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# Touting Touristic Primadonas: On Tourism, Ethnic Negotiation and National Integration in Sulawesi Indonesia

Kathleen M. Adams

Loyola University Chicago, [kadams@luc.edu](mailto:kadams@luc.edu)

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**Touting Touristic “Primadonas”:  
Tourism, Ethnicity, and National  
Integration in Sulawesi, Indonesia**

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In 1980 Pierre van den Berghe observed that tourism is generally superimposed on indigenous systems of ethnic relations and can profoundly affect indigenous ethnic hierarchies. Only recently, however, have Pacific scholars begun to explore seriously the salience of van den Berghe’s observations for countries promoting tourism as a strategy for nation-building (see Adams 1991, Kipp 1993, Picard 1993, Wood 1984). For instance, Wood (1984) discusses the politics of tourism in Southeast Asia, noting that a government’s promotion of tourism not only can heighten the cultural self-consciousness and ethnic pride of indigenous groups but also can suppress those groups that are not selected for the touristic map. Ultimately, then, tourism promotion of selected groups can exacerbate ethnic tensions. Likewise, Leong (1989) has explored how, in the context of tourism promotion, the Singaporean state mines, manufactures, and manipulates ethnic cultures for the purposes of economic development and national image management.

In part, this chapter contributes to this literature by presenting a case study of the effects of the Indonesian government’s tourism promotion policy on indigenous ethnic relations. The research presented in this chapter supports Wood’s observation that attempts to foster national integration and development by spotlighting particular

ethnic locales for domestic and foreign tourists can have ironic results. As the cases to be discussed illustrate, histories of ethnic rivalries and religious differences greatly complicate such endeavors. Ultimately, this chapter argues for the importance of situating tourism within the context of preexisting ethnic, economic, and socio-political scenarios.

A second, related theme addressed in this chapter is the relationship between regional political boundaries and tourism. Recently, several writers have explored the emergence of regional, pan-ethnic identities in particular provinces in Indonesia (Antweiler 1994, Robinson 1993). Given such emergent identities, what are the ramifications of the selective touristic promotion of particular ethnic groups within a province? Specifically, in this article I argue that Indonesian provincial boundaries are an often overlooked factor in shaping the discourse of tourism development and promotion.

A third theme is that of tourism and cultural resistance or contestation. A number of recent studies have explored how, in the context of touristic scrutiny, various ethnic groups have found ingenious, symbolic ways to resist or reassert control of the encounter, often in the guise of ritual humor (Evans-Pritchard 1989, Errington and Gewertz 1989, Adams 1995). While these studies tend to center on instances of resistance in what van den Berghe has termed the “tourist-touree”<sup>1</sup> relationship (1980), this chapter turns the lens to focus on *interethnic* contestation in the context of the touristic promotion of particular ethnic groups.

Of the various ethnic destinations promoted by the Indonesian state, my focus here is on Tana Toraja Regency in South Sulawesi, where I conducted ethnographic research from 1984 to 1985 and again in 1987, 1989, 1991, and 1992. Data are drawn from Indonesian newspaper articles, field interviews with Torajans residing at tourist sites, Buginese in Ujung Pandang, guides, foreign and domestic tourists, and Indonesian tourism officials.

### **Tourism Policy in Indonesia**

As an archipelago nation comprised of over three hundred ethnic groups and a multitude of religions, Indonesia faces the challenge of building a shared national consciousness. In addition to ubiquitous civic education in schools and on television, one way the Indonesian government strives to instill a broader sense of national unity is by championing tourism. As early as 1969, Indonesian leaders envisioned tourism contributing to nation-building in a variety of ways: first, as

a source of foreign revenue<sup>2</sup>; second, as a way of enhancing Indonesia's celebrity on the international stage; and third, as a strategy for fostering domestic brotherhood (see 1969 Presidential Instruction No. 9, cited in Yoeti 1985, 56–58). By 1988, tourism's role in nation-building was officially encoded into the mission statement of the Ministry of Tourism, Posts, and Telecommunications. As the statement declares:

Development of domestic tourism is aimed at strengthening love for country, instilling the soul, spirit and high values of the nation, improving the quality of the nation's cultural life and promoting historical sites (Departemen Pariwisata, Pos dan Telekomunikasi 1990, 40).<sup>3</sup>

For some years now, the message that domestic tourism to ethnic (and natural) locales makes a citizen a better Indonesian has been echoed in domestic travel advertisements, journals, and guidebooks. For instance, one Indonesian-language travel poster reads, "Know INDONESIA, . . . enjoy the panoramic beauty of our beloved homeland with INDONESIA PACKAGE TOUR." Emblazoned on the poster are photographs of a Batak structure at Lake Toba in Sumatra, a row of Torajan traditional buildings, fog-swept Mt. Bromo on Java, and a Dayak building on Balikpapan (Kalimantan). In a similar vein, the first quarter of a South Sulawesi guidebook for Indonesian youths is devoted to a discussion of tourism's importance in "strengthening the bonds between Indonesian ethnic groups" (Mandadung and Kinjan 1985, I), and a variety of Indonesian newspaper articles hail youth tourism as ideal for cultivating a love of country and a sense of national pride.

Most recently, in preparation for Visit Indonesia Year (1991) and Visit ASEAN Year (1992), the Indonesian government launched a national Tourism Consciousness Campaign (Kampanye Nasional Sadar Wisata). As part of this campaign, the minister of Tourism, Posts, and Telecommunications proclaimed the *sapta pesona*, or seven charms, to which all Indonesian groups should aspire. These tourist-pleasing charms included security, orderliness, friendliness, beauty, comfort, cleanliness, and memories. According to the minister, the objectives of the *sapta pesona* were "to form a strong and sturdy identity and to maintain national discipline" (Departemen Pariwisata, Pos dan Telekomunikasi 1990, 36).

Widely discussed in Indonesian newspapers (see Faisal 1989, Kuen 1990b, Tobing 1990, Kamarto 1990, Mandadung 1990, and Mar-

diatmadja 1991), outlined in handbooks distributed at tourist sites (see Departemen Penerangan 1990), and posted on plaques in villages, the Tourism Consciousness Campaign prompted even remote villages in outer Indonesia to consider their own touristic charms and attracting powers. For instance, as a result of this campaign, villagers I spoke with on the remote island of Alor enthusiastically speculated that their own dances, architecture, and scenic landscape would interest both foreign and domestic tourists. Noting their “uniqueness” in Indonesia, they pointed out that their small island offered a wider array of languages and cultures than most other Indonesian islands. Since uniqueness, indigenous architecture, and dance are all key markers of touristic marketability in Indonesia, it is clear that even the Alorese have absorbed the touristic rhetoric. Moreover, as these Alorese declared, the Seven Charms were just as present in Alor as they were in Bali, if not more so, since Alor lacks the drugs and drunkenness for which Bali’s Kuta Beach has become famous.

In a sense, to borrow Benedict Anderson’s (1983) now-famous phrase, we might conclude that the aggressive Tourism Consciousness Campaign has laid the foundations for a new kind of “imagined community,” one based on shared visions of a group’s own ethnic locale as a potential tourist destination, that is, an imagined Indonesia comprised of a mosaic of equally charming yet unique tourist sites. However, the gently rivalrous tone in my Alorese acquaintance’s comment about Bali merits our attention; in contemplating the state’s declaration of tourism as the pathway to national solidarity, local groups cannot help but recognize, and occasionally resent, that some groups receive more attention and promotion than others. In what follows, I explore the dynamics of this paradox in South Sulawesi.

### **A Brief History of Tourism in South Sulawesi**

Tourism in South Sulawesi cannot be disentangled from the history of ethnic relations on the island. Both international and domestic tourism to Tana Toraja are relatively recent phenomena. During the 1950s and early 1960s, Buginese-Makassarese Muslim rebellions in South Sulawesi, in tandem with poor roads, made travel to the Christianized Toraja highlands extremely difficult and sometimes dangerous (Bigalke 1981, Harvey 1974, 1977). It was not until the late 1960s, after the South Sulawesi Muslim insurrections were quashed, that the first adventurer-tourists began to travel to Tana Toraja (Crystal 1977). Hiring cars and Buginese drivers in the Buginese-

Makassarese coastal city of Ujung Pandang, these intrepid travelers embarked on twelve- to fourteen-hour journeys to the highlands in search of people who had been described by drivers as “pagans” who “celebrate death” with elaborate, “extravagant funerals.”

The trickle of tourists swelled in the early 1970s when Torajan entrepreneurs recognized the touristic potential of their homeland and started to produce articles and guidebooks about Sa’dan Torajan culture (Marampa’ 1974 [1970], Salombe 1972). Highlighting Torajan traditional architecture, carved effigies of the dead, funeral rituals, and the region’s spectacular natural beauty, these inexpensive booklets found an audience. Moreover, the 1973 European airing of a television documentary featuring a Torajan aristocrat’s funeral ritual,<sup>4</sup> in tandem with the Indonesian government’s 1974 Second Five Year Plan, which advocated the promotion of outer island tourist destinations, prompted still more tourist traffic to the Toraja highlands. Gradually, the growing body of touristic and anthropological literature about these Sulawesi highlanders helped make Torajan culture an entity to be studied, photographed, commoditized, and consumed by both outsiders and insiders (Adams 1984, 1990, 1993a, 1993b, Volkman 1984, 1990).

Toraja fully blossomed in the national (and international) touristic consciousness in 1984, when Joop Ave, the director general of Tourism, visited South Sulawesi and declared Tana Toraja the “touristic *primadona* of South Sulawesi” and Ujung Pandang the “Gateway to Tana Toraja.” For many Torajans I spoke with, this declaration, along with the selection of an image of traditional Torajan architecture to embellish Indonesia’s 5,000 *rupiah* note, was a source of great ethnic pride. As many of my Torajan friends noted, for centuries the Islamic coastal Buginese and Makassarese groups had dominated the region, raiding Torajans for coffee and slaves and generally limiting Torajan access to the outside world. Now, the tables were being reversed. This newfound touristic celebrity was earning Torajans an esteemed place in the Indonesian hierarchy of ethnic groups. As Torajans noted gleefully, the word *Toraja* (not *Bugis* or *Makassarese*) dominated maps of the region, the Buginese Makassarese city of Ujung Pandang had been symbolically demoted to the status of Tana Toraja’s port of entry, and the outside world was snubbing these Muslim peoples, preferring to visit the Toraja highlands (see Figures 6.1 through 6.4).

Joop Ave’s selection of the word *primadona* to describe Tana Toraja is intriguing. While it is not listed in older Indonesian-English



**Figure 6.1.** Western tourists pause to admire a panoramic view of the Rantepao Valley, Tan Toraja, Indonesia. (Photo by Kathleen M. Adams)

dictionaries, the word does appear in a dictionary of contemporary terms as the Indonesian spelling of “prima donna” (Schmidgall-Tellings and Stevens 1981). As a borrowing from the gendered Italian expression, the precise shifts in meaning in translation can only be imagined. What is clear is that the director general of Tourism wished to convey a sense of Torajans as the premier belles of Sulawesi. I was present on the occasion when Joop Ave made this declaration to a banquet room filled with South Sulawesi tourism officials and Torajan politicians. He had just finished his first tour of Tana Toraja Regency and at dinner had waxed poetic about the allure of Tana Toraja. Within days, even Torajans far off the beaten tourist track were repeating his declaration. Some clearly had no idea what a *primadonna* was, though they had divined that it was something positive. When Joop Ave returned to Jakarta, he repeated his declaration at a widely publicized event and the term rapidly became a part of tourism parlance in Indonesia.

#### **Tourism as a New Arena for Age-Old Ethnic Battles: Does Promoting *Primadonas* Breed Envious Understudies?**

By 1991, when the Toraja highlands attracted 40,695 foreign tourists and 174,542 domestic visitors<sup>5</sup> (most of whom spent only an



**Figure 6.2.** European and Indonesian tourists rest under a rice barn in a typical Toraja village. (Photo by Kathleen M. Adams)





**Figure 6.3.** Tourists observe meat division at a Toraja funeral ritual. (Photo by Kathleen M. Adams)



**Figure 6.4.** Western tourists and their guides shop for souvenirs at To Barana village, Tana Toraja, Indonesia. (Photo by Kathleen M. Adams)

obligatory evening in the Buginese-Makassarese capital of Ujung Pandang awaiting connections to the mountains), Tana Toraja’s *primadona* status was undeniable. In the eyes of Torajans, touristic preeminence was evoking the envy of their age-old rivals. As a Torajan local tourism official summed up shortly after their promotion to *primadona* status: “The Buginese are jealous of all the development tourism has brought to Tana Toraja, but it’s too late for them to do anything—they just have to be content with being a ‘Gateway to Toraja,’ rather than a real tourist destination.” Another Torajan whose livelihood relies partially on tourism invoked age-old ethnic antipathies even more directly: “in the past the Buginese raided us for coffee and slaves, now they are after our tourists.” Whether or not my informants’ perceptions were on the mark, shortly after the director general of Tourism’s 1984 visit to Sulawesi, Buginese and Makassarese tourism officials in Ujung Pandang began attempting to upgrade the touristic experience in Tana Toraja to international standards and to add additional South Sulawesi destinations to the touristic itinerary. As I will illustrate, for Torajans, both these and other Buginese efforts to partake in the nation’s tourism development program did not foster regional integration but rather further fueled intra-island ethnic antagonisms.

### *Case 1: Controversy over Guiding Rights*

The evidence of tourism as a new arena for age-old ethnic rivalries crystallized in 1985, in a battle over the guiding rights of local Torajans. While visiting Toraja with an entourage of South Sulawesi tourism officials in 1984, Joop Ave observed that the tourist experience in Tana Toraja needed some upgrading. Several officials in the entourage noted the number of unlicensed, aspiring guides proliferating in Rantepao (the main center of tourist services in Tana Toraja) and other Torajan tourist sites. These young Torajan guides, with their villager clothes and hustler style struck officials as a potential embarrassment. From the viewpoint of the Ujung Pandang officials, the Torajan “wild guides” (*guide liar*), as they dubbed them, were not only untrained but also unprofessional. This concern with professionalism reflects the state’s ideas about order and security: whereas wild guides were perceived as a threat to the state’s carefully manufactured imagery of tamed cultural diversity, professionalism promised uniformity and central control. By early 1985, the South Sulawesi Provincial Tourism Office issued a decree that guides could not operate in Toraja without a license from the state. The

decree provoked a great uproar from Torajans. Acquiring a license required money and schooling in distant Ujung Pandang, neither of which were available to the young and relatively poor Torajan wild guides.

The new mandate provoked an outcry from not only guides but also Torajans of all ranks and occupations. Many Torajans I interviewed declared with annoyance that the majority of the official and hence most lucratively paid guides were not Torajan but Muslim Buginese or Chinese, people whom Torajans felt knew little of their customs and frequently misrepresented the predominantly Christian Torajans as pagan and backward. For Torajans, the decree meant that they would no longer have the opportunity to represent themselves to outsiders or make money guiding those tourists that, as one wild guide put it, “had not already been snared by Ujung Pandang-based travel agencies.” Local Torajan officials lobbied to have the South Sulawesi Provincial Tourism Office offer a free training workshop for guides in Tana Toraja so that aspiring Torajan guides could earn licenses. The lobbying efforts succeeded, and in late October 1985, eighty-eight Torajans participated in a two-week-long “Local Guide Training Workshop” held in Rantepao. The workshop included lessons from local elites on Torajan mythic history, architecture, dress symbolism, and ritual traditions. In addition, several professional guides from Ujung Pandang lectured on tourist etiquette and, as the token foreign anthropologist, I was asked to present a lesson on “what tourists want.” At the end of the workshop, participants were tested on the material covered in the sessions, with the promise that those who passed would be granted licenses.<sup>6</sup>

From the outset the workshop was highly charged. Several of the Buginese travel bureau officials lecturing at the workshop confided their frustrations over Torajan demands to be granted what they deemed easy licenses. As one Buginese travel agency owner grumbled to me,

Torajans want to politicize tourism so that they get Torajan guides—but you *can't* do this. How can they assert that just because they are Torajan, they know more about Torajan culture than outsiders who have studied it? Knowledge of Torajan culture isn't in one's blood—it's not passed down in genes—you have to study it. [A prominent Torajan elder who lectured at the workshop] is clever, but that doesn't mean his children have automatically inherited his knowledge of Torajan culture—they have to study first. I've been studying Tora-

jan culture since 1968. Also, the problem with this guide-training thing is that it has attracted people who aren't necessarily devoted to or talented for guiding. Instead, we've got people looking for free training or folks from the “tourist objects” who were ordered to attend to become explainers for their sites—and their talents weren't weighed. . . . Yeah, now we'll have to use them when we take tourists to their sites, but they're not yet ripe, and certainly not yet professional. . . . But Torajans are playing politics without considering the needs of the tourists. You *can't* politicize tourism (Adams 1985).

Ironically, in the Torajans' eyes, it was the Ujung Pandangers who, seeking to monopolize the Torajan commodity of tourism, had politicized tourism in the first place. For them, permission to sponsor a training workshop symbolized a minor victory in taking back what was rightfully theirs.

However, a number of unexpected mix-ups were to rob some Torajans of their sense of victory. When the governor of South Sulawesi did not arrive to open officially the workshop as scheduled, a few of the Torajans sitting next to me murmured their misgivings. By the second morning of the workshop, when it was announced that the anticipated funds to cover the costs of daily snacks and participants' transportation had not been received from the governor's office and the tourism office, the murmurs of doubt about the commitment of Ujung Pandang officials to the workshop erupted into a long and tense discussion. The Buginese provincial officials supervising the workshop clarified that there had never been any money committed to the endeavor, only staff participation in the lectures. Torajans in the auditorium voiced their disbelief, speculating that the Buginese had deliberately diverted the funds “because they don't want the local guides to become official guides, as their own non-Torajan guides will have a harder time competing.” The workshop nearly collapsed, as the meeting deteriorated into a tense debate about where to get the necessary funds. Given their suspicions of Buginese betrayal, a number of Torajan participants were reluctant to dig into their own pockets to cover the expenses. Eventually the regent (*bupati*) of Tana Toraja donated 250,000 *rupiah*, and most participants agreed to make daily contributions for snacks.<sup>7</sup>

The rest of the training workshop went relatively smoothly. Following the conclusion of the workshop, the participants took their licensing exams and, to their delight, most passed. However, when I returned over a year later in early 1987, many of the wild guides

were grumbling once again. Apparently, only a few of the promised licenses had arrived. Moreover, they had not expected to be charged a fee to activate their licenses and were incensed that they would have to pay for the right to guide in their homeland. As one declared, “It’s the outside guides that should have to pay, not us.” Again, there was speculation that the Buginese were deliberately blocking Torajan efforts to retain some of the tourism revenues in the homeland. While I suspect that many of the snafus surrounding the training workshop were rooted in miscommunication and innocent misunderstandings, it is significant that Torajans interpreted the complications as deliberately engineered and rooted in ethnic rivalries. As this case illustrates, promoting tourism does not automatically promote regional ethnic solidarity. For these historic rivals, it only exacerbated age-old tensions.

*Case 2: Resentments over Lowlander Attempts to Siphon Tourism Revenues*

At the same time that Torajan wild guides were lobbying for guiding rights in their homeland, Torajans involved in other sectors of the tourism industry had their own complaints, which centered on beliefs that the Buginese were attempting to horn in on the tourism cash cow. After his celebrated visit to Tana Toraja in 1984, Joop Ave, the director general of Tourism, decreed that tourist flights between Ujung Pandang and Tana Toraja be instituted on a daily basis to facilitate visits to the highlands (previous flights to Toraja were scheduled twice a week, although they were erratic at best). The Torajans I knew were thrilled—some even speculated that the flights would allow tourists to bypass Ujung Pandang altogether. However, by May 1985, Torajans active in tourism were alarmed to hear rumors of a new flight schedule that entailed changing the arrival time of the flights from Bali to Ujung Pandang from the morning to the late afternoon and scheduling the flights from Ujung Pandang to Tana Toraja to the morning. As one Torajan hotelier in Rantepao observed with irritation, “[With this plan] tourists will be forced to spend two nights in Ujung Pandang. It’s Tana Toraja that’s the tourist destination, but Ujung Pandang is trying to suck up our profits. Those Ujung Pandang hotels weren’t built for tourists in the first place, they were built for traders and officials.” He complained that the bulk of tourism development money given to the Provincial Tourism Office in Ujung Pandang is not passed on to Tana Toraja Regency, as he felt it should be; rather, the office distributes the

funds all over South Sulawesi. Heaving a heavy sigh, he murmured, “It’s the Ujung Pandangers who are giving us problems.”

Likewise, a Torajan souvenir seller with whom I was friendly expressed similar suspicions about the rumored plan to alter flight arrival times.

Those Ujung Pandang people [for her they were synonymous with the Buginese] are making things hard for us Torajans again. They’ve succeeded in changing the planes from Bali so tourists are forced to spend two nights in Ujung Pandang. Just what are tourists going to do in Ujung Pandang?! Ujung Pandang is only the “Gateway to Toraja,” it’s not the tourist destination, you know. Tourists aren’t going to be happy about this. And eventually it’ll be us who lose—tourists aren’t going to want to come to Tana Toraja any more if they are forced to spend two nights in Ujung Pandang. But those Ujung Pandang folks are sly. Now they are staging dances at the Fort [site of Ujung Pandang’s main museum] so that tourists will go there instead of seeing dances here in Tana Toraja. Those Ujung Pandang people are always trying to make a profit from us Torajans (Adams 1995b).

Her husband, a respected local leader, interjected that the flights were changed at the suggestion of Joop Ave, the director general of Tourism. Noting that Joop Ave proposed this so that tourists would stay longer in Sulawesi and so that Ujung Pandangers could reap the profits of tourism as well, he surmised that Joop Ave was swayed by the Buginese on his last visit to the island a month before. Turning to his wife, he speculated,

Remember last month when he was supposed to come to a meeting here in Tana Toraja, but it didn’t happen and he was stopped in Ujung Pandang? Ujung Pandangers probably deliberately arranged things that way so that they could influence him. If only he had made it to Toraja, things certainly wouldn’t have turned out like this.

Returning to the issue of the Ujung Pandang dance performances, my souvenir-selling friend gave me a vigorous poke and reminded me of how, two months earlier, the prime minister of Singapore had been scheduled to visit Tana Toraja following the opening of a cement factory in lowland Sulawesi. Instead, the prime minister was whisked away to the Golden Makassar Hotel in Ujung Pandang, where he was entertained with Torajan dances. “What’s more,” she added in an exasperated tone, “They say the dancers weren’t even Torajan! Those Bugis are always trying to profit from our Torajan

cultural uniqueness.” Indeed, whether or not the rumors of the flight changes and the Buginese performing Torajan dances were accurate, Torajan commentaries about the state’s tourism policy in South Sulawesi were generally laden with these images of urban-rural and low-lander-highlander ethnic rivalries.

Highlanders’ fears that the Buginese would attempt to siphon off tourists by replicating Toraja in Ujung Pandang mounted in the late 1980s, when plans were announced for the construction of a mini-South Sulawesi theme park in a historic fort seven kilometers south of Ujung Pandang. The park was envisioned as South Sulawesi’s key contribution for the touristic promotion of Visit Indonesia Year 1991 (Robinson 1993, 230). The setting of Somba Opu Fort is significant, as the fort is the site where, approximately 350 years ago, Makassarese fighters led by Sultan Hasanudin waged one of the last battles against the invading Dutch army. Thus, several hundred years later, in 1989, the fort was being unearthed and restored as a sacred site where various South Sulawesi groups would once again encounter outsiders. However, this time the invading outsiders were not Dutch soldiers but coveted tourists bringing economic rewards.

South Sulawesi tourism developers regaled the selection of this site for Taman Miniatur Sulawesi (Miniature Sulawesi Park) as an opportunity to restore Somba Opu to its former position of glory. As the writers of a book promoting investment in South Sulawesi proclaimed, “Somba Opu is therefore nothing else than a fortress of defense mythologized as a symbol of greatness, courage and pride of the South Sulawesi people at that time” (Wahab 1992). This seemingly semiconscious transformation of a place of Makassarese resistance into a sacred site embodying the (presumably unified) greatness and pride of all South Sulawesi peoples is evocative of Hobsbawm and Ranger’s (1983) now-classic notion of “the invention of tradition.” In short, through its selection as the locale for Taman Miniatur Sulawesi, the fort is being refashioned into a key symbol of a pan-regional identity. Although South Sulawesi regional identity is only recently emergent and far from seamless, this mythologizing of the fort lends it the authority of a glorious past.

A brief mention of recent anthropological discussions of the assertion of a South Sulawesi regional identity is appropriate at this point. Observing the national political context for the construction of regional identities in Indonesia (the economic development agenda of the New Order and the instillation of national integration through the cultivation of common national values), several writers have sug-

gested that there is growing evidence of the forging of a pan-ethnic provincial identity in South Sulawesi. Antweiler (1994), for example, points to the dwindling ethnic residential segregation in Ujung Pandang, the growth of ethnic intermarriage (particularly between lowland Islamic groups), and the increasingly frequent references to common South Sulawesi cultural traits by Ujung Pandang academics, journalists, and ordinary people. However, in discussing how riots between city youth groups are often couched in ethnic terms and in noting the endurance of powerful ethnic stereotyping between these groups, he also offers ample evidence for the persistence of strong ethnic sentiments, despite the state's orchestrated moves to tame them. Likewise, in Robinson's exploration of the emergence of the platform house as a symbol of South Sulawesi regional identity (1993), she is careful to note that this symbol of common identity has salience only for the Islamic groups in South Sulawesi (the Buginese, Makassarese, and Mandarese), not for the Toraja or the Chinese. Thus, while the foundation for a common regional identity may be salient for some groups at some times, it is not yet sturdy, and some groups (for example, the Toraja and Chinese) are more likely to be set apart from this identity. In part, this separation reflects the fact that, at the provincial level, political power remains in the hands of the Islamic Buginese.

Returning to Taman Miniatur Sulawesi, the park was deliberately modeled after Ibu Suharto's<sup>8</sup> celebrated Mini-Indonesia in Jakarta. In fact, the name of the park was ultimately changed to Taman Budaya Sulawesi<sup>9</sup> because of concerns about detracting from the "uniqueness" of Ibu Suharto's park in Jakarta (Stanislaus Sandarupa, personal communication). Taman Budaya Sulawesi was designed to feature traditional architecture and cultural displays from the four main ethnic groups in South Sulawesi province (Bugis, Makassar, Mandar, Tana Toraja). As Robinson has noted, despite the strong presence of the Torajan traditional house in the park's promotional brochures, the park represents the "first real attempt to establish everyday vernacular architecture of the Islamic peoples of South Sulawesi as an aspect of the province's attraction for visitors" (1993, 230).

As noted earlier, a number of Torajans were aware of the park's potential to displace them from their position as the most celebrated group in South Sulawesi and felt that they had little say in the matter. In Tana Toraja, rumors circulated that Torajans were not represented on the park's planning committee (which turned out to be



untrue). On the occasion of the park's opening in the summer of 1991, the governor of South Sulawesi declared that: "It wouldn't be in the least bit astonishing if Miniature Sulawesi Park one day becomes the most interesting tourist object in all of eastern Indonesia. The issue now is how we can develop and improve the services and facilities at the site" (anon. 1991a, 10). For many Torajans these were ominous signals that Ujung Pandangers were promoting Mini-Sulawesi to compete with their title as "*primadona* of South Sulawesi."

To make matters worse, as opening day approached, a number of Torajans felt they had little control over how they were represented in the displays or how their rituals were presented in the park.<sup>10</sup> One Torajan student studying in Ujung Pandang told me of how irked he was to learn that the park officials planned to alter significantly the Torajan house consecration ritual (*mangrara tongkonan*) that was to accompany the opening festivities of the park. "The Bugis said there'd be no live pigs at the ceremony! But pigs are essential for the *mangrara* ritual—how can you have a house consecration without pigs? Just because they are Muslim and uncomfortable with pigs doesn't mean they should be allowed to change our rituals." According to the student, he and many of his Torajan friends residing in Ujung Pandang decided to boycott the opening ceremony at the park to protest this issue.

Taman Miniatur Sulawesi (as it was then known) opened to coincide with South Sulawesi's Second Annual Festival of Culture. Indonesia's minister of agriculture opened the festivities with a speech stressing the festival's importance to achieving the nation's tourism goals and to fertilizing a love for the homeland. Moreover, he emphasized that:

Up until now, the tourist destination of South Sulawesi is only known for its *primadona*, Tana Toraja. But actually there are other tourist sites here with great potential for development. With this Festival of Culture, these other regions of South Sulawesi have the opportunity to showcase their touristic potential and become better known (anon. 1991b, 1).

Undoubtedly, the minister's words resonated with the Sulawesi groups at the festival. Partly as a result of the state's tourism promotion policies and partly through witnessing Torajans basking in touristic celebrity, people from the lesser-known regions of Sulawesi have already begun pursuing touristic fame. Local scholars are researching

and listing potential tourist destinations, and local newspaper columnists have helped to promote interest in finding alternative tourist locations so that, as one writer put it, "the province is not dominated by already known locations such as Tana Toraja and the like" (Amier 1993).

In fact, since the late 1980s, South Sulawesi newspaper articles have regularly featured headlines announcing the new *primadonas* in South Sulawesi. As one 1990 South Sulawesi newspaper headline proclaimed, "South Sulawesi Doesn't Only Have Tana Toraja" (Kuen 1990). Other headlines heralded "Lemo, the Hidden Primadona" (Huka 1990) and reminded South Sulawesi residents that Ujung Pandang's central market was "still a primadona" (anon. 1993). Still other newspaper articles hailed Jambu Mete (a predominantly Muslim locale near Maros) the "Primadona of the Grilled Fish Region" (anon. 1992) and declared "The Kuri Coast and Batimuring the Tourist Primadona of Maros [a Buginese region of South Sulawesi]" (Basir 1991). By the early 1990s, *primadona* fever had caught on so that even *tamorilla* fruit and crab were being hailed as *primadonas* of South Sulawesi in local newspaper headlines and articles (anon. 1990, Amin 1991).

It is noteworthy that these articles announcing the new *primadonas* of Sulawesi are appearing in Indonesian-language South Sulawesi newspapers. The immediate audience is not foreign tourists, nor even Javanese tourists, but residents of South Sulawesi, many of whom are already familiar with these areas and foods. Thus, it is important to ask what purpose these articles serve. Aside from encouraging Ujung Pandangers to reacquaint themselves with an array of cultures and foods in their own province, this profusion of *primadonas* symbolically deflates the preeminence of Toraja's *primadona* title.

A similar move to promote other lowland regions of South Sulawesi, thereby diminishing Tana Toraja's preeminence in the province, can also be discerned in a recent English-language video produced by the South Sulawesi Provincial Tourism Office. This thirty-five-minute video, entitled "South Sulawesi, Land of Surprises," begins with a lengthy segment heralding the touristic charms of Ujung Pandang and its offshore islands. A second elaborate segment focuses on the southern coastal region of the peninsula. The segment addressing Tana Toraja is buried toward the end of the video and lasts only about ten minutes. As a friend commented, "If you blinked you could almost miss Toraja!" While she was exagger-

ating, the video makes it clear that the Ujung Pandang-based officials at the Provincial Tourism Office are no longer heralding Toraja as the central attraction in South Sulawesi.

### **Building Bridges and Boundaries: Torajans' Encounters with Domestic Tourists**

How do actual touristic encounters figure into this picture of nation-building and regional integration in South Sulawesi? What are the effects of domestic tourism on interethnic relations and nation-building? Ironically, while there is a rapidly growing literature on tourism in South Sulawesi, it gives but passing attention to domestic tourists (for example, Crystal 1977, Volkman 1984, 1990, Yamashita 1994). That is surprising, as domestic tourists greatly outnumber foreign tourists. In 1989, for example, five out of six visitors to Tana Toraja Regency were domestic tourists (Razaq 1991). Based on interviews as well as on a perusal of guest registries at tourist sites, the majority of domestic visitors to Tana Toraja are urban Buginese, Javanese, and Chinese Indonesians. Many Sulawesi lowlanders visit Toraja as part of a school group *pesantren* or government entourage.

The majority of the lowland Muslim tourists I interviewed in Tana Toraja appeared ambivalent about their highland neighbors. While many commented that the Toraja were “less backward” than they had anticipated and some even observed a few linguistic or mythological similarities, most focused on aspects of Torajan culture that they found disturbing. A few Buginese tourists commented that although the mountains were lovely, Torajans were not very friendly. Other lowland Sulawesi Muslim visitors expressed their disdain for the Torajan affinity for pigs and dogs. Still others complained of the food, the mud, or the sanitary conditions. Not surprisingly, such ambivalent feelings were often mutual. Torajan souvenir sellers often grumbled with disappointment when Buginese descended from the tour buses, declaring them “stuck-up” and “stingy.” Several vendors observed that, unlike visitors from other islands, Muslim tourists from lowland Sulawesi did not buy many carvings as gifts for their friends back home. Instead, they bought small, inexpensive bamboo items. (Indeed, very few of the middle-class Buginese I knew in Ujung Pandang decorated their homes with Torajan souvenirs. This general lack of interest in Torajan carvings may again convey the cultural ambivalence that typifies Toraja-Buginese relations). Other souvenir sellers claimed that whenever Buginese youth groups browsed in

their souvenir shops, they would tell their relatives to help them keep an eye on their goods, because “Buginese kids don’t buy, they shoplift.”

Of all the visitors to Tana Toraja, Toba Batak tourists appear to be the most successful in fulfilling the Indonesian government’s aims of fostering common bonds between different ethnic groups via domestic tourism. Like the Toraja, the Toba Batak of Sumatra are a strongly Christianized mountain people who receive much attention from tourists. Moreover, both in Tana Toraja and in Toba Batak, the touristic attractions are non-Christian cultural and religious elements. Finally, both groups are experiencing indigenous cultural revivals. Batak tourists I spoke with were particularly struck by the similarities between Torajans and themselves. As one Batak exclaimed, “It’s just like home! The carved houses, the water buffalo, everything.” And as an eighteen-year-old Batak woman recorded on my tourist survey, “Generally, Torajans and Bataks are just the same, both in terms of their attitudes and their dialects.” This feeling of Batak-Toraja kinship appears to be mutual. Torajans I interviewed spoke of enjoying their encounters with Batak tourists. They commented on the similarities in language (unapparent to me) and cultural style. Moreover, they noted that Toba Batak, like themselves, were Christian and hence comfortable around the pigs and dogs that make up the Torajan landscape.

The Indonesian government’s strategy of using tourism to forge ties between different ethnic groups also appears to be somewhat more successful with Balinese visitors to Tana Toraja. Although I did not encounter large numbers of Balinese tourists, those Balinese I spoke with commented on the resemblance of Torajan scenery to their own and observed that Torajans, like themselves, were acclaimed as talented carvers. Moreover, Balinese and Torajans alike noted that *aluk to dolo* (Torajan indigenous religion) is also “classified by the government as a branch of Hindu Bali.” Notably, they did not dwell on the many differences between their religions, but contrasted them with Islam.

Clearly, ethnicity, religion, and local histories all color such encounters between Torajans and domestic tourists from other regions. In short, such face-to-face encounters between Indonesian domestic tourists and tourees can both bolster nation-building—fostering recognition of commonalities between diverse groups—and reignite ethnic and religious antipathies.

### Provincial Political Boundaries and the Discourse of Tourism Development

The cases discussed here underscore the importance of situating tourism within the context of preexisting ethnic, economic, and socio-political processes. As we have seen, the history of ethnic and religious tensions between lowland Buginese-Makassarese and highland Torajans has greatly complicated the state's efforts to forge national unity through tourism. The promotion of Tana Toraja to touristic *primadona* of the province has added new fuel to long-simmering ethnic antagonisms. Rather than fostering pan-provincial bonds between ethnic groups in South Sulawesi, tourism promotion has intensified interethnic competition, rivalry, and mutual suspicion between some South Sulawesi groups. In short, van den Berghe's observations about tourism's effect on social relations in San Cristobal, Mexico hold true for the situation in South Sulawesi: it has rendered even more complex a preexisting system of ethnic relations (van den Berghe 1994, 145).

Moreover, this chapter has championed the importance of attending to regional political boundaries in researching tourism. Drawing attention to provincial boundaries enables us to perceive new dimensions of the state's effects on indigenous peoples' perceptions of their own identities. In addition, by focusing on the framing of tourism at the provincial level, we are better able to understand how the state's manipulation of local and ethnic markers fosters a sense of regional, rather than simply Torajan, entitlement to tourists (and, more importantly, to the accompanying political celebrity and economic rewards). Briefly put, provincial political boundaries play a critical role in reshaping the discourse of tourism development in South Sulawesi.

While I have devoted much of this chapter to tracing the ethnic rivalry that resurfaced in the context of tourism promotion in South Sulawesi, I do not wish to suggest that the Indonesian government's attempts to foster national integration through tourism have been entirely unsuccessful. Spotlighting Toraja as a touristic *primadona* has clearly spurred other areas in South Sulawesi to refashion themselves as aspiring *primodonas*, and in that sense has encouraged economic development and local cultural efflorescence. Moreover, the touristic promotion of Tana Toraja has enhanced infrastructure in South Sulawesi, making travel within the region easier and more common, and it has fostered a sense of ethnic pride and centrality to the nation for Torajans. In addition, as I have argued elsewhere

(Adams 1991), face-to-face touristic encounters between Torajans and Bataks, as well as other Christian Indonesian groups, have generally fostered new appreciations of commonalities and enhanced national pride.<sup>11</sup>

Likewise, the state’s celebration of traditional cultures in South Sulawesi serves to bolster Indonesians’ pride in their own cultural resilience after years of colonialism and cultural imperialism from the West. As one South Sulawesi column declared:

As Indonesians we should thank God for having given us a country so beautiful and rich in cultures. If before independence foreigners came to our country and oppressed and exploited our race, now after freedom it’s just the opposite . . . their coming here [as tourists] is making our country rich (Faisal 1989).

In this sense, tourism can foster nation-building by reminding Indonesians of their common identity vis-à-vis foreigners. The columnist’s invocation of Indonesians’ shared colonial struggles against the Dutch does just that, while stimulating readers to think triumphantly about the latest wave of outsiders penetrating their country.

Finally, as Rita Kipp (1993) has astutely observed, the Indonesian cultural policy of encouraging ethnic pride masks the imbalances of wealth and power in Indonesia. In a similar vein, Torajans’ promotion to *primadona* status effectively highlights local provincial ethnic rivalries and diverts attention from the economic and power imbalances between inner and outer Indonesia. By inadvertently fueling competition between Buginese and Torajans, tourism deflects attention from common resentments of Jakarta’s advantaged position and authority. It is perhaps in this sense that the *primadona* policy contributes most forcefully to national integration.

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## Notes

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1. “Touree” refers to the ethnic group member who is the object of the tourist’s gaze.

2. For more on the relationship between tourism, economic development, and nation-building, see Wood (1979, 277) and Booth (1990).

3. Also see Departemen Kepariwisata, Pos dan Telekomunikasi (1992, 41).

4. According to Toby Volkman (1985, 165), this documentary was produced by Ringo Starr, which presumably added to its cache.

5. These are the most recent figures available. The domestic figures may be slightly inflated, as the government determines this figure by counting hotel and homestay registers. Thus, some traders and businesspeople are inadvertently added to the pool. However, during my twenty-two month stay in Ke'te' Kesu' (the most visited tourist site in Tana Toraja), I found that domestic tourists far outnumbered the foreign tourists. Many of the domestic tourists came on group tours, often organized by schools, scout clubs, and so forth.

6. By 1991, a tourism and hotel studies high school had opened in Tana Toraja, effectively eliminating the need for local guide training workshops.

7. A few participants made a show of bringing their own snacks and refusing to contribute to the donation basket, steadfastly noting that the funds should come from the Buginese-run provincial tourism office, not their own pockets. It was unclear whether this was a strategy to conceal the fact that they could little afford to make a donation, or whether it was truly a matter of principle—a refusal to be taken advantage of by people they perceived to be their rivals.

8. President Suharto's wife.

9. This translates as Sulawesi Culture Park. It is noteworthy that, although the park showcases the different cultural traditions of South Sulawesi, "culture" is singular and not plural.

10. A number of Ujung Pandang Torajans worked as consultants on the Torajan section of the park. Moreover, a ritual specialist from the highlands officiated at the consecration of the *tongkonan* (traditional house) erected in the park (Sandarupa 1994).

11. However, perhaps not surprisingly, Buginese tourists I interviewed following their visits to Tana Toraja generally did not return with a new appreciation of their many regional commonalities with Torajans. Rather, most of the Buginese I spoke with, after noting Tana Toraja's refreshing mountain climate and scenery, made negative comments about the ubiquitous mud and pigs. For most Buginese, their touristic experiences in Tana Toraja reaffirmed their sense of superiority.

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