Traditional Arts, Contemporary Artists:
A Study of Influence and Change in Irian Jaya, Indonesia

by

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is a survey of contemporary artists and influences on art production in the province of Irian Jaya, Indonesia. It explores the reasons artists have been drawn to produce their art and how they perceive the role of their art today. Since the existing literature on the subject is scant, this study is based largely on fieldwork conducted intermittently over a four year period (1995-1998). Historically, the thesis examines major changes and developments that have taken place in tribal art traditions in the region since the turn of the century. It tracks significant influences on artists and art production from the Dutch colonial period through to the Indonesian takeover of Netherlands New Guinea in 1963 and until the end of Suharto's New Order in 1998. Using a framework that relates the arts of Irian Jaya to local, national and global influences, connections between art and social context are examined in an attempt to understand current manifestations of contemporary art and cultural expression. The role of international artistic and economic patronage, nationalist policies that facilitate cultural appropriation, and the importance of local agency are explored through case studies from the region.

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CHAPTER ONE - INTRODUCTION

> Origin is an eddy in the stream of becoming.
>
> —Walter Benjamin (quoted in Clifford 1997:281)

This thesis is a survey of contemporary artists and conditions for art production in selected regions of the province of Irian Jaya, Indonesia. It explores the reasons artists have been drawn to produce art and how they perceive the role of their art today. Since the existing literature on the subject is scant, this study is based largely on nine months of field research conducted intermittently over a four-year period (1995-1998).[1] Historically, the thesis examines major changes and developments that have taken place in tribal art traditions in the region since the turn of the century. It tracks significant influences on artists[2] and art production from the Dutch colonial period through to the Indonesian takeover of Netherlands New Guinea in 1963 and until the end of Suharto's New Order in 1998. Using a framework that relates the arts of Irian Jaya to local, national and global influences, connections between art and social context are examined in an attempt to understand current manifestations of contemporary art and cultural expression. The role of international artistic patronage, nationalist policies that facilitate cultural appropriation and the importance of local agency are explored through case studies from original fieldwork.

At the global level, the transformations in the art and culture of tribal groups in Irian Jaya and their current forms will be considered from the historical perspective of interactions between tribal groups and foreigners, including explorers, traders and missionaries; the imposition of colonial authority, institutions and centrist agendas; and the recent aspirations and activities of multinational companies, non-government organizations, international tribal art collectors and dealers, foreign workers and tourists. The responses of local communities and individual artists to these contacts and to the ensuing modernization of their environment have varied greatly.

At the national level, the diverse indigenous artistic traditions of Irian Jaya as well as those from across the Indonesian archipelago are under considerable pressure from the central

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[1] Financial support for my field research was provided in 1995, by a Canada-ASEAN Foundation Academic Travel Grant and in 1998, by a Northwest Regional Consortium for Southeast Asian Studies Travel Grant. For a more comprehensive breakdown of my time spent in the field, and a list of locations, see Appendix A.

[2] By artists, I mean predominantly woodcarvers and barkcloth painters, though I also mention some artists who work in batik, fiber, pottery, cement and paint.

government to fit into a national culture that is composed of carefully selected elements of regional indigenous artistic traditions. This process of national identity building attempts to dislodge traditional or local *adat* allegiances and shift the citizens' focus of loyalty to the national level. Many assimilative techniques have been employed by the Indonesian government in its attempt to quell regional instabilities, a substantial task given the over 300 different ethnic groups in Indonesia (Hill 1991: 3). The tension between local and national objectives is considerable in Irian Jaya, since it is the national government that has control of the political, economic and cultural activity in the region, to the detriment of indigenous populations who are continually striving for equality and more autonomy in a situation that can be described as neo-colonial. A widely supported separatist movement, the OPM (*Organisasi Papua Merdeka*) or Free Papua Movement, presents a continual security threat to the national government and military. The control and manipulation of cultural expression is one non-violent technique the government uses to further its integration of the indigenous population into a national framework governed by the motto "Unity in Diversity".

At the local level, the work of several prominent artists in Irian Jaya will be presented and discussed. These artists all work within genres rooted in traditional tribal cultures, but with differences in materials, style, meaning and motivation brought about by changes or transformations in religious belief, traditional lifestyles and socio-political and economic circumstances. Many of these artists are leaders in what seems to be emerging as a period of artistic and cultural revival occurring simultaneously in several areas of the province. This revival is significant because until recently some of these art forms were no longer being made and production of many others had been in decline for much of this century. Yet there are competing stakeholders in these processes and it remains open to debate who is orchestrating the current revivals, who will benefit, and what will be the long term effects on the production of art and cultural expression.

Literature Review

There are no substantial studies that consider contemporary art production in Irian Jaya. Prior to 1995, when I first began my fieldwork for this thesis, most research on Irianese arts was already more than thirty years old and described the artistic practices of distinct tribal groups, usually in a taxonomic way that treats art works as material culture or artifacts. The focus of these studies was not on the art itself, but on the culture group and in this sense the treatment of artifacts was descriptive, with little analysis of motifs or meaning. These studies are generally in

Dutch and form part of larger research (and military) expeditions conducted by scientists and anthropologists working with the colonial government.[3] Later Dutch studies that treat the selected artistic regions of Irian Jaya include Galis (1955) on the Humboldt Bay area, Pouwer (1956) on the Mimika (or Kamoro), and Hoogerbrugge (1967) on Lake Sentani.[4] While knowledge of Dutch would have been enormously useful for surveying the existing art studies of the region, it was beyond my timeframe for this thesis. Both Hoogerbrugge and Galis provide short English summaries, which I found useful. Old English language monographs that describe individual art traditions include Simon Kooijman's work on Lake Sentani (1959) and the Kamoro/Mimika (1984), Theodoor P. van Baaren's study of Biak carving (1968) and the early expedition in 1903 by the Dutch Surgeon G.A.J. van der Sande to the Northwest Coast area near modern day Jayapura (van der Sande 1907). Arts of Irian Jaya have also been addressed as marginal areas of study in several publications on tribal art traditions of Indonesia, New Guinea, Melanesia, and Oceania (see Koojiman 1963, Taylor 1991, and Feldman 1994).

A recent book on the arts of the northwestern region of the province, entitled *Art of Northwest New Guinea: From Geelvink Bay, Humboldt Bay and Lake Sentani* (Greub 1992) provides lengthy English summations of some of the above significant early research by leading Dutch scholars of individual tribal regions (now rare out of print books). Several articles in this book discuss the way in which material culture objects from tribes in the region began to be collected by private Western collectors and colonial museums and the way in which the status of certain selected objects shifted from ethnographic artifact to 'art'.[5] While this book, published in 1992, was invaluable to my research, its historical focus reflects the dearth of literature in recent decades on the contemporary arts of Irian Jaya.

Beginning to fill this void, several articles have appeared in the last five years that deal with contemporary art production. Anthropologist Michael Howard has written several papers on individual art forms in Irian Jaya (Howard 1995, 1996a, 1996b, 1998a and 1998b), and has edited with Naffi Sanggenafa a volume of short applied anthropological studies, some of which address contemporary art production by the Anthropology Department of Cenderawasih University in

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[3] DeClerq (1893), and Van der Sande (1907) are important catalogues of art collected during early explorations in Western New Guinea, presented in a similar style to botanical or zoological specimen catalogues.

[4] I do not list here any of the sources on Asmat art because I do not focus on Asmat art in this thesis. Sources on Asmat art are more numerous due to the strong Western interest in Asmat arts. A good bibliography on Asmat art is available in Smidt (1993).

[5] This transition, and how some objects were appropriated into the Western category of art, is discussed further in Chapter Three.

Jayapura (Howard and Sanggenafa 1997). Jac. Hoogerbrugge, who worked for many years in the area both before and after the Indonesian takeover, has published a recent article about the state of barkcloth painting in the Jayapura region, which considers the effects of government sponsored art programs (Hoogerbrugge 1995). Kal Muller, author of numerous Indonesia travel guides, has written a few articles for the Garuda Airlines in-flight magazine, one about the annual Asmat art auction (Muller 1995) and one about the revival of Kamoro art and culture, which, it should be noted, is actually an advertisement paid for by the mining company Freeport Indonesia (Muller 1996). There have also been some brief articles published in Indonesian newspapers and magazines such as GATRA and an exhibition of contemporary barkcloth paintings from Lake Sentani sponsored by The Jakarta Post in 1992. A well-photographed major catalogue was produced in conjunction with this exhibition (Pratiknyo 1995), but the accuracy of the text is variable and not well regarded by local artists according to Agus Ongge. Notably, some artists and cultural leaders in Irian Jaya have been systematically collecting and documenting information about Irianese cultural traditions. Most of this data is in the form of unpublished papers, although these artists generally wish to publish their work.[6]

Two books that deal with comparable contemporary situations, in Indonesia and across the border in Papua New Guinea provided useful models for my work. *Fragile Traditions: Indonesian Art in Jeopardy* (Taylor 1994) presents a variety of viewpoints from collectors, museum officials, anthropologists and art historians on the effects of the international art market on tribal art traditions in several of Indonesia's outer islands. A few of these essays suggest measures to be taken to prevent the further breakdown of local artistic traditions and ways to limit the international trade in stolen Indonesian artifacts. Reading this book, it is surprising to find that there is no reference to Irian Jaya. *Contemporary Art in Papua New Guinea,* by Susan Cochrane (1997), provides fascinating comparisons for my research as it describes contemporary arts in the eastern half of the island. While transformations in art and society have taken place across New Guinea, they have not been uniform. Papua New Guinea (PNG) has been an independent democracy since 1975. The country has an open political process and a media free from government censorship (Dorney 1991). The National Art School in Port Moresby appears to have had a strong influence in the evolution of distinctly Melanesian contemporary artistic styles in PNG, which appear to be vibrant and self-conscious. These works often convey an awareness of both tradition and change as seen in Figures 1-1 and 1-2. Artists in PNG are also

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[6] In my experience, these artists were most willing to share their knowledge and copies of these unpublished papers with visiting scholars, see Ap 1982, Kapissa 1995, and Ongge 1994 and 1995.

able to present critical social commentary in their art in direct ways that are not open to Irianese artists, partly due to a lack of art training and because of the repressive political situation in Irian Jaya. While this thesis is not a comparative study of art in Irian Jaya and PNG, it is useful to note how art forms, the perceptions of artists and artistic content differ in these two politically discrete sides of the same island.[7]

Inspirational Frameworks

> 'Entering the modern world,' their distinct histories quickly vanish. Swept up in a destiny dominated by the capitalist West and by various technologically advanced socialisms, these suddenly 'backward' peoples no longer invent local futures. What is different about them remains tied to traditional pasts, inherited structures that either resist or yield to the new but cannot produce it (Clifford 1988:5).

Contrary to popular Western assumptions, such as this one contested by James Clifford in his book *The Predicament of Culture*, tribal and indigenous peoples have found ways to react to external influences on their lives, and are not passive victims who have simply allowed their culture to be destroyed. Examples closer to home, including First Nations peoples and artists in North America and Aboriginals in Australia, show that cultures and traditions rarely die, but they do transform. Conducting research for this thesis, I found my own Western assumptions challenged as I learned that none of the artists I met felt that their predecessors had simply given up their agency and traditions at the insistence of outsiders. Most claimed that peoples in their culture were either willing or saw their actions as temporary at best. Many claimed that there had been no break in the passing of traditional knowledge and that while decisions may have been made to follow Christian religions or to not produce art at certain times, many felt this was their choice. None saw their culture as 'vanishing'. In this thesis I attempt to expose and move beyond common stereotypes of tribal peoples and show ways in which Irianese artists in are attempting to take control of their futures.

The practice of writing a history of the art of non-Western cultures and collecting objects for presentation in public spaces such as museums and art galleries is a Western one now seen as

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[7] I have not yet had the opportunity to visit Papua New Guinea. It is surprisingly difficult for a foreign tourist to cross the border from Irian Jaya to PNG and can actually necessitate a flight out of Indonesia (to either Singapore or Australia) before then entering PNG. Lack of regular air transport, no clear local immigration procedures in either Irian Jaya or PNG and Visa control through Jakarta and Port Moresby (respectively) can make such a journey difficult.

having its origins in European imperialist practices from the late 18th Century through the early 20th Century. While a revised, non-racist and non-imperialist theoretical basis for a history of art of non-Western people has yet to be developed,[8] there is the possibility of borrowing from other disciplines such as anthropology, museum and cultural studies, which have been engaged longer than art history in this process of introspection.[9] The recent work of anthropologists and cultural historians such as James Clifford and Nicholas Thomas have shown how cultural exchange between colonizers and indigenous peoples has been a two way process in which each group asserts its identity in contrast to the other (see Clifford 1988 and Thomas 1991, 1999). Indigenous art and objects have been used by colonists in ways that represent the colonial culture as superior to the indigenous or "traditional" or "tribal" culture. The Western philosophy of a linear progression of human development or history from "tribal" or "traditional" societies to "modern" is now seen as exclusive and Western-biased.

Current cultural theorists consider the balance of power in colonial and cross-cultural relationships. Cultural expression and art are arenas in which indigenous peoples assert their aspirations and identity as other than colonized. While this study is more descriptive than theoretical, I found readings in post-colonial theory useful in challenging some of my own Western assumptions and shaping my analytical framework. Through post-colonial discourse, it is possible to consider how the various tribal arts and artists of Irian Jaya have been affected by ongoing shifts in political and economic power struggles brought about by colonialism, neo-colonialism, the project of nationalism and an emergent globalism. I argue here that changes in patronage, audience, motivation and the meaning and role of art can be more fully understood in relation to changes in the social, political and economic situations in Irian Jaya.[10]

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[8] Artist Rasheed Araeen (1991) for instance, believes the current Western appreciation of non-Western art as "ethnic arts", is an extension of the category of primitive art. Both categories and approaches he claims have similar connotations of marginalisation or non inclusion in the 'high' art world.

[9] Western art historical practice has been criticised for its ethno-centric tendencies and continued use of an old fashioned and imperialistic approach to classifying and writing about art. The reluctance of art historians to apply contemporary cultural theory to the subject of art has been viewed as an adherence to old-school conservative Euro-centric ideas and as a denial that issues of power and social context are applicable when studying art, particularly art that is non-Western. The discipline's tendency to treat art as a-theoretical and free from the responsibility of questioning dominant frameworks or self-reflexive analysis is only now under review. Art historian Keith Moxey proposes that art history, as other history, must be entwined with theory relevant to the historical period. He writes that "If art history is to take part in the processes of cultural transformation that characterise our society, then its historical narratives must come to terms with the most powerful and influential theories that currently determine how we conceive of ourselves and our relation to one another and how we conceive of cultural artifacts and their role in society. Art historical discourse, in other words, must become cognisant of the historical circumstances in which it currently finds itself" (Moxey 1994:24-25).

[10] These ideas will be explored in greater detail in Chapters Three, Four, Five and Six.

I first became aware of the inter-relationships and tensions between global, national and local interests in cultural expression in Irian Jaya in late 1995 after walking from Wamena in the central highlands in an attempt to reach Agats, the capital of the Asmat region.[11] Asmat people are renowned for their monumental woodcarvings called *bisj*, known in international circles as "masterpieces of primitive art." During my visit, I was disappointed to find no artists (and virtually no people at all except for elders and small children) present in any of the dozen or so villages that I stopped at along the remote upper Catalina River. The men and women of these villages had relocated temporarily into camps outside their villages and were engaged in logging supervised by the Indonesian military for multinational firms.[12]

My own assumptions and expectations based on Western academic sources about the "traditional arts" of the peoples of Irian Jaya were confronted and contested by the disturbing realities of daily life for these people. Accounts of Asmat art often tell of how the Asmat refer to themselves as "*As Asmat*" [sic] or "we, the tree people," (Konrad 1981:189) and include the central myth of *Fumeripitsj*, the Creator of Mankind:

> Fumeripits built the first ceremonial house (*yeu*) and created the first people in the form of wooden figures... Then he carved the first hour-glass shaped drum; as he played it he sang, and so woke the wooden figures to their human life. That is why every Asmat wood carver is believed to be continuing the work of Fumeripits (Kaufmann 1997: 250).

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[11] After the two weeks it took to walk over the central highlands, it was a relief to be able to rely on local river transport once we reached the Asmat villages on the upper Catalina River. From this point, we went by dugout canoe to Agats.

[12] After catching a ride on a motorised canoe one day, it became apparent that I was travelling down river with an army officer (from Serui on Yapen island) in plain clothes. Soon this man began shooting at birds at the river's edge. We stopped at several bivouac camps just long enough for the soldier to harass the Asmat about the quantity of logs they had prepared. He insisted that the men must work harder and that the logs must be tied together in rafts for transportation before the arrival of the logging company's tugboat. The Asmat men and women seemed intimidated, and they tried to placate the soldier with gifts of fruits, smoked fish and baby parrots (which he would raise and later sell to market merchants). He shouted at them in Indonesian, claiming that he had put himself on the line for them and that they had already taken advance payment of tobacco for which they owed more logs. The distribution of tobacco to Asmat villagers as a form of payment for providing logs to logging companies has been documented. The general procedure seems to be that the Asmat, many of whom are addicted to tobacco, are bribed, often by soldiers assisting the logging companies for a profit, to fell logs in the jungle with an advance gift of tobacco and the promise of a paid wage once they produce the logs. Disputes have arisen, however, when the Asmat subsequently learn that are expected to pay off the tobacco with logs, and as a result receive very little further payment, if any, for their work. The exploitation of Asmat loggers is documented throughout the *Asmat Sketch Books* (Volumes 1 – 8), produced by the Crosier missionaries, and in Mandibondibo, (1984:7). This situation for art production and the Asmat woodcarvers is rarely discussed in publications on art which prefer to focus on the pre-contact context.

Much of the scholarship on the arts of Irian Jaya has omitted significant aspects of contemporary circumstances for art production. Possibly this is because the authors at the time of writing perceived the history of art as apolitical or perhaps they were reflecting an uncontested superiority that privileged the West's "discovery" and appreciation of the arts of the region over the individuals, peoples and cultures who made them.

My experiences in Asmat were also in stark contrast to my early encounter with these peoples through the anthropological documentary film, "Asmat: A Case Study in Religion and Magic" (Coast Community College 1983). This film presented woodcarving as integral to headhunting and spiritual rituals in Asmat society prior to sustained contact with Europeans. It ends just after it introduces the agents of change, the Catholic missionaries who arrived in the late 1950s and the Indonesian government which followed in the early 1960s. Produced in 1983, this film, like much scholarship on the arts of Irian Jaya (and indigenous or tribal peoples in general), stopped short of exploring the effects of these intrusions on artistic practice.[13] What is suggested is that Asmat art and culture will not survive increased globalization or will be so completely changed that they will no longer be "authentic" and therefore not of interest.[14] My research challenges this widely held assumption.

My decision to discuss contemporary artistic processes in Irian Jaya from global, national and local perspectives was reinforced by the works of Arjun Appadurai (1990) and Danilyn Rutherford (1997), which consider the cultural implications of globalization and nationalism. While I do not desire to impose Appadurai's framework onto my study of Irianese arts, this thesis demonstrates his belief that "...the state plays an increasingly delicate role" (Appadurai 1990:16) in the mediation of global and local cultures.

Methodology

This thesis is informed by extensive field observations, analysis of the available literature, my exchanges with artists in Irian Jaya, ongoing ethical questioning and personal reflection. Interviews were conducted with local artists to better appreciate the varying influences, meanings and motivations for their art. It was evident to me during the course of my research that, at times, my interactions with artists had an impact on their prerogatives (and I have

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[13] I do appreciate, however, that the focus of this documentary is ritual practice, not development or cultural change.

[14] The Western notion of "authenticity" is raised further in Chapter Three and in the case studies in Chapters Four, Five and Six.

identified this effect in my case studies where possible). The choice of this particular topic is one that slowly unfolded over time and represents my own process of discovery as a foreign researcher suddenly immersed in a place that will always be, in many ways, foreign to me. I doubt that this topic would ever have presented itself as a possibility had I not already been travelling in Indonesia[15] since the existing literature on contemporary art in Irian Jaya is so limited. There is a narrative to my journey that is woven into my discussion. I do not intend my own voice to be one of authority, but rather to express my present understanding of the issues raised through my conversations with artists and patrons in Irian Jaya. It should also be pointed out that I have not been to Holland, where the largest and best collections of Irianese arts are held today. I do not, therefore, focus on qualitative comparisons between art made in a pre-contact sense and art made in a contemporary setting.

My research involved travelling to various communities in Irian Jaya, conducting interviews with local artists and members of the arts community in Irian Jaya to better appreciate the varying influences, meanings and motivations for contemporary art production, and photographing art works. This process was supported and inspired by Astri Wright, whose work on contemporary Indonesian art is based on first hand interviews and conversations with artists. I share her belief that

> ...artists are an important authority about a work of art – one which has often been ignored in the pages of art historical research. In attempting to understand the art of another culture, the inclusion of the artists is essential: like thought processes and behaviour patterns, aesthetic reactions and judgements are learned, and the artist's ideas and circumstances can give clues to perceptions and values surrounding art that would not be immediately apparent to an outsider from the artwork itself (Wright 1994:1).

The time frame of my field research spans a period of almost four years. Since I was unable to see all of Irian Jaya due to its size, my time constraints and the difficulties and expense of travel within the province,[16] I focussed my research on specific regions. I was able to visit

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[15] Unlike academic sources, the Periplus guidebook to Irian Jaya (Muller 1994) does provide leads to a few contemporary artists that furthered my interest in arts of this region. The displacement of the discourse on the art of Irian Jaya, from "primitive" art to tourist souvenir art, will be discussed further in Chapter Two and Three.

[16] Irian Jaya is the most expensive province in Indonesia for transportation (Manning and Rumbiak 1991), which is extremely difficult in many parts of the province outside of urban centres. The road infrastructure is extremely limited and the only viable alternative is to use expensive air networks (government or missionary aircraft) or extremely slow sea and river boats. Very few transport services in Irian Jaya are regular or reliable.

most of the areas renowned for their artistic traditions,[17] as well as some lesser known areas and met self-proclaimed and locally recognized artists in almost every place. I made an effort to see different regions of Irian Jaya to get a sense of the range of contemporary art production and concerns among various tribal groups. This confirmed my belief that many of the local artists were influenced by dynamics well beyond their immediate context (operating both within and beyond the nation) and that the nature of artistic production in these communities might usefully be considered across the whole of Irian Jaya (i.e. provincially).[18]

I selected four relatively accessible, yet distinct artistic groupings as the basis of case studies for my research. The regions are: Agats and Timika, towns in the southwest lowlands of Irian Jaya, where the multinational mining company Freeport McMoran has recently sponsored local art production; the northwest coast region, including Lake Sentani, near the provincial capital of Jayapura, where proximity to this rapidly expanding Indonesian urban center has strongly impacted artists' imperatives and artistic expression; Wamena, in the central highlands of Irian Jaya, where figural wood carving has recently begun among the local population in response to the tourist industry; and Biak Island, off the north coast of the mainland of Irian Jaya, with a long history of cultural and artistic resistance to foreign domination.

An overview of thesis chapters

Chapter Two provides a brief overview of the geographical, cultural and artistic background necessary to appreciate the research material in the case studies. The constraints of the natural environment, features in the evolution of the cultures and broad patterns in the artistic practices of Irianese communities are considered through a review of relevant sources available in English and Indonesian. Expanding on the brief literature review above, this chapter offers a

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[17] I visited many of the northwest coast villages within a day's travel by car or boat from Jayapura; Manokwari, Ransiki and the Anggi Lakes in the Bird's Head; the Asmat and Kamoro regions along the southwest coast; the Baliem Valley and the island of Biak (see Appendix A). Areas renowned for their artistic traditions that I was unable to visit include the Raja Ampat islands (where the art is similar to that from Ternate and Tidore in Maluku) and the Marind-Anim communities in the southeast near Merauke.

[18] In doing so, I do not intend to suggest that the arts or situations for art production in Irian Jaya are homogenous, since there is incredible diversity to be found in both. However, given the contemporary situation of Irian Jaya and the growing influences of foreign companies, foreigners and perhaps most strongly, the Indonesian government, I feel that some of the dominant issues surrounding the production of contemporary art can not be divorced from these broader influences. Different communities and individuals do react differently to these influences, however, and I do not intend for this thesis to undermine the difference and autonomy of local and individual responses.

chronological sketch of the development of art forms in Irian Jaya and of the importance of these arts to pre-contact[19] New Guinea societies.

Chapter Three elaborates on the global, national and local framework used in the thesis to facilitate an understanding of past and present influences on art production in Irian Jaya. These categories are not intended to be rigid or definitive, but do represent the perspectives from which different actors affecting art production in Irian Jaya operate. The first section considers the impact that foreigners, foreign institutions and growing global networks have on art and artists in Irian Jaya, from early colonizers and missionaries to foreign collectors, museums and the international tribal art market. Issues central to this global context include the effects of colonialism on cultural expression, the development of global and consumer culture, cultural tourism and cultural commodification. The second section expands on the past and present dominance of Dutch and then Indonesian national government institutions and policies directed towards indigenous tribal peoples in West New Guinea, including their forced integration into provincial and national political and cultural groupings. It explores ways that the appropriation and manipulation of culture has enabled the Indonesian State to create a provincial identity, strengthening national unity and affecting local cultural expression in Irian Jaya. The final section of this chapter discusses indigenous responses to local, national and global imperatives, and what initiatives local people have used (within their communities) to further their individual or collective cultural agendas.

Chapter Four explores the corporate patronage of tribal artists by a controversial transnational mining company operating in Irian Jaya. Freeport Indonesia operates the largest gold and copper mining complex in the world (Ballard 1997a) in the southern highlands of Irian Jaya near the town of Timika. The company's close links with the Indonesian State and its need to improve international and local perceptions of its practices in Irian Jaya, raise questions about the nature of its sponsorship. It assumes credit for a revival of wood carving among the local Kamoro communities and sponsorship of artists from the neighbouring Asmat tribal group. This case study considers the philanthropic role the company imagines for itself and the benefits and problems created by this for art production in the region.

Chapter Five moves from an emphasis on international connections in the historical record to a discussion of the role of national imperatives in shaping what is heralded as an art

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[19] 'Contact' in this sense refers to the impact of foreigners, and in the context of New Guinea has been most closely associated with the arrival of European explorers, missionaries and colonisers. Usage of this term, although widespread, is problematic as demonstrated in Chapters Two and Three because it is unlikely that even the most remote New Guinea tribal communities were isolated from contact from trade and interactions with outsiders.

revival among barkcloth artists in the Lake Sentani region, near Jayapura, the provincial capital of Irian Jaya (Howard 1996b; Howard 1998a; Hoogerbrugge 1995). Moving from the theme of patronage to a case study focussed on the appropriation of traditional motifs and technologies, the chapter explores relationships between indigenous artists and migrants from other parts of Indonesia, mediated through Indonesian State policies. As in the previous discussion of international corporate sponsorship, this chapter demonstrates a loss of control by local artists and communities over their cultures' artistic forms and traditional economic significance through cultural appropriation by larger, more politically powerful actors.

Chapter Six discusses the initiatives of two Irianese artists, one from Biak Island and the other from the central highlands of Irian Jaya, who are seeking to reassert local control of and authority in their cultural expression. The chapter demonstrates that far from being passive recipients of change, local peoples retain or develop techniques for engaging with and distancing themselves from, foreign intrusions. The fundamental importance of local agency is explored through these case studies which challenge the assumptions of both international and national actors about the sustainability and resilience of Irianese cultures. This chapter reinforces the idea that art must retain meaning among the people who produce it if it is to be able to continually transform in dynamic and creative ways.

The thesis concludes with a review of the case studies and their implications for an understanding of contemporary art in the region. Throughout the thesis I suggest the need to move beyond simplistic, dichotomous frameworks, which still characterize many of the discussions of Irianese arts. These arts can no longer be understood as "traditional or modern," "primitive or civilized," dispossessed or independent, and important questions are raised in the thesis about what constitutes authenticity among arts in transition.

A note on terminology

There are many terms used in this thesis that have been problematized elsewhere. For reasons of space and focus, I do not address them all in detail, but will explain my use of some of these terms here. One problematic term is "art" itself. In this thesis I use the term art to refer to the productions of all the central artists in this thesis. I do this because the artists themselves use the term art (or the Indonesian term *seni*) when referring to their work. At present, contemporary arts of non-Western countries that are still based on traditional forms are often relegated according to Western classifications to the category of 'craft'. The distinction between art and craft (often used to designate objects that were made by skilled hands for functional purposes) is

being debated on the grounds that "art" is a discriminatory category (Araeen 1991:159, Errington 1994:212-213).[20] While the original function of the objects I refer to as "art" in this thesis were not conceived with this Western category in mind, today most Irianese artists who carve to sell to foreigners accept this designation. Furthermore, since their works are now being collected and used for display (a traditional function of "art") in a western context, now adopted by establishment cultures in most post-colonial nations including Indonesia, I feel this term can be used. I also choose not to use the term "tourist art" since I feel that most artists do not consider their production as intended solely for purchase by tourists, and that this category has negative connotations which the artists themselves do not necessarily associate with pieces sold to tourists or foreigners.

Another term I use that has been disputed in some circles is "appropriation". Some scholars have refuted the idea of appropriation and claim that all art is derivative of ideas and forms of others. I use the term to refer to instances where art forms are used by members of communities other than the producing community for non-negotiated gain at the expense of the producing community. In this thesis I highlight situations where appropriation is seen as problematic by local peoples, when its effects are loss of income for local peoples and artists, or where there is external manipulation or loss of control of cultural expression.

Finally, the place name for the Western half of the island of New Guinea is also subject to debate. "Irian Jaya" has a complicated and hotly contested political history. Its very existence as a unified political entity made up of previously isolated or warring tribes is entirely due to the imaginings and interferences of outsiders. The written history of the region, as known to the West, begins in the early 16th century, when the sea-faring powers of Western Europe began exploring remote and uncharted regions of the world.

> In 1545 the Spanish seafarer Ortiz Retez, on his way to Panama, claimed the mainland and nearby islands in the name of his king and called the territory 'Nueva Guinea' (New Guinea) because of the population's supposed resemblance to the Guineans of Africa... (Osborne 1985:7).

In 1828, the Dutch claimed "Netherlands New Guinea," the Western half of the island and kept nominal control over the territory until the Japanese invasion in WWII. In 1945, the

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[20] Shelly Errington discusses the criteria by which ethnographic objects and the material culture objects of non-Western cultures have been appropriated in the Western canon of "Primitive Art" in her article, "What Became Authentic Primitive Art. The criteria includes: a preference for objects that have formal sculptural qualities, objects where the designs have iconic value that can be interpreted (and therefore are not merely patterned), objects made of precious or at the very least durable materials, and objects whose sole function is contemplative – to be looked at but not used in a functional sense" (see Errington 1994).

Dutch resumed control of Netherlands New Guinea, and retained this even after Indonesian Independence in 1949, although Indonesia entered negotiations with Holland over the future of the territory. During the 1950s, a growing international movement for de-colonization weakened the Dutch claim to West New Guinea, and Holland, not desiring their last colony to be integrated into Indonesia, began to prepare Netherlands New Guinea for independence. In 1962, Indonesia dropped paratroopers into Netherlands New Guinea, challenging the Dutch plans for the future of the territory. A settlement in 1963 was reached through the United Nations, which allowed for a referendum by the people of Irian Jaya to determine their future. At this time, the Indonesian government renamed the region "Irian Barat" (West Irian). In 1969, this referendum (known by the Indonesian acronym PEPERA or *Penentuan Pendapat Rakyat* – the "Act of Free Choice") went ahead, sponsored by the United Nations. While it was not well monitored and the resulted integration into Indonesia was very contentious (see Chapter Three), the referendum gave international recognition to Indonesia's claim to West New Guinea. In 1973, President Suharto renamed "Irian Barat" as "Irian Jaya," the 26th Province of the Republic of Indonesia (see Chapter Four).

The term "Irian Jaya" is very controversial, and is used to designate West New Guinea's current political locale as a province of Indonesia. In this thesis I use this term, but in doing so there is no intention to sanction the present lack of self-determination among its diverse long-standing communities. In order to maintain clarity, I will use the term "Irian Jaya" when referring to the period from the 1969 plebiscite to the present day, "Irian Barat" for the period from 1962 until the referendum in 1969, and "Netherlands New Guinea" or "West New Guinea" for the region prior to 1962. Due to the racial and cultural affinities with the peoples of the eastern half of the island, now the independent nation of Papua New Guinea, some politically minded indigenous inhabitants (and their supporters) prefer the place name *Papua Barat* or West Papua to Irian Jaya and *orang Papua* or *orang Papua Barat* for its inhabitants -- Papuans or West Papuans as opposed to *orang Irian* or Irianese.[21] Use of *Papua Barat* is not tolerated by the Indonesian government due to its separatist connotations. The term *orang Papua*, however, is

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[21] Indonesian is the lingua franca of the Irianese people, and was so even prior to the Indonesian takeover. Pasar Malay, the basis for the Indonesian language, was used by many of the coastal trading groups in their dealings with traders from other parts of the region prior to Dutch colonization. The Dutch maintained its usage as they brought many assistants from other islands in the Dutch East Indies to work in Netherlands New Guinea. In rural and remote areas, there are still some people who can't speak much Indonesian, though school in Irian Jaya is taught exclusively in Indonesian. In urban areas, Indonesian is invaluable as few people under the age of 40 can speak any Dutch. If the area were to become independent, many people indicated to me that use of Indonesian would likely continue to be the lingua franca, with English as an eventual possibility.

allowed as a racial distinction only when referring to the Papuan race and not as a political designation. It is rare that these terms are used publicly in Irian Jaya for fear of reprisal. Irian Jaya is internationally recognized as part of Indonesia, though this recognition is frequently criticized because of the dubious nature of the referendum and increasing awareness campaigns by non-government groups and human rights organizations.[22] I will use the terms Irianese, West Papuan, indigenous, local person, or the name of the specific tribe to distinguish the indigenous Irianese from other islands Indonesians.[23]

Finally, "*Irian*" is a Biak word meaning "hot or shimmering land," used to designate the whole of the mainland of New Guinea by Biak speakers for hundreds of years (Sharp 1994:xix). In the late 1950s, after years of frustrating negotiations with the Dutch over the future of West New Guinea, "Irian" was appropriated by Indonesian nationalists into "*Ikut Republik Indonesia Anti-Nederlands*" or "follow the Republic of Indonesia (in the anti-colonial struggle) against the Netherlands." This acronym helped to strengthen the Indonesian Government's domestic support for an aggressive position against the Netherlands over Irian Jaya's future, but it must be stressed that this is not the origin of the word.[24]

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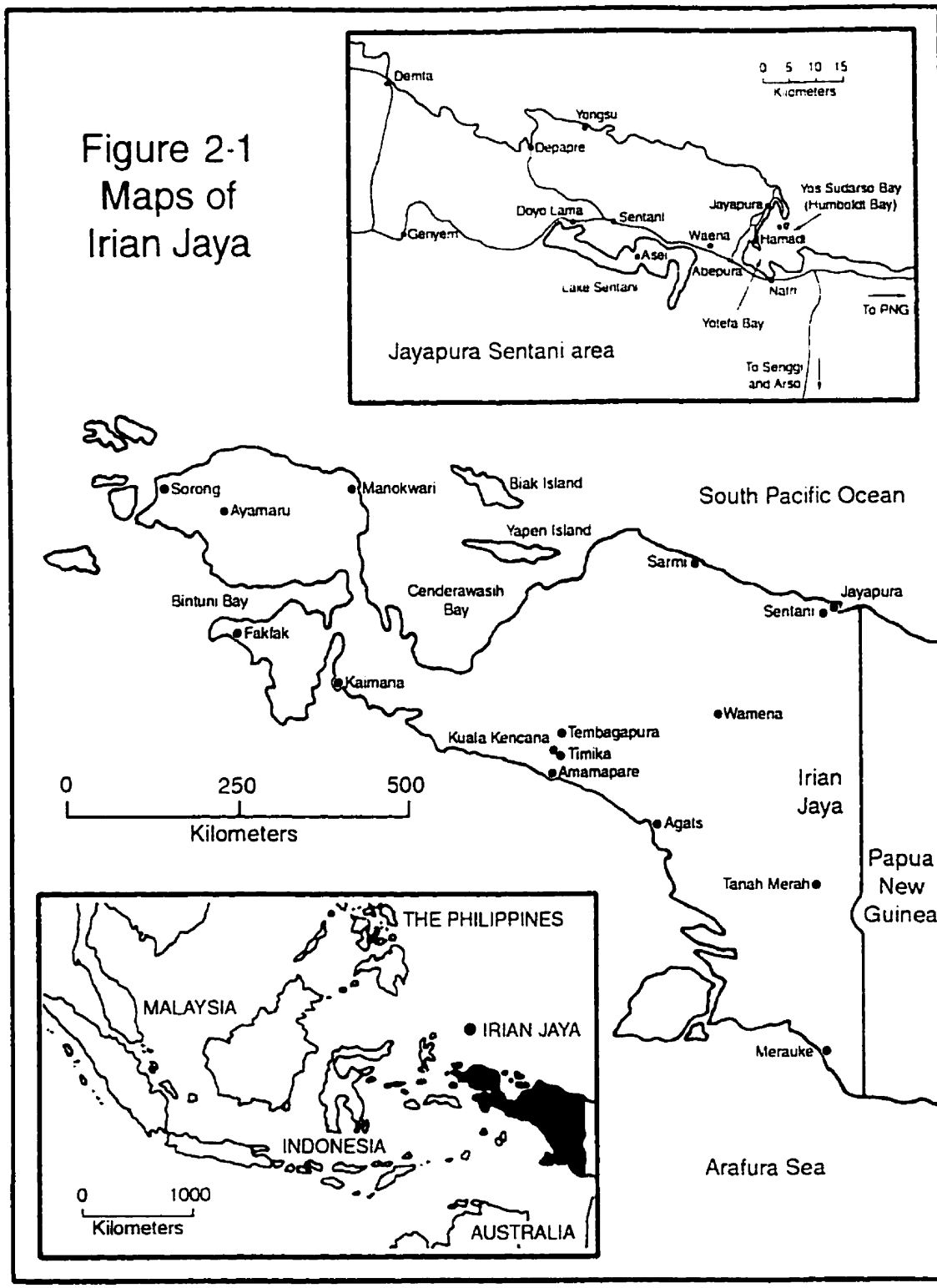
[22] Irian Jaya is not the only region within Indonesia with an active separatist movement. Separatist movements are also found among the people of Aceh in northern Sumatra, and the East Timorese. The international attention on the continuing struggle for independence amongst by indigenous peoples of East Timor,

[23] In Irian Jaya, the terms "*orang Irian*"(Irianese person) and "*putera / puteri daerah*" (son or daughter of the area), are confusing because while they are generally used to designate indigenous Irianese, they can also be used to refer to people of any cultural background born in the province of Irian Jaya. There are now two generations of migrants from other parts of the archipelago born in the province that are considered by government definition, "Irianese." The ambiguity in this terminology is confusing and it does occasionally serve to cover up inequalities in government statistics, and gives no indigenous rights to local populations. The term "*Orang asli Irian*" – an original or "born and bred" Irianese person is more likely to refer to an indigenous Irianese person.

[24] For further discussion of this terminology and the Referendum of 1969, see Budiardjo (1988) and Osborne (1985).

Figure 2-1
Maps of
Irian Jaya



CHAPTER TWO - BACKGROUND TO THE CULTURES AND ARTS OF IRIAN JAYA

Irian Jaya comprises the Western half of the mainland of New Guinea[25] and surrounding islands, and covers an area of 421,981 square kilometers, similar in size to California (see Figure 2-1 for a map of Irian Jaya and Indonesia). A few degrees south of the equator, its terrain ranges from coastal swamps to rugged interior mountains that run in an east-west cordillera through the middle of the island. These peaks represent the highest mountains between the Himalayas and the Andes and reach almost 5,000 meters in height. There is considerable climatic variation between the hot, tropical malarial coasts and the interior highlands where night temperatures can drop to below freezing and occasional frosts can destroy staple root crops.

In the broadest of terms, New Guinea was inhabited by populations with distinct cultural and linguistic characteristics. The oldest populations of New Guinea, collectively referred to as Papuan, have inhabited the region for more than 40,000 years (Thomas 1995:14). They are related to Aboriginal groups of Australia and became isolated in New Guinea when the land bridge of the ancient Sahul continent (at the end of the Pleistocene glacial period) was submerged. These peoples lived as hunter-gatherers and their cultures became well adapted to life in the tropical rainforests. It is known that these Papuan peoples developed agriculture by 9,000 years ago (at around the same time as agriculture was emerging in the Middle East). Agricultural production in the highlands of New Guinea was highly sophisticated, with complex drainage systems and domesticated root crops, sugar cane and (possibly) pig husbandry. The second linguistic and cultural grouping which entered New Guinea more than 3,500 years ago by sea brought with them maritime technologies, pottery (and associated tools) and shell ornamentation. These populations spoke Austronesian languages (a group of languages found in Indonesia and Southeast Asia) and settled predominantly in coastal areas.

Today Irian Jaya has more than 250 different language groups (and accordingly cultural groups, although the relationships between these has not yet been determined), which can be linguistically classified into four distinct phyla. Language phylum are made up of groups of languages that may share as little as five percent of the same vocabulary, giving some indication of the diversity of Irianese cultures (Muller 1994:27). The variety of these languages is clear

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[25] New Guinea, which spans 2,400 kilometres from its western to easternmost extremes, is just slightly larger than the island of Borneo. Irian Jaya and Kalimantan (northern Borneo) contain many of the tribal groups still living hunter-gatherer lifestyles in modern Indonesia. There are many important parallels between these two islands and a comparative study of contemporary indigenous arts in these two regions could be a useful future research project.

when compared to the languages of Europe, most of which belong to a single phylum. Many possible reasons exist for the enormous diversity of cultures across New Guinea. Environmental factors, such as Irian Jaya's rugged geography, its surging rivers, great mountain walls, vast swampy coastlines and tracts of dense inhospitable terrain have contributed to this isolation and diversity. So too have human factors, including endemic cycles of warfare, periodic fragmentation of ancient trade routes and widely varying political and cultural systems across the island(s).

The indigenous population of Irian Jaya today is approximately 1.6 million[26] and the size of tribal groups varies considerably. In the most marginal environments in Irian Jaya, groups may consist of fewer than 2,000 people. In the fertile highlands river valleys where communities practice intensive agriculture and pig husbandry and live in a (largely) malaria free environment, the natural environment supports much larger communities. There are more than 300,000 people[27] (Grimes 1996) living in and around the Baliem River Valley in the central highlands of Irian Jaya with population densities of up to 1,000 people per square kilometer (Muller 1994:17).

The documented history of Irian Jaya, like its many tribal groups, remains fragmented. Almost all literature on Irianese peoples has been written in the past 150 years by foreigners. Pre-contact New Guinea tribal groups had no codified histories and in many cases oral histories were not immediately accessible to foreign explorers or researchers. The exception to this was coastal villages with established trading networks, where the lingua franca in the recent past has been *Pasar Malayu* (or marketplace Malay). The Dutch maintained and encouraged its usage while it governed to region[28] and since the Indonesian take-over, this traditional lingua franca has been taught across Irian Jaya as Bahasa Indonesia (Indonesian language).[29]

Background to the Arts of Irian Jaya

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[26] SIL, The Summer Institute of Linguistics gives a 1995 population estimate for Irian Jaya of 1,641,000 (Grimes 1996).

[27] Karl Heider points out that these peoples who are commonly referred to as the Dani, do not refer to themselves by this name as they traditionally see themselves as belonging to smaller independent political units with very closely related languages. In this sense, Heider writes "there is no single Dani tribe or language or culture" (1979:29), but he goes on to say that the main cultural characteristics he describes apply to the many groups in the Grand Valley. The term Dani is still the one used to refer to this broader group of related peoples.

[28] This was expedient as many Dutch government officials and military were from other parts of the Indonesian archipelago (then the Dutch East Indies).

[29] While Bahasa Indonesia has been promoted in Indonesia as a distinct language, it is largely derived from this form of Malay.

Rock art sites - paintings or engravings on stone surfaces including cliffs, caves and boulders - are reported in at least twelve areas of Irian Jaya, in both coastal and highlands regions (Mead 1979). They are the oldest surviving art form in the region. Some are at least 200 years old [30] and the most ancient are estimated to be more than 25,000 years of age (Koentjaraningrat 1993:116). One of the most extensive complexes of rock paintings in Irian Jaya, is located on sea cliff faces in the MacCluer Gulf (presently known as Teluk Berau, on the north coast of the Fakfak peninsula), where thirty-six reported sites have been associated with ancient burial grounds. The dating for this rock art can only be approximated since insufficient archaeological work has been conducted in the area.[31]

The first rock art to be discovered on the island of New Guinea was that near the present day town of Fakfak. This encounter by explorers in 1678 predates the earliest discovery of rock art in Europe by two hundred years (Chaloupka 1994: 107). The significance of these rock art sites to the study of other arts in the region remains largely unexplored but they may prove useful in the future given that there are no extant artworks from Irian Jaya dating prior to the nineteenth century (Kaufmann 1997: 370). Some sites have several layers of motifs that include stencils of hands, arms, feet and other objects as well as drawings of birds, lizards, fish, boats, and human and anthropomorphic figures. Above the village of Doyo (now Doyo Lama), on the shore of Lake Sentani, there are dozens of petroglyphs engraved on large scattered boulders that depict fish, lizard and turtles as well as motifs believed to have been derived from bronze Dongson axe heads found in the area, that have been suggested to bear some relation to motifs found in the barkcloth paintings and woodcarvings of Sentani people.

The influence of the physical environment on art production in Irian Jaya was and continues to be significant. Where food was easier to obtain and prepare with fewer hours of work, larger scale woodcarving and architectural artistic practices often developed. Broadly speaking, Irian Jaya can be divided into three main types of geographical environments: the highlands, the interior lowlands and the coastal lowlands. In the highlands, there are few animals that can be hunted for meat and foraging is time consuming. To survive in this environment, ancient Papuans required agriculture and cultivated taro and yams, with the eventual adoption of the sweet potato as the staple crop. The husbandry of pigs is also characteristic of highland peoples, and these animals have both spiritual and dietary significance. Even though pigs

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[30] George Chaloupka (in Muller 1994) dates some of the more recent paintings from descriptions in the accounts of Nineteenth Century travellers and explorers in New Guinea.

[31] For more information about the archaeological investigations that have been carried out in Irian Jaya, see van Baal (1984), who lists the publications of J. Röder on the MacCluer Gulf rock art.

compete with these communities for food, they are only killed and eaten on ceremonial occasions. The pig is an important commodity in highlands culture and owning pigs is a sign of wealth and prestige.[32]

In the highlands, carving was a skill used in making practical and necessary tools. Generally these were simply carved and relatively unadorned. Referring to the carving of spears, stone axes and arrows, Karl Heider writes that:[33]

> Certainly the men achieve craftsmanship when they spend hours working on a spear, heating and bending it to make it straight, and polishing it smooth. Then they color it so that two-thirds of the shaft is black, and the blade, red; these two parts are set off with a broad braided lime-whitened band... Clearly there is non-utilitarian elaboration here, but it lies somewhere in that hazy area between art and craftsmanship... The hafted stone axes and adzes often have interesting forms, but they are very utilitarian. Arrow points are usually elaborately notched and barbed, but here elaboration is lethally utilitarian. However, below the bars there are frequently engraved zig zags, dots, circles, and wavy lines. Carrying nets [made by women] sometimes have added ornamentation. But few other artifacts have anything which even approaches art (Heider 1979:58).

While these comments illustrate a Western bias against utilitarian objects being accepted as 'art' (instead they are considered craft), ornamentation, even of functional objects, was certainly less elaborate in the highlands than in coastal regions and figural representations and carvings are rare. The exact reason for this remains unclear. One possible reason is that prior to adopting intensive agriculture, highlands peoples were hunter gatherers, with a lifestyle that required high mobility and a significant amount of time devoted to the daily collection of food. Perhaps it was not practical for a semi-nomadic people to have to carry around large unfinished carvings. In support of this hypothesis, Heider (1979:59) suggests that the songs of the highland Dani people (who are horticulturists) have been found to be closely related to those of hunters and gatherers. He suggests that "this remarkable finding strengthens the idea that perhaps the Dani are now still in transition from hunting and gathering to horticulture" (Heider 1979: 60).

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[32] For this reason, pig skulls are collected in many traditional houses across Irian Jaya. They provide a record of festivals, of past generosity and wealth. Pig tusks are often used as body ornamentation and motifs derived from pig tusks are common in New Guinea art. Traditionally many Irianese in both highlands and lowlands tribes would pierce their nasal septum and wear pig tusks, carved shell or bone through the nose.

[33] Heider also mentions a highlands cave with rock paintings of hand imprints, and geometric, bird, and crescent designs in red pigment (Heider 1979:59).

Christian Kaufmann, on the other hand, suggests that differences in the focus of ceremonial and spiritual life may account for the comparative lack of ornamentation of objects and developed carving traditions in the highlands. He proposes that:

> It may be because there has been a shift in focus in the ceremonial life of these societies from the mythic-sacred plane, with its emphasis on cosmology, to the social-profane level. As everyday social order occupies the foreground, aesthetic expression has become concentrated on self-representation by large patrilineal groups, through ceremonies revolving around exchanges and pigs and, at least in precolonial times through ceremonial warfare. This is no doubt a relatively recent evolution, which started some three hundred years ago, and which perhaps went hand in hand with the spread of sweet potatoes as a staple crop and the subsequent sharp increase in the population. (Kaufmann 1997: 382).

As a result, other arts apart from figural carving were more developed amongst the highlands peoples including singing, dancing, body ornamentation, ritualized warfare and many types of fiber work. Highlands communities have many traditional forms of weaving, which fulfill both utilitarian and ritual functions. They have developed techniques for making string from natural fibers which are woven into bags or *noken* and may be decorated with the fur of *cuscus* (tree kangaroo), or rabbits (introduced to the area), the bark of ground orchids, feathers, bone, shell or natural dyes. The Dani of the central highlands produce elaborately woven bark string skirts worn low on the hips by married women in this fashion, and weave red and/or yellow fibers (from ground orchids) into the skirt to striking effect. Other woven objects, such as cowrie shells bands, have a ritual role as family heirlooms and bride price wealth (reflecting the limited, but ancient, trading networks between highlands and coastal communities).

Carving traditions among coastal communities were generally more elaborate than their highlands counterparts. The warmer coastal environment, with fewer population pressures, more bountiful marine and land resources (particularly sago, coconut and banana palms and wildlife), and access to coastal trade routes, generally meant less time was required to provide adequate food and shelter. Carved wooden canoes provided the main mode of transportation in many coastal areas and were owned by all families. Many were embellished with ornamental carving; those used in warfare were generally more elaborately adorned than utilitarian canoes. Though coastal peoples often had more free time, they were, on the other hand, more vulnerable to the extremes of nature - including attacks by crocodiles, sharks, tropical storms, earthquakes, tidal waves, excruciating heat and tropical diseases such as malaria. For these reasons their carving often played an important role in ceremonial practices and rituals designed to placate spirits associated with such phenomena. The best known coastal art traditions in Irian Jaya are those of the Asmat, Mimika (Kamoro) and Biak.

Another possible distinction between highlands and coastal communities relevant to the production of figural art is the difference in leadership styles between highlands groups and coastal groups. Generally speaking, two broad categories of leadership can be discerned in New Guinea, the Big Man system which allows any man to achieve power through acts of generosity and charisma and the Chief who inherits power through lineage. The highlands communities fall into the Big Man category, while most coastal communities (particularly Austronesian speakers) fall into the latter. Heider explains that generally speaking, there is more social mobility in Big Man society, and therefore the society is more egalitarian (Heider 1979: 66). It is plausible to presume that figural carving traditions in societies where chiefs come to power by birth right developed to affirm the spiritual or historical links between the ruling lineage and the ancestors or divine (supernatural) forces.

The meaning of traditional art forms

The earliest attempt to provide a stylistic delineation of Irianese artistic traditions, was published in Dutch by Adrian Gerbrands in 1951. An English version, entitled "The Art of Irian Jaya: A Survey," was published in 1979. Gerbrands wrote that "up until the 1960s, little was known about the arts of the Western half of New Guinea. Some stylistic analysis had been done but we knew next to nothing about the cultural context in which the arts functioned" (Gerbrands 1979: 111). In 1999, this observation largely remains true. The original religious or ritual contexts of the traditional arts of Irian Jaya are extremely complex and still highly localized and our knowledge of them remains rudimentary.

Individual tribal groups had, and most still retain, different languages, cultures, and at least aspects of indigenous belief systems, and different forms and functions for their arts. In general, the arts of Irian Jaya fall within the category of Melanesian arts of Oceania, and even some classifications of Pacific arts.[34] Art was intricately linked with local spiritual worldviews; and it is therefore impossible to understand the traditional meanings removed from this context. Nicholas Thomas, in his 1995 survey of *Oceanic Art* writes:

> Oceanic art was and is created in cultural milieux that do not share Western premises about what art is, how it was produced or what its effects are. A carving that has human characteristics is not necessarily a 'representation' of a human being or an ancestor. It may be better understood as an embodiment of that ancestor, as one expression of that ancestor, or it may be a physical container

[34] For a detailed treatment of the classifications for Melanesian, Polynesian, Micronesian and Oceanic Arts, see Kaeppler (1997:515-613).

> that an ancestor can be induced to inhabit at certain times. On the other hand, designs that appear to be abstract to an outsider, may denote specific animals or mythological figures for local viewers (Thomas 1995:9).

In the course of my own fieldwork, I realized that even today extreme subtleties in the meaning of traditional art forms still exist, and while these are understood by many in the communities it would take a long time for a Westerner to gain a thorough understanding of them. It is possible that some of the subtleties can still be gathered with more in depth fieldwork. The current revival of traditionally based art forms in Irian Jaya today, even if commercially motivated has prompted many of the artists I met in Irian Jaya to begin documenting these traditions themselves, for fear that many of the subtleties could be lost one day. These artists, with their knowledge of local languages and their membership in the communities are in a much better position to uncover much of this information from village elders and the collective memory of the communities.

The diversity of the physical environment and cultural groups of Irian Jaya and New Guinea as a whole is among the most varied in the world. The arts communicated a great deal about local social and spiritual life, but it is extremely difficult to generalize about these and doing so risks obscuring cultural difference. Art was used in exchanges and in life marking ceremonies such as initiation into adulthood, marriage and death, often in combination with other art forms such as music, dance and oration. Some arts played an important role in maintaining relationships with ancestors, others in ritual warfare and in preserving balance with natural forces. Susan Meyn explains that,

> ... these works from Oceania hint of personal relationships; relationships between living and dead, between male and female, between people and environment.... Melanesian heritage, unlike ours, is oral and conveyed through songs or myths. ...In Melanesia it is impossible to separate art and ephemeral constructions from the natural, social, or supernatural environment (Meyn 1982:13).

Perhaps it is only to Westerners that these arts 'hint' at the complexity of relationships in New Guinea societies. To the peoples of New Guinea, who had no other visual system for encoding these relationships and local knowledge, as they used no written script, the motifs and meanings of visual forms may have communicated much of society's complexity. Contemporary Biak artist Micha Ronsumbre, who is featured in Chapter Six of this thesis, spoke for hours on end about the meaning of Biak art, and after interviewing him many times, he was never exhausted of new things to tell me. I explore some of these fundamental characteristics of Melanesian art further in the case studies in this thesis, as they have important implications for

the way sponsors and patrons of Irianese arts relate to both art and artist. In each of the case study chapters (Four, Five and Six), I provide further background on these traditional contexts for art production and meaning, but it is well beyond the scope of this thesis and my knowledge to provide a complete understanding of them.

Arts and the artist in traditional society

Artists in Melanesia were accorded special status for their artistic abilities. While all men made their own personal objects for daily use such as bows and arrows or canoes, generally speaking carving involving the use of ritual motifs was the responsibility of selected men descendant from a long line of carvers. Susan Meyn writes that

> Traditions are passed from one male to another. Although most men are craftsmen, recognized experts or masters are responsible for significant works. These "specialists" also lead a normal daily life, working in gardens or at other tasks. Taboos and rituals are observed before a piece such as a large sailing canoe is begun, to insure safety and success for both artist and user (Meyn 1982:13).

Chapter Six discusses specific taboos and rituals associated with canoe carving in the case study of Biak artist Micha Ronsumbre. While some taboos and rituals involved art production, others incorporated ownership of motifs, techniques and materials.

Abar village, on Lake Sentani, was once famous for its pottery, and pottery production was the exclusive right of women. (Figure 5-8 shows two pots and pottery motifs from the Humboldt Bay area near Sentani). The land at Abar has a type of clay that is perfectly suited to hand built pottery (personal communication, Pierre Petrequin). There were specific rules regarding ownership of clay and which women had rights to work with clay. Only women born in Abar had ownership rights to clay in Abar, and women who married outside the village lost their rights to clay, unless appropriate compensation was paid. Women marrying into the Abar community were permitted to do pottery, but had to be taught by one of their new (female) Abar relatives (see Solheim and Ap 1977). Another example of traditional restrictions on artistic practice was recounted by Tinus Melangsena of Babrongko village on the south shore of Lake Sentani. Tinus told that once his village had no carving rights. A strategic marriage was arranged with a coastal Tobati village, and appropriate compensation was paid for the bride who brought with her carving rights for Tinus's village. Today, Babrongko is renowned for its woodcarving (see Figure 2-2).

Traditional rights and ownership of arts in Irianese communities cannot always be reconciled to Western approaches to property. Often art was produced for the well-being of the entire community, and this would include the ancestors. For many of the artistic areas in Irian Jaya, there was at least some distinction between art produced in a sacred context and art produced in a more profane context. Traditional motifs could designate the clan affiliation of the person who owned an object and could not be used by members of other clans. Some motifs were reserved for specific purposes or rituals, while others could only be reproduced on objects commissioned by and made for the use of the chief or tribal leader or his family. For objects such as drums and household items belonging to common villagers, other motifs could be used. It would violate taboo in Lake Sentani, for example, if a common villager chose to have a canoe adorned with a motif reserved for the tribal chief or *ondoforo*, and heavy fines would be demanded in compensation.

Finally, women in Irianese cultures also produce some art, but their work has largely been ignored in the literature on art and has generally been accorded the status of craft. Women's mediums are usually in fiber – including net bags and string skirts and barkcloth or pottery (and therefore are seen as utilitarian objects, not art).[35] These objects, however, are often decorated, and more in-depth studies of arts made by women are needed.[36] In general, figural woodcarving and the production of art for use in ritual was the domain of men, but arts made by women were considered no less important as the gender roles of men and women were often conceived of in dualistic terms, both necessary and sustaining to the community.

These traditional contexts for art production did encompass a certain degree of exclusivity in terms of who could be entrusted with the sacred or special knowledge about producing carvings and objects that served proprietorial or ritual function. These elements of

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[35] In villages in the Baliem Valley and in the main town of Wamena, I attempted to speak with women about their *noken*. I found no women who were willing to discuss their *noken* with me. I noticed in the Wamena market, where women sell vegetables, that some will also sell *noken* to tourists. In general these *noken* were less intricately decorated than the *noken* the women wore themselves. Once, when I inquired about the possibility of purchasing a very finely decorated *noken* that was not being offered for sale, the woman who owned it was firm that she did not want to sell the *noken* because it was her best work and she was keeping it for herself.

[36] While I would have liked to have included more art by women in this thesis, I found that women, in general, were extremely reserved around foreigners. Today, the Batik Irian factory employs Irianese women to do batik work, but most contemporary art for sale is produced by men. In Kayu Batu, a village now encompassed within the city of Jayapura, I attempted to meet elderly women artists who were said to still be making pots in the traditional style. I found that there was only one woman still alive who could produce the pots but her health had deteriorated to the point that she was no longer producing pots and was unable to speak with me. A younger male relative by the name of Robert Obei had been trained by her to carry on potting. Robert explained to me that he was carrying on with producing pots because it would be a means of earning an income for him.

Irianese art and the effect of foreign intrusions into Irianese communities, are discussed further in the case studies.

CHAPTER 3: SITUATING IRIANESE ARTS AND CULTURES IN GLOBAL, NATIONAL AND LOCAL CONTEXTS

> The globalization of culture is not the same as its homogenization, but globalization involves the use of a variety of instruments of homogenization... which are absorbed into local political and cultural economies, only to be repatriated as heterogeneous dialogues on national sovereignty, free enterprise and fundamentalism in which the state plays an increasingly delicate role... (Appadurai 1990: 16).

This chapter establishes the framework within which I examine contemporary art production in Irian Jaya. It presents a history of how global, national and local interests have collided, collaborated and contested with one another over the control of art production and cultural expression in the region. I illustrate these points with observations I made in the field and in the literature on Irian Jaya. With expanded possibilities for communication, travel, and the circulation of objects and ideas in the late twentieth century, it is necessary to understand contemporary art and culture as influenced by global, national and local inter-relationships. These three levels are not mutually exclusive, they "overlap and interpenetrate" (Thomas 1994: 8) with one another in ways that create the unique contemporary situation in Irian Jaya. In this chapter I will introduce the global, national and local levels sequentially in order to understand the background and context of each more fully. It will then be possible to better appreciate their interactions in the case studies presented in Chapters Four, Five and Six.

IRIANESE ARTS DRAWN INTO A GLOBAL FRAMEWORK

> It is no mean feat to transport 30-foot carved poles from Irian Jaya to New York, and it requires a collector or museum both wealthy and determined enough to do it (Errington 1994:202).

When seafaring foreigners reached the shores of New Guinea they set into motion a flow of objects and cultural exchange with the coastal peoples. Asian traders came to New Guinea in search of native products. They found bird of paradise and their magnificent feathers, massoi bark (an aromatic bark), *beche-de-mer* (also known as trepang - a kind of edible sea slug), and Papuan slaves,[37] which they simply took or traded for goods such as iron, cloth, beads and

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[37] There was no known trade in artifacts by Asian traders. The interest in Irianese artifacts began with the arrival of Europeans in the region. One of the first commodities of Irian Jaya to be exploited by Europeans were exotic feathers of birds of paradise used in fashionable hats (Swadling 1996).

porcelain (Osborne 1985: 5-6).[38] The first recorded visitors to New Guinea were Srivijaya merchants from Southern Sumatra who arrived in the Seventh Century. The Sumatran King of Srivijaya is said to have bestowed upon the Emperor of China gifts that included some "Seng-k'i girls," thought to refer to a race of dark skinned and frizzy haired people believed to be from New Guinea. "Fuzzy-haired" men and women are depicted on the reliefs of the eighth-century Javanese monument of Borobudur. (Souter 1963: 17) The Nagara-Kertagama, a Javanese poem of 1365 A.D., mentions two New Guinea territories (Onin and Seran, on the southwest side of the "Bird's Head") as belonging to the Indonesian kingdom of Majapahit, though the extent of this control is disputed and generally believed to have been negligible.

The relationship between Papuans and the outside world began to change as European sea powers explored the Pacific Ocean. The Portuguese were the first Europeans to reach the island of New Guinea when navigating the Pacific in search of spices that were being imported into Europe via the Middle East (Osborne 1985: 7). European colonialism would have a far greater impact on the lives of most Papuans than regional trade. Robin Osborne writes that

> Unlike the Asian traders, the Europeans wanted not the produce of New Guinea, nor its strongest males and loveliest maidens. They sought permanent footholds ashore, settlements from which they could control the sea-lanes of the Spice Islands (Osborne 1985: 7).[39]

In West New Guinea, the Dutch took advantage of Asian traders to act as intermediaries with the local people and they continued the use of the trading lingua franca, *Pasar Malayu* (marketplace Malay). From 1660 to 1905, the Dutch ratified a series of treaties that enabled the Sultanate of Tidore to administer West New Guinea on their behalf, as the territory was perceived to have limited resources, but high strategic value (Swadling 1996: 16). In this way, the Dutch

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[38] Pamela Swadling claims that the "Natural resources peculiar to New Guinea and nearby islands have provided attractive trade items for distant markets for at least 5,000 years" (1996: 15). Archaeological remnants of this exchange, include approximately a dozen prehistoric Dong-son bronze axe heads and a fragment from a bronze kettledrum that have been found in the Bird's Head and Lake Sentani regions of Irian Jaya respectively These bronze artifacts have been determined to be over 2,000 years of age, ranging up until approximately AD 250. Swadling claims that the dates of these artifacts coincides with the first trade boom in New Guinea that lasted up until AD 300, when Asians are known to have sought bird of paradise plumes. Some of these ancient bronzes were unearthed "by villagers in places where sacred objects used to be buried, other were held as heirlooms in men's houses" (Swadling 1996: 205).

[39] It is frequently written that the Asian parties came in search of trade only, with no interest in capturing territory or settling in the area. It is possible, however, that the motives behind these emissaries and trading parties were never documented. The Spanish explorer, Luiz Vaez de Torres, who voyaged along the South coast of New Guinea in 1607, observed some Islamic traders trying to convert Papuans to Islam by force. In one of his letters, he writes that "At the termination of this land, we found Mahometans [sic] who were clothed with artillery for service, such as falconets and swivel guns and arquebuses. They go conquering the people who are called Papuans and preach to them the sect of Mahomet" (quoted in Osborne 1995: 6).

held West New Guinea as a buffer zone against British and German imperial interests (active in the eastern half of the island) to protect the more economically important part of their East Indies colony. Dutch interest in the resources of its New Guinea holding took some time to develop as many of the resources were only discovered with more extensive explorations, and were difficult or costly to extract, such as oil, gold and copper. Even by 1938, the Dutch administrative presence in Western New Guinea was limited to a collection of coastal villages and many coastal and highlands areas had not been contacted.

During the Second World War, Japanese forces seized control of the Dutch East Indies including Netherlands New Guinea. The Japanese, who arrived initially as "liberators," quickly established a reputation for themselves among New Guinea peoples as being more brutal than the Dutch, and this seemed to engender greater tolerance of Dutch rule after WWII (Osborne 1985:13). In 1944, General Douglas MacArthur defeated Japanese forces to establish the Allied Headquarters, Southwest Pacific Region in Netherlands New Guinea, and Hollandia (present day Jayapura) was transformed into a huge Allied base of operations with over 250,000 men (Muller 1994:44). With the Japanese surrender in 1945, the Dutch regained temporary control of West New Guinea, but the War and events which followed it, had made their early visions of its tribal peoples passé, while post-War demands for decolonization made their aspirations for the future of Netherlands New Guinea impossible.

Plundering Culture: European Explorers, Colonizers and the Early Collecting Of Arts

> For those who yearned after the obscure, and its promise of wonders, New Guinea was the world's last great hope. Earlier in the nineteenth century these yearners - eccentrics and romantics, adventurers and confidence men, collectors and prospectors; the froth, as it were, on the heavy ale of colonialism - had had plenty of room to play in, but by 1875 their world had contracted greatly. Because New Guinea dominated this dwindling world, its history is perhaps frothier than that of any other frontier land (Souter 1963: 9).

Early explorers' fascination with New Guinea did not generally extend to indigenous artifacts or art objects. Initially, these objects were considered to have little aesthetic or artistic value by the Europeans who encountered them though there was the odd explorer who sought artifacts as souvenirs. An example was the Italian naturalist, Luigi d'Albertis, an eccentric who explored both east and west New Guinea in the 1870s (Souter 1963). He came not as a representative of any European power, but as an individual on a quest for adventure. His bold and aggressive approach to exploration characterizes one extreme in the early relations between

Europeans and Papuans. He "harassed the local people of the Fly, shooting off fireworks and stealing artifacts" (Muller 1994: 37).

Other European explorers and colonizers were more measured in their interactions with local people. Many of the earliest objects acquired by foreigners from New Guinea were obtained through trade. Trading was often used by explorers and early colonial officials as a peaceful introduction to local people and the items acquire by these Europeans were generally not in popular demand before the early twentieth century. While in some areas the locals were repeatedly and reputedly hostile to outsiders, generally after often tense initial encounters, many Papuans were enthusiastic to exchange some of their locally produced objects. The Papuans' taste for Asian trade goods continued even after the arrival of early Europeans. Dirk Smidt describes early European collecting practices at the turn of the Twentieth Century as follows

> Though the Papuans sometimes displayed hostility toward the collectors at first contact, the encounters were mostly characterized as peaceful. The Papuans traded ethnographical objects for Western goods that were a particular source of temptation to them. Certain items, such as beads, Chinese porcelain and iron had already entered the local trade system as a result of early contact with traders from Tidore... and Spanish, Portuguese, English and Dutch navigators; at the turn of the century, desirable goods included hatchets, bush knives, axes, fishhooks, mirrors, tobacco, iron bars, silver coins (which were melted down and fashioned into bracelets and other jewelry, copper wire (used for arrow and spearheads), razor blades, textiles (including worn clothes), empty bottles, possibly also gin, guns, gunpowder, lead, and even clockwork toys, penny whistles and mouth organs (Dirk Smidt 1992:195).

Many of the objects collected by the Dutch colonial administration were subsequently donated to national museums, like the National Museum of Ethnology in Leiden, opened in 1837,[40] or the Koloniaal Museum which was founded in Haarlem in 1871.[41] The Leiden museum's role, according to its first director von Siebold, was "...to foster understanding of non-European man, woman and culture;" and, more pragmatically Von Siebold claimed in 1837 that the museum "will be particularly useful if missionaries, civil servants and officers, merchants and seamen visit it and prepare themselves there, before undertaking shipping and trade with foreign countries" (quoted in Smidt 1992:203). According to David van Duuren, Curator of the Oceanic Collection of the Tropenmuseum, Amsterdam, the Koloniaal Museum was initially assembled from collections of curios from Holland's colonies that had been assembled by private collectors

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[40] According to curator Dirk Smidt, the Oceanic Collection at the Museum of Leiden contains about 7,600 objects from New Guinea's northwest coast alone (Smidt 1992: 193).

[41] The name of the Koloniaal Museum was changed following decolonisation to the Tropenmuseum, or Museum of the Tropics, and is located in Amsterdam.

in the 17th and 18th centuries and displayed as *Wunderkammers*, cabinets of wonder or curiosities (1993:209). For 52 years, the museum was sponsored by the colonial office. Ethnographic objects were placed in the crafts department so that they might serve as models for the production and manufacture of crafts in Holland. These early colonial collections and records were substantial, but there was little interest in the iconographical meaning of the objects in local culture. Many of these important early collectors were in the colonial administration in other roles, and collected objects in their spare time.[42] No in-depth studies of the meaning of these objects were sponsored by the colonial administration, though they were generally well described, engraved, or in later years photographed.

In the late nineteenth century, artifacts were not really valued as objects worthy of study in and of themselves, but often served to illustrate expedition reports and early ethnographical and anthropological studies. Tribal objects were considered curiosities that exemplified the strangeness and "Otherness" of the colonized peoples. Objects were not perceived to have aesthetic value but rather a sort of sublime grotesqueness that could astound and horrify. Conversely, these cultures were also often exoticized and romanticized. Cultural artifacts were appropriated by the Dutch as symbols of colonial conquest, and formed part of the tribute or possessions of the imperial nation that afforded a glimpse of the far flung empire to the masses who remained at home. Yet because of these early collections, examples of art forms no longer produced in Irian Jaya have been preserved and these create visual templates (see Figure 6-12) which can be used to reconstruct artistic styles and some artistic practices (as discussed in Chapter Five).

Secularizing Culture: Missionaries – From Burning Idols to Sponsoring Arts

> "In these days," wrote the Rev. Samuel McFarlane, who first visited New Guinea in 1871, "when so many have done what not many years ago was known as 'the grand tour': when alligator shooting on the Nile, lion hunting in Nubia, or tiger potting in India can be arranged by contract with Cook's tickets; when the Holy Land, Mecca or Khiva are all accessible to tourists; when every mountain in the Alps has been scaled, and even the Himalayas made the scene of mountaineering triumphs; when shooting buffaloes in the Rockies is almost as common as potting grouse on the moors, - it comes with a sense of relief to visit a country really new, about which little is known, a country of bona fide cannibals and genuine

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[42] Important early collectors included participants of early expeditions of scientific organizations such as G.A.J. van der Sande, H.A. Lorentz, and L.F. de Beaufort; Dutch civil servants who joined government explorations and scientific expeditions including F.C. de Clerq; and members of the Dutch military, such as A.J. Gooszen (Smidt 1992: 194).

> savages, where the missionary and explorer truly carries his life in his hand" (Souter 1963:4).

The first (Protestant) missionaries arrived in Netherlands New Guinea in 1855. By 1935 over 50,000 Papuans were claimed to be Protestant. Catholic missions, generally in the southern coastal regions, estimated their converts at 7,100 in 1933 (Garnaut and Manning 1974: 10).[43] In many regions of West New Guinea, early missionaries worked among local communities for years prior to the arrival of colonial administrators. It was the missionaries who carried out the majority of the early administrative duties, especially in education and health care. Mission teachings, supported by the colonial administration, also sought an end to intertribal warfare, ritualized headhunting and cannibalism. During the process of conversion to Christianity, woodcarving was largely banned by missionaries, because of its embedded role in indigenous animist belief systems, ancestor worship and warfare.

Some academics and postcolonial theorists now see this breakdown of indigenous social and power structures as an integral part of the imperial subjugation of colonized peoples (Thomas 1994). Missionaries played an important role in reorienting the traditional values and practices of the indigenous peoples to those compatible with colonial rule. The removal or destruction of sacred, culturally significant objects and the associated beliefs and rituals that made up the local worldview, created a vacuum in local communities to be replaced by European trade goods, imported religion and the colonial administration. The relationship between colonization and missionization has recently been discussed by Thomas (1991, 1994).

The handing over of spiritually significant objects was also promoted abroad by missionaries as evidence that they were winning the fight for Christianity (see Figure 3-1, "Burning idols" in Thomas 1991:155) Dirk Smidt suggests the pragmatic uses some missionaries found for these artifacts:

> In Holland, the objects collected by the Protestant Mission were sometimes used in exhibitions aimed at obtaining support for its missionary work... In New Guinea, itself, sales of objects were organized as part of missionary manifestations... Sometimes, complete canoes were brought in for a sale or for a raffle on behalf of the evangelization fund (Smidt 1992: 195).

Most of the accounts of such artifacts being surrendered by local peoples come from late Nineteenth and early-mid Twentieth Century mission records. The destruction of culturally and

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[43] In general, Protestant missionaries have been most active along the north coast of Irian Jaya while Catholic missionaries have established in some parts of the highlands and along the south coast.

spiritually significant artifacts had not ended by the 1950s, but it appeared that missionaries intent on such practices were maintaining a lower profile.

In 1998, during the course of my fieldwork, I was shown a dozen carved wooden palm wine spoons said to have been rescued from a fire which had been started by local people at the behest of newly arrived Bethel church (*Gereja Bethel*) missionaries in the Ayamaru Lakes[44] region of Irian Jaya (see Figure 3-2). The twelve spoons were rescued from the fire by an art dealer based in Jayapura and were now in his art shop to be offered for sale to tourists or art collectors.

The people of the Ayamaru area were apparently still practicing their traditional animist religion prior to the arrival of Indonesian Bethel missionaries. The Bethel Church is one of the stricter Protestant churches (Pentacostal) and it prohibits the consumption of alcohol. Apparently the missionaries had suggested that the people turn in all of their ritual items used for drinking alcoholic palm wine, as well as those associated with 'ancestor worship', including some large carved wooden ancestral bowls and platters (objects that were heirlooms to the people). The art dealer also acquired several carved abalone shell bracelets from the local people that were traditionally used for *mas kawin* or bride price. While it is no longer the norm, it seems both remarkable and shocking that some missionary groups in the field still persist in such practices that are now strongly criticized by scholars and many missionaries who see this heavy handed technique as outdated and unreasonable.

Different missions and missionaries continue to use a wide variety of techniques bring their religious message to Irian Jaya's tribal and urban communities. By contrast to the story of the Ayamaru people, the Asmat people of the southwest coastal and river systems, have had a very different experience with the Roman Catholic Crosier missionaries than the people in the Ayamaru area have had with the Bethel missionaries. With the help of the Crosier missionaries, Asmat art was revived in the late 1960s and early 1970s and continues to play an important cultural role for the Asmat people, even though this has changed in many ways. The successful

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[44] Ayamaru is a remote location in the interior of the Bird's Head region, inland from Sorong. I should add that I have not been to Ayamaru myself and have been unable to corroborate this story. This information was provided by Nico Tanto (who owns an Art Shop in Jayapura) on April of 1998. Nico Tanto has a prominent role in Irianese art, as he is both a shop owner and employee of the Museum Loka Budaya in Jayapura. Unlike most art traders in Irian Jaya, Pak Nico searches for quality art pieces, focussing on arts of the northwest coast region around Jayapura. Pak Nico explained to me that in January of 1998 he went on a very disappointing buying trip to the Sorong area. He spent a considerable amount of money on this trip, and came back, in his estimation, virtually empty handed when he compared it with previous trips he has made to the region. One of the main reasons for his lack of success in buying art works in January was the arrival of the church and the destruction of ethnographic and religious objects of interest to foreign (and some domestic) buyers.

revival of Asmat art has become heralded as an inspirational and appropriate model for the revival of art in other areas of the province.[45]

The Popularizing of Asmat Art and Dutch-Indonesian transitional art programs (FUNDWI)

The first foreigners to establish themselves in the Asmat area were Catholic missionaries in 1953, who began setting up schools and clinics.[46] Proselytizing began in earnest, and tobacco was "liberally used by missionaries as both payment and a kind of modest bribe" (Wassing 1993: 28-9). Despite the ban on headhunting, woodcarving (traditionally associated with headhunting and ancestor worship) flourished as collectors from around the world and several European museums (particularly those in Holland) began dispatching people into the field to snatch up as much "authentic" Asmat material as they could find. Jac Hoogerbrugge explains that

> By "genuine," I mean items that were both traditional in design and had been used. This collecting caused great upheaval among the woodcarvers, who were suddenly confronted with a hitherto unknown demand from outside. Thus, they set out enthusiastically to produce new objects which, to their great dismay, they soon found out were not in demand. Because they were new, they lacked the patina of age sought by the museum representatives (Hoogerbrugge 1993:149).

In the early 1960s, Adrian A. Gerbrands of the Rijksmuseum in Leiden did eight months of fieldwork for his famous study of Asmat artists in the village of Amanamkai in 1960-61, and commissioned many new carvings from local artists.[47] The world's attention turned to the Asmat region when youngest son of New York governor and billionaire, Michael Rockefeller, died there

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[45] Asmat art is the best documented art in Irian Jaya today, and several publications have included sections on contemporary woodcarving. Because my trip to Asmat (as described in Chapter One) yielded no first hand interviews with artists, and because so much material exists on Asmat art, it is not a focus of this thesis. For more information, see Smidt 1993; and Konrad 1981.

[46] Historically, the Asmat were not frequently visited by foreigners since they had developed an early reputation of reacting aggressively towards newcomers. Captain Cook visited Asmat in 1770 and was attacked as he and his crew turned to retreat to their boat after deciding that the Asmat were not interested in meeting on peaceful terms. In 1902 an administrative post was established at Merauke, from where Dutch officers would make occasional forays into Asmat territory. During the first two decades of the 1900s, some carvings were taken out of Asmat, which incited some interest in Europe that led to the collecting expeditions of ethnologist Paul Wirz in 1922, and Lord Moyne in 1935 (Schneebaum 1990: 17-18). It was not until 1939 that the first Dutch administration post was established in Agats. Soon after, the Dutch abandoned Agats when the Japanese Imperial army arrived on the southwest coast during WWII. The Dutch government re-established itself in the area in 1954.

[47] Gerbrands' study which was published in English as *Wow-Ipits: Eight Asmat Woodcarvers of New Guinea,* in 1967 disputes the myth of the anonymous tribal artist and presents the individual styles of eight Amanamkai artists.

while on a collecting trip for the New York Museum of Primitive Art in 1961.[48] After the 1962 transfer of Netherlands New Guinea to Indonesia, the Indonesian government in an effort to stop all warfare and headhunting banned most Asmat ceremonies, drumming and dancing and destroyed many *yeu* or traditional men's houses. Old ceremonial carvings were also destroyed and only a few utilitarian items such as canoe paddles were still permitted to be carved.

During this period, the Crosier Missionaries encouraged Asmat artists to continue to carve, and they collected as much art as they could.[49] The Crosier missionaries were inspired by the Papal teachings of Vatican II, which outlined that indigenous cultures should be allowed to maintain their cultural identity, defined as separate from spiritual or religious identity.[50] The Crosiers designed their churches to incorporate traditional Asmat style carvings and priests gave mass while wearing parts of the traditional regalia of the Asmat—including cuscus (tree kangaroo) fur headbands, bird plumes. Asmat song and dance was encouraged in church, as was the use of the local language.[51] Over time, despite the Government's ban, some traditional feasts and ceremonies continued but these were recontextualized and Biblical adaptations provided and explained, while others - specifically those with direct relation to headhunting practices - were banned or replaced with something deemed more suitable.[52]

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[48] The most up to date and substantial analysis of the various theories surrounding the death of Michael Rockefeller can be found in Toohey (1997).

[49] Tobias Schneebaum suggests that foreign researchers such as the medical researcher Carleton Gajdusek, expressed strong criticism of early Crosier Missionaries and that this may have prompted the Crosiers to reevaluate their approach. Schneebaum stated "During Gajdusek's first patrol in Asmat, he was not impressed by the Crosiers he met. He later wrote his opinion in his West New Guinea journal of that year. The Crosiers read his entry, took his comments to heart, and committed themselves to courses and degrees in anthropology and sociology for all missionaries who followed. Subsequently, the Crosiers began compiling important studies of Asmat culture, which were published in their own journal, *An Asmat Sketch Book* (Schneebaum 1990: 22).

[50] A similar perception of culture as secular was promoted by the Indonesian government, and will be discussed further in Chapter Five.

[51] In 1961, Vatican II was issued. "To the world religions it spoke of the church's admiration of the spiritual values that had been preserved in those traditions that did not know the name of Christ. And to all people, believers and unbelievers, the council expressed its respect for the integrity and freedom of humanity and its repudiation of coercion as a means for bringing people to faith." This also involved "...encouraging the use of the vernacular in the liturgy and greater lay participation everywhere" (Encyclopedia Britannica 1999). At this time, it also became compulsory for Crosier missionaries to have anthropological training.

[52] "When headhunting is unsuccessful and heads are scarce, a wooden head has been carved to serve the same symbolic purpose; and with the advent of missionaries, coconuts have replaced in displays, rituals, and ceremonies the head, which originally had symbolised the coconut or sago nut, metaphorically assuming the fertility endowed in these seeds" (Gajdusek in Schneebaum 1990: 78).

Further inspired by Vatican II, the Crosiers decided to make socio-economic development a part of their missionary vocation and to support the United Nations programs in Irian Jaya.[53] In 1968 a new United Nations Development Program aimed at developing sustainable industry development in West Irian was initiated in conjunction with the Department of Small-Scale Industries (*Departmen Perindustrian)*. One project, known as the Asmat Art Project (1968-74), sought to develop art for export. As part of this work, the Asmat Art Project joined with the Crosier Mission in Agats to establish the Asmat Museum of Culture and Progress, which was officially opened on August 17, 1973 (see Figure 3-3).[54]

The Museum was intended to become a repository of Asmat traditional and contemporary carvings and has sought to stimulate carving among the Asmat people through an annual carving competition and auction. To build its collection, the Museum keeps the winning pieces in each of the many carving categories, while the rest are auctioned off. The auction has provided an incentive for carvers to try to improve their carving and to be creative. The auction format has since been adopted by Freeport for its Kamoro-Sempan auction in 1998 (see Chapter Four), and most recently in Jayapura at a 1998 barkcloth auction (*Pameran Kulit Kayu 1998* discussed in Chapter Five).

The FUNDWI program (Fund for the United Nations Development of West Irian) also established a project to train Irianese people to produce batik cloth with Irianese motifs (Figure 3-4). The project, known as Batik Irian, began with the goal of diversifying souvenirs and handicrafts marketed to tourists. The use of batik, a textile tradition imported from Java, was partly chosen for its appeal to domestic tourists. Batik artists from Yogya and Solo traveled to Jayapura to train local staff and help set up the batik factory. This project began in 1983 and while it is still running today, it has encountered many difficulties since its inception. The necessary supplies, including dyes and metal *cap* batik stamps (see Figure 3-5), are produced in and imported from Java. The designers of Batik Irian have also been frustrated by the lack of a steady supply of dyes and chemicals, many of which have deteriorated and discoloured by the time they arrive via ship in Irian Jaya.[55] These delays have frequently resulted in the lay off of

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[53] In this capacity, the Crosier missionaries often mediated on behalf of the Asmat people with the Indonesian government or foreign logging companies (Trenkenschuh, ed. Vol. 1&2).

[54] August 17th is celebrated as the anniversary of Indonesia's independence from the Dutch. This is the earliest reference I have come across that shows the Indonesian centrist practice of combining meaningful local occasions with nationalist commemorations, discussed further in the national section of this chapter.

[55] As a result, Batik Irian is renown for its gaudy colours, which were presumed by some people to reflect a lack of aesthetics. Lime greens and bright oranges were among the colours that Batik Irian designer Yansen Marwery, a Sentani man complained to me about.

lower level employees who produce the batik. The majority of Irianese occupy lower level production based positions (as opposed to administrative), so many were unsatisfied with the instability of their jobs. The program trained more people in batik production than have yet been provided with work, and some production equipment is still sitting in a storage room waiting to be used.

Batik Irian has become very popular as a result of an Indonesian government program that seeks to promote regional identity by designating one day every week when civil servants must wear "*busana daerah*" or local fashions to work. This government policy might have encouraged the local Irianese Batik industry, but it is incidental to broader National Government policies which have resulted in Batik with Irianese motifs being wholly imported from Java by privately owned batik stores in competition with Batik Irian. These are already more successful than Batik Irian because they can get a better range of colours and cheaper labour in Java. Over the years, many FUNDWI projects were taken over by provincial government departments, and today the Fund is bankrupt. FUNDWI was unable to create durable models for art, transport, agriculture or infrastructure development that would function in an Indonesian context, for a variety of institutional, cultural, economic and political reasons.

The Dutch colonial period was profoundly significant in shaping Indonesian Government institutions, national ("Indonesian") attitudes and the role for religion in the nation. In Irian Jaya, definitions of progress and spirituality once seen as distinctly Western have been imposed by the Indonesian State and some missionary groups in attempts to develop Irianese people and the resources of the province. This has reinforced perceptions established since the earliest European encounters with Irianese people, including dichotomies of traditional ("primitive") and modern. The legacy of these early global actors and other more recent international influences in Irian Jaya continue to be imposed and often mediated through local, provincial and national government policies and practices.

The approaches that Europeans have taken towards collecting, documenting and displaying tribal objects and cultures have changed dramatically over the years. These range from the taxonomic approach of the early colonial administration, including field officers, missionaries, and anthropologists; to the inclusion of these objects in natural history and ethnographic museums to the inclusion of these objects into art museums only after their aesthetic appeal was 'discovered' by Western artists such as Picasso and the Surrealists. Contemporary academic approaches attempt to allow local voices to be heard. The origins of these developments or changes in approach are now seen in contemporary post-colonial theory and

museum studies as being firmly entrenched in changing Imperialist ideologies and Western classifications and assumptions about other cultures.[56]

IRIAN ARTS ASSIMILATED INTO A NATIONAL CONTEXT

> The biggest problem of these Irianese or Papuans or whatever you call them is that they have different cultural values. If they can manage it, they want to go through life doing nothing at all. We don't need people like that (Dr. Mochtar Kusamaatmadja, Indonesian Foreign Minister, quoted in Deihl and Gordon 1987:155).

> Culture is closely tied to the national development now being implemented, because on the one hand development requires prerequisite cultural values that support development while on the other hand development results in side effects whose resolution hopefully can be discovered by means of culture (Statement from Repelita III, Government of Indonesia quoted in Yampolsky 1995:708).

This section will consider the creation and imposition of Indonesian cultural values and how these impact on regional arts and ethnic groups within the country. The quote above, by the former Indonesian minister for foreign affairs, Dr. Mochtar Kusamaatmadja, illustrates how the Indonesian State has embraced a culture focussed on progress and development. This preoccupation of the New Order government with economic development can be traced to the origins of the Indonesian State.

Nation building – including the creation of national unity, stability and economic development – has been the focus of the Indonesian government since it proclaimed independence for the peoples of the Dutch East Indies in 1945. With the withdrawal of Dutch troops in 1950 (except from Netherlands New Guinea), Indonesian Nationalists lost their most compelling argument for solidarity among the various ethnic groups comprising the new nation of Indonesia (overthrowing the Dutch). There was no precedent for the far-reaching unity that colonial rule had brought to the previously separate kingdoms and sultanates in the archipelago. Furthermore, regional antagonisms had been exacerbated by the Dutch colonial practice of "ethnic divide and rule" (Anderson 1987:74). The need to develop a unifying principle and focus of allegiance amongst the various ethnic groups was one of the most pressing issues facing the new nation of Indonesia, and it continues to be a major concern today. How can this diversity be drawn together when fragmentation seems imminent? Sukarno, the first Indonesian President, was faced with the task of creating unity among over 300 different ethnic groups in the country.

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[56] For more information about this process, see Errington (1998), and Price (1989).

One of Sukarno's tactics towards creating unity was to re-ignite anti-colonial sentiment to wrest West New Guinea from the Dutch (Anderson 1987:75).[57]

Under the Dutch, West New Guinea was administered separately from the remainder of the East Indies, and as such was not included in Holland's transfer of sovereignty to Indonesia in 1949.[58] Internationally, proponents of a growing anti-colonial movement (following World War II), sought independence for all colonized nations and believed that these new nations should inherit all territory administered by their former colonial regimes. West New Guinea held deep nostalgic significance to Indonesian nationalists, though few of them, including Sukarno himself, had visited the region before 1963 (Anderson 1991:177). Between 1927 and 1943, Dutch authorities exiled anti-Dutch nationalists to Digul prison located in the inhospitable southeastern malarial swamps of Netherlands New Guinea[59] in the district of Merauke. The prison had no walls because the harsh environment was believed sufficient to contain the inmates. Many of those interned there or who died in the Digul prison later became heroes of the Indonesian revolution (Shiraishi 1993), and "Indonesia Free from Sabang to Merauke," became the nationalist slogan for the "liberation of West Irian" (*pembebasan Irian Barat*) campaign (Sabang, at the northwestern tip of Sumatra, is the westernmost point of the nation while Merauke is the easternmost). Throughout the 1950s, negotiations were held between Indonesia and the Netherlands, but with strong international advocates of de-colonization, Holland's claim to West New Guinea gradually weakened.

The Dutch, not wanting to lose their last colonial holding to Indonesia, made a hasty attempt to groom West New Guinea for independence.[60] They argued on racial and cultural grounds that these Melanesian peoples were different to the Malays of the rest of Indonesia, and should therefore be granted self-determination. This plan ended abruptly in 1962, when Indonesia dropped paratroopers on coastal towns in Netherlands New Guinea, showing Indonesia's determination to obtain the region. The dispute lasted until 1963 when a United Nations' intervention gave temporary authority to Indonesia with the provision that a referendum

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[57] It has also been suggested that Sukarno adopted an antagonistic stance towards Malaysia, thereby creating another enemy against which the nation could unite (see Schefold 1998:269).

[58] At the time, the Dutch claimed the West New Guineans were racially different from the Indonesians, and should be given independence.

[59] Digul prison was located roughly 450 kilometres up the Digul river from the coastal administrative town of Merauke.

[60] The reasons why the Dutch wanted to retain Netherlands New Guinea are many and complex. A full discussion of them is beyond the scope of this thesis (for more information see Lijphart 1966; Rutherford 1998).

would be held in the region by 1969. The 1963 decision was celebrated by Indonesian nationalists as the final battle in the revolution against the Dutch (see Figure 3-6), resulting in what to nationalists was the long awaited unification of Indonesia. Heroes and heroines of the campaign, including Indonesians and Irianese were selected and promoted as role models and celebrated with nationalist fervour.[61]

The Indonesian government was quick to assert its authority during the 1960s and renamed Netherlands New Guinea as *Irian Barat* (or West Irian). Indonesia expanded the West Irian government, replacing many Dutch and Independence sympathizers with Indonesians. The Referendum that took place in 1969 was controversial and not well monitored. Indonesian authorities confidently proclaimed it was an unnecessary formality. Voting was rigourously restricted to 1022 men supposed to be tribal leaders, many of whom are now believed to have been hand-picked or coerced by authorities into voting unanimously for assimilation into the Republic of Indonesia. As many as 3000 indigenous West Papuans protested over the manner in which the plebiscite was carried out and many were thrown in jail in Java (see Osborne 1985). With the acquisition of West Irian complete, Indonesia gained control of an extra 256 separate ethnic groups, and approximately 700,000 people. The Irianese became subject to the cultural policies of Indonesia led by army officer, General Suharto, who had commanded the 1962 military operation to "liberate" West Irian and subsequently became President of Indonesia via a violent military coup in 1965.[62]

From 1965 to 1998, President Suharto, who took on the title *Bapak Pembangunan* or "Father of Development," and his New Order Government, focused on unifying the nation through economic development. The government's five-year plans or *Repelita*, were designed to spread development throughout the archipelago, in the form of industry, schools, housing, health clinics and expanded transportation and communications infrastructure. As Patrick Guiness writes, "development became the means to introduce the uniformities both of a material and cultural nature" (Guiness 1994:269). Standards of living rose significantly throughout Indonesia under the New Order as did expectations of the benefits of modernization. A constant government rhetoric paying lip service to the idea that economic development, infrastructure and

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[61] One such heroine, Herlina, was the first woman to volunteer to parachute into Irian Barat during Indonesia's military operation in 1962. She was promoted as a role model of the ideal nationalist woman (see Sunindyo 1998).

[62] Several of the military commanders involved in the Irian Barat campaign, including Benny Murdani – the first paratrooper to land in West New Guinea, were subsequently promoted and attained high positions in the Indonesian military and many of these personnel were later involved in the invasion and annexation of East Timor in 1975 (Osborne 1985:28).

services will eventually reach all corners of the archipelago is one strategy implemented to undermine separatist sentiment. When these expectations go unfulfilled, resentment tends to grow among local populations, who no longer see any benefits to putting the nation first.[63] In these instances, the Indonesian government employs its armed forces to counter the 'subversive' tactics of groups who speak out against 'development'.

Government policy towards indigenous peoples and cultures

The Irianese people, along with other ethnic and tribal minorities in the country, are designated as *masyarakat terasing* (isolated or hinterland peoples) who are presumed to be primitive or not yet civilized and in need of development. The Western notion of indigenous peoples is dismissed by the Indonesian State, as it officially considers all Indonesians to be "indigenous."[64] The idea that ethnic minorities should control their local culture and that cultural identity should be protected by the national government or by international organizations is thereby avoided. *Masyarakat terasing* are perceived and rhetoricized as people who, in their isolation, lack access to basic state sponsored services such as education and health care. Education programs in remote villages teach Bahasa Indonesia and Indonesian cultural values to villagers. Tribal peoples find themselves expected and pressured by the Indonesian state to cast off their (perceived) backwardness and enthusiastically join with the Indonesian mainstream (as illustrated in the cover of an Indonesian book on Irian Barat illustrated in Figure 3-7) by participating in government sponsored programs of relocation to permanent settlements and working in imported agricultural or industrial jobs (Guiness 1994).[65] This dominant pan-Indonesian culture is centrally formulated and propagated throughout the country by means of a rhetoric of nation-building which includes the promotion of a national ideology and motto, implemented in what is sometimes referred to as a process of "ideological indoctrination" (Mackie and MacIntyre 1994:25).

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[63] In Irian Jaya, I have heard it said many times that if Irianese felt the Indonesian government was working for the indigenous people of Irian Jaya and including them in its processes, and hence Irianese people were truly going to benefit from development, they would be less inclined to want separation.

[64] Persoon (1998b) describes how in 1994, Indonesia chose not participate in the United Nations designated "Year of Indigenous Peoples" because it did not accept that the term had relevance to Indonesia.

[65] It should be pointed out that this policy is not only oriented towards ethnic minorities. The economically disempowered including peasants in Java and elsewhere are frequently evicted from their land with minimal compensation in what are claimed to be state development programs, even if the move is to make way for a new tourist resort.

An example of a government program that targets the local customs of *masyarakat terasing* is the *Rumah Sehat* (Healthy House) project which seeks to regulate the "quality" of housing for all Indonesians (Heider 1979:51-53). In this program, tribal villagers are requested to vacate their traditional homes and move into government sponsored dwellings, usually designed for a single nuclear family. This style of housing often goes against traditional community structures in which men and women may live in separate dwellings, or the design of the house incorporates aspects of local belief. The nuclear family dwellings also compromise the traditional gender roles, by promoting the collective unit of the nuclear family, in which men are breadwinners and members of the workforce and women are housewives and mothers. Another task force project undertaken in the highlands of Irian Jaya was the *Operasi Koteka* (Operation Penis Gourd) which sent specially trained military personnel into highland villages with the aims of modernizing the people through a number of community development projects. This included encouraging highlanders to abandon their traditional dress, which was essentially a penis gourd for men and grass skirts for women, and to wear Western style clothing (See Heider 1979:51-3; Garnaut and Manning 1974: 24,89-91; Rutherford 1996:588). These programs have been criticized because they rarely take into account the desires of the people in terms of what they would like to have 'developed' in their village, and as a result, many failed. *Operasi Koteka* officially ended in 1977 following a series of uprisings by highland tribes that forced the government to reappraise its projects (see Budiardjo 1984:66-7). Many such projects were carried out in the 1970s and while some improvement has been made in development programs since, in general there is still insufficient consultation with the local peoples who continue to be treated as the 'subjects' of development programs.

One of the most controversial and contested policies affecting tribal communities in Irian Jaya has been the National Government's Transmigration Program. By 1986, this had resulted in the relocation of 25,000 families from Java to transmigration sites across the province (Manning and Rumbiak 1991:100).[66] The Transmigration Department designates land to be given to these government sponsored migrants, generally without regard to indigenous uses of the land that is allocated. In many areas this has created resentment among Irianese communities who are forced to surrender rights of use and access to traditional lands. Moreover, transmigrants are often farmers, and they are quick to form cooperative and cartels to dominate fresh produce markets in the large towns, dislodging local Irianese producers from this sector of the economy. The other

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[66] The Kabar-Irian website estimates there are 770,000 migrants – including spontaneous migrants and sponsored transmigrants living in Irian Jaya today, of a total population of 1.8 million (Kabar-Irian 1999).

less conspicuous National Government migration policy of serious concern to Irianese is the right to freedom of labour movement (Garnaut and Manning 1974:32,39). This is of great importance to art production in Irian Jaya (as discussed in the case study chapters). Every year spontaneous migrants from other parts of Indonesia arrive in Irian Jaya in the search for a better life and employment. For Irianese, the growing numbers of Indonesian migrants pose a threat to their claims on their land and the prospect that soon they will be a minority in their own land.

Pancasila and the Transformation of *Adat*

Cultural policy in Indonesia is based upon a widely publicized national rhetoric that stresses the stability and unity of the country. Cultural management, as one of the foremost challenges of the nation, is enshrined in the national motto, *Bhineka Tunggal Ika* (Sanskrit) or "Unity in Diversity" and in *Pancasila*, the state sanctioned ideology. Through the motto of Unity in Diversity, diversity is tolerated, but unity is essential. *Pancasila* provides the unifying ideology to which all citizens and organizations in Indonesia are expected to adhere. It consists of five pillars: "Belief in One God, Nationalism, Humanism, Democracy and Social Justice" (Kipp and Rodgers 1987:17). *Pancasila* dictates the choice of a monotheistic religion, usually one of the codified world religions and rarely allows the choice of a tribal or animist religion, which are accorded the status of "custom" or "belief" and are not officially sanctioned as religion.[67] This philosophy was designed to give the diverse segments of Indonesia's population a common focus and allegiance. It explains, in part why "Peoples speaking hundreds of different languages and occupying thousands of different islands have managed to operate as an 'imagined community' for the last four decades" (Kipp 1993: 85).

Pancasila provides the blueprint by which citizens are expected to live. But for most ethnic groups, other frameworks have already existed for hundreds of years. The bodies of traditional law and beliefs of the individual ethnic groups of Indonesia are collectively termed *adat*, derived from the Dutch and meaning "native customary law" (Renier, Routledge Dutch Dictionary: 11). "In the past *adat* provided the cosmological order, the primary, perhaps sometimes the only, explanation that rendered the world intelligible and informed one as to how to act in it" (Acciaioli 1985: 152). Centralized authority has been imposed throughout Indonesia through nationalist ideology and policies designed to transform local *adat* into a less potent and opposing force. Whereas *adat* includes a whole series of integrated complexes of religious and

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[67] In exception to this, a few tribal religions have been accepted by the state and included as sub-sects of Hinduism (see Kipp and Rodgers 1987).

customary law, both the Dutch and Indonesian central governments have sought to remove the religious component from law. In doing so, the New Order government has attempted to separate *adat* from village administration, and base Indonesian society more solidly on Javanese cultural norms and models of village administration. An example of this is the imposition of a program of *gotong- royong*, a concept of mutual cooperation originating in Java that is proliferated in development rhetoric and even in official symbolism such as monuments. In Figure 3-8, the *gotong royong* fountain monument located in central Jayapura, is topped by a larger than life Indonesian soldier holding a rifle and flag in bronze.[68] At the base are smaller painted concrete Irianese in traditional dress engaged in the communal activity of carrying water in bamboo tubes (as might be done in a development project). The symbolism of this image suggests that the indigenous populace will willingly support the development activities of the Indonesian State (often carried out through the directives of military personnel).

Traditional *adat* village structures have been replaced everywhere by the Javanese *desa* style following the Village Law of 1979, (see Guiness 1994: 273) a strategy through which central authority can be imposed upon even the smallest, most remote villages in the archipelago. This has been the source of much conflict between previously self-sufficient communities and the emissaries of national interests who may offer little relevance or benefits to local people. The Indonesian government acknowledges ethnic diversity more than it allows ethnic expression. Only certain select expressions of ethnicity are tolerated and they are generally those that are not politicized. In general, a Javanese style respect for authority is considered healthy to both nation and individual in Indonesia: "Responsibility, self-control, restraint, and self-denial for the common good have been called for in order to achieve national goals" (Hooker 1993: 3).

Indonesianizing Irian Jaya: Monuments and Museums

A campaign of monument building was started under President Sukarno and continued under President Suharto. These monuments, like their counterparts in Western and other post-colonial nations, typically glorify significant events and figures integral to the formation and preservation of the nation. Figure 3-6 shows the Liberation of West Irian Monument (*Monumen Pembebasan Irian Barat*), built in 1963 in Jakarta.[69] It depicts a man jubilant with his shackles

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[68] I am not entirely certain if the top portion of the sculpture is bronze, or some other material that looks like bronze.

[69] Within Indonesia, nationalist symbols abounded with monuments and a series of postage stamps created to celebrate the West Irian campaign. One such series of stamps, the first day cover envelope of which read "Red and White from Sabang to Merauke," (*Merah Putih dari Sabang Sampai Merauke*), was issued on

broken, and represents the Indonesian version of history in which Irianese are presumed to have wanted to join Indonesia.[70] In this way, the past achievements of the nation are glorified as a continuing source of pride for all Indonesians,[71] but a counter reading of this history is not permitted. Nationalist heroes are also honoured on several annual holidays, and throughout Indonesia, roads are named after designated national heroes.

Since independence, the Indonesian government has used visual imagery to convey and reinforce a sense of national identity to the populace. The Provincial Legislative Assembly building (DPRD or *Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah* in Figure 3-9) in downtown Jayapura, decorated with colourful renditions of drums (*tifa*) in concrete and paint with different local motifs on them,[72] gives the impression of a government engaged with its diverse local communities. Benedict Anderson has drawn attention to Indonesia's use of the monument, the census, the map and the museum in creating national consciousness (Anderson 1991:176-179). In Indonesia, census figures do not include ethnicity (with the exception of ethnic Chinese). In Jayapura, the largest city in Irian Jaya, population figures released by the government do not determine how many ethnically Papuan or Irianese people have settled in towns versus those of other ethnicities who have migrated or transmigrated from other parts of Indonesia. In this way, ethnic difference is officially overlooked. Figures are released that divide the population according to religion, however, so some broad estimates are possible. Within the nation, all citizens are first and foremost Indonesian, regardless of other ethnic affiliations. With regards to mapping, Anderson notes the Indonesian practice of producing maps of Indonesia that show West New Guinea "*with nothing to its East,*" depicting a truncated western half of the island of New Guinea (Anderson 1991:176). This denies geographical, racial and cultural affinities that Irianese people have with Papua New Guineans (today an independent nation) and the motto of the OPM (the *Organisasi Papua Merdeka* or Free Papua Movement), "One People, One Soul," which

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May 1, 1963. The three motifs on these stamps included a bird of paradise, an outline map of Indonesia with red and white Indonesian flags at either end of the country, in Sabang and Merauke, and a paratrooper.

[70] A similar monument can be found in Dili, East Timor. While on a short side trip to East Timor in 1996, I noticed the "Integration monument" similarly depicts a man being freed from his shackles. When I visited the monument in 1996, the engraved marble plaque at the base of the sculpture had been vandalised, and was smashed in two pieces with one piece missing. This act of vandalism shows that the perception of "integration" for some East Timorese differs significantly from that of Indonesian nationalists.

[71] Anderson states that monuments "...face two ways in time. Normally they commemorate events or experiences in the past, but, at the same time they are intended, in their all weather durability, for future posterity" (Anderson 1973:61).

[72] The roof structure over the DPRD sign is also local in origin, styled after the roof of a traditional Geelvink Bay men's house (this cultural group is now a part of the Biak-Numfor Regency). There are no extant examples of such *rumah adat* or traditional houses, but this roof style is also used on the Biak-Numfor pavilion at the Waena Expo site in Jayapura.

demonstrates the solidarity that is felt by many Irianese with Papua New Guineans (see Osbourne 1985: plates between 96-97).[73]

The Indonesian government has adopted a cultural policy that de-emphasizes or trivializes cultural differences in the archipelago and unites them under a contrived national culture. The state culture, though based predominantly on Javanese culture, also includes highlights of local cultures from all the provinces of Indonesia. Indonesian museums, most of which were built following independence in 1950, are one modern venue where cultural difference is reformulated according to a restricted and tidier notion of difference (Kreps 1994).

The first Indonesian museum was established by the Dutch in 1778, today the Indonesian National Museum in Jakarta.[74] In the mid twentieth century, museums spread throughout Southeast Asia as new nation-states emerged. One function of museums in newly developing nation states is to justify the nation's existence, and make sense of the past in a way that legitimizes the present nation state. Since the 1950s museum systems have been established and growing in numerous Southeast Asian nations. Legitimizing the authority of the nation-state government to its citizens is one of the main challenges facing nation states. Shelly Errington explains that

> Nation-states of Southeast Asia, independent since mid-century, are now in the awkward position that European powers were in during the nineteenth century: of reinterpreting events and recontextualizing objects in order to make them speak to national culture and national history (Errington 1989a: 53-4).

She adds that the governments of these 'new' nations "... could not situate themselves in the same myths of divinity that church and king had claimed yet they needed to insist that they, and the territories and people they governed, were not a merely arbitrary collection" (Errington 1994: 157). New narratives were created by these nations to give credibility to their political authority, and in the case of nations made up of diverse previously separate political and ethnic entities, to establish a narrative that originates and authenticates national borders.

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[73] The border between Irian Jaya and Papua New Guinea, has split numerous families between two nations. While these people are generally given special "traditional border crosser status," which allows them to cross the border with greater ease for visiting with family, differences in lifestyle and experience, from one side of the border to the other are significant. In Papua New Guinea there are numerous small and several large refugee camps along the border, where as many as 7,000 Irianese who fled Irian Jaya in 1984/85 are still living. Indonesian security forces guard the border carefully and are currently requesting permission to pursue "guerillas" into P.N.G. territory (See Australian Federated Press, Feb 13, 1999).

[74] This was formerly the Dutch colonial museum in Batavia (now Jakarta). Indonesian museums are institutions with European origins and have often represented culture in ways similar to museums in the West. For further discussion on museum development in Indonesia, see Taylor (1994) and Kreps (1994).

As discussed earlier, one function of museums is to display objects in such a way that they tell a story to the viewer (Taylor 1994: 71). Colonial museums presented narratives illustrated through the display of objects that justified the activities of the colonial regime. In the late 1970s, Suharto's New Order government established a nationally instituted provincial museum system that expanded rapidly through the 1980s and 1990s. By 1994, nineteen of the twenty-seven planned museums had been built (Taylor 1994: 72). According to Paul Michael Taylor: "To watch this expansion of a centralized museum system throughout the archipelago, and reactions to it, is to watch Indonesia's center and periphery debate their public presentation of themselves" (Taylor 1994: 71). I would argue that it represents less of a debate between two parties and more of an imposition in the many less stable regions of the country (such as East Timor, Aceh and Irian Jaya) where separatist movements and local resistance to centralized control are strong, thus posing a threat to national unity. I visited the newly built Provincial Museum in Dili in 1996, and not a single indigenous East Timorese was involved in the development of the displays or in deciding what story should be told with the museum's collection. Further evidence of this claim is the heavy-handed tactics used by the New Order government in dealing with prominent cultural figures that it regards with suspicion. In the early 1980s, Arnold Ap, a prominent Irianese cultural figure headed the non-state Loka Budaya Museum[75] and the dance troupe Mambesak. He worked on strengthening contemporary local culture and arts. Ap was believed by Indonesian officials to be a member of the OPM and in April 1984, he was arbitrarily arrested, imprisoned and died while in the custody of the Indonesian military (see Osborne 1985; Sharp 1994).

In contrast to encouraging or allowing local ways of classifying and presenting local culture to flourish, the Indonesian museum development programme is establishing state museums in all provinces. These must follow a standard format designed in Jakarta to spread a

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[75] The Loka Budaya Museum is affiliated with the Universitas Cenderawasih – Bird of Paradise University, and is located on the university's Abepura campus. It was established by a donation from the Rockefeller foundation and houses many of the objects collected by Michael Rockefeller not freighted back (due to size or quantity of representative types) to the Museum of Primitive Art (this collection is now in the Rockefeller wing of the Metropolitan Museum). The Loka Budaya museum has also received by donation some deaccessioned items from museums in Holland. The museum suffers from a lack of regular funding, as it is not sponsored through the Indonesian museum system and only occasionally receives minimal building repair funds from the university budget system. The quality of the collection has suffered from rapid deterioration due to lack of funding and lack of proper storage and conservation facilities. Many of the finest pieces are believed to have been sold or 'carried off' by past museum directors to Java (personal communication with museum staff and I observed that many of the published pieces said to be in this collection no longer seem to be at the museum).

consistent concept of national identity throughout the islands.[76] Paul Michael Taylor refers to this system of classifying cultural attributes as the *Nusantara* or archipelago concept of culture. All Indonesian provincial museums have a *nusantara* room or area where local material culture in common categories such as traditional dress, traditional house, traditional arts, and so on, are displayed alongside examples and miniatures from other regions of the archipelago. In this way, local objects and art illustrate nationally defined categories, and visually support the government's motto that there is "Unity in Diversity" (Taylor 1995:113-4). The overwhelming propagandistic message communicated in these displays, as Taylor observes, is 'we are distinctive as a province, but we are one with the rest of the 'nusantara' (archipelago)" (Taylor 1995:116).

The provincial museum of Irian Jaya in Waena near the provincial capital of Jayapura was founded in 1981 and follows the *nusantara* style of display. With over 256 different ethnic groups, there is an overwhelming diversity to condense into a single provincial identity, let alone a national identity. While no traditional houses are preserved at the museum, the entire building itself is cone-shaped (see Figures 3-10 and 3-11) like a traditional house from the Humboldt Bay or Sentani areas (see Figure 5-4). The museum employs a mixture of Irianese and other Indonesians. It houses the first Indonesian flag to be planted on New Guinea soil and is not highly visited, particularly by Irianese, some of whom have told me they can see many of these objects in their own villages.

Adjacent to the Provincial Museum, is the *Taman Budaya Irian Jaya* culture park (Figure 3-12). While museums in Indonesia house objects of traditional culture deemed worthy of preserving as part of the nation's heritage, the *Taman Budaya* (culture gardens), generally located in provincial capitals, are where regional culture is developed and brought "in step with the times" or *sesuai dengan irama zaman*, (Yampolsky 1995:712, Soebadio 1985:39).[77] The provincial *Taman Budaya* are modeled after Taman Mini Indonesia Indah (TMII or Beautiful Indonesia in Miniature) in Jakarta. TMII is a miniaturized version of the nation transformed into a cultural theme park that conveys in a direct visual sense a model of the state's motto of "Unity

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[76] The administrative structure of Indonesian museums is outlined in Soebadio (1985).

[77] This is made clear in Soebadio's 1985 publication *Cultural Policy in Indonesia*, based on annual reports of the Department of Education and Culture and material of the Centres and Directorates of the Directorate-General of Culture, where museum development is discussed under the category of "History, archaeology and museum development", while *Taman Budaya* or cultural gardens are discussed under "Development of the Arts" (see Soebadio 1985:35-41).

in Diversity" and its concept of regional provincial cultures.[78] The grounds of TMII are divided into 26 one-hectare parcels, each area containing one or more traditional house and displays representing one of each of the 26 provinces. These surround an 8.4-hectare lake with groomed islands that represent the islands of the archipelago. Taman Mini is a popular theme park where tourists or largely middle class Indonesians can go for a family outing or to see the "whole archipelago" at a glance. At TMII, space and time is collapsed, and an artificial rendering of history is given. Ironically the theme park is so big that it is difficult to see the whole thing in one day. Life size replicas of traditional houses from around the archipelago stand side by side one another, as if they are all neighbours on the same street.[79] In this way the distinct histories of each place are distilled into a superficial state controlled synthesized version. John Pemberton refers to this process as "... the dedicated, unitary recuperation of difference within a representational framework of the local." (Pemberton 1994:12)

When I visited TMII in 1995, and asked to speak with an Asmat artist who was working at the Irian Jaya pavilion, (Figure 3-13), I was told that he was not permitted to speak with guests unless it was specifically about his carving demonstration. He told me that there are plain-clothes intelligence officers who patrol the park, and for that reason he felt afraid to be seen talking to a foreigner. Members of ethnic groups who work at TMII are not there as ambassadors of their culture, although they might appear to be, but rather as symbols of state ideology. In effect, they are showpieces, meant to be seen but not heard.

Taman Budaya Irian Jaya (TBIJ) functions differently from TMII in that it is not open year round. There are not enough tourists and not enough of a middle class to warrant it. Instead, the TBIJ is open for special events only. The main event of this sort is the Jayapura Art Festival or "Expo," as it is called. Expo is held annually for a week, in early August during the build-up to Indonesian independence day celebrations on August 17th. The festival began in 1992, and its venue is the TBIJ, though it also goes into the city of Jayapura with performances in the streets as

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[78] TMII was a project of Ibu Tien, the wife of President Suharto, inspired by a trip to Disneyland. The project began with acquisition of land for the site in 1971, and was officially opened on International Women's Day in 1975. The project also represents the approach of government towards villagers and regional cultures because the one hundred hectares of land used for the park was unjustly and forcefully appropriated from local inhabitants at "prices well below market value" (Pemberton 1994:152). For more on TMII, see Pemberton (1994:152-161, 178-81, 188) and Errington (1998:194-201,212-222).

[79] The process of selecting the highlights of the many traditional and ethnic groups in the country can be seen here: one or two ethnic groups per province are presented on a grand scale (with traditional houses), while others are only represented by small unidentified carvings (or trim for the pavilions), and yet others not at all. The two tribes highlighted from Irian Jaya were the Asmat, who are represented by a concrete sculpture of canoers in a pond, and the highland Dani, represented by a replica of a family compound and dwellings. The Asmat canoers, wearing t-shirts and shorts reinforce state ideas of modernity and propriety.

well. The festival is a series of judged competitions in the traditional and modern arts, including traditional dance, music and contemporary dance and music. Carving and traditional arts are another category, and artists from around the province are chosen by district officials (primarily Indonesian) to attend the Jayapura festival. The carvings are displayed in the individual pavilions on the TBIJ grounds, which like TMII, represent traditional houses from the provincial ethnic groups, arranged according to government administrative districts or *kabupaten*. At TBIJ, it is evident that much less money was available for displays than at TMII, and there is, to a Western eye, an unfortunate heavy use of concrete and commercial paints in an attempt to recreate houses whose most dramatic feature was the skill of its makers in the use of materials from the natural environment. It is very reminiscent of a contemporary Indonesian style of urban landscaping that seems to have spread throughout the archipelago.

Provincial identity building: motifs in urban landscaping, dress and national TV

In the late 1980s and 1990s, a government promoted proliferation of local motifs began to be employed in urban landscaping in Jayapura to produce an urban atmosphere with "local colour." Towns and cities in Irian Jaya are increasingly becoming 'melting pots' of diverse peoples from around the archipelago. In Irian Jaya this has resulted from the influx of government employees, transmigrants and migrants from other parts of Indonesia and villagers from more remote regions of Irian Jaya flocking to urban centers in search of education and employment. Government projects and individual offices commission local artists and "landscape designers" to do this work, which generally consists of visual motifs applied in relief to painted concrete, or larger three-dimensional sculptures, located at intersections (Figure 3-14), on the exterior of government and private buildings and in public spaces. The designs vary in their degree of stylization, but they are all based on Irianese art forms and provincial emblems like the bird of paradise (*burung cenderawasih*), shield, spear, stone axe, and string bags (called *noken*). Contemporary architecture in Jayapura frequently incorporates forms from traditional styles such as the *honai* (round traditional dwellings of highlanders that are now found frequently as *Sat Pam* or security guard stations in front of government buildings), or simplified cone shapes reminiscent of the temples and men's houses of the Jayapura (Tobati tribe, see Figure 3-15) and Lake Sentani area, seen in the *Pelni* office (*Pelayaran Nasional Indonesia*—the National Shipping Lines) in Figure 3-16. In residential architecture, I noticed that many of the homes on Jl. Trikora in Jayapura (street where prominent Indonesian government and some military officials reside), also incorporate these 'Irianese' elements.

In Jayapura, Asmat styled metal lampposts (Figure 3-17) line the city streets. These were made in Hamadi a suburb of Jayapura and location of the Jayapura art and souvenir market, by Bugis craftsmen, migrants from South Sulawesi.[80] There is little concern with cultural property in the commissioning of these works; they could be made or designed by anyone of any ethnicity. As in government census-taking, belonging to the ethnic group in question is not a prerequisite for using its motifs — all people in Irian Jaya are Irianese, and hence may use Irianese motifs. This is an integral part of the way ethnicity is conceived and promulgated in Indonesian political ideology. The effect of this Indonesianization of Irianese art forms is to provide a sense of cultural unity and familiarity for the wide ranging peoples now congregating in the urban centers of Irian Jaya. This seemingly innocent tactic promoted by government offices throughout Indonesia serves "...to create a sense of community in the minds of their subjects..." (Steinberg 1987: 460).

Many of the Irianese artists discussed in Chapters Four, Five and Six of this thesis, have done commissions of this sort and it is one way for the artists to earn some income from their art. Until recently, none of the individual tribes have been consulted about their opinion of the appropriation of their motifs.[81] Batik Irian, as discussed in the global section of this chapter, raises similar issues. Batik Irian is the most common fabric used in uniforms in the service industry in Irian Jaya.[82] In Figure 3-18, a shop employee wears a uniform that is printed with Asmat motifs often found on shields (compare with figure 4-5), including the *ainor* and *bipane* (Asmat language). The *ainor* motif is defined as a mysterious, frightening shield motif (Konrad 1981: 189). In a traditional context, both motifs were used to empower the bearer of the shield and to stun or weaken the enemy in the highly ritualized complex of Asmat warfare. The *bipane* motif represents the tusks of a wild boar or the shell nosepieces traditionally worn through the pierced septum by Asmat men and women. The piercing of the septum is no longer practiced as modern dress and Indonesian dress codes are increasingly adopted. The meaning of the motifs on

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[80] Nico Tanto of "Nico Tanto Art Shop" provided me with this information.

[81] Most recently in Jakarta, there is said to have been a meeting discussing the issue of appropriation of Asmat art and the copying of Asmat sculpture in workshops in Bali and Java. I am waiting for information about this conference. I will describe the reactions of local artists to my questions about the issue of cultural appropriation in the local section of this chapter and in the case studies in Chapters Four, Five and Six.

[82] Government employees wear "traditional" clothing to work every Friday. In Irian Jaya, Batik Irian is what is worn, since more traditional *pakaian adat* (traditional clothing), is unacceptable to Indonesian sensibilities and inappropriate for an office environment. Most tribes in Irian Jaya wore little clothing, traditionally, if any. Some school children also wear Batik Irian uniforms.

Batik Irian clothing are trivialized, and the use of the motifs is only to signify a sense of Irian-ness.

A current provincial government project is attempting to design provincial dress styles for three occasions where ceremonial attire is required: wedding attire for bride and groom, traditional dancing and ceremonial attire, and formal attire. Throughout the 1980s and 90s, the provincial government of Irian Jaya has been working to synthesize tribal styles of dress into a single "Irianese" dress style that presents a provincial identity that conforms to national cultural policy (Pemerintah Daerah Propinsi Tingkat II, Irian Jaya 1996). Previous attempts at depicting a single "Irianese" dress style have been made for school books and government posters promoting "Unity in Diversity," but there has been no consensus on what the synthesis should look like (See Rutherford 1996). With a mixed committee of Indonesian and Irianese of different ethnic backgrounds, it is not surprising that consensus has not been easily reached.[83] The 1997 plan divides Irian Jaya into five style regions based on artistic categories suggested by Western scholars and proposes that stylistic motifs common to these areas be chosen for inclusion in the provincial style. Regional arts council members compile lists of predominant motifs from the tribes in their administrative area, which are compared for their similarities to motifs from other tribes. The desired effect or likely affect of such a project will be a loss of distinct tribal identity and traditions.

At a national level, cultural difference is distilled through state-controlled education and mass media all in the national language, Bahasa Indonesia. Carefully censored radio, television and print media cultivate a perception of the unity of the nation and an awareness of the national community.

> Ideas of modernity now reach every corner of the archipelago through radio and television. Through modern technology the central government promotes state ideology with the aim of preventing regional, ethnic, linguistic, and religious differences from becoming political forces in Indonesia (Rath 1997: 2).

Television broadcasts reinforce the concept of "Unity in Diversity" through regular showings of simplified artistic performances from across the archipelago, representing the cultural diversity of the country. One such program, recently broadcast across the country showed filmed footage from the annual Irian Jaya cultural festival, or Expo. Highlights of dances performed by various groups divided into *kabupaten* (administrative regencies) were shown in

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[83] I learned of the difficulties in reaching a consensus on dress styles through discussions with Michael Howard and Naffi Sanggenafa.

what seemed to be random succession with no start or finish to any dance, and with no dance shown in its entirety (see Hughes-Freeland 1989). The point of these dances is to provide viewers across the country with a sense of Irianese provincial identity as a component of their national culture.

Government control of local culture and art production

The approach of the Indonesian government towards indigenous art traditions and cultural expression in Irian Jaya has changed over the years. Initially the government banned virtually all forms of local art production. Most Irianese art forms were not acknowledged by the Indonesian government as art, and were often integral to practices the government wanted to eradicate as part of its plan to "civilize" the local population. In the 1960s in the Asmat, for example, Indonesian government officials banned carving and most rituals because of their association with headhunting and warfare, and also banned and feared by the government. Traditional men's houses or *yeu*, a focus of ritual practices, were destroyed in numerous villages.[84] It was not until the United Nation's administered FUNDWI program begun in 1969 that Indonesian officials saw the potential of Asmat carving.

The FUNDWI program in the Asmat proved that Asmat carvings were marketable and that art production, if revived, could contribute to local economic development. After five years, FUNDWI's Asmat carving program was transferred to the Indonesian department of Industry or *Departemen Perindustriaan*, which began searching among other Irianese ethnic groups for artists they could sponsor in the production of contemporary handicrafts and souvenirs. One focus of these programs has been on art production as a means for local peoples to earn some income. *Perindustriaan* provided carving tools to several communities in the Jayapura regency, and chose local artists to run government sponsored workshops on local art techniques and styles. Tourism was put forth by the national government as one arena for regional cultural development in the mid 1970s (Errington 1998:124-125), although Irian Jaya remained closed to foreign tourists until 1987 for security reasons (McCarthy1994:82).[85] In the early 1980s at the Irian Jaya

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[84] Resistance by some Asmat villages to Indonesian government control is documented by the Catholic Crosier missionaries in the *Asmat Sketch Books*. Military raids into non-cooperating villages or villages that refused to participate in state-sanctioned logging projects resulted in whole villages fleeing into the forest, a practice that still occurs today for similar reasons in areas close to the Freeport mine (see Richards1996; ACFOA 1995; and Ballard 1997a).

[85] This was because of extensive, clandestine military operations from the early 1960s until the mid-late 1980s and the risk of increased international scrutiny due to foreign hostage taking by OPM guerillas (Osborne 1985).

Department of Industry's suggestion, traditional *adat* carving rights and other taboos were abolished in the spirit of capitalist competition. The government's philosophy was that all people should have the right to earn an income from tourism and the production of art and souvenirs – and that original *adat* rules, based on a spiritual function for the arts, no longer existed.[86]

Art production was revived or at least increased in several communities through such government sponsored projects, though generally only areas with easy access to urban centers have been significantly influenced. Some communities in the Jayapura regency even began carving and bringing their products in to Jayapura in anticipation that it might draw government development projects to their village. Artists with exceptional skill or productivity were selected for government sponsored trips to Java and Bali for carving lessons. All of the main artists discussed in the case studies in Chapters Four, Five and Six, as well as others, have received this skills training and some have attended national handicraft/tourism development exhibitions. Their responsibility was to train other artists in their community upon their return. Through government sponsored carving classes and competitions, a state aesthetic is imposed upon local carvers.

Philip Yampolsky has defined the characteristics of this state aesthetic as the "Depdikbud aesthetic," that promoted by the Department of Education and Culture (*Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan* or Depdikbud, the acronym by which it is commonly known). According to Yampolsky, Depdikbud seeks to control political and moral content in the arts and promotes art forms that incorporate government messages and that can be easily adapted to the needs of the tourism industry (Yampolsky 1995:710-714). These art forms are often devoid of specific local meaning or sacred content, as these are often incompatible with the simplified and portable needs of tourism or the assimilative aims of national unity building. Yampolsky writes that

> One of Depdikbud's unacknowledged operating principles is that urban is more respectable than rural, and hence performances that exhibit 'urban' standards – such as fancy costumes, elaborate production values, professionalism, variety in programming, and modern (usually Western) instruments – are more respectable that those that do not (Yampolsky 1995:712).

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[86] I learned of this from Bernard Mittaart, now retired, who formerly worked with the Department of Industry. Mittaart worked first on the Asmat Art Project with Jac. Hoogerbrugge, and later when based in Jayapura, he opened carving classes in Lake Sentani after encouraging local chiefs that anyone should be allowed to participate in order to keep these artistic traditions alive. Similar situations have been documented in other regions of the archipelage. Toby Volkman observed a similar situation with the construction of traditionally styled houses in the Toraja region of central Sulawesi. She writes, "...families whose low status traditionally did not entitle them to such a roof are now encouraged to display one. Similarly, everyone is urged to decorate his house façade with carved and painted patterns once restricted to the nobility. For hierarchy, in this case, has not become a tourist object..." (Volkman 1993:372).

Depdikbud influences regional arts in Indonesia through its sponsorship of art festivals, competitions and commissions and through awarding opportunities to artists who meet government standards. These modernizing influences, and the homogenizing effects of the Depdikbud aesthetic, encourage artists and performers to follow established patterns and styles while still conveying a sense of the traditional or exotic. Under these conditions individual creativity and indigenous cultural expression is constrained, and the door is opened to outsiders to use and manipulate traditional local motifs and imagery according to these standards.[87]

Profits from regional artistic traditions

The lack of cultural property rights in Indonesia opens the door for peoples from other ethnic backgrounds getting in on the sale and production of Irianese arts. To date, very few indigenous artists have the means to own and operate their own art shops, a predicament which most of them take very seriously (this will be discussed further in the local section). Cultural appropriation is not a consideration of the Indonesian government, and there are no precautions or regulations designed to protect the welfare of Irianese artists (or other tribal artists in the archipelago). Most profits from the sale of Irianese arts go into the hands of non-Irianese and even the Indonesian government, members of the Suharto family and cronies (a term used to refer to close business associates and friends of the Suharto family).

Irianese arts are shipped to showrooms in Bali and Jakarta. In Kuta, travelling foreign art dealers can find plenty of Irianese art to buy without having to buy an expensive plane ticket to Irian Jaya and pay shipping rates. The prices at art shops such as the "Irian Jaya Primitive Art

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[87] My initial interest in the arts of Irian Jaya (and of other indigenous peoples in Indonesia) developed while doing fieldwork in Java in 1995. At that time I was studying the development of a pan-Indonesian art style in the 1970s by a prominent group of older generation artists called DECENTA. DECENTA artists combined artistic motifs from around the country in order to create a uniquely "Indonesian" national style of art. While many of the artists involved in DECENTA no longer work with the motifs of other cultures, one wealthy and established Javanese artist by the name of Sunaryo who teaches at one of the Indonesian state's prominent art academies, the ITB, *Institut Teknologi Bandung* in Bandung, Java, continues to take his inspiration from Asmat art and motifs as well as from other art traditions with exotic appeal such as Bali. Sunaryo told me that his interest in Asmat art was in its formal artistic qualities only – in the 'brute' use of line, bold design and earth tones, elements of which he tries to capture in his paintings, sculptures and prints. He did not believe that his use of Asmat art constituted appropriation (one younger generation artist and student of Sunaryo's, Semsar Siahaan had challenged Sunaryo on this point) because he was not appropriating the meaning of the motifs. At the time I met with him, Sunaryo was in the process of building a luxurious museum to display his life's art work. After meeting with him, I was inspired to travel to outer islands in Indonesia to find out if local artists would consider art such as Sunaryo's to be appropriative or objectionable. I discuss Irianese responses to these issues of appropriation in the case studies and conclusion of the thesis (Chapters Four through Seven).

Shop" (see Figure 3-19), in Kuta Bali, (owned by Pak Baso Basri, a Makassarese from Southern Sulawesi who once lived in Irian Jaya), are significantly higher than the prices in Irian Jaya, even when taking into account shipping and handling prices. In Jakarta the largest showrooms of regional arts can be found in department stores, like Sarinah and Pasaraya, that are controlled by the government and wealthy businessmen. The *Pasar Seni* art market at the Ancol theme park is another venue in Jakarta for traditional arts. The majority of the workshops are owned and run by Balinese and Javanese carvers from the east Javanese carving village of Jepara. Several carve furniture with Asmat motifs or "primitive" carvings sold on the reputation of the primitive-ness and former headhunting practices of some Irianese tribes.

Art takes on a new role under Indonesian government sponsorship. The daily life of Irianese peoples and artists are expected to fit within Indonesian norms for being a modern Indonesian citizen. Regional art production is secularized and also nationalized. The function of art is to promote national economic development with performances, souvenirs and facilities designed for tourists as well as provincial and national identity building. This is particularly conspicuous in the new class of tourist hotels being built throughout Irian Jaya, including the Sheraton Timika Inn, the Pariwisata Biak Beach Hotel at Marauw Resort, the Hotel Sentani Indah on the shore of Lake Sentani (see Figure 3-20) and the new hotel in Enttrop, a suburb of Jayapura, where Irianese culture and art forms are the basis of exterior and interior design.[88]

In defiance of geographical realities and local histories, the Indonesian government under Sukarno and Suharto have both attempted the integration of Irian Jaya and the assimilation of selected aspects of the history and traditions of Irianese peoples into Indonesia's national culture. Yet, like other strong willed ethnic groups in the country, the majority of Irianese peoples have resisted such complete absorption. The following section of this chapter discusses local perspectives and demonstrates that Irianese peoples and artists seek to reclaim greater control of their future and their cultural representation. As Benedict Anderson has stated,

The subsequent painful relations between the populations of West New Guinea

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[88] By 1998, a group of carvers from Jepara, Java had moved to Jayapura and set up a studio on the main Sentani-Jayapura road where they were producing wooden furniture, interior panels and mouldings carved with Asmat designs for the new Enttrop Hotel. Members of the Irian Jaya Arts Council, (*Dewan Kesenian Irian Jaya*) informed me that this studio had also carved some large poles with Asmat motifs that were purchased by the Trikora Regional Command for use as gate posts to their headquarters in Abepura. The *Dewan Kesenian* is a government organization that has yet to reach its full potential. It has a small staff and an office in central Jayapura where it occasionally puts on public art performances. The organization suffers from a lack of funding, however, and mostly they assist with the art programs of Depdikbud, the Department of Education and Culture. They hope in the future to be able to perform a regulatory function and to prevent unauthorized appropriation and use of Irianese motifs (personal communication with council members).

> and the emissaries of the independent Indonesian state can be attributed to the fact that Indonesians more or less sincerely regard these population as 'brothers and sisters,' while the populations themselves, for the most part, see things very differently (Anderson 1991:177).

IRIANESE ARTS REAPPROPRIATED INTO A LOCAL FRAMEWORK

> ... it is worth noticing that for the people of Irian Jaya, Indonesianization may be more worrisome that Americanization... for polities of smaller scale, there is always a fear of cultural absorption by polities of larger scale, especially those that are nearby. One man's imagined community is another man's political prison (Appadurai 1990:5-6).

Irianese peoples are in a difficult position today because they have their roots in small, traditional tribal societies often seen as incompatible with the modern, progress oriented Indonesian State. The Western dichotomy of 'traditional' and 'modern' as mutually exclusive societal stages has had profound effects for Irianese peoples who are neither definitively traditional nor modern. The breakdown of indigenous structures of authority, both spiritual and political, and their replacement by modern state structures denies the focus of tribal societies on maintaining continuity with a unique and specific past – connected through land, a sense of place and people, in the present and in their visions of the future.

Traditional spiritual leaders and tribal leaders have been replaced by new religious teachings and *kepala desa* (village heads) from other parts of the archipelago (or province), who put national and provincial interests first because it is in their interest to do so, but it compromises local peoples. Tribal peoples in Irian Jaya, have been reluctant to let go of their continuity with their past, and it is difficult to convince them that it is necessary or advantageous to them to become one with a larger entity that has no ties to local place and history. Development rhetoric, as promoted by the Indonesian government and many international 'aid' agencies, emphasizes looking to the future and often regards a strong adherence to traditions as an obstacle to development. Yampolsky states that the "fundamental premise underlying Depdikbud's upgrading programmes is that there is something wrong with the arts as they stand..." and unfortunately, local traditions are too often seen as part of the problem that development agencies seek to improve as opposed to part of the solution (Butt 1996). For example, the official motto of the Jayawijaya regency, "Tomorrow must be better than today," or *Yogotak Hubuluk Motok Hanorogo* in the local Dani language (Pemerintah Daerah Tingkat II Jayawijaya 1995) positions the past – and the present as inferior to the future. What these approaches fail to recognize is that different cultural values do exist, as the tribal peoples of Irian Jaya are keenly aware.

Headhunting raids and tribal warfare within and between ethnic groups in New Guinea provide extreme evidence of this, as does the current unwillingness of many Irianese to assimilate quietly into Indonesian society. Therefore, we must ask to what extent can local allegiances be dislodged by new religious and political structures?

There is a long history of resistance to foreign rule in Irian Jaya manifested as early as the 1850s as millenarian and secular uprisings. These were messianic or prophet movements that are best documented on the island of Biak and resulted from dissatisfaction with Dutch colonial rule and with promises made by missionaries.[89] In the 1940s, seeds of the first West Papuan independence movement germinated and in 1965 under Indonesian control, the OPM or *Organisasi Papua Merdeka* (Free Papua Movement) resistance movement was formed.[90]

The Indonesian government, until recent events brought on by the resignation of President Suharto in May 1998, had never officially acknowledged the OPM or any degree of popular support for West Papuan nationalism. Instead it referred to "Wild Terrorist Gangs" (*Gerakan Pengacau Liar* or GPL) and alternatively to "Security Disturbers" (*Gerombolan Pengacau Keamanan* or GPK) that threaten civilian welfare and state security with terrorist tactics (Osborne 1985:viii). OPM's acts of defiance to Indonesian rule have varied from peaceful raisings of the West Papuan flag,[91] organizing political resistance in Irian Jaya and overseas, and guerilla activities including the taking of both Indonesian and foreign hostages, and attacks on transmigration camps, military posts and companies operating in Irian Jaya (logging, road construction and mining) that employ Indonesians. The OPM has experienced overwhelming logistical difficulties in organizing and mounting its opposition. As Peter Hastings writes, "Melanesians have to date demonstrated they have neither the weapons nor organization in a

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[89] Millenarian movements also took place around Lake Sentani in the 1920s / 30s (see Defert (1997) for more about the Framai movement). Nonie Sharp has explained that "These occasions see the rise of a prophet or universal leader who may draw together and give expression to the feelings, the strivings, the frustrations, and above all the hopes of the members of a group of which they themselves are part" (Sharp 1994:5).

[90] It is often wrongfully presumed that West Papuan nationalism was born in the period when Holland began preparing West New Guinea for independence. In the late 1940s and 1950s, some Papuans supported Indonesia's claim to the territory because they were already engaged in opposing Dutch colonial rule (Osborne 1985:31-32).

[91] The morning star flag was chosen as the symbol of Papuan identity by Papuan representatives in 1961 when the region was being groomed for independence by the Dutch. The morning star represents Venus, the brightest star in the morning sky. The morning star is also the symbol of *Koreri*, a Biak concept that originates in mythology and is integral to Biak identity. It is an indigenous Biak philosophy and spiritual teaching passed down through generations and it has been the basis of many millenarian uprisings in Biak and related Cenderawasih Bay areas. For more on *Koreri*, see Sharp (1994), and Kamma (1972).

country of small social units and fragmented terrain to mount an effective insurgency" (Hastings 1984:146).

Indonesia's representation of the OPM as terrorist gangs has made many Irianese unwilling to openly support the OPM, for fear of reprisals by the Indonesian military. The long history of human rights abuses in the province has recently been receiving more attention by local church groups and non-government groups (NGOs), often in collaboration with foreign NGOs (ACFOA 1995). West Papuan nationalist sentiment, however, is very strong among the indigenous population in the province and rumours continuously circulate about the prospects for independence. Relations among the OPM's chain of command and West Papuan nationalist groups are unclear. OPM, in its broadest sense represents independence or greater political autonomy for West Papuans and is something that most West Papuans embrace, though not necessarily through guerilla actions.

One reason for the broad appeal for West Papuan nationalism is that tribal peoples throughout Irian Jaya now share similar grievances over the "development" tactics employed by the Indonesian State. Irian Jaya was rated close to the bottom of the Human Development Index in the *1996 Social Economic National Survey* published by the Indonesian Bureau of Statistics. Ironically, the province also had the second highest non-oil income per capita, due to the huge earnings of the Freeport gold and copper mine (Ballard 1998:433). The discrepancy in these statistics highlights problems that are of considerable concern to Irianese peoples. Infrastructure development is almost always tied to the expansion of industry in the province, with few services in remote areas. Provincial governors of Irian Jaya have continuously complained of the lack of trickle down effect to the province as profits from resource exploitation are absorbed in Jakarta.

Many Irianese people question the benefits of centrally imposed development and there is a growing belief that the Indonesian government is not really interested in improving conditions in the province for Irianese people. Traditional leaders still maintain power in their communities, but they are subordinate to government decisions and so villagers must deal with *kepala desa* (government appointed village leaders) for problems with government initiated directives. *Kepala desa* gain more power in this way because they represent the link to government.

Migrants and transmigrants from other islands continue to hold many of the most influential roles in government institutions and dominate employment opportunities in the province. George Mealey, past president of Freeport McMoran Copper and Gold, remarks

> The indigenous Irianese are at a marked disadvantage in competing for these jobs. Compared to the Islamic and Christian cultures of Western Indonesia, the Melanesian cultural traditions of Irian Jaya are a poor match with the demands of modern capitalist economies. The jump from shifting cultivation of yams and

> gathering of sago to wage employment servicing truck transmissions is a long one. Outside of a few mission schools, there was no education here before the arrival of Freeport and the Indonesian government in the late 1960s... For these reasons, in its development work Freeport feels a special obligation to the indigenous Irianese, especially the local Amungme and Kamoro (Mealey 1996: 291).

The perception that Irianese peoples are not sophisticated enough "culturally" to participate in the modern capitalist system is another problem that local peoples face. Despite Freeport's claim that it feels a special obligation to the local people, after 35 years in the area ninety-six percent of its employees are Indonesian but less than ten percent of these are indigenous Irianese, and most occupy unskilled laboring positions (IRIP 1995). The stereotype that Irianese people are primitive and backward (*terbelakang*) persists, and many Irianese have come to perceive themselves and their cultures in this way. In 1998, the wife of the Provincial Governor of Irian Jaya, Annie Numberi, herself an Irianese woman, was quoted in *Tifa Irian* (a provincial newspaper run by the Catholic Church) as saying:[92]

> We with the ugly faces, frizzy hair and dark skin, who chew betel nut, are said to be backwards. Let us bury this reputation and struggle to work towards proving these confused remarks false in the future (Tifa Irian 1998:12).[93]

Yet even early reports of interactions with Papuan peoples indicate they were quick to capitalize on exchanges with foreigners. Early traveler and missionary accounts tell of being approached by Papuans eager to sell their carvings or local products. The Dutch Naval Medical officer G.A.J. van der Sande, who joined an expedition to Dutch New Guinea in 1903, collected over 600 objects. He wrote that he met people keen to trade their artifacts and that he "passed the time by trading for artifacts late into the night." (Smidt 1992:199). Other collectors explained that Papuan people were often very specific about what they would and would not trade and what they wanted to receive in exchange. Some Papuans, when they heard that foreigners had arrived in a village other than their own, would make a special trip to that village so that they would have the opportunity to trade. Of his trip in 1889, Horst wrote "While we were staying here [Humboldt Bay area], we were visited by people in about fifty canoes from Tanahmerah, who came to offer all sorts of ethnographical objects in exchange for beads, axes, and knives" (in Smidt 1992: 197).

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[92] This is my translation of the Indonesian: "*Kita berwajah jelek, berambut keriting, kulit hitam, makan pinang, dianggap tertinggal. Mari kita kuburkan semua itu dan kembali berjuang dan berusaha agar semua anggapan keliru itu kita buktikan pada masa-masa yang akan datang*" (Tifa Irian 1998:12).

[93] Anthropologist Michael Hitchcock has analyzed the representation of Irianese peoples in Indonesian publications (see Hitchcock 1985).

Early accounts also indicate that locals exerted the control they could over the trade in their cultural objects. The hardest things to buy were said to be objects that local peoples were still using for their own spiritual purposes, like *amfyanir* (or *korwar*) ancestor figures in Biak, and sacred flutes from the ceremonial houses of Lake Sentani and Humboldt Bay. Missionaries who attempted to get local peoples to turn in their ritual objects associated with animism reported that local peoples would hide or turn in brand new carvings to avoid have to turn in the objects that remained important to them (particularly in Biak). Once villagers had converted to Christianity or were forbidden to keep their ritual paraphernalia, they were willing and eager to at the very least sell and receive some return for the loss of their objects. Before long, in many communities Papuans identified the sorts of objects foreigners were collecting and began making them specifically for trade. Jac. Hoogerbrugge noted that in the Asmat in the 1960s, Asmat carvers who saw foreigners chop off the intricately carved openwork tops of canoe paddles and leave the shafts behind, began making only the openwork tops, called *ajour*, which eventually became a new style of carving (Hoogerbrugge 1993:150-1).

The following chapters explore some of the diverse responses that local communities have had to foreign contact and intrusion into their lands and their lives. These range from extreme despair and resignation at the changes to their communities that have accompanied development in the region, to armed resistance in defiance of foreign domination and control. The case studies conclude with examples of Irianese artists whose sense of place and commitment to their art and culture has given them powerful, creative visions for the future.

CHAPTER 4

GLOBAL INFLUENCES: FREEPORT'S PATRONAGE OF KAMORO ART

None of the guidebooks on Irian Jaya will lead you to the town of Timika on the Southwest coast of Irian Jaya[94] (see Map, Figure 4-1). Timika is the main town servicing the needs of the worlds' largest copper and gold mine, operated by P.T. Freeport, Indonesian subsidiary of Freeport McMoran Inc.[95] At present, virtually no tourists seem to turn up in Timika, as the town is not of particular appeal to tourists and the mine is only accessible to official visitors.[96]

Following a trip to the Asmat region of Irian Jaya, an area renowned for its carvers; in early December of 1995 I unexpectedly arrived in Timika, some 150 kilometers up the coast from the Asmat town of Agats, and found myself stuck there for the next four days.[97] This provided me with some time to explore. In downtown Timika, to my surprise, I came across a spectacular large wooden building that was carved and painted with tribal motifs. It was so unquestionably "tribal," yet unlike anything I had previously encountered in my travels or in my literature review of Irianese arts. Its appearance was somewhat reminiscent of a *haus tambaran* from the Sepik region of PNG, if only because of its colourful and highly decorated facade. The sign out front identified the building as the "*Gedung Seni Kamoro*" (The Kamoro Art Centre - see Figure 4-2).

Historically, the arts of this region are not well documented, and I had no knowledge of their existence. Off the beaten tourist path, I felt I had made my own "discovery"[98]... (Excerpts from 1995 field notes).

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[94] The three most common guidebooks relevant to Irian Jaya are: Lonely Planet's *Indonesia*, Periplus's *Irian Jaya* by Kal Muller or Bill Dalton's *Indonesia Handbook*. None of these recommend Timika as a tourist destination.

[95] PT Freeport Indonesia is the Indonesian subsidiary of the multinational resource extraction company, Freeport McMoran Inc., which recently changed its name to Freeport McMoran Copper and Gold reflecting the significance of the company's operations in Irian Jaya (referred to in this thesis as Freeport). Freeport headquarters are in New Orleans, USA.

[96] While there has been some talk of Freeport offering mine tours, the company seems unlikely to open its doors in this way. According to company spokes people, they already have more than enough official visitors to accommodate each day, so many in fact, that in 1992 Freeport decided to build its own hotel to accommodate company guests, the Sheraton Timika, discussed further in this Chapter.

[97] The only commercial plane out of Agats (Merpati) was cancelled for several weeks. Eventually, I caught a ride out of Agats on a cargo (luggage) boat chartered by a Canadian tour group. It went to Timika, a sizeable town with a commercial airport from which I could return to the provincial capital Jayapura... but not for a full week, because all flights out of Timika were fully booked for days (for reasons that will become apparent later in this chapter)

[98] The Mimika / Kamoro territory ranges 300 kilometres between Etna Bay and the Otakwa River. Mimika and Kamoro are names of rivers in the area, and both are used interchangeably to refer to the same group of people and the territory they inhabit. Most of the writing on the arts of the region uses the name Mimika. The last major publication on the arts of the region was by the Dutch scholar Simon Kooijman, published in 1984, and does not include a reference to Irian Jaya or West New Guinea in the title – one of the reasons I was unaware that the art existed and therefore felt I had "discovered" something that I did not know existed when I first saw the *Gedung Seni Kamoro*.

This chapter presents a case study that examines the motivation and effects of contemporary art patronage along the southwestern coastal region of Irian Jaya. Over the course of the past decade, a new patron of the arts, the transnational mining company, P.T. Freeport Indonesia (to be referred to from here on as Freeport), has been actively involved in sponsoring local art production in this region. This patronage takes place within a very specific context, for Freeport is mining in the nearby mountains, and in 1997 accounted for 88% of export income from the province (Ballard 1998:438).[99] The artists who have received Freeport patronage are predominantly from the lowland Kamoro, Sempan (their immediate neighbours) and Asmat tribes. The Kamoro, and two highlands tribes, the Amungme and Damal, are the three groups indigenous to Freeport's project area or Contract of Work (COW).[100] The Amungme are the indigenous inhabitants in the highlands vicinity where the mining site is located while the Kamoro inhabit the swampy coastal lowlands area where the mine's tailings or waste accumulates in the Ajkwa river, and where its portside facilities are located (see Figure 4-1).

Just how P.T. Freeport came to be the new patron and instigator of the Kamoro artistic revival, is a complicated story that demonstrates external patronage and international manipulation of politics and culture in the region. This chapter raises the following questions: what is patronage and how does it affect art production? To what extent has patronage changed in the region and what has been the effect of that change in patronage? Who is in control of art production? What control does the patron have, vis a vis the control of the artist? What motivates patrons to support the arts? And vice versa: what motivates artists to accept particular instances of patronage? To what extent is the exchange between patron and artist reciprocal?

The Politics of Patronage

To begin this discussion, it is necessary for me to clarify my use of the term patronage. Patronage virtually always indicates some type of control or influence of the patron over the artist. In tribal communities, this patronage was often a collective act on the part of an entire village, and artists were expected to maintain the prerogatives of the community in producing art according to established protocols for specific events or uses. A post-colonial perspective has

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[99] Most of this wealth is collected in taxes and royalties by the Indonesian national government in Jakarta and there is a strong sense in Irian Jaya that most of this wealth should remain in the province.

[100] Freeport's sponsorship of artistic activities for the Amungme and Damal appears to have been negligible.

allowed for a broadened definition of patronage, because it understands the cultural expressions of subjugated post-colonial peoples as influenced by the colonial power. Colonial culture and colonial patronage are seen to have favoured and promoted certain forms of cultural expression over others, particularly those most in keeping with the colonizing culture. Ashcroft et.al. (1998) define patronage as:

> ... a term that refers to the economic or social power that allows cultural institutions and cultural forms to come into existence and be valued and promoted. Patronage can take the form of a simple and direct transaction, such as the purchase and commissioning of works of art by wealthy people, or it can take the form of the support and recognition of social institutions that influence the production of culture (Ashcroft et.al 1998: 43-44).

This definition of patronage is broader than conventional definitions that denote the financial sponsorship of artists and the commissioning of artworks from artists by wealthy or powerful individuals and institutions. It explicitly recognizes that patronage is a form of power, whether it is economic or political, that can significantly influence the forms and uses of art and culture. This definition then, in my view, includes the support of artistic expression that reinforced their image of superiority and the suppression of cultural practices they found threatening or distasteful. Patronage, therefore, can be more than mere philanthropy; it can become a politicized act.[101] I believe this definition with all its post-colonial economic implications, reflects the situation observable around Freeport.

History of the Kamoro and Kamoro Arts

The Kamoro people have received far less international and national attention than their neighbours and traditional enemies to the southeast, the Asmat.[102] The Asmat are renowned

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[101] In the west, corporate patronage of the arts was criticised in the early 1970s when socially and environmentally conscious artists and activists began making social and environmental statements in their art (e.g. Hans Haake). At the same time, national governments were finding it increasingly difficult to fund the arts and non-state corporations increasingly became the sponsors of art and culture. Some of the more socially and environmentally conscious artists saw immediately how corporations did not sponsor arts that denounced their corporate activities as socially unjust or as detrimental to the environment. Comparable criticisms of sponsorship of indigenous arts by corporations actively and contestedly exploiting resources in the lands of the same indigenous peoples has occurred in Canada as well. One example is the controversy surrounding "The Spirit Sings" exhibition which was boycotted by the Lubicon Cree due to the corporate sponsorship of Shell Oil, with whom they were engaged in a dispute.

[102] Most of the discussion in this section draws on the article by a Catholic missionary who worked with the Crosier mission and the neighbouring Asmat people, Father F. Trenkenschuh, O.S.C. (Ordo Sanctae Crucis, indicating he is a member of the Crosier Order) (Trenkenschuh 1970). He explains that Kamoro and Asmat languages are related and together form one language family, namely the Kamoro-Asmat

internationally as former headhunters and for their traditional carving, hailed as among the world's finest tribal or "primitive" art still being produced today. The Asmat will proudly tell you how their villages have been visited by such celebrities as Michael Jackson, Arnold Schwarzenegger, and Mick Jagger (who are reported by the Asmat to have arrived and stayed aboard yachts, travelling to the villages to buy art by day and partying on deck well into the evening).[103] That some Asmat are aware of these global superstars, suggests that they are not isolated or "primitive" as tour operators would like us to believe.[104] Until very recently, Kamoro artists have been largely obscured on the international scene, overshadowed by their Asmat neighbours. There are several possible reasons for this, which I will outline below.

Historically, the Kamoro came into contact with foreigners much earlier than did the Asmat. As early as the 17th century, it is reported that Chinese traders came to the Kamoro area to hunt crocodiles and trade with the local people who subsequently adopted Chinese gongs and dishes, which they acquired as items of bride price exchange (Trenkenschuh 1970: 78). In 1632, the Dutch explorer Jan Carstenz, sailing along the south coast, first saw the distant snow capped peaks that would later bear his name and draw other Europeans to explore the southern interior of West New Guinea. Catholic missionaries entered the Mimika region in 1927-28, some thirty years before contact with the Asmat was established and before the 1938 western "discovery" of the Baliem Valley in the central highlands.[105] Catholic missionaries began the work of settling the nomadic population into permanent villages and setting up schools, which was continued under the Dutch authorities. During WWII, an estimated 1000 Japanese occupied the Mimika

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language family. This language family is made up of approximately six distinct Kamoro dialects and six distinct Asmat dialects (Trenkenschuh 1970:77).

[103] Tobias Schneebaum, a world expert on Asmat culture is said to have accompanied some of these tours. These celebrity visits seem to have received little Western media coverage, so it came as some shock to me to be told this by villagers in Agats, though it seemed matter of course for the Asmat to receive such high profile visitors. They delighted in telling these stories and were most curious to hear about how famous these people were in the West. No concerts seem to have been played in the area, so we might assume that Asmat has become a place - so underdeveloped and remote - where these stars can get away from it all and relax in a place where they stand out only as another Westerner with obvious wealth. In Agats, the main town of the region, there are only two modest *losmen* for tourists and visitors, but according to stories told by town dwellers the celebrity visitors lived and ate on their yachts and made day trips upriver into the villages.

[104] Isolation from Western influence is seen in Western 'primitivist' thought as proof of the 'authenticity' of the tribal culture. The notion that other cultures can not remain 'pure' or maintain their integrity in the face of Western influence is now seen as ethnocentric. Tourists are encouraged to seek authentic and different experiences from their overseas holidays by tour companies promoting cultural tourism along these lines.

[105] The American adventurer Richard Archbold 'discovered' what he called the Grand Valley of the central highlands, a highly populated area hitherto unknown to Europeans. The Grand Valley is today known as the Baliem valley, and this region will be discussed further in Chapter Six (see Archbold 1941).

area, and according to Fr. F. Trenkenschuh, O.S.C., the soldiers were harsh and brutal with local people who did not assist them. Father Trenkenschuh suggests that it was this cruel treatment that solidified the Mimikans reactions toward outsiders. He writes "This further contact with the Japanese had, I believe, lasting effects on the people's attitude toward both government and mission" (Trenkenschuh 1970: 78).

Father Trenkenschuh faults the successive Dutch, Japanese and Indonesian governments' lack of local development and unfulfilled promises to the people as contributing to the Mimikans' negative and apathetic attitude towards foreigners, which manifested itself as passive hostility and resistance. Overconsumption of *segera* palm wine, a traditional alcoholic drink made by the Kamoro, has been documented as a problem throughout the history of contact.[106] Trenkenschuh writes that at times the situation was so bad that few missionaries would remain in the area for longer than a year at a time (Trenkenschuh 1970: 79). Despite the similarity in the artistic styles and ritual practices of the Kamoro and Asmat, the Kamoro were overlooked while the Asmat became subjects of international attention. The mystery surrounding the disappearance of Michael Rockefeller, (as his body was never recovered, rumours circulated that he was possibly the victim of cannibalism, a revenge attack on the enemy "white" tribe) also captured the West's imagination. The unwillingness of the Kamoro people to engage with foreigners in either an impressive and aggressive show of force and prowess or in a friendly and cooperative way[107] may be part of the reason why foreigners have not been strongly attracted to the Kamoro or their arts, as they lack romantic or exotic appeal, or perhaps they have simply been overshadowed by the popularity of Asmat art

Following World War II and up until the early 1990s, the Kamoro or Mimika area was not well known for its arts or its cultural enthusiasm. Yet, in 1954, Dr. J. Pouwer, a Dutch government ethnologist determined of the Kamoro that "They had developed the ability to be totally Christian in the presence of the pastor but totally Mimikan with all their beliefs and practices intact when they were alone" (Trenkenschuh 1970: 78). Pouwer noted that the Kamoro's attitudes to foreigners and reactions to situations of contact went through a series of distinct phases:

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[106] Freeport publications have referred to alcoholism amongst the Kamoro as a problem in their community development initiatives.

[107] The idea that passive behaviours can be deliberate and effective forms of cultural resistance has recently been taken more seriously by academics. What fieldworkers such as missionaries and government workers had observed on the ground became a subject of anthropological and sociological discourse in the early 1980s (see James Scott 1985,).

> Initially the people showed both enmity and hostility as well as a respectful fear of the intruders. Gradually this fear was replaced by a period of cautious reproachment which developed into a stage of active good will and a strong desire for Western goods. Then a serious turning point was reached. Real disappointment with both outsider and all that they represented replaced the good will. This hostility could not manifest itself with direct resistance so it took the form of passive resistance to any attempts to change their nomadic and ritual way of life. This passive resistance became a weapon to kill the contact situation – but it was also realistically accompanied by a type passive resignation to the outsider's permanent presence. In effect, they could do nothing about outsiders – but they at least did not need to cooperate with him [sic]. Mimika had reached the place where they would respond only to force (Pouwer 1954, paraphrased in Trenkenschuh 1970: 78).

Trenkenschuh also made this observation:

> It is not a pleasant sight – a people totally indifferent to your presence; people educated but without a place in their own society. Mimika strikes a person as a dead area filled with zombies. There is no work and no interest in work. By 1970, almost all art had disappeared and all artists were old men. Religion of the past is no longer celebrated and the Christian religion means nothing to the people. The past is gone forever. The present lacks vitality. The future holds no hope (Trenkenschuh 1970 78-9).

In his 1982 monograph on the art of the Mimika, Simon Kooijman also quoted Trenkenschuh, who stated that Mimika "is a society without pride in itself and one that totally lacks any sense of excitement or enjoyment of life" (Kooijman 1984). In April of 1998, the first Kamoro art and cultural festival took place, and there appeared to be plenty of excitement surrounding the event. What happened to bring such excitement to this place?

Negotiating its place – Freeport's entanglement in Indonesia's cultural politics

In 1936 Dutch geologist Jean Jacques Dozy, a member of the Colijn expedition to climb Mount Carstensz, took the first rock samples from Mount Ertsberg, a mineral rich rock outcropping in the Carstensz valley, a location that he remarked was so remote that "It was just like a mountain of gold on the moon" (Mealey 1996: 71). In 1959 Freeport Sulphur's chief of explorations, Forbes Wilson came in contact with Dozy's expedition report and conducted a second expedition in collaboration with a Dutch mining company to determine the mining prospects of the region. "The results of this second expedition were sufficiently promising for Freeport to pursue their option on the deposit, but the takeover of Dutch New Guinea by Indonesia in 1962 forced a delay in its development" (Ballard 1997a: 2).

The Freeport mine has a long history of entanglement in the cultural and economic politics of Indonesia, as it must negotiate its terms of operation with the Indonesian government. The New Order government awarded Freeport its first Contract of Work in 1967, which represented the first foreign investment enterprise to be undertaken during Suharto's New Order regime. The Indonesian government was slow to provide basic utilities and infrastructure to the area, so Freeport assumed responsibility for almost all of these services. After five years of intensive infrastructure development, the mine was ready.

President Suharto made an official visit to the province for the mine's inauguration in 1972. The President "rode by jeep up the magnificent road, and the next day named Tembagapura -- 'Copper City' -- and dedicated the new mine. He also, unexpectedly and on the spot, renamed the province Irian Jaya, or "Victorious Irian." (Mealey 1996: 106). The renaming of the province symbolizes the deep sentimental and financial importance of Irian Jaya to Indonesia and the imagined limitless resource wealth of the province. During the 1970s and 1980s, as mine productivity grew, Freeport revenue became an integral part of the Indonesian economy. In 1988, Freeport was the highest corporate taxpayer in Indonesia and what was once a small and relatively obscure mine in Irian Jaya was considered one of Indonesia's ten 'national assets'. (Ballard 1997a: 3). The Indonesian government is also a "minority owner," owning a 10% share of the company. Provincially, the mine accounts for 88% of Irian Jaya's non-oil exports, though there is much resentment about how much of these profits actually make it back to the province once it has been paid out in royalties to Jakarta. Freeport had known that the Ertsberg's gold and copper wealth would not last more than the twenty years it took to exploit the orebody, so company executives at this time had a short-term view of their work in Irian Jaya. But this vision was about to change.

Grasberg discovery and expansion

In 1987, a massive new ore body was discovered very close to the existing Freeport mine and it changed the future outlook for the company, the local people and the Indonesian government in Irian Jaya. The discovery of the Grasberg deposit "saw Freeport enter the mining stratosphere" (Ballard 1997a: 3). Freeport is now the "single richest mining complex in the world," with the world's third largest reserves of copper, the second largest reserves of gold, and silver reserves.[108] To explain the impact of this discovery, Chris Ballard states:

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[108] Chris Ballard adds that the full extent of the mine's wealth is as yet unknown as the Grasberg orebody is so big that its depth has yet to be determined (1997a:2).

> The process of discovery of the different orebodies that make up the Freeport complex is important to grasp because it's the variable financial viability and potential of the mine at different stages in its history that has yielded different strategies by the company in relation to the indigenous communities (Ballard 1997a: 2).

With the Grasberg discovery came massive expansion of Freeport operations, infrastructure and output. In 1991, the company signed a new fifty-year Contract of Work (COW).[109] Freeport celebrated their contract renewal with an ambitious Expanded Infrastructure Project intended to dramatically improve facilities for its 15,000 employees through the creation of an entirely new town out of "pristine jungle." This New Town (in its various stages referred to as New Town and Kuala Kencana) was to be located in the lowlands, approximately twenty kilometers from the boomtown of Timika that had expanded rapidly during the Ertsberg years. The Grasberg discovery and Freeport's massive expansion resulted in increased local and international scrutiny of the company's corporate, environmental and social practices and its cooperation with the Indonesian government and military.

Freeport and indigenous peoples

> The discovery of the Grasberg orebody in 1987 and the realization that they might be there another 50 years forced Freeport to reconsider its policy towards the Amungme [as well as the Kamoro] - or rather, to develop a policy in the first place... (Ballard 1997a: 7).

In 1967, Freeport established a pattern for its interactions with local peoples when it began setting up its highland facilities. For the Amungme, the Ertsberg (known to the Amungme as *Jelsegel Ongopsegel*), and nearby peaks were home to their ancestral spirits and formed the basis of their cosmology. Amungme people resisted Freeport's encroachment by erecting wooden crosses (*salib*) - signs traditionally used to demarcate that "trespass beyond the point indicated was not permitted by the owner of the land" (Ballard 1997a: 5).[110]

The 1967 Contract of Work did not stipulate any land compensation for Amungme people who were displaced from their land. The only compensation paid was that deemed reasonable by the Indonesian government to cover the costs of relocation and new dwellings -

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[109] The new Contract of Work stipulates a 30 year renewal of Freeport's Contract of Work with two 10 year extension options and a new Contract of Work area of an additional 26,000km^2 (known as COW-B).

[110] Freeport has long been sceptic of the Amungme's claims but the recent doctoral thesis by John Ellenberger, a former missionary in the area confirms the significance of the mountains to tribes in the area, including the Amungme (see Ellenberger 1996; Ballard 1997a).

which amounted to some tobacco and trade goods. The Amungme, continued to protest as Freeport continued its explorations, and in 1974 a formal agreement known as the "January Agreement" was signed by Freeport and the Amungme. While Freeport thought it had been given consent for its Contract of Work area from the Amungme, today Amungme leaders claim they did not realize the full implications of what they were agreeing to and that they did not ever intend to give up permanent rights to their land (see Ballard 1997a:5-6).

In the past few years, resentment of the mining company has also grown among the lowland Kamoro whose health and livelihood has been compromised by the company's waste tailings (pulverized rock) and chemical additives expelled into the Ajkwa river. Some Kamoro tribes have also been relocated without adequate compensation for the loss of their ancestral lands. Both the Kamoro and the Amungme have suffered the effects of massive migrations to the area – both Irianese and other Indonesians looking to get a job with Freeport. To the dismay of local peoples and other Irianese, semi-skilled migrant labourers from other islands of Indonesia fill most positions.

In 1991, Freeport's first Community Development and Government Relations Department was launched in an effort to improve company relations with the local peoples. Community development programs established by the department included small-scale livestock rearing projects and small-business incubator projects. The concerns of indigenous peoples within the mine's jurisdiction, on the other hand, include access to training, employment and economic benefits from the mine, the unauthorized appropriation of their lands, destruction and resettlement of villages, the invasion by migrants and transmigrants from other areas, the strong Indonesian military presence[111] and associated human rights abuses, a general atmosphere of insecurity, and lack of concern for their well-being (see Ballard 1997a). Many of Freeport's development projects were not well received by local peoples; some failed miserably. Local peoples sought fundamental change in their relationship to the company, including recognition of their rights and what they perceived as company responsibilities.

From the start and increasingly as its operation grew in size, Freeport has been the target of resistance movements by indigenous peoples dissatisfied with the company and its

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[111] The number of Indonesian soldiers stationed within the concession area varies considerably with the political climate but a rough estimate of 2000 at any given time is realistic, fluctuating up to 3000 in times of unrest (Ballard 1996:44). These forces include a Kostrad (Strategic Reserve) unit whose sole purpose is the defence of the mine. In each of its Contracts of Work with the government, Freeport has been obliged to house, supply and transport government officials and members of the security forces within the COW area and this is increasingly a point of contention (Ballard 1997a:4).

collaboration with the Indonesian government and military involvement in the province.[112] The mine's security has been forcefully guarded by a strong security presence controlled largely by the Indonesian military. Indigenous resistance has been met with violent, and sometimes lethal punishment. In 1995, the first independent human rights report in years from within Irian Jaya was released internationally by the Australian Council for Overseas Aid, a non-government organization concerned with issues of development and human rights.[113] The report was originally written by local Irianese in Indonesian and was edited and translated into English for publication by ACFOA (see ACFOA April 1995). Known as the ACFOA report, it attests to human rights abuses in the vicinity of the Freeport mine, which had been ignored for almost 30 years. The human rights violations described in the ACFOA report were subsequently investigated by the Catholic Church of Jayapura (see Bishop Munninghoff's report, May 1995) and the Indonesian National Human Rights Commission. Reports by both the Catholic Church and the Indonesian National Human Rights Commission supported the ACFOA allegations that human rights violations had occurred in the area from June 1994 through to February 1995, and the Munninghoff report included additional evidence of another massacre of a further 11 people in May of 1995. The violations were committed by the Indonesian military, as reprisals to resistance by members of the OPM who in 1994 and early 1995 staged a series of flag raisings of the West Papuan Morning Star Flag in the vicinity of the mine. Human rights violations were of six types: torture of civilians, sixteen murders (including the 11 which occurred in May), arbitrary detentions and arrests, excessive surveillance, disappearance of civilians and the destruction of property. While Freeport has denied any involvement in these incidents, and Bishop Munninghoff's statement referred specifically to abuses committed by Indonesian soldiers and did not directly implicate Freeport employees or security staff, Freeport was indirectly implicated in these reports, as abuses were reported to have taken place at Freeport company facilities, including Freeport security posts, Freeport shipping containers and workshops. Within Indonesia, four soldiers were sentenced to minor jail terms as a result of the reports, though many of the

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[112] On several occasions during the 1970s and 1980s, organised resistance activities targeted Freeport infrastructure. In 1977, Irianese seeking independence blew up the main pipeline from the mine to the coast, costing the company between US$6-11 million dollars (Ballard 1996:33). Some of the resistance activities around the mine have been lead by members of the OPM and have included raising the morning star (the West Papuan) flag. The problems around the mine have aggravated clashes between military and separatists since it is so heavily protected by the Indonesian military and represents unwanted colonisation to the separatists.

[113] Chris Ballard (1997a:15) points out that prior to 1995, all impact assessment reports of the mine sponsored by Freeport focussed strictly on environmental impacts of the mine and did not address social impacts or human rights concerns.

additional findings of Bishop Munninghoff's report have not been investigated further (Ballard 1997a: 9). Freeport has denied involvement in these violations and has blamed the Indonesian military for human rights problems around the mine. However, independent human rights analysts have not received permission to investigate in the region in order to assess whether the company has been involved or not (Bryce 1998).

The local Kamoro and Amungme communities have continued to contest the presence of Freeport and the Indonesian military in the region (see Appendix A for a chronology of significant events that occurred during the time span of my research for this thesis). The ACFOA and Munninghoff reports have drawn increased international attention to the region. One effect of the 1994 to 1995 human rights violations has been an increased awareness on the part of local peoples about the processes of documenting abuses and working with international NGOs to publicize their situation. In April 1996, the Amungme tribal council, LEMASA (*Lembaga Musyawarah Adat Suku Amungme*),[114] in defiance of Freeport and the Indonesian government began two separate independent U.S. based legal challenges to Freeport's operations in their lands. Tom Beanal, a LEMASA leader, filed a federal class action lawsuit with the New Orleans District Court on behalf of the Amungme. The suit alleges Freeport's corporate policies have led to environmental destruction and human rights abuses amounting to "cultural genocide" and stipulated damages amounting to six billion U.S. dollars. While Beanal's suit has been rejected three times to date, a second class action suit by an Amungme elder, Yosefa Alomang, has been allowed to move forward in Louisiana state court. Alomang is an outspoken Amungme, who alleges she was taken from her home by Indonesian military in October 1994 and taken to a police station where she was locked in a closet for three weeks. Her lawsuit also claims environmental damages and human rights abuses. A LEMASA statement of December 12 1998, indicates its commitment to continue to press on with both lawsuits "until such time as a comprehensive, honest and fair solution has been reached between the parties, on an equal footing" (see LEMASA 1998).

The Amungme communities are almost unanimous in their support for LEMASA and leader, Tom Beanal. The tenacity of the Amungme people can be seen through the commitment of LEMASA, "which can justly claim to represent the vast majority of Amungme as its members" (Ballard 1997a: 10). Ballard also states that in "the rural areas beyond the townships of Timika and Tembagapura, LEMASA provides the only civil infrastructure of any consequence,

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[114] LEMASA is headed by four elected Directors who each lead a council of approximately 90 representatives from each of the Amungme settlements (Ballard 1997a: 10).

conducting its own censuses, and representing the interests of the more remote communities through an impressive network of volunteers" (Ballard 1997a: 10).[115]

In contrast to the cohesion of the Amungme, the Kamoro are more divided in their stance on Freeport. The Kamoro population is much higher than the Amungme population and more widely distributed. As a result the effects of the mine amongst the Kamoro vary significantly from one Kamoro community to another. Kamoro communities directly affected by the mine include those from the villages of Koperapoka Lama, Nawaripi Lama and Negeripi on the banks of the Ajkwa and Muamiuwa rivers. In January of 1997, members of these villages submitted a letter to Freeport on behalf of 87 families (totaling 300 people) protesting that the mine's tailings have forced them off of their ancestral lands, flooded sago groves and forests and poisoned the waters and fish with toxic chemicals and overburden (Kamoro Protest to Freeport 1997). Freeport's sponsorship of art and culture in southwestern Irian Jaya needs to be understood within this broader context.

A New Patron of the Arts

Freeport's first major sponsorship of the arts of Irian Jaya was in 1989 when it donated Rp267.5 million (at the time approximately US$ 140,000), to the art and cultural "Festival of Indonesia," which exhibited in the United States in 1990-91. This followed the 1987 discovery of Grasberg and Freeport's hope for continued operations within Indonesia and Irian Jaya. At this time it was to Freeport's advantage to foster cross-cultural appreciation and goodwill between the two countries. The organizer of this festival was the former Indonesian minister of foreign affairs, Dr. Mochtar Kusumaatmadja, and the festival was endorsed and promoted by both countries' governments and business communities. Of the three major exhibitions associated with the Festival, *Beyond the Java Sea: Art of Indonesia's Outer Islands* (see Taylor 1991), included some of the first art from Irian Jaya (other than Asmat) to tour the United States, although no Kamoro art appeared in the exhibition.[116]

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[115] Since 1996, Chris Ballard and Glenn Banks of the Australian National University have been conducting the first social mapping project of the area of the Freeport mine. This information is intended to provide detailed census information and histories of the Amungme and Kamoro peoples directly affected by the mine.

[116] The two other major exhibitions that toured with the Festival of Indonesia were: *Sculpture of Indonesia*, and *Court Arts of Indonesia*. Both of these exhibitions represented works of art that have been embraced more seriously by Western biased art historical approaches, the first focusing on the ancient classical Hindu Buddhist sculptures of Indonesia and the second on court arts which have generally been accorded status of art due to the precious materials they are made of and their association with royal patronage. *Beyond the Java Sea* was exhibited predominantly in Natural History Museums, as opposed to

In the period between Freeport's Grasberg discovery in 1987 and the renewal of its contract by the Indonesian Government in 1991, company involvement in arts, culture and community development programs increased dramatically. In 1990, the company established the Freeport Irian Jaya Foundation:

> The Foundation was created to assist the social and economic development of Irian Jaya with special emphasis on the population in the area of Freeport's exploration and mining activities... The Foundation accomplishes its objectives through (1) planning assistance, (2) the provision of infrastructure, (3) operations assistance in the early phases of new projects, (4) encouragement and support of selected new small economic enterprises and cultural activities, and (5) providing education and training opportunities (Freeport 1994:5).

Freeport's involvement with Kamoro arts and culture seems to have been instigated by the sub-provincial Fakfak Regency (*kecamatan*) government. Between 1990 and 1992 the government Department of Industry assisted Kamoro carvers by providing them with carving tools, sponsoring a short publication on Kamoro carving (see Terupun 1990) and by searching for a sponsor. On March 23, 1992, *Yayasan Freeport Irian Jaya*, the Freeport Irian Jaya Foundation, became the *Bapak Angkat* or "foster Father" of Kamoro arts and culture.

The *Gedung Seni Kamoro* or Kamoro Arts Centre[117] was built in 1993, serving both the function of a Freeport community development project and the broader interests of its Expanded Infrastructure Project. The main projects of Freeport's Expanded Infrastructure Project included the establishment and building of Kuala Kencana; an associated International Five Star Hotel for company guests – the Sheraton Timika; and an 18-hole golf course, the *Rimba Irian* (Indonesian for "Irian Jungle"). These new facilities are significant to the history of contemporary Kamoro arts because most of the art produced at the *Gedung Seni Kamoro* became incorporated into these new company settings. The *Gedung Seni Kamoro* is located in downtown Timika on the road out of town towards the mine and Freeport facilities including the Sheraton and Kuala Kencana (located twenty kilometers from Timika). This location is at odds with its tribal appearance because Timika is a booming Indonesian style town where more migrants and transmigrants live than do Kamoro.

The *Gedung* artists were happy to explain about the centre. The *Gedung Seni Kamoro*, they explained, was built in 1993 and was not based on a traditional Kamoro ceremonial house or

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art galleries. A fourth exhibition allowed later in the festival's planning process was an exhibit of modern Indonesian art. Modern Indonesian arts have also been excluded in much Western centric art history (see Wright 1994).

[117] The building is approximately 25 by 60 feet, and about 20 feet tall at the front side with the roof sloping down to a wall approximately 10 feet in height at the back.

karapao (Kamoro language), but has traditional motifs and elements derived from aspects of Kamoro art and culture (see Figure 4-2). The structure bears a striking similarity to a photograph of a Kamoro ceremonial house first published in an expedition report by British Ornithologists Union explorer Alfred Wollaston from 1912 (Figure 4-3). Similarities shared by the two structures are the shape of the building with a flat roof that slopes down at the back and multiple doors in the front as well as vertical supports along the front, which in the case of the *Gedung* are replaced by *mbitoro*, carved Kamoro poles that were erected in front of all ceremonial houses while they were in use. The *Gedung* is elevated on stilts above the ground with a corrugated iron roof and walls constructed of carved and painted wooden planks, rather than traditional panels of woven thatch as seen in Figure 4-3. The *Gedung* artists told me that carvings were made for the exterior of *karapao*, but that these were generally made on smaller panels or ceremonial shields called *yamate* (see Figure 4-17 and Kooijman 1992: 63). The *Gedung Seni Kamoro* was made more spectacular and "traditional" in appearance, with the all-over hand-carved patterns and coloured designs. The *Gedung* artists seemed proud of the building and their new careers as carvers sponsored by Freeport.[118]

Many of the *Gedung* artists were discovered in Kamoro villages relatively nearby to Timika and were invited to come to Timika to work at the centre. Timothius Samin, the head of the *Gedung*, told me he left his position as *kepala desa* (Indonesian government term for appointed government position of village head as opposed to a traditionally appointed village head) of Kiura village where he originates in order to come and work with the *Gedung*. Timothius and a second *Gedung* artist were part of a delegation of Irianese artists sent by the government to a training session on carving techniques and how to make a living from handicraft production in Bali in 1993.

The interior of the *Gedung* in 1995, was set up as a museum, with labels and displays including a small scale model of a *karapao* or ceremonial house erected for the traditional male initiation ritual and nose-piercing ceremony. Behind the *Gedung*, is a large work yard where carvers work on large pieces.[119] In Figure 4-4, two *Gedung* carvers are working on a large *wemawe* or *iwamapuku* ancestral figure poles destined for Kuala Kencana. *Gedung* carvers generally work in groups on the larger commissioned poles. It was estimated that a large pole

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[118] Despite the resentment and stigma associated with Freeport, employment with Freeport is considered prestigous by many local peoples.

[119] During my research trips to the *Gedung* in 1995, 1996 and 1998, there have been an assortment of simple houses at the back of the workyard where artists and their families live. Most recently, in 1998, I noted that several families were also living beneath the *Gedung* itself (in approximately a four foot clearance). By 1998, Timo, the head carver, had purchased a television and satellite dish for the *Gedung*.

like this one, would take roughly two weeks to complete for a team of five carvers using a chain saw to rough out the form and assorted chisels for finishing the carving. The *Gedung* received its first major commissions for carvings from Freeport for the Sheraton Hotel and Kuala Kencana. According to *Gedung* carvers, Freeport requested oversized replicas of *wemawe*, which were traditionally substantially smaller to fit with their landscaping designs (the largest were 400 centimeters high and 70 centimeters in diameter for landscaping in Kuala Kencana). *Wemawe* statues traditionally ranged between 40 to 180 centimeters in height. Freeport provided carvers with ironwood from their site excavations for these commissions.

The design scheme of the Sheraton Timika focuses on Kamoro and Asmat art. There are roughly a dozen large Kamoro poles from the *Gedung* situated on the hotel grounds. The interior decoration was inspired by Mary-Anne Murphy, the wife of Paul Murphy, then director of P.T. Freeport's Irian Jaya operations. Mrs. Murphy incorporated as much local art as she could into the hotel.[120] It is an international standard hotel intended almost exclusively to serve the needs of Freeport. [121] The Sheraton group has been guaranteed payment for fifty percent occupancy by the company every night (the hotel has 84 rooms). Tourism in Timika is almost exclusively restricted to visitors to the mine (who must have special authorization) and very few casual tourists make it to Timika. I observed that the hotel can be quite discriminatory towards lower income peoples and non-Freeport guests or employees and backpackers or budget tourists are discouraged.[122] Administrative employees of the hotel are mostly Indonesian or European. Many of the lower level employees are Irianese (though few are Kamoro or Amungme). Service employees dealing with guests in the hotel generally wear dress that reflects an "Irianese" style of dress (such as Batik Irian or a headband made of local materials).

Adjoining the hotel's Timako bar (which features a spectacular Asmat soul ship hanging over the counter as well as big screen televisions with satellite links), is the billiard room (See Figure 4-5). The overall decor is comprised of Asmat shields and spears, the spears displayed in a pool cue like rack. The effect is somewhat reminiscent of early colonial collections and the way a curiosity room would have been decorated without any labeling - as talking pieces of sorts. In this way, objects once made by Asmat men to terrify and stun their enemy in warfare, are

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[120] This is in keeping with a general trend in hotel design in Indonesia given Indonesia's promotion as a cultural tourism destination (also seen for instance in Balinese hotels decorated with Balinese temple sculptures).

[121] The hotel claims to have five-star service and rooms and four-star dining facilities.

[122] An example of the hotel's discriminatory policies is its prohibition of motorcycles on hotel grounds. Motorcycles are a common and relatively inexpensive form of transportation used by lower and middle class Indonesians.

neutralized and given only decorative meaning. Freeport's insensitivity to local artists is apparent in this treatment as these shields were carved recently and many purchased by Freeport executives at the annual Asmat auction where the names of artists are provided to the buyer of each carving, but no labels accompany or acknowledge these works.

The pathway to the pool is through a colonnade of larger than life *tifas* (hand drums), produced at the *Gedung*. Ancestral *wemawe* sculptures are scattered in the surrounding gardens and overlook the pool (Figure 4-6). There is no indication of what is truly "traditional" and what is a creative adaptation for design purposes. With the exception of paintings and pastel drawings done by Western artists that portray Irianese tribal peoples peering out from behind foliage or "in the village," none of the artwork displayed in the Sheraton is acknowledged. *Noken* (hand woven or crocheted carrying bags), are framed behind glass, as if they are 'art', but their makers are not credited as artists.

There is a small carving shop in the hotel that sells local Asmat and Kamoro woodcarvings. The shop was started as one of Freeport's small-business incubator projects. To add insult to injury the hotel gift shop sells small bronze replicas of *wemawe* made in Bali that sell for substantially more than the woodcarvings made by Kamoro artists in the carving shop (see Figure 4-7).[123] While the hotel appears to be a place that embraces local culture, on October 17, 1990, neighbouring airport facilities were burnt by Kamoro people in reaction to the appropriation of land for the Sheraton Hotel. As with most protests surrounding Freeport facilities, this one was quickly brought under control and business resumed (Ballard 1996:36).

Freeport's New Town: Kuala Kencana – "Golden Estuary"

New Town became essential because Freeport's operations were expanding to such an extent that it made sense for them to build a New Town to house its employees and lowland logistical and administrative operations. New Town consists of an *alun-alun* Javanese style town square, a retail and entertainment complex, a sportsplex, a mosque, a multi-denominational Christian Church, P.T. Freeport Indonesia administrative offices and a government office

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[123] In April of 1998, these "made in Bali" 6 inch hollow bronze *wemawe* figurines were selling for Rp 130,000 (at the time of the monetary crisis in April 1998 this was approximately US$13). One foot high wooden Kamoro *wemawe* sold for approximately Rp40,000 or US$4. These bronze replicas were available only in the Sheraton gift shop and not from the *Gedung* or any of the other art and souvenir shops in Timika. They were packaged in cardboard boxes lined with batik cloth with Asmat motifs.

Figure 4-9. Nyoman Nuarta Studio, *Shield*, centerpiece of the *alun-alun* (town square) of Kuala Kencana, 1995, cast bronze on fountain base, ca. 10m x 4m.

building.[124] Freeport's information brochure on New Town provides a sense of the town's overall concept, demonstrating that the town was planned by Indonesian designers to fit into a perceived Indonesian town aesthetic (as opposed to a local Kamoro or even Irianese style of village plan):

> The Town Center was designed by an Indonesian consortium led by P.T. Puri. The heart of the Center will be the Indonesian town square or *alun-alun*, the central congregating area. The *alun-alun* will be surrounded by the community's main symbols of authority. The future government office building will be positioned north of the square. The other two corners will be anchored by the PTFI office building and the Retail and Entertainment Complex. The triangle symbolizes the daily relationship in the community between Government, Commerce, and People. This interface will then be blended with the spiritual, as the two primary religious facilities flank either side of the triangle, representing their influence in all aspects of daily life (Freeport Indonesia 1994, pages unmarked).

In late November and early December of 1995, final preparations were being made in New Town in anticipation of the inauguration and official opening of the town site by President Suharto. On December 4th, I was invited to join Freeport staff and *Gedung* artists at the entrance roundabout to the town to watch the installation of five *wemawe* poles (each approximately 4 to 5 meters tall and 0.7 meters in diameter), see Figure 4-8. The poles were lifted into place by Freeport cranes. A short dance was performed by Kamoro men and women (some wore festive outfits to give a semblance of traditional dress, yet others wore Javanese batik) during which Freeport expatriot personnel joined in. As is traditional with the Kamoro, the men danced at the front, moving forward in a group with the women falling in behind them, and drummers following. The event was informal and finished within an hour.

Nyoman Nuarta's "Shield"

The following day, on December 5, 1995, President Suharto officially opened New Town and named it Kuala Kencana (Golden Estuary). He also inaugurated the artistic centrepiece of the town at the center of the *alun-alun*, a monumental bronze-cast sculpture called *Shield*[125] (Figure 4-9). Freeport commissioned the sculpture from the Balinese artist Nyoman Nuarta, a favorite

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[124] In the original concept phase of New Town, the town plans included an "Irian Jaya Culture and Nature Park" which has yet to materialise. The New Town brochure reads: "Directly east of the entrance road, this park will be an area dedicated to celebrating the traditional culture, art, customs and skills of the local people, as well as the flora and fauna of Irian Jaya" (Freeport Indonesia 1994, pages unmarked). While I have no real sense of what exactly was planned for this park, the association of local culture with local flora and fauna seems degrading.

[125] There is no name for this sculpture on the inauguration plaque signed by President Suharto. The work is titled "Shield" on the Equator Web magazine (1996).

artist of the late Ibu Tien Suharto (President Suharto's wife). Nuarta typically works on prestigious and monumentally scaled sculptures. With the assistance of his studio, he is currently working on the world's largest sculpture to be situated in Bali, the *Garuda* (Eagle) *Wisnu Kencana*, intended to be finished by the year 2000 to mark the millennium.[126]

The sculpture is made of a copper alloy with an oxidized copper finish. This green-blue colour is symbolic of the copper ore deposits found in the nearby Freeport mine concession. This copper ore has been cut into blocks and is used extensively in the landscaping of Kuala Kencana, including the *alun-alun*. The sculpture is approximately ten meters high. It sits on a three tiered black marble fountain base in the centre of the *alun-alun* park The central portion of the sculpture consists of four shield-shaped ovoids with stylized lacelike patterning reminiscent of the Asmat style of shield or contemporary panel carving unique to the village of Sawa-Erma (the designs on Sawa-Erma carvings are generally smaller and more tightly spaced creating an all over pattern that is unique in comparison with carvings from other Asmat regions (compare with Figure 4-5 and see Hoogerbrugge 1979:Figures 131-134). Raised on the middle of each shield are turtle figures derivative of motifs found on ancient petroglyphs along the shore of Lake Sentani at Doyo Lama. At the top of each of the four shields stands a human figure, also in Asmat style, with arms raised to support two spiraling birds of paradise (a common symbol of Irian Jaya). Traditionally, many Asmat shields are topped with part or all of a human figure that represents an ancestor – compare with the shields in the Sheraton Billiard Room (Figure 4-5).

Freeport claims this sculpture represents the Indonesian government sanctioned ideology *Pancasila*:

> The centrepiece will reflect the Republic of Indonesia Pancasila, the 'five pillars', which comprise the national philosophy – belief in the Almighty; Humanity; Unity in Indonesia; Consensus; Justice – and will celebrate Irian Jaya and Indonesian culture (Freeport Indonesia 1994, unpaginated).

Intentionally or not, *Shield*, with its pan Irianese motifs, also symbolizes many other aspects of Irian Jaya and its role in the Republic of Indonesia. The sculpture's monumental size can be seen to symbolize the great wealth that Freeport has brought to Indonesia, incorporated into the Indonesian New Order campaign of dotting its landscape, near and far, with nationalistic monuments. It also represents both Freeport's and the Indonesian government's lack of concern

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[126] Balinese farmers and peasants have protested against this sculpture because of its immense cost, condemning the wasteful spending of the government which could have put the money into local development projects (IRIP 1993). The project is currently delayed due to the economic crisis in Indonesia.

Figure 4-12. Bena with his carving of an *Asmat Golfer*, at his studio near Mapurujaya, April, 1998.

for the appropriation of individual cultural property. Kuala Kencana was carved out of jungle belonging to the Kamoro people. The town's name and design is Javanese and this, the central sculpture, has been made by a Balinese artist and his studio out of precious material mined from the land inhabited by the Amungme people, the waste of which is disposed into the river systems of the Kamoro people. This sculpture, set in the public context of Freeport's new enclave mining community, is monumental in size and can be approached from a distance by paths on all four sides that divide the central park, or *alun-alun.*

The Kamoro pole raising ceremony could have been delayed a day so that President Suharto might attend, but perhaps the event – one that celebrates traditional Kamoro art and artists, was not considered important enough. The modesty of this event must have contrasted sharply with the official opening of Kuala Kencana and New Town, which was closed to the public.[127] While Freeport maintains that Kuala Kencana was built for the benefit of all in the region, until now it has remained in effect a company enclave with spectacular facilities accessible only to an elite community.

Kuala Kencana also hosts an internationally recognized private 18-hole golf course, the *Rimba Irian*, managed by the Sheraton Timika. As in the hotel, the *Rimba Irian* clubhouse is decorated with local carvings and motifs and the interior is finished in a rustic style with local timber and stone. Golf club lampshades were made at the *Gedung Seni Kamoro* by local carvers who were provided with punches and copper sheeting and asked to apply Kamoro designs (See Figure 4-10). The round shapes with radiating line stenciled in Figure 4-10 are *mopere* (Kamoro), motifs central to all Kamoro carving, which represent the navel and the essence of life to Kamoro people (Pouwer 1954:78; Kooijman 1984: 4). The lampshades were produced in two styles – round table lamps for the dining tables of the golf club and four sided pyramid shades for the entrance hall. The lamps are complimented by batik tablecloths with stylized Irianese motifs manufactured in Java (Figure 4-11). In the front entrance, several two-foot high wooden *wemawe* statues had hollowed heads filled with sand to serve as ashtrays (Figure 4-23).

Asmat Golfer, by Bena

In the *Rimba Irian* clubhouse, a new style of carving, statuettes of Asmat golfers, were displayed behind glass with engraved plaques on them as the *Rimba Irian*'s tournament trophies.

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[127] Every hotel in Timika was full for the week surrounding Suharto's visit and there was a visible military presence in the streets.

These were also used to decorate the pro shop (Figure 4-12). These Asmat sculptures are the innovation of an Asmat artist named Bena. Bena moved from Agats in 1993 to take part in one of Freeport's business incubator projects. When the project fell apart, he decided to set up a carving studio with other Asmat friends and family members in a small village between Timika and Mapuru-Jaya (see Figure 4-13). He claims to have been the first person to carve golf figures and he has had great success in selling these to official Freeport visitors to Kuala Kencana's golf course. The golfing sculptures are in a contemporary "daily life" Asmat style, stripped of body markings and conspicuous male genitalia, the hallmarks of traditional Asmat carving. The carving of secular and everyday scenes began with the Asmat auctions, and were encouraged by officials at the Asmat Museum of Culture and Progress who felt this new style of carving could offer new possibilities for the creative expression of issues of concern to Asmat peoples in today's changing environment and social setting. We know the figure that Bena has carved is an Asmat man golfing because of his pierced septum and the plaited arm and leg bands, traditionally worn by Asmat people. The addition of fibers from the sago palm was also a characteristic of traditional Asmat carvings. This sculpture shows the Asmat stylization of the human body, though the posture is more life like than in many traditional Asmat carvings. Many of the newer style of genre carvings have a flat carved wooden base which allows for a more representational or narrative scene to be carved, in which all elements rest upon a horizontal plane, creating a more visually realistic depiction of space. One interesting feature of this carving (and that in Figure 4-13), is the unrealistically small golf bag. This could reflect Bena's unfamiliarity with golfing or that Asmat artists are unaccustomed to carving in realistic style, or that they feel this it is unnecessary for such details to be portrayed literally.

While it seems unlikely that many Asmat people golf, it is interesting that Bena should suggest this possibility through his carvings. When I spoke with him he appeared to be amused by their content and the interest they have generated. I felt certain that to at least a small degree these carvings are an expression of Bena's hope for the future. Bena could have chosen to carve a Westerner golfing but instead the figure is an Asmat. These golfers are witty and playful, and they appeal to a Western audience because of this. As a result they sell more readily than the Kamoro carvings.

When I visited Bena in April of 1998, he and other Asmat in the studio were capitalizing on traffic between Timika, Kuala Kencana and the Sheraton and the site of the first Sempan-Kamoro Art and Cultural Festival -- "*Sempan Kamoro Kakuru Ndawaitita*" (Kamoro) -- *Pesta Budaya Sempan Kamoro* (Indonesian), in Hiripau village. As Asmat, these artists were not

involved in the cultural festival, so this was their way of cashing in on the event.[128] Ironically, the festival that Bena was excluded from, was modeled after the annual Asmat auction held in Agats (See Chapter Three).

Sempan-Kamoro Cultural Festival

From April 23 to 27, 1998, the first annual Kamoro art and cultural festival was held, sponsored by PT Freeport Indonesia and (nominally) the local government or *Kabupaten* of Timika (formerly *Kabupaten* FakFak). This festival has its origins in Freeport's 1996 decision to abandon its community development projects following negotiations in which local peoples expressed their lack of satisfaction with most of these projects. These negotiations took place after riots during March of 1996 that closed the mine for three days until military reinforcements arrived to control the demonstrators.[129] A 1% fund for local development was established instead. Under this agreement, 1% of the mine's annual revenue is paid to an assortment of NGOs set up by local people. This move is intended to distance Freeport from development problems and frustrations it feels should be directed at the local government. With this decision, Freeport deliberately removed itself from direct involvement in development projects, and its support of the *Gedung Seni Kamoro* ceased. While Kuala Kencana townsite and Freeport staff continue to commission works from carvers (who have made their home at the *Gedung*), disagreements over management have resulted in some of the Kamoro carvers leaving the centre.

As soon as it was established, the 1% fund was causing problems. While the highlands Amungme outright refused the offer, disputes over the way the money would be distributed caused fragmentation among the Kamoro (LEMASA 1996, Corporate Watch 1998). The idea for the Pesta Kamoro was in part intended to engender both pride and unity in the community. For years Freeport employees and executives have chartered company planes and flown down to Agats to attend the auction, and they have generally comprised the majority of the bidders since it is exceedingly difficult to reach Agats as casual tourists. In 1997 a delegation of Kamoro was invited to accompany Freeport staff to the Asmat auction in Agats to decide if they would like to have a similar auction in their area. Upon returning, Kamoro delegates including the head of the *Gedung Seni Kamoro*, Timotius Samin, decided they wanted to go ahead with an auction of their own.

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[128] Ursula Konrad, a noted Asmat art collector and scholar ordered twenty of Bena's golfing sculptures on this day.

[129] The riots started after a Dani man was injured as a result of being hit by a Freeport vehicle.

The auction was organized by a Freeport employee and anthropologist and Kal Muller, a photojournalist now in the employ of Freeport Indonesia.[130] Few expenses were spared. All Kamoro villages were invited to participate as were their close neighbours, the Sempan. To entice villagers to take part, each individual was paid Rp50,000 for participating.[131] All travel expenses, accommodation and food expenses were covered by Freeport. This was at considerable expense as some villagers came by motorized dugout canoe, some from 150 kilometers away, so fuel expenses were high.

The site chosen for the festival was a village called Hiripau, some 40 kilometers east of Timika. The site was chosen because of the river and road access, making it as accessible as possible to mine employees, invited guests who were staying at the Sheraton and to the Kamoro and Sempan. The Hiripau people cleared a piece of the jungle for the site and a large wooden *pendopo* – a Javanese style raised and covered stage with open sides was built. There was some controversy over this as Freeport staff was unhappy with the site clearance because it should have been compacted to make the ground firm and flat, but there was no time for this. The local people of Hiripau seem to have been foot dragging while getting the site ready because the ownership and compensation for the land use was under question. Meanwhile Freeport staff knew they had an obligation to have a site and temporary housing ready for the date when thousands of Kamoro villagers were set to arrive so they encouraged the people of Hiripau to be better hosts and make a good impression. In the end, not enough accommodation was prepared on time and last minute shanty shacks were set up with the help of Kamoro who had arrived from other villages. When the rain came the site turned to mud and many people got cold and wet in their makeshift accommodations.

The *pendopo* was opened with the raising of a *mbitoro* pole that is traditionally erected by the Kamoro at the start of all ceremonies and at the entrance to all ceremonial houses (See Figure 4-14).[132] The *mbitoro* remained in place throughout the duration of the festival as it would have remained in front of a ceremonial house or *karapao* while the ceremonies were ongoing. The Kamoro *mbitoro* poles are similar in style to the Asmat *bisj* poles and were, like *bisj*, carved out of the trunk and a protruding buttress root of a mangrove tree. *Mbitoro* carvings were

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[130] Kal Muller is the author of most of the Periplus guidebooks to Indonesia, including the guidebook for Irian Jaya. In addition, he has published numerous photo essays on Indonesia.

[131] At the time this would have amounted to approximately US$5 but would have held almost as much purchasing power locally as when the Rupiah was worth more.

[132] The evening prior to the start of the festivities a dispute between two *panitia* (committee members) escalated into a brawl which resulted in the *pendopo* being minorly damaged and a few small holes were burnt in the thatch roof.

traditionally part of several Kamoro rituals, including the male initiation nose-piercing ceremony, and were associated with life, rebirth and death rituals. The carved figures on *mbitoro* are believed to symbolize the presence of the dead at village ceremonies. The stoic rigid and stylized appearance of *mbitoro* poles can be explained by Kamoro beliefs about the separation of the physical body and soul after death. Kooijman explains that

> According to Mimika beliefs, when death occurs the *ipu*, the personal spirit, leaves the body together with the *nata*, the 'inner body'. Only the external visible body, the *kao* or rind, remains. The *kao* is all that is left of the *mbitoro* figure, too. This relationship between the *mbitoro* and the *kao* and *ipu* is founded on a myth in which it is told that 'in the beginning', the men made (female) *mbitoro* figures. At first these were no more than the *kao*, the casing, the outer body. But then the beating of drums brought the *nata* and the *ipu* into the *kao*, and this turned the *mbitoro* into living people (Kooijman 1984: 1).[133]

During ceremonies marking life and death, the *mbitoro* accumulated "a vital energy, an impersonal life force (*kapita*)." Following the ceremony, the *mbitoro* was removed and allowed to decompose in the sago stands. When the wood began to decompose, it was believed that it released the accumulated *kapita* into the sago palm so that the plants would remain healthy and fertile (Kooijman 1984: 9). Following this Kamoro festival, however, the *mbitoro* was hauled away by a Freeport staff member.

The festival opened with an elaborate procession of seventy to eighty canoes paddled by Kamoro dressed in ceremonial attire as they made their way upriver to the festival site. The festival activities included a dance competition, a rowing competition and the art auction, which was juried by *panitia* (committee). Prize money was awarded for the top three carvings in each of the following twelve categories: *yamate* (shield / panel), traditional tale, free-style, small *mbitoro*, medium *mbitoro*, large *mbitoro*, *tifa* (drum), daily use items, *mbiikao / natakao* (spirit masks), *wemawe / iwamapaku* (figural sculptures), animal category, and braided or plaited pieces. The auctioneers for the event were Kal Muller and Youven Biakai, the curator of the Asmat Museum of Culture and Progress who also does the auctioning for the Asmat auction. The top eight juried items in each category were auctioned off (see Figure 4-15). Meanwhile, entrepreneurial carvers who had been too late to enter their carvings in the auction or whose pieces were not accepted set up shop and did business around the edges of the floor (Figure 4-16).

Artists were asked to come forward and hold their pieces while they were being auctioned off. In Figure 4-17, a man is seen holding his *yamate* carving. As a category, the

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[133] Kooijman references this discussion to the works of Jan Pouwer 1955 and 1954. I use Kooijman as Pouwer is written and published in Dutch, which I am unable to read.

yamate were highly sought after and at the auction received many of the highest bids. Traditionally the *yamate* are thought to have been used as ceremonial shields in various Kamoro rituals where they are thought to have incorporated souls of deceased ancestors. *Yamate* were generally placed around the entrance on the façade of a traditional house or *karapao.* Several types of *yamate* were carved, many with open work and relief carving and coloured with natural pigments. This *yamate* shows more of a contemporary influence in that the motifs are more pictorial and less stylized. (The artist is wearing a formal Batik Irian shirt).

Women artists were also included in the auction. They produced the majority of the hand woven items – such as baskets, fishing nets, and plaited *nokens* or carrying bags and clothing (vests and skirts), traditionally made by women. In Figure 4-18, a Kamoro woman stands with her creation – a hand woven basket net used traditionally by women for fishing in rivers. This piece was purchased by the well known Asmat art collector and author, Ursula Konrad, who was keen to purchase the piece because these fishing baskets are rarely made by the Asmat anymore. They are difficult to find and today are used only in the remotest villages because most women now choose to purchase nylon nets from trade stores. Despite the obviously meticulous work that the women artists put into their woven items, they received substantially lower prices than the men did for their carvings. The western prejudice against utilitarian items and their lesser designation as craft as opposed to art is the likely cause for this disparity. While bidding for carvings generally started at anywhere between Rp50,000 – 150,000, most of the woven items received opening bids of Rp 10,000 – 30,000.

Only one woman artist entered the carving competition. While the competition was not restricted in any way along gender lines, Kamoro women are traditionally prohibited from carving, as carving is a male activity. The small wooden sago bowl in Figure 4-19, created a stir among female bidders in the audience, some of whom deliberately raised their bids on the bowl because it was presumed to have been produced by a pioneering woman. Male Kamoro carvers at the *Gedung Seni Kamoro* whom I later spoke with could not believe that the bowl was actually carved by the woman and they suggested that she must have been selling it on behalf of a male family member. While I could not confirm this, – the incident may, nevertheless, prompt more women to carve in the future, especially when they see that wood carvings make substantially more money than fiber pieces (which are at least as time consuming). This carving fetched Rp400,000 while most woven items sold for between Rp40,000 and 100,000.[134] The above two

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[134] At this time the exchange rate was roughly Rp10,000 to US$1, though local spending power had not changed much.

examples illustrate cases in which Freeport expatriots impose Western values (in one instance the hierarchical value placed on art over craft and in the other an expectation of gender equality or equal pay for equal work) through their interactions with local people.

The dance contest was another area where great creativity was displayed, especially in the costumes made and worn by the dancers. Villagers had been requested to dance in "traditional costume," and were asked to stay away from commercial materials in their decorations (in other Kamoro dances I have seen dancers wear costumes with brightly coloured and even fluorescent commercially dyed fabrics and feathers). This request for a traditional palette and natural fibres produced a range of results that showed a mastery of local materials. The dancer in Figure 4-20, was asked by Freeport's photographers to step aside following his performance so that pictures could be taken of his elaborate costume. Painted on the tunic is a lizard or dragon motif, representing the role he was performing in his village's dance. The Kamoro have a tradition of producing barkcloth with painted designs for clothing, but most designs were extremely stylized with geometric and angular lines seen in the surface treatment of Kamoro carvings (see Figure 4-8). Some elaborate painted barkcloths stunned the auctions' organizers to suggest that next year they should include a separate barkcloth category.

A drummer with another dance group (Figure 4-21), had the words "*pakaian adat*" (Indonesian for "traditional costume") painted on the back of a hand plaited grass vest which he wore with a pair of commercially made shorts for his role as a drummer. This caught the eye of audience members who responded by laughing at what seemed to be an expression of sarcasm on the part of the dancer. His dance vest and use of the words "*pakaian adat*", struck me as an underhanded form of social commentary through a work of art or visual statement in a way I had not seen in any of the communities I visited in Irian Jaya. Unfortunately, due to the circumstances of this event, and the large number of participants and spectators, the drummer disappeared into the crowd before I was able to discuss his intention with him. Plenty of motivations for why he did this present themselves. He may have felt he was being helpful in labeling the portion of his costume that was, in fact "traditional", or he may have been alluding to the ignorance of foreigners who make demands for "traditional costumes" but know little about traditional Kamoro culture nor acknowledge that for the Kamoro people themselves, "traditional" may have a much different meaning than it does to foreigners, and that it may in fact be an insult to be told by a foreigner what constitutes an acceptable "traditional Kamoro dance costume". While it is impossible for me to be certain of this man's true motivation(s), given the history of resistance in the region, it is tempting to think that his costume may have been designed as an intentional slight on the stereotypical "traditional costume requirements" stipulated by Freeport's

organizers of the event. By labeling the vest as "traditional costume", the drummer may have been consciously trying to indicate that while he and other Kamoro may consider that contemporary dance costumes designed by Kamoro made with whatever materials they choose could still be "traditional costume" to the Kamoro, that he was prepared to accommodate (even if facetiously) Freeport's qualifications for "traditional costumes" simply to receive the payment offered by the company for participating in the event. In this way, the labeling of the vest might be seen more as an active expression of resistance to outside expectations, and an assertion of Kamoro authority in matters of Kamoro cultural tradition, even if done in a playful and humorous way.

In the course of both the dance competitions and the art auction, art forms rarely or never before seen in Mimika appeared, such as the carving in Figure 4-22, representing a Komodo dragon. The Komodo, which features in Kamoro mythology, was most likely derived from contact with Chinese traders and ceramics,[135] though as a sculpture it seems to be the first of its kind. It was dramatically unveiled as a prop in one of the dances said to have been based on a traditional myth. In another performance, a dancer was whirling a bull-roarer, thought not to have been made or produced by the Kamoro.

Following the festival, Freeport organizers and the festival committee (*panitia*) assembled the participants and gave them copies of a glossy full colour twenty-five page promotional brochure entitled: *Warta Freeport Budaya & Seni – Masyarakat dan Freeport: Bahu-Membahu* (Freeport News on Art and Culture – Freeport and the People: Shoulder to Shoulder). Freeport's Kamoro festival appeared to be a success, although some skepticism did surface. Articles in both provincial and national newspapers and magazines in Indonesia in late April and early May of 1998 discussed the festival – "They Are Crying in Hiripau: Kamoro Culture is Reawakened Through a Festival. Let's Hope It's Not Just for the Sake of Freeport Indonesia's Public Relations."[136] and "Reviving the Dead in Kamoro Culture: Efforts Taken to

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[135] Jac. Hoogerbrugge has traced the source of Chinese dragon motifs among Asmat carvers to an image of a dragon used on a box of Thai matches discarded in the region. Thai fishermen are known to have fished off the southwest coast of the island for decades. (Hoogerbrugge 1993: 150).

[136] This article appeared in Indonesian. This is my translation of the Indonesian title, "Mereka Menangis di Hiripau: Kebudayaan Suku Kamoro Bangkit Lagi, Lewat Sebuah Festival. Semoga Tak Sekadar Public Relations Dari PT Freeport Indonesia." (see Lubis and Kadir 1998). Ironically, despite the inclusion in the title that it is hoped that the Festival is not just for the sake of Freeport's Public Relations, this article is marked with the Indonesian word *iklan*, for advertisement.

Give Birth to Great Artists from the Kamoro Tribe."[137] In its article, the local provincial newspaper *Tifa Irian* reported some of the festival statistics including the names of the winners in each of twelve categories as well as the total auction proceeds from the sale 96 pieces, Rp.42,970,000 (at the time just below US$5,000). The expense of staging the first Kamoro festival and art auction was estimated at Rp.90,000,000 (at the time around US$10,000), including the incentive money (Rp.50,000) paid to each of the estimated 3,000 participants, prize money of Rp.42,000,000 and more than Rp.13,000,000 in transportation costs.

Analysis of Main Issues

In attempting to assess the success of the Kamoro auction, it is useful to compare it with the Asmat auction it was modeled upon. The Catholic Crosier missionaries in the Asmat and particularly Bishop Alphonse Sowada, O.S.C., are widely credited with preventing the destruction of Asmat carving traditions. Their auction was initially designed to try to stimulate interest in carving among young people and to create an incentive for artists to try to do their best work and be creative. The huge expenses covered by Freeport for the 1998 festival is in stark contrast to the Asmat auction. In my conversations with them, the Bishop Alphonse Sowada and Youven Biakai (Asmat curator of the Asmat Museum of Culture and Progress) were both critical of the Freeport auction because of the precedent it set for paying incentive money in order to get people to participate. The Bishop said that the Asmat auction was forced to begin much more modestly due to a lack of money on the part of the mission. As a result, it was left up to artists to decide whether they were prepared to put in the serious effort required to get themselves to Agats and find their own accommodations while they were there. When the Asmat art auction began in 1973, virtually all participants were from Agats due to such constraints. It is possible that some Kamoro simply went to the festival for a free trip and some money to spend in town. Bishop Sowada thinks that the people should not get 'something for nothing'. Nor should they be enticed to participate in their own culture. The Bishop's concern is that in 1999 the Kamoro will not participate unless Freeport offers equivalent or better incentives.

In Irian Jaya there is almost no political transparency or openness.. This problem is compounded when parties with vested interests are the only source of information. Journalists are not allowed into Irian Jaya without a special permit from the Indonesian government, and

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[137] This article also appeared in Indonesian. This is my translation of the Indonesian title, "Menghidupkan yang Mati di dalam Budaya Suku Kamoro. Upaya untuk Melahirkan Seniman-Seniman Besar dari Suku Kamoro." See Tifa Irian (May 1998: 5).

those who manage to reach Timika, are often highly critical of what they see. If we believe Freeport's optimistic, at times misleading, public relations campaign, we might accept that:

> The loss of the Kamoros' ancient culture has slowed down during the past few years thanks to more enlightened attitudes of government and church officials – and the esteem given to the Kamoros by a mining company (Muller 1996:24).

This statement was written by the travel writer, Kal Muller, in a style that resembles an ordinary travel feature in an in-flight airline magazine. However, in small letters at the top of the page is the word "advertisement", indicating to a careful reader that this is how Freeport is portraying itself, through the employ of Kal Muller.[138] How do we evaluate this claim, or the implicit and explicit motives that underscore Freeport's relationship to the local people in its Contract of Work? Is Freeport, as patron, choosing to acknowledge, support or privilege certain forms of cultural expression over others, attempting to control cultural expression by making what it perceives as acceptable and favourable cultural forms economically rewarding for the local people. How do we evaluate Freeport's sponsorship role in the revival of Kamoro art and in what ways should this support be scrutinized?

Freeport has a long, undistinguished history of cultural insensitivity in Irian Jaya, which must be considered when evaluating their motives as patron and their self-promoted role as the champion of local cultures. Several examples of this have been discussed in this chapter. When highlands Amungme raised crosses (*salib*) on their land in 1967 when the company first began construction in the area, Freeport ignored these signs and trespassed on the land and ignored the cultural expression of the Amungme people. In 1999, more than 30 years later, Freeport has yet to acknowledge this intrusion into Amungme lands. In the 1990s, when Freeport expansion created a New Town, with an international five star hotel and eighteen hole golf course, the only works of "art" acknowledged were those by "artists" from distant lands. In 1998, three years after artists at the *Gedung Seni Kamoro* had completed copper lampshades and woodcarvings for the *Rimba Irian* Golf Club House; these artists had yet to see how their work had been used. They may reasonably be shocked to find their *wemawe*, traditionally carvings of ancestors serving as ashtrays in the Kuala Kencana golf club, but none of these artists have ever been inside the clubhouse at *Rimba Irian* (see Figure 4-23). Finally, participants at "the first ever Kamoro Auction and Cultural Festival" might be surprised to discover that while they try to profit from

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[138] Freeport's manipulation of its media coverage, its paid advertisements and its policy of hiring prominent individuals and even outspoken critics of their operations to their public relations team is discussed in Bryce (1996).

the event by selling their wooden *wemawe* sculptures, a nearby competitor, the Sheraton Hotel, is stocked with bronze Kamoro *wemawe* sculptures made by Balinese craftsmen. Local people continue to feel they are being excluded from the training, education and jobs they deserve with Freeport. They also continue to express their frustration with Freeport's initial appropriation and continued environmental abuse of their lands, and with their unaddressed demands for compensation for the use of their lands. In this context, can Freeport be considered to be a champion of local culture or is the company's patronage of art and culture in the region merely a Public Relations campaign intended to distract potential critics from examining other more fundamental and long overdue issues?

What will the market be for Kamoro arts in the future? While Kamoro arts have now made their way into art markets and shops throughout the province and even as far away as Bali (see Figure 3-19), will there be a sustainable demand for these carvings? The presence of the mine has brought Indonesians and Irianese of various ethnicities together, all competing for the same thing - a piece of the Freeport pie which invariably leads to disputes and tensions that periodically erupt into street riots and violence. The end result is that the atmosphere of Timika town is becoming less and less conducive to tourism and mine employees. Freeport's decision to separate itself from the growing social and economic problems in Timika through its enclave of Kuala Kencana, does little to convince local people of the company's commitment to (or interest in) their culture, their art and their well-being.

While in the Timika area, I found that the Kamoro artists were in general content to accept Freeport's sponsorship, which they felt was a good thing.[139] With few economic opportunities, this was one way Kamoro people could earn an income. So far, however, Freeport's sponsorship of Kamoro arts has not stopped local peoples from asking for more returns from the wealth in the surrounding mountains. I feel it remains important to continue weighing the benefits to the artists vis a vis the benefits to the company.

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[139] As I only met with them on a handful of occasions, I am uncertain whether the Kamoro artists would have felt comfortable enough to say anything critical about Freeport's programs to me, however.

CHAPTER 5

NATIONAL INFLUENCES: BARKCLOTH REVIVALS, PAST AND PRESENT

This chapter will discuss the revival of barkcloth painting and art of the Lake Sentani and culturally related peoples[140] along the stretch of coastline towards the Papua New Guinea border in Northeastern Irian Jaya. Barkcloth was traditionally produced for clothing – everyday and ceremonial, among a relatively small number of tribes in Irian Jaya.[141] A unique transition to barkcloth produced expressly as paintings occurred in the Lake Sentani and Humboldt Bay regions in the late 1920s, at the same time that missionaries were actively dismantling traditional Sentani men's houses and forbidding carving.[142] This output appears to have been instigated by the interests of European buyers, but by the early 1950s painted barkcloth was virtually unobtainable. In the early 1990s a second revival of barkcloth painting began, stimulated by foreign demand, the development of barkcloth as a regional art by the Indonesian government, art traders, and the initiative of a handful of painters. These competing interests are struggling to

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[140] This chapter focuses predominantly on the production of barkcloth in the Lake Sentani village of Asei, the location of the biggest boom in contemporary barkcloth. Asei is known to have been a center for traditional barkcloth production though it was made in other Sentani villages as well. The Sentani language is a Trans New-Guinea language, spoken today by approximately 30,000 people (according to 1996 statistics taken by SIL). The Sentani speakers, whose name for themselves is "*Buyaka*", live in approximately 30 villages around the shores and islands of Lake Sentani, though today many live in the larger cities and towns in the area. Lake Sentani is a freshwater lake fifteen miles in length located close to Humboldt Bay (known to the Tobati people as the Yotefa Bay). The Nafri and Tobati peoples of Yotefa Bay also produced barkcloth and are culturally related to the Sentani people as indicated by their art and other cultural attributes. Today there are less than 2,500 speakers of Tobati, an Austronesian language (according to 1975 statistics taken by SIL). The Nafri language is spoken by approximately 1,500 people in one village, and is related to Sentani and is also a Trans New Guinea language (according to 1975 statistics taken by SIL). I discuss barkcloth produced by members of these communities in this chapter.

[141] Few studies have been made of barkcloth in Irian Jaya. In his book on ornamented barkcloth in Indonesia, Simon Kooijman (1963) refers only briefly to the "marginal area of West New Guinea." It is mainly in the context of the current barkcloth revival that barkcloth in Irian Jaya is being studied in more depth. Michael Howard (1996b) identifies six regions of Irian Jaya where barkcloth is known to have been produced. Three of these areas fall within the present day *kabupaten* (regency) of Jayapura: Sarmi, Waris – Senggi and the Nafri, Humboldt Bay, Lake Sentani and northeast coastal peoples from Tanah Merah Bay to the tip of Cape d'Urville. Outside of the Jayapura regency, the Kamoro people made decorated dance aprons from barkcloth, as discussed in Chapter 4. Barkcloth clothing was also made by the peoples of Cenderawasih Bay, including Biak, and on the West Coast near Bintuni Bay and the Bomberai Peninsula. It is quite possible that in remote and understudied areas traditional use of barkcloth remains unidentified by scholars.

[142] Similar transitions have occurred in numerous instances in the history of indigenous artforms in the twentieth century, from Inuit and First Nations prints to the acrylic paintings of Australian Aboriginal artists formerly produced on bark. The transition usually consists of an adapting of traditional art forms for production in new media and styles to suit the artistic tastes of a global market. These transitions were often initiated by outsiders and they have been one way that art forms that have lost their relevance to local communities have continued to be produced, often developing new meanings to local peoples.

control or at least influence contemporary barkcloth production and painting. The history of the production of this art form has been characterized by periods of near abandonment by the Sentani people and revivals stimulated by foreign demand and a desire for profitable trade on the part of local people and competing art traders. This second revival of barkcloth or *maro* as it was traditionally called by the people of Sentani and Humboldt Bay, and the story of one Sentani artist, Agus Ongge and the community of Asei where he lives, are the focus of this case study.

Early production of barkcloth as clothing

Prior to Western influence and with the exception of married women, the people in the Lake Sentani and Humboldt Bay region wore little clothing at all, and the Dutch referred to the area as 'Papua Telandjang' or 'land of the naked Papuans' (van der Sande 1907:38). Married women in Tobati wore knee-length wrapped barkcloth skirts and married Sentani women wore longer below-the-knee wrapped skirts. Van der Sande described how "on the day when the bride is led towards her bridegroom, she wears a petticoat of prepared bark, which reaches one turn and a half round her waist, here supported by a girdle, and hanging down below the knees. This petticoat she further continues to wear as a married woman and also as a widow" (van der Sande 1907:38). The barkcloth was most often undecorated or plain as evidenced in historical photographs of the region (Figure 5-1).

Trees used for the production of bark were of several types that yielded different colours and quality of cloth.[143] The bark was traditionally collected and prepared by women. Its preparation, in the past and today is as follows (also see Figure 5-1):

> A piece of bark from the stem of a young tree, about two yards long and in diameter some five and a quarter inches, was scraped clean with a shell and beaten until the bark loosened and could be cut away. Then the fleecelike inner skin of the bark was scraped off, and the beating proper began. The strip gradually became thinner and wider until it formed a piece of cloth about a yard wide; it was then soaked in water, wrung out and put in the sun to dry (Hoogerbrugge 1992:128).

Two early expedition accounts include engravings of Humboldt Bay women wearing painted barkcloth but these drawings are not detailed enough to give an accurate idea of the

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[143] Suzanne Greub suggests that the barkcloth trees belonged to the genera *Artocarpus* and *Ficus* (1992:11). I received three different names of trees used for barkcloth, but as these were in Sentani language I have been unable to translate them. The type that yielded the best barkcloth was called *kombo* in the Sentani language. They are rare in the Sentani region today, and I was told by Sentani painters that they can only be found deep in the jungle today, as the rest have already been harvested.

designs.[144] Painted barkcloth from Lake Sentani was first collected in 1921, and there are two extant pieces dating from 1926 that were collected by Swiss ethnologist Paul Wirz. Missionary and ethnological accounts inform us that these painted barkcloths were worn by women (some indicate women of the *ondoforo* clan) on festive occasions and were sometimes hung next to graves (see figure 5-2). The designs on these paintings all followed a similar pattern based on spiral motifs that were also found in relief carving in the area. To these were added animal motifs or elements such as birds, fish (said to represent wealth and status) or legs with joints ('elbows'): "the maro paintings collected ...between 1921 and 1926 all have ... a central theme consisting of a horizontal row of connected and interlocking spirals framed on the left and right by straight lines suggesting pairs of legs (Hoogerbrugge 1992:128). Little is known about the production of these early painted barkcloths; it is not known whether men or women painted them. While women produced the cloth, men traditionally did the woodcarving and sacred arts such as the playing of bamboo flutes. The meaning of Sentani designs and the symbolism of the arts are not well documented by Westerners, and much has been forgotten by the Sentani people.[145] According to a Sentani myth told to me by Agus Ongge, two ancestral Sentani women, Ayokhoi and Hebeakhoi wore barkcloth skirts with *fouw* motifs in two different variations. Ayokhoi, the eldest, wore a single interlocking spiral motif (*iuga*) while Ayokhoi wore two double spirals (*hakhalu*). The *fouw* motif is thought to refer to clan genealogy and social hierarchy, and to symbolize eternity and clan continuity, and was reserved until recently for use by clan chiefs (*ondoforo*) and their families.

In this respect, a brief synopsis of a Sentani origin myth is relevant, sketched by Jac. Hoogerbrugge as follows:

> In the beginning heaven rests heavenly [sic] on earth causing primordial darkness. The Culture Hero then separates heaven and earth, lifts up heaven, thus enabling light and the ancestors to appear... The separation however does not mean that the contact between heaven and earth ceases to exist – on the

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[144] These engravings, dating from 1858 and 1885 are reproduced in Hoogerbrugge (1992:126-7). Both Hoogerbrugge (1992) and Howard (1996b) discuss these early descriptions of barkcloth in more detail.

[145] The most comprehensive description of the meaning of Sentani artforms can be found in Hoogerbrugge's 1967 study. From 1956 to 1963 Jac. Hoogerbrugge was stationed in Jayapura as a shipping agent. He developed a passion during this time for studying the art and mythology of Sentani people and he recorded several Sentani origin myths which are recorded in his 1967 publication. This publication is in Dutch and includes only a one-page summary in English. Between 1969 and 1974, he continued to survey Sentani art while he headed the United Nations Development Programme's (FUNDWI) Asmat Art Project, after which he returned to Irian Jaya again in 1993, and has made several short annual trips since then. Mr. Hoogerbrugge's feeling is that few Sentani people today still remember many of the myths he collected. In my fieldwork, I found it very difficult to get any in-depth information about the meaning of most Sentani motifs, for reasons I will explore later in this chapter.

> contrary: preserving this contact becomes an important feature of the culture. In the myths this contact is maintained by the Culture Hero who climbs to heaven using a rattan or a tree that quickly grows upwards or clouds that shape into ropes... The information received from the inhabitants regarding the meaning of objects and ornaments all point at a cosmic basis and refer to primordial action as recorded in the myths... the two ends of the wooden bowl represent heaven and earth; the spiral-ornament in between them represents the clouds between heaven and earth; the straight lines connecting heaven and earth are the rattan-ropes used when descending from heaven to earth. Also the spiral-line is compared with the clouds which shape into ropes used by the Culture Hero to climb to heaven (Hoogerbrugge 1967:90-91, See Sentani *ohote* (bowl), Figure 5-3).

Sentani art traditions were passed down through male lineages and were taught to young men at their time of initiation in the Sentani men's houses (see Figure 5-4). All men were taught to carve functional items, such as canoes, oars, bowls, sago spoons and other household items which were often carved with motifs indicating clan status. The *ondoforo* house, the home of the village chief and his family, were supported by elaborately carved houseposts (see Figure 5-5), made in a style similar to Asmat *bisj* poles, that were carved from a mangrove tree turned upside down so that the buttress roots were at the top of the posts and were carved with openwork designs. Objects carved for the *ondoforo* or his family were given special treatment by specialist carvers from designated lineages related to the *ondoforo* family and assigned by the *ondoforo*, who were allowed to carve every day and ceremonial objects for the *ondoforo*. Objects for the wife of the *ondoforo* had motifs reserved only for her use. Whether painted barkcloth was worn only by *ondoforo* wives and what if any restrictions existed with regards to lineage rights to paint on barkcloth remains uncertain.[146]

Shift from barkcloth as clothing to barkcloth as paintings

Protestant missionaries first arrived in Sentani in 1925, and with government support they ordered the destruction of the Sentani ceremonial men's houses and *ondoforo* houses (Kooijman and Hoogerbrugge 1992:93). With this shift in religious authority, the majority of Lake Sentani art left the community and was burnt, thrown in the lake, sold or surrendered to foreigners. In 1929, a French art collector by the name of Jacques Viot[147] collected as many as fifty painted barkcloths from the village of Tobati on Humboldt Bay. On the same trip he also visited Lake

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[146] It is possible there were restrictions since ritual objects and motifs were usually reserved for artists from the *ondoforo* lineage.

[147] Viot was also a friend of many surrealist artists in Paris, including Joan Miro who's paintings are believed to have been at least in part inspired by Sentani Maro (Peltier 1992:155-7,159,172,174-175; Cowling 1992:186).

Sentani and obtained more than sixty carvings, many of which were found submerged in the lake. A German man by the name of Herr Stüber living in the Humboldt Bay area from 1917-40 traded ethnographic objects and local flora and fauna on board visiting ships, and some forty-one painted barkcloths that he collected among the Tobati people were sold to a traveling American, Julius Fleischmann,[148] in 1931 (Hoogerbrugge 1992: 131).

The origins of these painted Tobati barkcloths are unknown because there are no extant examples of early painted barkcloth from Tobati. Prior to 1929, all Tobati barkcloths collected by foreigners were unpainted. The sudden new trend in painted Tobati barkcloths collected by Viot and others after him continued into the late 1940s, and Sentani artists also began producing barkcloths with different motifs from those seen previously (Figure 5-6 and 5-7), possibly indicating that artists had begun to paint cloth for foreigners (Figure 5-8). The motifs on these Sentani and Tobati cloths are the same as those found in woodcarving and on Tobati pottery (Figure 5-9). Jac. Hoogerbrugge has suggested two possible reasons for the sudden explosion in painted barkcloth in the region. In 1903, Dutch officer van der Sande gave pencil and paper to a Tobati youth who produced designs reminiscent of those later found on barkcloth – of birds and sea creatures (see van der Sande 1907:285, Hoogerbrugge 1992: 129-30). Both Lake Sentani and Humboldt Bay artists painted or rubbed pigment into their carvings, so this could have been applied to barkcloth which, when foreigners took interest caused the flowering of a new art style. The second scenario proposed by Hoogerbrugge (1995:175-8) is that in 1929 a contingent of thirty-five north coast artists went to Jakarta to attend the 'Arts and Crafts Exhibition' held at the Royal Batavian Society for Arts and Sciences (now the National Museum in Jakarta), where they came in contact with four hundred and fifty artists from twenty-two different regions of the Dutch East Indies. This event, which featured textiles and art may have stimulated the north coast artists to decorate their barkcloth in new ways.

These barkcloths, numbering around four hundred in museums today, are treasured as rare examples of the brilliance of Sentani art. The barkcloths collected by Viot were exhibited at the Musée d'Ethnographie du Trocadéro in Paris in 1933 in the exhibition "Tapa of Dutch New Guinea," where they were received with interest and enthusiasm by critics and Surrealist artists (see Champigny 1933, Duchartre 1933), and inspired more collectors to venture into the field.

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[148] The collection of Julius Fleischmann was donated to the Cincinnati Museum and is discussed in Meyn 1982. A photographer with National Geographic Magazine by the name of Amos Berg traveled with Fleischmann, and one of the photographs published in a 1934 issue of the magazine illustrates the Fleischmann yacht surrounded with canoes full of Humboldt Bay men wanting to trade their art objects.

The Decline of Barkcloth

The collecting of barkcloth lasted until the start of the Second World War, and by 1944 because of its strategic location, the Sentani-Jayapura area was transformed into the Allied forces' Southwest Pacific Headquarters under the command of General Douglas MacArthur. More than 250,000 troops were stationed in the region, and no reports suggest that barkcloth was produced during this period. After the Japanese surrender, the Netherlands resumed authority of Irian Jaya and by the early 1950s colonial officers reported that painted barkcloth was extremely difficult to obtain. Ironically, in 1959 the first feature exhibition of Sentani Art in North America "The Art of Lake Sentani" was held at the old Museum of Primitive Art in New York just as field officers were alarmedly writing that barkcloth was almost gone: "In the area of Lake Sentani we asked everywhere about tapas [maros], but these new ones are hardly made any more and the colors are made from red lead and so on. What a shame!" (letter from C.M.A. Groenevelt, 1952 quoted in van Duuren 1992:212).

Before long there were few practicing barkcloth artists and most of the remaining ritual objects of the Sentani people had been destroyed or sold to overseas collectors. In 1960-61, Jac. Hoogerbrugge took photographs of barkcloths from the exhibition catalogue produced for the Museum of Primitive Art's 'Art of Lake Sentani' exhibition (Kooijman 1959) to Sentani villages to see if any artists could still make these paintings. He acquired only a handful of poorly executed paintings. In 1971, Hoogerbrugge was again circulating villages in search of artists and found two elderly barkcloth painters in the Humboldt Bay village of Nafri by the names of Nyaro Hanuebi and Sibo Sriano. These two men produced a series of barkcloths for Hoogerbrugge depicting local spirits living in their village. In Figure 5-9, Nyaro Hanuebi holds one of his paintings which he described as follows "At night I see the luminous dots of spirits (*uaropo*) moving on the beach close to my house, spirits coming from the sea and the bush" (Hoogerbrugge 1992:138). Hoogerbrugge was convinced that the works of these two painters, who would only have been teenagers when missionaries tore down ceremonial houses in Nafri, were comparable with those of pre-war artists. Both men had died by 1976, however, prompting Hoogerbrugge to ask "Did the spirits of the sea and the bush die with them, and were Nyaro Hanuebi and Sibo Sriano the last of the old-style *maro* painters?" (Hoogerbrugge 1992:139).

Contemporary barkcloth revival

The obstacles to a revival of painted barkcloth are substantial, as Sentani people have been drawn into the increasingly urban and modern environment of the provincial capital

Jayapura. Most Sentani people began wearing Western clothes to church in the 1930s at the insistence of missionaries. Prior to that some women had already begun wearing Indonesian (or Malay) cloth and sarongs through trade. Even in the relative seclusion of Asei Island, Sentani people were wearing clothes and going to church (most are Protestant) prior to World War II. Between 1962 and 1999, the population of the Sentani-Jayapura area swelled from 14,500 (Garnaut and Manning 1974:64) to approximately 300,000 (based on population projections from: Kantor Statistik Propinsi Irian Jaya 1994:77). The airport (built in WWII) serving Jayapura is located on the shores of Lake Sentani and the town that grew around it is called Sentani. Today it is linked by paved road and public transport to Jayapura, the provincial university and government offices.

Following the success of the Asmat Art Project, the provincial branch of the Indonesian government department of small scale industry (*Perindustrian*) began providing carving tools to Sentani villages, including Babrongko and Asei island in 1982. The restriction of carving to those with hereditary carving rights was lifted at the suggestion of *Perindustrian* to local *ondoforo*, as it was otherwise feared that carving traditions would die out.[149] The art no longer served the same ritual function that in the past necessitated secrecy of motifs and specialized status of carvers. As art production became a government sponsored development project; all Indonesian citizens were entitled to participate. The government gave its sanction to any carver, with traditional rights or not. *Perindustrian* organized carving classes where traditional carvers taught others their skills. Agus Ongge was one of those who took up carving at this time. Agus was born on Asei Island. He is married to Maria, a woman from Biak, and they have seven children. He does not come from a carving lineage, which on Asei island belongs to the Ohee *ondoforo* clan, although Agus' grandfather and father had both done some art commissions, though not for the *ondoforo*. His grandfather carved figures of Adam and Eve on posts in Asei's Protestant church, and his father made a cement replica of a Sentani housepost for the gardens of the provincial museum (see Figure 3-9).[150] Among Agus's early carvings was an *ohote* bowl with a bird of paradise painted and carved in relief in the center. Agus claims this was the first bowl to

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[149] This information was communicated to me by Bernard Mittaart who formerly worked with the Department of Industry and by several Sentani artists who took part in the programs as teachers or students. It was previously discussed in this thesis in Chapter Three:52-53.

[150] Agus Ongge has also produced sculptures from cement. His most well known work is a giant *tifa* (drum) that is cast in cement and brightly painted with Sentani motifs. This sculpture stands on the edge of the main Sentani-Jayapura road at a lookout point overlooking Lake Sentani. Unlike many other public sculptures in the Jayapura region, it was not commissioned by the government, but rather by a graduating class of students from a highschool in Jayapura.

have this type of nontraditional design on it and that it was so well received that offers were made for him to have government sponsored carving training.

In the early 1990s the GKI (*Gereja Kristen Injil* or Evangelical Christian Church), established a project involving painted barkcloth that was instrumental in spurring the contemporary revival of barkcloth.[151] The GKI church runs the *Pusat Pengembangan dan Pembinaan Wanita* (the Centre for Women's Development or "P3W" as it is commonly called) devoted to skills training for Irianese women. Among other skills, women at P3W are taught a variety of handicrafts that are marketed in their own shop. Small cards decorated with painted barkcloth are one of the items produced by Irianese women. Card sized barkcloth paintings are provided by artists from Nafri and Sentani (see Figure 5-11). These are generally made using a stencil for the black outline that is then filled in with red and white by hand. In the early years of this project, Agus Ongge produced a large number of these card size barkcloths and eventually began providing larger paintings of around a foot square in size. The head of the P3W is a Dutch woman who is married to an Irianese. On several occasions she took some of these paintings and cards to Holland with her where they were exhibited by the church and offered for sale. Initially, according to Jac. Hoogerbrugge, the larger paintings done by Agus were very rough and difficult to sell (personal communication 1998). Agus persisted in developing his skill as a painter through this sponsorship since it enabled him to earn a small income.[152] While early church sponsorship was important in stimulating the revival of barkcloth art, recent developments have been led by growing exposure of the artform and its rapid commercialization.

In 1992, two exhibitions of Sentani barkcloth were instrumental in promoting the production of larger painting sized barkcloths, generally over two by three feet in size, though variable. One was held at the Cenderawasih University's Anthropology Museum, the Museum Loka Budaya, which featured the work of Seru Ongge (Agus Ongge's uncle),[153] an elderly man whose paintings 'by hand' were original for the way he filled the entire barkcloth with images (see Figure 5-12).[154] This exhibition was organized by Nico Tanto, a member of the museum

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[151] This support of traditional arts is in contrast to the earlier destruction of sacred objects by Protestant churches in the region. It reflects the church belief that the production of arts and 'handicrafts' no longer holds spiritual significance to local peoples.

[152] P3W sells primarily to ex-pats living in the Sentani area. There are a number of ex-pats living in the area because of the proximity to government offices and also because it is used as a base for missionary families and is the location of the international school. Few tourists make it to P3W because it is not advertised in English.

[153] Agus says that he learnt to paint barkcloth from his father, not his uncle, Seru Ongge.

[154] Seru Ongge died in 1995. In regards to the literature on contemporary barkcloth, the man that Howard refers to as Seru Ongge, appears to be the same man referred to by Jac. Hoogerbrugge as Uwus Ongge.

staff. Nico Tanto also helped with arrangements for a research crew from Jakarta organizing an exhibition of Lake Sentani barkcloth held at the Bentara Budaya gallery in Jakarta in 1992 on behalf of the Jakarta Post (a daily English language newspaper). The exhibition, which is said to have been a success (Howard 1996a: 8, Hoogerbrugge 1995: 175), was accompanied by the launching of a book on Lake Sentani published by the Jakarta Post, called "Old and New in the Land of the Clear Water."

An increased awareness of barkcloth paintings resulted from these exhibitions.[155] Since the early 1990s, large hand painted barkcloths have been sought by a small number of foreign collectors and tourists, who want pieces in the style of the earlier paintings. Nico Tanto has played an important role in filling this demand by commissioning paintings from Asei artists which he markets at the Museum Loka Budaya art shop and at his private 'Nico Tanto Art Shop.'[156] These large scale barkcloths, such as those seen in Figures 5-13, 5-14 and 5-15 by Agus Ongge are often copied directly from printed reproductions of older pieces (compare with Figures 5-6, 5-7 and 5-8) given to artists by foreign buyers or by Nico Tanto.[157] These three

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The similarity can be seen in the unique style of his barkcloth paintings and in the photographs of him (see Hoogerbrugge 1995: Fig. 40,41; Howard 1996b Fig.26).

[155] I first became aware of contemporary Sentani barkcloth paintings in 1995 when I went to the UnCen Loka Budaya Museum. There were some paintings in the museum which I had presumed were old, but on speaking with one of the Museum employees, I was told that they were of recent origin. After our tour of the museum I was shown barkcloth for sale by Nico Tanto, the museum employee who runs the museum's art shop. There were approximately thirty paintings for sale, and I bought two. I was told that artists on Lake Sentani were producing barkcloth. This was the first time I had seen any painted barkcloth other than stencil barkcloths at the Hamadi market which were of non-traditional pan-Irianese motifs such as birds of paradise and drums which I had presumed were made by non-Irianese market employees.

[156] Nico Tanto is of mixed parentage, Chinese and Irianese, in contrast to the majority of art traders in Irian Jaya who are mostly migrants from South Sulawesi. He personally profits from the sales at the Museum Loka Budaya art shop. This is problematic because the Museum Loka Budaya lacks a regular operating budget. The collection is in disarray, in need of proper storage facilities and conservation work. Nico takes the initiative to keep the museum shop running and the responsibility for purchasing items to sell. He also pays for cleaning supplies, coffee, tea and sugar for employees with 10 – 15 % of the money he earns from sales. This might be seen as a conflict of interest but it is not seen as such by other members of the museum staff who see that Nico does most of the work maintaining the shop. Museum staff believe that since the Museum is designated a non-profit institution, it cannot generate income even if the money is used towards its operating budget. Nico Tanto has stimulated artists to begin producing traditional carvings / art again in many regions of the province, particularly along the north coast through his buying trips. He goes direct to villages and lets artists and potential artists know that he is willing to market their work. Even though he takes what by Western standards is a high cut of the selling price, this opportunity is one that many artists have not had.

[157] The book *Ukiran-Ukiran Kayu Irian Jaya / The Art of Woodcarving in Irian Jaya* (ed. Jac. Hoogerbrugge), published in 1979 by the provincial government with the assistance of the United Nations Development Programme is available at book and art shops in Jayapura. Its 140 black and white plates of traditional art from around the province serve as a useful pattern book for many artists. Five plates illustrate barkcloth paintings from the Lake Sentani-Humboldt Bay area.

pieces by Agus Ongge were produced as part of a commission of twelve pieces for a foreign dealer of Indonesian arts and ethnographic objects in 1997. The dealer asked Agus to try to capture the quality of the line in the earlier pieces, and gave Agus photocopies from the Greub book (which it turned out he already had). He was asked to use traditional materials, motifs and techniques[158] but to feel free to use his own creativity, emotion and inspiration. The resulting paintings were considered by Agus and the dealer in question to be among Agus's best works, and among the best paintings being produced in Sentani today. Agus told me later that he enjoyed this work because it encouraged him to try to improve his carving and to get a better idea of what foreigners will buy.[159] The dealer, however, did not feel that these works were as good as pre-WWII barkcloth paintings, where the quality of the line is much more expressive (In Figure 5-16, Agus Ongge is painting barkcloth outside his home on Asei Island). Agus has frequently been referred to as an excellent draftsman by his foreign patrons. The lines in his paintings are very consistent in width and are smooth and steady handed. Despite the fact that Agus still uses the traditional painting tool, the tip of a sago palm rib, and traditional pigments in his paintings (the process is more like drawing with a quill pen than painting), Western collectors have expressed their desire to see more of the scratchy and varied lines seen in the older paintings (personal communication, James Barker). Most of the compositions of his paintings are more geometrically aligned and evenly balanced in terms of spacing than the older paintings were, which visually creates a more static feeling. Western collectors feel that the earlier pieces had a certain sense of movement and unease to the placement of the figures that gave the figures 'life'.

These traditionally based hand painted pieces are in contrast to smaller stenciled barkcloths produced as less expensive souvenir items and sold at the Hamadi art and souvenir shops. An example of the style of these paintings can be seen in Figure 5-17, where the motifs used need not be traditional, but decoratively represent more general and provincial symbols of Irian Jaya such as the two birds of paradise on branches and the simplistic representation of a

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[158] From my field observations, almost all barkcloth artists draw the outline of their designs in black first. Traditionally black paint is water mixed with charcoal or soot (that has accumulated on the bottom of cooking pots exposed to an open flame). Some contemporary artists prefer to use black ink, because this gives a finer line, reflecting the common desire among buyers for what they see as refined (*halus*) work. The black outline is then filled with white paint, although this is not traditional. Barkcloth in the past was from the bark of the *kombo* tree which is off-white, so only black, terracotta red and occasionally yellow pigments were used. When *kombo* trees became scarce, artists started to use white paint, made from baked and then powdered clam shells. Today, the white paint is a mixture of water and lime (*kapur*) which is also used to enhance the effect of chewing betel nut (*pinang*). Agus said that he often lets his wife Maria (or even his children) paint white onto a barkcloth once he has outlined the work in black.

[159] In 1998, Agus was given several significant commissions for barkcloth from foreign buyers, including one for 70 barkcloth from a collector of PNG arts near Albury, in Australia.

drum (*tifa*) on its side. The commercialization of barkcloth in a contemporary context is problematic since the motifs used are not ones the local people believe in anymore. Contemporary carving and painting on barkcloth takes place in a secularized and commercial context, and for this reason even collectors and dealers sometimes have difficulty viewing these contemporary works as artistic expressions. The irony is that by asking artists to paint the subject matter and in the style that no longer speaks about the artist's realities or their contemporary concerns, it is unlikely that the artists will be capable of producing much more than copies with little individual expression. From the point of view of creativity, is there much difference, artistically, between the paintings based on past symbols and those based on provincial symbols?

Barkcloth artists also take inspiration from traditional motifs carved on new and old objects such as canoe prows, oars and *ohote* bowls. The resulting paintings based on carved objects are sometimes more creative than those copied directly from books. Many Sentani artists now refer to paintings not based strictly on traditional designs as 'new creations' (*kreasi baru*), while copies of traditional paintings and those based only on traditional motifs are called 'authentic' or 'original' (*asli*). In Figure 5-18 for instance, a sea spirit is depicted with the body of an *ohote* bowl. Many of these bowls used to be carved with similar spirit motifs. The artist plays on the idea of motifs imbuing an object with meaning and here paints the reverse – an object becoming part of the spirit itself. This painting represents some of the new directions that artists in Sentani are taking with their barkcloth paintings, as their lives are distancing from the more spiritually focused realm of the past where the motifs represented spirits and cosmology. In this new context, artists experiment with novelty, as they are continuing to test the tastes of consumers and finding new ways to express themselves.

The revival of arts in Sentani has been stimulated by increased commercial opportunities resulting from the broader development of the Jayapura-Sentani region as the provincial capital of Irian Jaya.[160] Agus Ongge and other artists, who lack their own venues for marketing and selling their art, supply barkcloth and carvings to numerous art and souvenir traders in the Jayapura-

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[160] Sentani town is located approximately forty kilometres from Jayapura, but development has basically built up along the paved road that links the two. This road runs from Sentani town through Waena, a town on the eastern edge of Lake Sentani which is where the Batik Irian factory, the P3W office, the Provincial Museum and the new campus of the Cenderawasih University are located; to Abepura where the original Cenderawasih University campus and the University's anthropology museum, the Loka Budaya Museum are located; to Enttrop town where the new bus terminal servicing the area is located; to Hamadi where a large market including the art / souvenir market is located; to Jayapura proper, where government buildings and the central business district are located.

Sentani area, most of whom are located at Hamadi.[161] Bugis-Makassarese migrants from South Sulawesi began opening souvenir shops in the Hamadi market in 1985-86, about the time Irian Jaya was opened to foreign tourists (discussed further in Chapter Six). There are now approximately twelve separate art shops in the Hamadi market, all owned by Bugis-Makassarese. These shops market art from all over Irian Jaya, and the majority of shops have large stocks of Asmat carvings including monumental *bisj* poles and large canoes with spirit figures in them known as 'soul ships' and smaller stocks of carvings and objects from other regions which they market to foreign art dealers and the occasional tourist. They earn the majority of their income from foreign buyers or traders in Bali and Jakarta (for instance Baso Basri, who's art shop in the tourist area of Kuta, Bali is seen in Figure 3-19), who may come once or twice a year and purchase enough material to fill a shipping container. Their most regular buyers have been domestic tourists, however, who purchase small gifts or *oleh-oleh* for their friends and family. Generally they desire inexpensive, portable and decorative items which has prompted the Hamadi merchants to create souvenirs for this market. This often includes gluing together recognizable objects from around the province to create small composite wall hangings or freestanding sculptures. These may be composed of arrow tips, penis gourds, dried flowers, photographs of highland Irianese and coiled basketry plates made in the highlands. Barkcloth is also sewn into carrying bags by Hamadi merchants and painted with motifs similar to those seen on the penis gourd creations in Figure 6-11.

Hamadi merchants often employ younger brothers and nephews who come to Irian Jaya from Sulawesi to get away from the overcrowded conditions and lack of opportunity in Ujung Pandang a large city in South Sulawesi. These youths work as shop assistants and are called *anak buah* in exchange for room and board. In order to earn some money, some will make souvenirs themselves to sell. One souvenir trend started by the *anak buah*, is to paint in acrylics on barkcloth, which has become an identifiable 'Hamadi style'. Generally the barkcloth is treated as a canvas, and is whitewashed first and then painted over. They take their imagery from postcards and directly copy these images in highly realistic or photographic style onto barkcloth. Virtually

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[161] The Hamadi market is the second largest market serving the Jayapura – Sentani area. It has Jayapura's largest fresh fish market and the only art and souvenir market. Sellers and buyers come from the neighboring regions of Sentani, Depapre, Arso (a mixed transmigration community), and Genyem to attend the Hamadi market. The trade at the Hamadi market is dominated by south Sulawesi migrants, Bugis and Makassarese. Most of these migrants came to Irian Jaya in search of economic opportunity and found a niche for themselves as market merchants, a role they have played historically in other parts of Indonesia as well. Generally, the Bugis-Makassarese do not produce the products they sell in their shops. They generally source products from indigenous Irianese and from transmigrants. In this capacity they do form buying cartels and do sometimes refuse to purchase the products of economically disempowered peoples for fair prices.

all the scenes are of what I call 'Irianica' or stereotypical images of Irian Jaya including birds of paradise, romanticized (postcard style) village scenes from Asmat and Lake Sentani and Wamena *honai* or traditional houses. (see Figure 5-19).

Hamadi traders were crucial to the early commercialization of barkcloth, but over the years dissatisfaction has grown among local artists with the prices they receive from these 'middlemen'. Artists on Asei, who are the main producers of contemporary Sentani barkcloth, generally now only sell to traders as a last resort. On average these traders will pay only Rp10,000-Rp20,000 (approximately US$ 1 – 2 in April 1998) and then sell these barkcloth to tourists for between Rp 50,000 to Rp 150,000. An increasing number of tourists and ex-pats now visit Asei, and artists who previously were deliberately kept unaware of the prices that traders were receiving, have learned what foreigners are willing to pay for barkcloth and woodcarvings. Agus Ongge, who has received the greatest number of foreign visitors, began to encourage other artists not to sell to the Hamadi market or to Nico Tanto. Today Nico Tanto employs one painter to produce the large, hand painted barkcloth he sells in his shop. Artists have recently found that the provincial museum staff will accept their works on a commission basis, and this is now their preferred outlet for selling their works if they cannot sell them on the island. When they are in immediate need of money, however, they will still sell to Hamadi or Nico Tanto.

The use of stencils even in large paintings was developed by one Sentani artist by 1995 (the use of stencils is photographed in Pratiknyo 1995:115) and today virtually all artists use stencils on some of their paintings (personal communication with Jac. Hoogerbrugge, 1998). The use of stencils seems to have been an innovation developed as a result of the low prices the artists receive for paintings. The results vary with regards to composition, and a good stencil can be used advantageously to produce interesting printed barkcloths of good quality. Given that even foreigners pay relatively low prices for these barkcloths, the development of stencils makes sense. Despite the proliferation of stencils, many artists still paint or embellish stenciled pieces by hand. With the use of stencils, barkcloth paintings are reasonably quick to produce, they may take roughly one to three hours to produce compared with five or more hours for a hand painted cloth. The stencils are used to produce the basic outline of the design in black, which can then be filled in quickly by hand by virtually anyone, including children. Nico Tanto has the painter he commissions work where he can supervise him to make sure that the work is of good quality and painted by hand, which is what many foreign buyers want.

The traders, for their part, have been unwilling to give up any of the profits they make selling souvenirs and art because it is a highly competitive business.[162] Many resent the higher prices that artists are now asking as they feel the paintings are increasingly of poorer quality, which encourages them to keep their prices low or even to commission paintings from non Sentani and even non Irianese producers.[163] As a result, Hamadi shopkeepers generally only have access to low quality barkcloth paintings, since artists tend to keep their best work for direct sale to foreigners.

Some of the carvings thrown in the lake at the insistence of early missionaries have subsequently been retrieved at the request of foreign collectors and traders looking for authentic old pieces, although this source is believed to have been virtually exhausted following searches by dive teams. This has resulted in contemporary carvers and Hamadi merchants artificially aging carvings by submerging them in the lake and drying them in the sun repeatedly to give them a weathered look. The housepost in Figure 2-2, carved by Tinus Melangsena of Babrongko village, Lake Sentani is currently being aged. Woodcarving was not as completely abandoned by Sentani people because many of their functional objects remained dependant on carving skills. Canoes are one example of this and most canoes on Lake Sentani are still carved by hand out of hollowed logs.[164] Carving seen by colonial authorities as purely decorative was allowed to continue. The fronts of canoes, traditionally incised with motifs, have been in high demand among foreigners. Many carvers will use a canoe until it is in need of replacement and then allow

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[162] In a recent anthropological survey of the Hamadi market, one shopkeeper by the name of Anwar, one of the first traders to open a shop in Hamadi in the mid eighties, is recorded as stating that while art and souvenir sales were at one time a profitable business, today he finds it difficult to obtain items to sell, and he has few buyers, sometimes only one per week. He also stated that he might open a grocery store again which was his business before he began selling souvenirs (Apomfires, Poli and Matatula 1997:12). In my own conversations with Anwar, he explained to me that when he first began he could obtain old and valuable items from local peoples for low prices. Today, virtually all of the old objects have already been sold and Irianese peoples ask high prices for remaining heirlooms.

[163] Hamadi merchants have experimented with commissioning carvings from Javanese carvers now living in the Jayapura-Sentani area. One Hamadi merchant named Thamrin told me in May of 1998 that he was considering having Sentani carvings made in Bali since the Babrongko carvers were continually raising their prices. Thamrin had also paid a highlands man to teach him how to do finishing plaiting and weaving work for stone axes and cassuary bone dagger sheaths. I also observed that Hamadi merchants were buying rough and unfinished carvings and finishing them in Hamadi themselves. This generally consists of coating the carvings in permanganate to treat them for insects and to give them a dark brown colour which otherwise would be obtained by soaking in water. In this way merchants justify paying lower prices for carvings because they are unfinished when purchased. Sentani artists who bring their work in to sell are often confronted by the shop assistants or *anak-buah* doing finishing work and they see this as taking income away from local people.

[164] Today, however, outboard engines power some of the largest canoes.

the carved prow (which by then appears old and weathered) to be cut off and purchased by foreign collectors and traders.

In the past two years Sentani villages have begun to receive groups of tourists coming direct to their villages, particularly Asei. Grand Irian Tours, the largest tour operator in the province (based in Jayapura), began scheduling a one day tour of the Jayapura-Sentani area into their package tours of Irian Jaya, which previously centred only on the highlands.[165] A boat trip to the island of Asei is increasingly popular for tourists. Asei is a tiny and picturesque island with approximately fifty houses and a population of roughly four hundred. Though at its closest point it is only a few hundred meters from the mainland, the island has no electricity, potable running water or shops. The rustic and timeless feeling of the island has contributed to its growing popularity as a tourist site, which, ironically, is having an impact on the livelihood of the people and could wind up reducing its tourist appeal as the villagers get more money and modernize their village. The work of Asei artists needs to be understood in relation to these broader development circumstances, as it is difficult for Asei people to find work.

Asei people lay their barkcloths out on the ground whenever tourists come (see Figure 5-20). Sometimes more than one hundred barkcloths are for sale and today most men in the village and even women and children do some painting on barkcloth. In general, however, Agus Ongge estimated that only one or two tourists will buy a painting in a given visit, which leaves many artists disappointed. Sales to tourists bring the most money to local artists, and this is what most hope for. Tourism in the Sentani area is very limited and unpredictable, however, and in a month only one or two groups of tourists may visit Asei Island.

Agus Ongge has emerged as a cultural production manager for Asei and coordinates tourist arrangements with Grand Irian Tours and the people of Asei. He lets artists know when tourists plan to come and tries to get them involved in whatever ways he can so that Asei people profit from tourists by transporting them to and from the island, preparing barkcloths for sale and doing dance performances and art (carving and barkcloth painting) demonstrations. In March 1997, a large French cruise ship called the Mermosz docked at the Jayapura harbour and roughly

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[165] A few years ago, virtually no tourists made it to Lake Sentani despite the fact that most flights into the highlands leave from the Sentani airport. As these flights tend to leave first thing in the morning and a travel permit or surat jalan is required for tourists outside of Jayapura and Biak, it is usually necessary for tourists to overnight in Sentani town. Most visitors stare out the window in awe as the plane carrying them in to Irian Jaya for the first time circles the green rolling hills surrounding Lake Sentani in preparation for landing, and yet few of them visit the lake. Plans are currently underway to increase tourism in Sentani and the Hotel Sentani Indah, a three star hotel has been built to accommodate tourists. Before this new hotel, there was not even a single star hotel in Sentani, only small and basic guest houses or losmen.

350 tourists went to Asei Island in four separate groups.[166] Agus organized two dance performances and coordinated logistics for the performances. This was the largest tourist event the Asei community had ever held.

Villagers wearing "tribal" dance regalia paddled out in their traditional dugout canoes and performed a non-traditional dance (while standing in their canoes) as the tourists approached Asei Island in motorized boats. While Agus had choreographed this "welcome dance", he did not join in during the performances as he was busy following notes on his clipboard[167] and organizing villagers on the island. Once the tourists had arrived, they had time to walk around the island before a traditional Sentani dance was performed, accompanied by *tifa* (drums). The dancers wore barkcloth blouses which was never traditional (see Figure 5-21), while one woman wore a home made blouse of Batik Irian fabric with Sentani motifs.[168] They also wore traditional sago string dance skirts (called *yaboi*, see Howard 1996: plate 7). After this dance performance, village men gave wood carving and barkcloth painting demonstrations while their families placed barkcloth and carvings on the ground for sale. On my previous visits to Asei, men would negotiate with the tourists but increasingly it appears that women have assumed this role. There were no prices attached to the objects, although in my observation, Asei people rarely ask for more than an item could be purchased for at a local art shop. Most Asei villagers speak virtually no English or other European languages,[169] so many of these interactions were assisted by the Indonesian tour guides. The Asei people I spoke with said they liked doing these performances

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[166] Grand Irian Tours had arranged for these tourists to visit the highlands as well as Asei and Lake Sentani. In this way, they staggered the visits to accommodate this very large number of tourists.

[167] I have observed that clipboards are often used in such events to signify importance or the status of organiser, even when the clipboard is not used. At this event, Agus was the only Asei islander to be dressed in formal Western clothes. Most of the villagers were dressed up in fiber skirts, and adorned with palm fronds, flowers and body paint. This was in contrast to several times where Agus was the spectacle at such events, and sat doing a painting demonstration in 'traditional' costume.

[168] Contemporary government sponsored dance competitions in the Jayapura regency have helped to reveal barkcloth production in more remote areas of the *kabupaten* (regency) of Jayapura that had previously been unidentified or forgotten. Dancers wear costumes that generally resemble, with varying degrees of fidelity, the traditional ceremonial costumes of the region they are from. The dances need not be absolutely traditional, but they are in a traditional style and are accompanied by singing and drumming. This type of presentation is what Agus Ongge had prepared the dancers of Asei to do. Many of the villagers who were not participating in the dancing had decorated themselves, either with body paint or with fronds and leaves to add to the atmosphere.

[169] They were predominately dealing with tourists from the Netherlands, Germany, France, USA, Japan and Australia.

because they all made Rp 15,000 for participating, an opportunity that is spread more evenly throughout the community than the few artists who profit on selling their works.[170]

Agus has taken a leading role in trying to promote Sentani art and culture, and in doing so is creating a new hierarchy for who the custodians of culture are in his community. He has worked with the department of small scale industry, teaching other Sentani men and youths (male) to do woodcarving and painting on barkcloth in the traditional Lake Sentani style. He produced two short booklets on production techniques in Sentani art which he uses in the workshops he teaches (Ongge 1994 and 1995). He is currently trying to set up his own foundation devoted to the development of Sentani arts and tourism and has been meeting with local government officials for assistance with this project. Like other Irianese artists, he lacks funding. As part of his foundation's plans, Agus hopes to build a lakeside guest house as well as a replica of a traditional Sentani men's house on Asei as a tourist attraction and as a gallery space to display and market the art and handicrafts of Sentani artisans. He is currently recording his knowledge of Sentani culture, art motifs and production and hopes one day to compile this into a book. He is also working on designing tours to some of Sentani's most notable cultural locations and on organizing more performances and exhibitions of dance, music and art.

Pameran & Lelang Lukisan Kulit Kayu, May 1998

The most compelling indication that the people of Asei are losing control of contemporary barkcloth production was the first major exhibition devoted solely to barkcloth held in Jayapura, on the weekend of May 23, 1998. The exhibition was titled *Pameran & Lelang Lukisan Kulit Kayu 1998* (Barkcloth Exhibition and Auction 1998), and it was advertised on banners in the streets of Jayapura and in the provincial newspapers for a week leading up to the event. The organizer of the event, as printed on these banners, was the YOUtefa Advertising & Entertainment Company (sic), owned by a Makassarese businessman by the name of Hamzah Muin. Pak Hamzah has lived in Jayapura for fourteen years and makes his living from marketing, catering and organizing parties and functions, designing rubber stamps and iron-on and silk-screened t-shirts with Irianese motifs and images or 'Irianica'. This commercially driven event seems to have been organized very quickly. Hamzah told me his initial inspiration had been a recent article on Asei barkcloth published in the April 18 1998 issue of the Indonesian magazine GATRA (see Ruba'i Kadir 1998).

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[170] Only approximately a dozen barkcloth were sold to tourists during this event.

In late April 1998, I made plans to spend a week, possibly two on Asei island to continue my research with Agus Ongge, but Agus suddenly disappeared for three weeks, and despite sending several notes and messages to Asei and visiting the island once myself, I had received no response from Agus (this was completely out of character). I presumed that he had gone to get barkcloth from the Mamberamo area, as he had mentioned to me in earlier correspondence that he needed to start filling outstanding commissions for barkcloth paintings and would source the barkcloth himself.[171] On the trip I had made to Asei, there were few paintings available for sale, and I was told that the day before the Provincial Governor and his wife, Freddy and Ibu Numberi, had been to Asei and purchased approximately eighty barkcloths. When I first saw the barkcloth exhibition banners, I felt certain that Agus was in some way involved.

Following this I went to the YOUtefa office, a modest building with a cone-shaped roof (of the Humboldt Bay "traditional house" type), in the old bus terminal of Jayapura. There I met Hamzah, who told me about his planned exhibition and showed me some of his company's barkcloth table covers and golf hats that were being produced on site, some hand painted, some hand stamped and some silk-screened by his employees who were members of his family and other non-Irianese Indonesians. The table covers, which were round, had a few motifs arranged neatly against the cloth background or as a border around the edge. Motifs included very simple stylized Sentani spiral designs, others were of birds of paradise and drums. Hamzah said that he had approached the Governor's wife, Ibu Numberi, with his idea for an exhibition and she had offered to help sponsor the event.[172] Hamzah explained that the exhibition and auction would feature traditional barkcloth (*kulit kayu*) made by Asei artists and contemporary paintings (*lukisan*), portraits and landscapes in acrylic paints. He did not mention Agus' name, and took credit for promoting local arts, stating he could not understand why the local people had not yet done this themselves. He offered to put my name on the guest list so that I could attend the auction, which was by invitation.

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[171] Around Sentani most of the trees with bark suitable for making barkcloth have been killed (to collect bark for barkcloth, the bark is generally completely removed from the lower trunk of the tree). Through a project with the GKI Church, barkcloth produced in the Mamberamo region was being back-loaded on mission aircraft flying out from communities in the Mamberamo who now have some cash income for supplying barkcloth to satisfy the market in Jayapura. Agus Ongge said that when he wants to do a really good job (commission), he will go to the edges of the Mamberamo river basin itself and collect the very best bark he can find.

[172] Generally there is an expectation that the Governor's wife be involved in community minded projects. I did not have the opportunity to speak with Ibu Numberi about her sponsorship of the event, but on the order forms for barkcloths at the auction there was a note indicating that 10% of the proceeds from the sale of barkcloth would go to help Foster Parents Plan projects in Irian Jaya.

The venue for the exhibition was the seventh floor of the new *Bank Pembangunan Daerah* (BPD or Regional Development Bank) bank building, the tallest building (roughly ten stories) in Jayapura.[173] The event was held for one weekend, with the auction on Saturday, and the exhibition open to the public on Sunday. The auction was a gala affair with everyone seated at banquet tables, (we later all received a catered box lunch with tea and coffee service, which is a feature of many contemporary Indonesian official functions). At each seat there was a promotional auction package including: a YOUtefa brochure ("YOUtefa For Your BUSINESS" is the company's slogan);[174] a photocopy of *the* GATRA article on Asei barkcloth painting featuring Agus Ongge, titled "Magical force from Asei" (*Kekuatan Magis dari Asei*), photocopied sheets with captioned numbered thumbnail sized photocopies of photographs of the paintings and order forms. In the center of each table sat piles of YOUtefa's barkcloth golf hats and tablecloths stacked in the middle with price tags on them.

Roughly seventy paintings were displayed around the periphery of the room. Of these, thirty-two were Hamadi style paintings and included; postcard style images of "Irianica" (traditional landscape and village scenes of local peoples, flora and fauna – with some direct copies from commercially available postcards) or portraits of prominent provincial businessmen, government and military officials with their wives. These were painted in acrylics on barkcloth by young Sulawesi painters who also work at the Hamadi art and souvenir market. Two examples of these paintings can be seen in Figures 5-22 and 5-23. Figure 5-22 is a portrait of an Asmat man carving a *bisj* pole, probably for the tourist trade, given that the man is alone, indoors and wearing a t-shirt and not ceremonial attire. In Figure 5-23, a painting of Asmat shields has been treated in a unique way because, unlike all of the other paintings in which the barkcloth is first whitewashed and then painted as if it were a canvas, the background here is unpainted and the texture of the cloth is incorporated into the composition. This painting was the only Hamadi acrylic piece that took advantage of the actual barkcloth material. Both of these paintings reveal some of the realities of art production in Irian Jaya and the role of migrants in the art trade and now increasingly, art production.

In Agats, the main administrative coastal town of the Asmat region, the export of Asmat arts and crafts is controlled by Sulawesi merchants. One such operator, Pak Alex, tours Asmat

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[173] Ironically, this new bank building was opening just as many banks in Jakarta were closing their doors due to the financial crisis of late 1997.

[174] This is probably a pun on the English 'you' plus *tifa* – a generic Indonesian term for any Irianese drum. Yotefa is also the indigenous Tobati name for what the Dutch called Humboldt Bay or what is now called Yos Sudarso Bay by Indonesians.

villages in his motorized canoe and picks up carvings from village workshops, which he then ships direct to Bali or Jayapura. These carvings are then further marked up and sold in art galleries in Java and Bali or in the Hamadi market.[175] Figure 5-23 depicts a collection of Asmat shields as they might appear piled up against a wall in a trader's shop. It is strikingly similar to a photo I took while in Agats of shields in storage waiting to be shipped to Bali by another Sulawesi middleman (see Figure 5-24). There is a degree of irony in these paintings because they represent a further appropriation of the cultural heritage and identity of Irianese people for profit by non-Irianese. Asmat people are not in control of the sale of their carvings, and as a group, profit substantially less from their artistic production than do migrant middlemen.[176] These acrylic paintings are an extension of the economic appropriation that migrant middlemen are performing by taking control of the profits of the handicraft and artistic industries of Irianese people.

The remaining paintings on display at the auction were from Asei, and generally consisted of poor quality stenciled pieces. Figure 5-25 shows one of the few hand painted works, by an anonymous Asei artist who combined the Sentani spiral motifs with animal motifs. There were no labels with any of the paintings, as they were presented in an auction style, with details provided on a separate sheet (in this case as black and white thumbnails photographs). The captions included size, painter and a category called *obyek* (subject or title). Most of the *obyek* categories were left blank. Some of the Asei paintings were labeled *etnik* or *etnik Asei* (ethnic or Asei ethnic), and while all the Hamadi style painters were identified, for most of the "traditional" paintings, the painter category simply stated "Asei". Six paintings were designated as the work of Agust. Ongge. In contrast to the typical presentation of barkcloths on the ground on Asei, these paintings were glued to brightly painted handmade wooden frames (with no glass). This treatment highlighted one of the difficulties in marketing Sentani barkcloth, because it is exceptionally difficult to frame, or to make it look like it would fit into a "modern" interior. The Asei barkcloths, with their natural pigments looked washed out and overpowered by these frames, and the acrylic paintings, to a western eye, were quite garish There are no picture framing businesses in Jayapura to date and these frames were built at YOUtefa.

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[175] These carving workshops are, to date, never owned by Asmat or Irianese people.

[176] Middlemen take far more of the profits in virtually all culture related industries in Irian Jaya, including tourism. Most tourist agencies in the province and tourist guides are migrants as well, and in the Asmat region, Sulawesi middlemen, who are more likely to have a canoe with an outboard motor and can afford the high prices for fuel, offer to take tourists around with them while they pick up carvings.

After a designated period for viewing the paintings, the opening speeches began. A banner over the stage across the front of the room read: "*Dengan Semangat Hari Kebangkitan Nasional Kita Tingkatkan Mutu, Keunggulan dan Kemitraan Kerajinan Khas Irian Jaya*" – 'In the spirit of the National Day of Resurgence, we raise the quality and superiority and partnership of Irian Jaya Handicrafts,' (see Figure 5-26). The opening speeches were typically long and official, and spoke of the regions' need to honour and celebrate the National Day of Resurgence[177] with this exhibition's contribution to the development of the nation's regional arts, with the nuance of Irian Jaya (*bernuansa Irian Jaya*).

The auction drew prominent government, military and business figures of Irian Jaya (who were also the subjects of most of the portraits), into a heated frenzy of bidding. Only three paintings were auctioned off, despite indications more paintings would be auctioned (Figure 5-26 illustrates these pieces).[178] The paintings auctioned off represent, from left to right: the Governor of Irian Jaya and his wife, Fredi and Annie Numberi; the Pangdam VIII Trikora (*Panglima daerah militer* – the Territorial military commander of Irian Jaya) General Amir Sembiring and his wife, and a highlands man referred to as the *Kepala Suku Besar*, or tribal leader.[179] These paintings sold for extremely high prices, with prominent government officials bidding the prices higher and higher. In the end the Numberis and the Sembirings each purchased their own portraits for Rp 16,000,000.00 and Rp 16,500,000.00 respectively (US$1600 and $1650 in May 1998).[180] The *Kepala Suku Besar* sold for the highest price of Rp 20,800,000.00 (around US$2080).

The remaining paintings were exhibited only as sample pieces to be ordered for a fixed price. Uniformed sales staff stood around the periphery of the room and circled the tables to see if any orders needed taking. Few people ordered, however, because the prices were hugely

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[177] The National Day of Resurgence is a national holiday held on May 20th of each year that commemorates Indonesia's early nationalist movement. On May 20th in Jakarta and in other parts of the archipelago, anti-government student protests that quickly led to the resignation of President Suharto were continuing following the shooting of four Trisakti University students by security forces.

[178] Two articles in the provincial newspaper Tifa Irian, suggested the exhibition and auction were of Asei barkcloths only.

[179] I have been unable to find out exactly who this man is. People I asked at the auction could only say he was a Dani "tribal leader." I do know, however, that there is a photograph of him in the Irian Jaya pavilion at the Taman Mini Indonesia Indah theme park. I have since found out that this portrait as well as several of the 'Hamadi style' paintings in the exhibition were direct copies from photographs published in the book *Irian Jaya: A New Frontier for Trade, Investment and Tourism.* (Provincial Government of Irian Jaya 1993), where his identity is also not given.

[180] It would appear that these officials were following some sort of etiquette whereby they were obliged from the outset of the auction to hold the successful bid on their portraits.

inflated. For a painting from the *Lukisan Wajah / Flora Fauna* (portrait / flora and fauna painting) series, the price was ten to twenty times what it would cost at the Hamadi market (from Rp 2,000,000 and Rp 5,000,000, at the time about US$200-500). Also a clear 'modern' hierarchy was being established: the Asei paintings called *Ukiran Motif Irian Jaya* (Irian Jaya Motifs) were being sold for one million Rupiah less than the equivalent size acrylic paintings, suggesting the inferiority of the traditional pieces.

The auction was followed by more speeches by Hamzah and government officials who hailed the ability of Irian arts to command high prices and praised the beauty and ingenuity of barkcloth as a uniquely Irianese product and commodity. No representatives of Asei or Sentani spoke. The event ended with the announcement of the winners of a children's barkcloth painting competition, which had been run in conjunction with the auction. The three winners, none of them Sentani or Irianese children, had been awarded prizes of Rp150,000, Rp100,000 and Rp75,000 (for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place respectively) but these winning paintings were not displayed. It seemed implicit that they represented the future hope for Irianese barkcloth art.

Following the speeches, Agus Ongge finally appeared on stage to do a painting demonstration, accompanied by a man from the town of Genyem who demonstrated the preparation of the barkcloth. Later Agus told me the arrangements he had negotiated with Hamzah on behalf of the people of Asei. Hamzah had ordered all of the barkcloth ahead of the event from Genyem and provided it free to the Asei artists so they only had to paint the cloth. Hamzah had promised that he would purchase ten barkcloth from every family on Asei that wanted to be involved in painting barkcloth and that he would pay Rp20,000 (US$2) per barkcloth. He promised that with the success of this exhibition (and future exhibitions in Jakarta and Darwin, Australia),[181] he would be able to buy ten barkcloth from every family in the project in Asei each month. This promise of a regular income for many families on Asei was very appealing, but after the auction, Agus expressed his dismay that the event had not been what he had expected. He was not invited to speak and he was not acknowledged except in the collective, as Asei artists were praised for their contribution and for their 'invention' of barkcloth, so that it could be developed into an artform of Irian Jaya. Still, Agus was hopeful that some of the promises Hamzah had made to continue to work with the people of Asei would contribute to providing a more stable market for Asei painters.

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[181] Hamzah intended to go to Darwin for an Eastern Indonesia/Australia joint handicraft expo and to pay for Agus to join him on this trip. Agus was very excited about this possibility as he was intrigued by Australian Aboriginal barkcloth paintings and this appears to have been part of the reason he accepted Hamzah's barkcloth proposal. Agus Ongge did travel to Australia with Hamzah in June of 1998 and exhibited his work in Darwin after I left Irian Jaya.

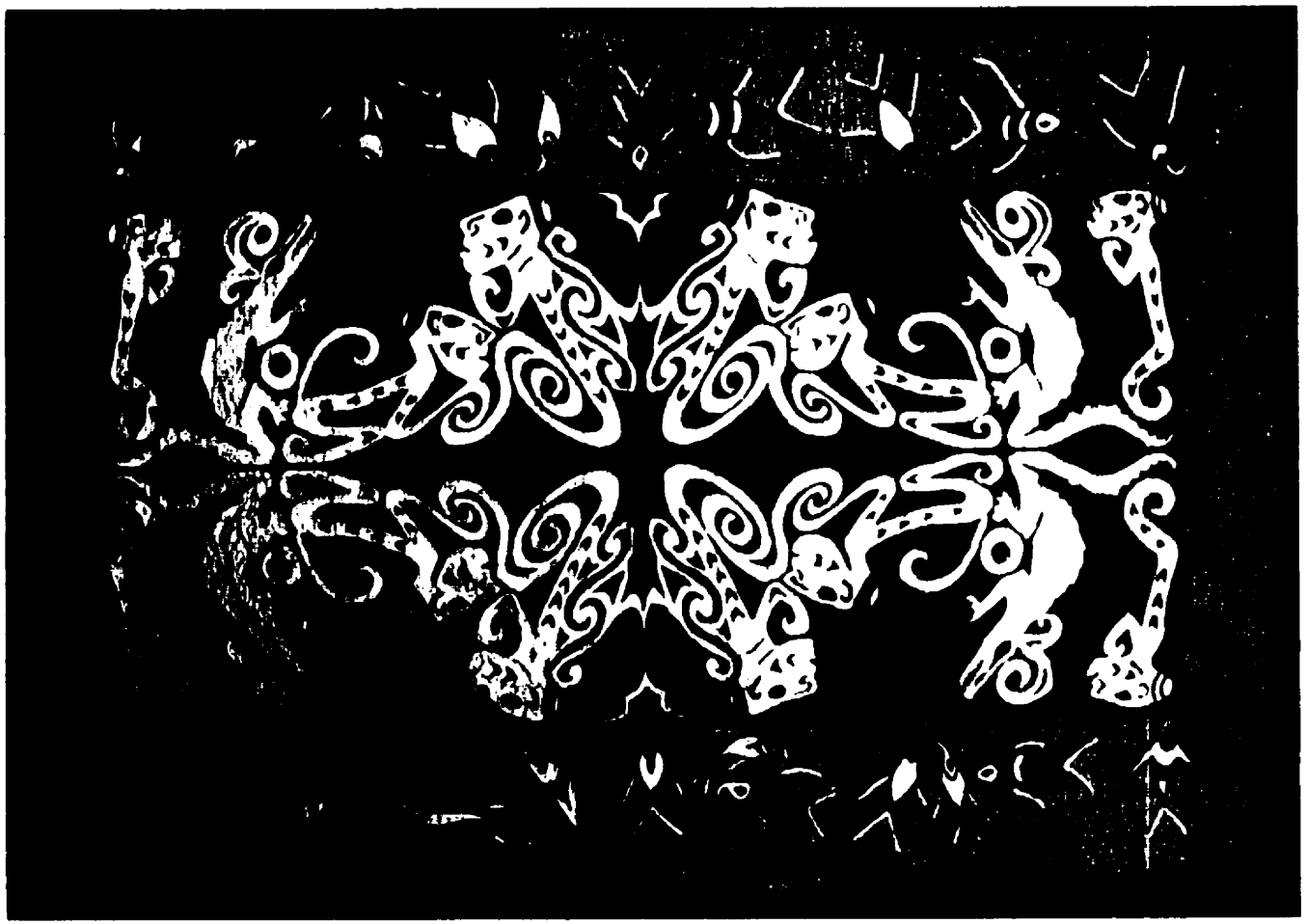

Figure 5-27. Stenciled barkcloth with Asmat and Sentani motifs, Asei Island, 1998, ca. 53 x 81cm (Stencil design by Agus Ongge and John Ohee, painting attributed to Syors Ibo).

Analysis of main issues

Agus Ongge represents a new type of Irianese artist who has emerged from the breakdown of traditional barriers to art production brought on by both missionaries and the Indonesian government. Though he does not have traditional carving rights, Agus is able to support his large family with the money he earns from carving. His personal goal is to be able to send his children to high school and university and to build a new house to accommodate them. His position within his community, however, is not uncontested by other Asei islanders who have seen Agus profit considerably from art production, which was not traditionally his right. Agus works hard to maintain his reputation with the members of his community by sharing the profits from tourism with them, and acting as a cultural promoter for the island of Asei. On an island as small as Asei, communal ties and responsibilities remain very strong, even if they reflect more contemporary concerns. This is particularly true of communities which have been (or feel) neglected by Indonesian development programs.[182]

There is an irony to Agus's story. Although the "traditional" origins and rights of artists to paint barkcloth are uncertain (as discussed earlier), Agus has benefited from the government's decision to lift carving restrictions in Sentani. For a while, this gave Agus new opportunities, first through the GKI Church sponsorship and later to commercialize his own work and sell directly to foreigners and local traders. During this time, he gained a reputation as a skilled carver and painter. Reflecting the emergence of such artists and these developments in contemporary barkcloth production (specifically prior to Hamzah's project), Jac. Hoogerbrugge has stated: "Thus it appears that the spirits of the bush and the sea, formerly the main source of inspiration, are not yet dead as was feared twenty years ago. Rather, they seem to have joined forces with powerful new spirits like publicity, competition and cash. This new combination of incentives is keeping the art of barkcloth painting alive, at least for the time being" (Hoogerbrugge 1995:175).

Stenciled barkcloth with Sentani and Asmat motifs (stencil design by Agus Ongge and John Ohee, painting itself attributed to Syors Ibo)

Today, it is the very lack of controls and restrictions on barkcloth production that threaten Agus's future as an artist and the future of barkcloth as an art form in Sentani. Figure 5-27 gives

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[182] Despite their proximity to the provincial capital of Jayapura, many Sentani villages have yet to receive basic services such as road access to all villages. This is in contrast to the village of Sabron-Dosay, even further from Jayapura than the Sentani villages. Sabron–Dosay is the first transmigration site to have been established in Irian Jaya over twenty years ago. It has electricity and is linked by paved road to Jayapura.

an example of the dilemma faced by Agus and other artists like him. It shows a similar fusion of motifs to those of the Batik Irian, pan-Irianese design styles. These designs are considered interesting, creative and popular. This is a barkcloth produced with a stencil that employs Asmat motifs, including *bipane* (or boar tusk nosepiece symbol), an Asmat hornbill motif, an Asmat styled human figure and a crocodile (which could be either Sentani or Asmat) and some Sentani spiral motifs (*fouw*). When I asked Maria, Agus Ongge's wife, who had designed the stencil, she told me it was Agus and John Ohee, another prominent Asei carver. They had apparently both been teaching stencil design in a government organized painting workshop and this is the stencil that they were using to teach with. When I asked Agus who made the stencil, he initially claimed it was John Ohee. I presume Agus did not want to take credit for the stencil since I had questioned him several times about how he feels when Hamadi artists use Sentani motifs. His reply had always been that he did not like it.[183] Eventually Agus did admit that the painting was one of his once I was able to convince him that I actually liked the painting despite the issues of appropriation involved which he also acknowledged as being potentially problematic. Agus's general feeling was that he felt undecided about the appropriation involved. On the one hand he suggested that since Asmat artists do not paint on barkcloth, perhaps his use of Asmat motif in this instance, which was done as an experiment, was all right. On the other hand, he acknowledged that he might feel upset if another tribal group used a Sentani motif in a similar way.

Many barkcloths made from this stencil have been sold (at least four to foreigners) and the stencil is popular because it works well to create an overall composition.[184] In Figure 5-27, the stencil is repeated four times, and was turned over to create the mirrored effect. The outside border of the painting is comprised of a ring of Sentani style fish. Despite the fact that some of the motifs are from Asmat, the stencil has the feeling of a Sentani barkcloth because of its radiating quality, which is the same visual element seen in the Sentani *fouw* motif. The emphasis on composition and symmetry are also elements traditionally found in the Sentani barkcloths (compare Figure 5- 2). The creation of this stencil was probably at least in part inspired by the Indonesian government's policies of loosening the past strict taboos on the use of motifs. As cultural appropriation is acceptable and even officially sanctioned by the Indonesian government, this barkcloth might be seen more as a pan-Irianese designed barkcloth, strongly influenced by

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[183] This stencil is unusual in that it is used in different combinations and repetitions to make an all over pattern that is filled in with some hand painting to create different visual effects.

[184] While this painting was not produced by Agus Ongge himself, I am aware of others using this stencil design that are attributed to him.

Batik Irian. The novelty and visual effect of this barkcloth have made it a winner so far by the most pragmatic contemporary standards for judging the merit of a barkcloth (does it sell?), and for this reason it could have interesting effects on contemporary barkcloth painting and art production in Irian Jaya, if other artists decide they too will break loose from traditional conventions and produce new works that focus on more formal artistic considerations such as composition.

Hamzah's Barkcloth Exhibition and Auction of May 1998 has enormous implications for the future role of barkcloth in the community of Asei and as a regional art of Irian Jaya. If the Hamadi (and now Hamzah) style of barkcloth paintings continues to gain popularity among the Indonesian elite, it could cause serious problems for Asei artists. One of the main concerns is the appropriation of the indigenous material and technology of barkcloth production, as the barkcloth trees are already extremely scarce in the Sentani area. Agus Ongge and other artists had already been sourcing the raw material for barkcloth from trees in Genyem (approximately fifty kilometres from Sentani) because all of the easily accessible trees have been harvested in the Sentani area. Agus told me that in the past he was allowed to take the trees from Genyem for free (which he cuts into short lengths to transport on the bus), but he is worried that this may not continue now that Hamzah pays Rp 15,000 for a large pre-made barkcloth sheet in Genyem.[185] Asei artists could wind up with little choice but to become low-waged employees of Hamzah, without access to barkcloth themselves. Hamzah has the available capital to push Sentani artists who do not collaborate with his new venture out of production, whether it is his intention to do so or not. He has better access to the Indonesian elite clientele who are able to purchase art in Irian Jaya, and his entrepreneurial activities appear to have the full support of the provincial government. While Hamzah's deal might provide a more reliable income for Sentani people, they are losing control of the production and sale of their barkcloth art.

The manipulation and appropriation of indigenous rights, property and practices is under attack in Canada, the U.S.A. and Australia, and this has not gone unnoticed in Irian Jaya. On my last visit to Asei Island in late May 1998 (after the resignation of President Suharto), I felt a certain sense of unease among the villagers to my presence. I discussed this later with Agus, and he explained that the people had just been told that there should be certain conditions if foreigners (people from outside Lake Sentani) were to learn about Sentani culture. Agus said he had been

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[185] Ironically, this was also the concern of Rizal, the Hamadi artist who painted the Dani warrior barkcloth that took the highest bid at the auction. When I spoke to him, he was unsure of what, if any of the auction money he would receive. He said that it had not been clarified between himself and Hamzah beforehand.

given specific instructions about how much he should tell me (as a researcher)[186] about his culture and that I should pay for this knowledge (which he disagreed with). This directive was issued by Theys Eluay, a Sentani man and Head of the Coalition of Tribal Leaders of Irian Jaya (*Lembaga Adat Irian Jaya*). After hearing this, I tried to visit Theys Eluay several times in May and early June of 1998, but he was away in Jakarta hoping to meet with the newly appointed President Habibie about the future of Irian Jaya. By late 1998, Theys Eluay and other Irianese tribal leaders were publicly calling for an end to Indonesian governance in Irian Jaya and independence for the peoples of West Papua.[187]

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[186] Agus speculated that this may have been prompted by Indonesian researchers who came to Sentani to prepare the book *Sentani: Old and New in the Land of Clear Water* (Pratiknyo 1995) for an exhibition of the same name. According to several Sentani artists, these journalists (for the Jakarta Post newspaper) were apparently very invasive in their research style and the book has many inaccuracies.

[187] Theys Eluay has been under house arrest at his home in Sentani at different times during the past year, and interrogated by Indonesian security personnel.

CHAPTER 6: IRIANESE ARTISTS INVENTING LOCAL FUTURES

> The local is not necessarily the passive, dominated receiver of worldwide influences, but is busy selecting, reorganizing and reprocessing them in a creative way (Nas 1998:184).

This chapter discusses the role of local agency in art production through case studies of two contemporary Irianese artists, Nico Haluk from Siepkosi in the central highlands and Micha Ronsumbre from Biak Island. These two artists represent opposite extremes in what is considered by many Indonesians as the continuum of Irianese ethnicity. This Chapter explores how each of these artists, through their own initiatives and distinct cultural context, are contributing to contemporary artistic production in Irian.

Nico Haluk of Siepkosi, Baliem Valley

Nico Haluk, from Siepkosi village in the central highlands of Irian Jaya, lives in what is still stereotyped by many Indonesians and foreigners as a "Stone Age" world. Despite the complexity and sophistication of highlands peoples in Irian Jaya, including the remarkable irrigation systems used in their gardens, the highlands are unfortunately still best known as the last place on earth where vanishing "Stone Age" cultures can still be seen. While this erroneous stereotype exists in general for all of New Guinea, the highlands are the main tourist destination in Irian Jaya today, and as such the region seems to draw the majority of these claims.[188] Within Indonesia, the highlands of Irian Jaya are widely considered to be the least developed region of Indonesia, because many areas are still inaccessible except by air.

Many highlands communities had no known "contact" with foreigners (other than their immediate tribal neighbours) until the arrival in the middle of this century of explorers, missionaries and colonial officials. The first permanent government presence in the central highlands was established in 1957. Schools, trade stores and development projects have followed. Within this context, Nico Haluk has created a role for himself as an artist in his community and an entirely new art form, with important implications for art production in the highlands of Irian Jaya.

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[188] One needs only look at adventure travel brochures or on the internet to find such claims.

It is generally believed that no "art" is made by the 420,000 tribal people who live in the highlands.[189] The anthropologist Karl Heider writes "In New Guinea it is the coastal and lowland cultures which produce the great art. The Papuans of the central highlands have little art, and the Dani even less than most" (Heider 1979:58). About 50,000 Dani (or Balim)[190] people inhabit the Baliem River Valley in the central highlands of Irian Jaya and many live in or near the only urban center of Wamena. When I first visited in Wamena in October 1995, I was surprised to see the main street lined with souvenir shops like those in Hamadi, several with names in English like "Baliem Valley Art Depot," or "Dani Art Shop" (see Figure 6-1). These shops, I found out, were owned exclusively by Indonesian migrants from South Sulawesi, and at least one Hamadi merchant owned a second shop here. Inside these shops there were typical highland souvenir items such as penis gourds (*koteka* in Indonesian, or *holim* in Dani language), stone axes, bow and arrow sets, and women's net bags, called *noken*. Some shops also sold more specialized local items like fossils (found by local people in river beds), and ethnographic objects such as finger knives,[191] woven string bands adorned with cowrie shells – once used as money and as bride price, assorted "medicine man charms," long flat stones called *je* (highly valued by local peoples and used in bride price exchange), woven platters, plaited armbands and rings.[192] These items were also sold by Dani souvenir peddlers in the streets and outside the restaurants of Wamena.

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[189] This was the official estimate in 1995 of the Community Relations Department of the Local Government in Wamena for the entire highlands Kabupaten, or Regency of Jayawijaya (Pemerintah Daerah Tingkat II Jayawijaya, Bagian Hubungan Masyarakat 1995).

[190] George Aditjondro refers to the Dani people as Balim people [sic] because they almost all live within the Baliem Valley and identify themselves with the Baliem River. He argues that Karl Heider, in his seminal work on the "Dugum Dani" inappropriately named the ethnic group that lives in the Baliem Valley. Aditjondro suggests that Balim would be a better category for these peoples, as Dani is generally confused with Lani (an ethnic group found to the west of the Baliem Valley). See Aditjondro 1995:2. Highlands people refer to themselves by a wide range of names reflecting smaller social units.

[191] These are now more decorative than functional. They are small heavy stones with a worked edge and woven handle, traditionally used in grieving rituals associated with funerals. Traditionally this tool would have been used to sever the first segment of a finger from one hand of the relatives (often female) grieving the loss of a family member. This practice, widespread in the highlands, was discouraged under missionaries and later banned by Dutch and Indonesian government officers.

[192] These rings are traditionally used to secure a string to the *holim* (penis gourd) which is tied around the torso to hold the *holim* close to the body (for more information, see Heider 1979:56). See Figure 6-2 which includes a picture of Yok-lar-rah, an elderly Dani man from Jiwika dressed in a *holim* and wearing three feathers in a wig made of hand spun fibre coated in pig fat. Pig fat among highlands communities is a ceremonial food with many other functions. When applied as a grease directly to the skin, it is an effective barrier to the cold. It is also used to add durability and lustre to wooden and woven objects including *holim*, woodcarvings, hunting bows and tool handles. It is also used as a lubricant when sharpening stone edges (on stone axes, etc).

More than half of the items for sale in the Wamena art shops were carvings from Asmat and other areas of Irian Jaya. In a few of these shops I noticed some carvings I had not seen before in Hamadi or in any publications. I was surprised to see that some of the figures depicted in these carvings wore penis gourds, and many of the carvings depicted men climbing lookout towers called *kayo* (Dani language), traditionally used as enemy watchtowers before tribal warfare was banned by missionaries and government.[193] The shopkeepers confirmed my suspicions that these were carvings made by Dani and immediately asked my opinion of them the works. They were wary of how the sculptures would sell, but they acknowledged that the Dani people were making an attempt to learn to carve ("*Mereka sudah coba dan belajar bikin patung juga*"). They could not, however tell me the name of any of the carvers, and claimed local people just brought them from time to time. The shopkeepers had no formal arrangement with artists yet as they were waiting to see if the carvings generated any interest. After a day of asking other shopkeepers and Dani street peddlers, (some of whom I found were also selling the Dani style carvings), I was finally given the name of Nico Haluk. Nico was said to be the first and best of the Dani carvers by the most active and persistent group of Dani peddlers who would walk the streets or sit in front of the tourist trying to sell their wares. One of these men was from Nico Haluk's small village of Siepkosi, about eight kilometres from Wamena. He offered to return home that night and tell Nico that I was interested in meeting with him.

The next morning at 7am, Nico was waiting in the lobby of my hotel with some of the street peddlers I had met the day before (Figure 6-2). As part of this interview, I asked Nico to write down the story of how he became an artist. Below is a synopsis of what he wrote in October 1995, including additions he made in subsequent meetings (all comments in parenthesis are mine). I have included his description in the body of this text because of its importance to his life. It is a story he tells with great passion and conviction. I also include it here because in my subsequent research, it became clear from others interested in highlands culture,[194] that Nico is the undisputed creator of this new Dani style of carving and as such, his story (if left unwritten) would traditionally become part of local oral history and, perhaps eventually contribute to the mythology of the Dani people. (The importance of oral history to the peoples of New Guinea cannot be overemphasized and will be explored further in the next case study.)

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[193] The first missionary group to settle in the Baliem Valley was led by Myron Bromley in 1954. He was followed by the Dutch Government administrative post in the Mukoko Dani region (now the town of Wamena) in 1957 (Pemerintah Daerah Tingkat II Jayawijaya Bagian Hubungan Masyarakat 1995).

[194] Including the Bupati J.B.Wenas, the head of Yahubla (a local NGO working on cultural development) and the UNESCO field officer for Irian Jaya, based in Jakarta. UNESCO's activities in Irian Jaya will be discussed later in this chapter.

Nico Haluk - age 38

Wood Carver, *(mameluok inoh* in Dani language*)*

Hawally Clan, Siepkosi village, Wamena (Jayawijaya) Regency

Studio members: (all men around the age of twenty years)

1) Derry Itlay
2) Elias Walilo
3) Nichanor Itlay
4) Jan Walilo
5) Korintus Siep
6) Dianus Walilo

I began making sculptures on July 3, 1981. The subjects for my sculptures come from my ancestry. When I was still in elementary school, I already enjoyed drawing and won many competitions in the years 1972-73 while I attended the Tomas Catholic Mission middle school. On May 3 1974, I became a teacher at the elementary school in Siepkosi paid with an honorarium. For 5 years I taught the students of Siepkosi and then I received a letter of termination from the missionaries informing me that I would no longer be a teacher at the school.

The Diocese of Jayapura then invited me to study as a Catholic religion teacher for 5 years without any honorarium or wage. I received a letter of termination (in early 1981). That year I was very disappointed as some of my friends had been chosen to go to teacher's training college at the Cenderawasih University in Jayapura.

On July 3, 1981 at 6:30 am, I was pondering my problem of having left school (and having no job), when I received a gift from God above and immediately I envisioned a picture / image inside a nearby piece of wood. I had brought a knife with me so immediately I began carving a sculpture of a Dani / Baliem person. (he said that there was a child around playing with a bow and arrow so he decided to carve an arrow first, with human figures and a bird on the tip. See Figure 6-3) I practiced carving from the 3rd of July 1981 until the 19th of July 1992, when I took examples of my work and presented them to the Bupati, Head of the Regency of Jayawijaya, the Provincial Government in Wamena.

The Bupati tested me for one week and I carved Dani / Baliem sculptures at his residence. The Bupati found these carvings to be very good, interesting and of merit. I have made thirty-seven Dani carvings since I first met the Bupati. For one large sculpture (approximately one meter in height), I was paid on average Rp500,000 by the Bupati (five hundred thousand Rupiah at the time was approximately US$220).

The Bupati and I took sculptures to exhibit at the Development Expo in Jayapura, at the provincial level. After I had attended the Jayapura Expo three times (over

> the course of three years), the quality of my carving was equal/competitive with that of the Asmat in Merauke Regency.
>
> In November of 1993, I met with President Suharto, at the Expo arena in Jayapura / Waena. I took the opportunity to shake hands with the President and we talked for quite a while.
>
> At the Jayapura Expo in 1993, the President's impression of my work was good and in 1994 with the assistance of the Bupati[195] I got the opportunity to be sent to Java for training in wood carving techniques to broaden my work and technique. I spent four months in Bandung - Subang (for carving lessons) before I returned home to Irian Jaya Wamena on the 19th of January where I have remained until now, the 29th of October, 1995. I brought back with me the carvings I made there and was upon returning expected to continue improving my carving as mentioned. (often artists who are sponsored by the government for carving lessons are expected to continue refining their skills upon their return and to impart them to others as well in return for the opportunity).
>
> Many of my carvings are of enemy lookout towers (*patung mengarah pengintai musuh* in Indonesian), or *kayo / ap suam* in the Dani language [– see Figure 6-4]. This symbol is used today as the symbol of development and looking to the future in Wamena / the Jayawijaya Regency.[196] Before there was the Gospel, missionaries or the government, tribal warfare took place and *kayo /ap suam* were used.

We went together to look at examples of his work in the shops. Nico described how he had long believed that Dani people should be able to profit from tourists who visit the Baliem Valley, and that it was a shame many tourists leave the Baliem valley with an Asmat carving as a souvenir. He also expressed his firm conviction that Dani people should not be represented only by the penis gourd, given that many Dani people are now Christian and wear Western style clothing and some are even embarrassed of the traditional dress style. (While Nico prefers not to wear *koteka* his carved male figures always do.) Nico believes that Dani who don't wear regular clothes (in Wamena) do so simply because they want to make some money charging tourists for photographs. In my experience, this is certainly true for the most spectacularly dressed men in Wamena, who often make themselves into works of art for tourist interest. Yet, even in villages

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[195] Although neither Nico Haluk or Bupati Wenas acknowledged any involvement of LIPI (*Lembaga Ilmu Pengetahuan Indonesia*) or the Indonesian Academy of Sciences, it is possible that Nico's training in Java was facilitated by LIPI. The Academy has a small office in Wamena and has established the *Pemuda Silimo* or Youth Training Center near the Bupati's office in Wamena. Here LIPI has a variety of projects, including agricultural test plots and a pottery studio which produces souvenir replicas of highlands *honai* buildings. In Figure 6-11, pottery *honai* have been joined with *koteka* or penis gourds as a tourist souvenir. Unfortunately I was unable to meet with LIPI staff during my time in Wamena.

[196] The local LIPI office in Wamena also uses the *kayo* as its symbol (see Figure 6-5). It is ironic that LIPI, which prides itself on its visionary projects should use the *kayo* as its symbol as the watchtowers have long been banned (due to their association with tribal warfare). There is only one permanent Kayo in the Baliem Valley (built specifically for tourists, see McCarthy 1994).

quite close to Wamena, many Dani still wear traditional dress and live quite traditional lives (although when they come to town, most will dress in Western style clothes if they have them). Nico feels it is only right that Dani people should profit from tourism. "Why should Asmat people profit, or migrants from other islands altogether" he asked, "when tourists come to Irian Jaya to see the Dani."

In the souvenir and art shops, he identified some of the better quality carvings as his work. He takes pride in doing refined work (*halus*), and he pointed out that a number of the other carvings were coarsely carved, probably by students still practicing. He explained that he wanted the Dani art style, to be different from the stylized art of the Asmat. Thus the Dani carving style was conceived at least in part out of a desire to be different and to assert an individual ethnic identity. Dani carvings are more rounded, fleshy, and life like,[197] and according to Nico, display a uniquely Dani perception of the human form, distinct from the Asmat and other ethnic groups in Irian Jaya. He also believes that they are more detailed and require more technical skill and time to carve. As with most woodcarving in Irian Jaya, the works are made from one single piece of wood.[198] But Nico's best works were in the collection of his sponsor, the Bupati, J.B. Wenas.[199] Nico arranged for to meet with Bupati Wenas at his office, where he expressed his happiness at my interest in Dani art and invited me to his house that evening for dessert, coffee and a tour of his collection.

It was clear that the relationship between the Bupati and Nico Haluk was strongly influenced by the status of the two men. Nico was once just a villager, now a carver with "promise." The Bupati was the Head of the Indonesian Government for the entire Regency, a former army colonel, a keen art collector and Nico's sole patron. While Nico came with me to the Bupati's house, he behaved in a very submissive fashion and never challenged the Bupati's version of the Dani art revival. The Bupati is very proud of his development achievements in the highlands. He claims the Dani Art revival is one element in his overall development plan for the Jayawijaya Regency. He told us that he had won the Pancasila award for upholding and promoting Pancasila values and another award for promoting religious understanding and

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[197] It is more than likely that Nico Haluk's development of the "Dani style" has been shaped by influences from the nearby town of Wamena. One of the most obvious possible influences is an Indonesian monument to Kur. Mabel (see Figure 6-6), a famous Dani warrior (discussed later in this chapter).

[198] Nico and the work of other highlands carvers suffers from the problems with sourcing and seasoning timber for their sculptures. Cracks are common in many of these pieces, particularly in the work of carvers still learning technical skills.

[199] Wenas claimed that he would donate the works he had purchased from Nico Haluk to the Museum in Wamena at the end of his term as Bupati. I have not been able to confirm if he did this before leaving Irian Jaya to retire in Manado.

tolerance in the region. His wife, who joined us that evening, had also won awards for her role in the community and in the family welfare program, PKK (*Pendidikan Kesejahteraan Keluarga*).[200] She offered me a serving of her most recent project, fried sweet potato and taro chips, which her group had taught Dani women to produce, package and sell at the Wamena market.

The Bupati described the day he discovered Nico's talent, an ability he claimed to have suspected was lying latent somewhere among the Dani population, and which he had recognized in Nico Haluk. The Bupati made this "discovery" one day when he came across Nico carving arrows, one of which had a figure of a bird at the top (see Figure 6-3). The Bupati spotted the bird, which is not a typical arrow motif, and Nico's skilful carving. He brought Nico back to his home and encouraged him to carve sculptures. While the first were lacking in technique, the Bupati felt they showed talent and promise so he continued to supply Nico with wood. The Bupati said that to help improve Nico's carving skills and ensure that Nico's carvings would be economically competitive, he sent Nico to Java to study carving. Initially a large sculpture about four feet in height took Nico almost three months to complete. The Bupati boasted that with the timesaving techniques he learnt in Java, Nico could now make a big sculpture in three to four weeks.

The Bupati explained his theory that the Dani people do indeed have artistic capabilities, citing their arrow production as partial proof of their craftsmanship, but moreover that they have true artistic traditions that have been dormant for thousands of years. The proof, he explained, was visible in a photograph he had on his wall, of a palm-size carving of a stone bird. He believes this small bird to be 5,000 years old, and claims it is one of only three such birds in existence. One, he said was in Australia, another in New York and the third he claimed to be safekeeping for the collection of the Museum Pilamo (see Figure 6-7) once there was an adequate security system in place).[201] He said he was advised by a museum curator from Australia not to sell this piece, and that he has been offered 1 billion Rupiah for it from a museum in America. He feels it is important that at least one of these birds remains with the Dani people, especially if an artistic revival is to occur.

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[200] This is a national government program, directed at the village level and intended to train or help women in various aspects of family welfare.

[201] The Museum Pilamo in Wamena has two storeys and is in the shape of a traditional *honai* or house. The lower level is open to public access, while the upstairs is closed to all but Dani people, as it stores traditional sacred objects. The downstairs collection is very limited, and several of the souvenir shops in Irian Jaya have more prized examples of highland's art available for sale. I have no real sense of what the collection of sacred objects upstairs in the museum is like as I found no museum staff who could or would discuss this with me.

The revival the Bupati envisions will allow the Dani people to express themselves artistically in a modern sense, with no question of the art or the object assuming any traditional meaning. Wenas mentioned two of his strongest passions, the first is watching old 'cowboy and indian' movies, and the second is discovering any objects used in black magic, which, as Bupati, he then confiscates. These objects he keeps in a special room which he had built at his home in Jakarta, a room that his domestic workers (*pembantu*) are afraid to enter after dark. As the Bupati observed Nico's progress, he felt certain that this ancient art of carving had been carried down through the generations and resurfaced in Nico, making the Dani art revival a natural and long overdue occurrence. The final piece to this puzzle, according to the Bupati, was Nico's own penchant for carving birds. Many of Nico's early works included bird motifs and at least one of the three ancient stone birds was claimed to have been found in Siepkosi, Nico's village.[202]

Nico's interest in carving birds, however, is not surprising. In Dani mythology, there is a strong "symbolic association of man and bird" (Heider 1979:119). The 1962 film, *Dead Birds*, which according to Heider "has been responsible for making the Dani one of the better-known tribal cultures to introductory anthropology classes" (Heider 1979:21), begins with a description of the myth. Heider describes the myth as follows:

> Snake and Bird had an argument about death. Snake held that people die, are cremated, and return to life ... Bird argued "No, that is not good. They should stay dead, and I'll smear mud on myself and mourn in sympathy." At this point Nakmatugi (the first man) settled the argument by saying, "I don't like snakes." And so men die, and birds mourn (Heider 1979:117).

Evidence of this mythological association between the Dani and birds, has been manifested in Dani rituals, especially funerals, where grieving men and women smear their shoulders with pale coloured clay, in an effort to reproduce the markings found on birds. Dani men often wear bird feathers as adornment, and it seems natural that the Dani, who routinely walk New Guinea's harsh, rugged mountains, must have marveled at the gift of wings. Quite possibly Nico's early choice of a bird as a feature in his carvings represents this link with birds, and may have little or nothing to do with the Bupati's sense of destiny. What is clear is that Nico's carvings appear to have always been inspired by subject matter from Dani mythology and traditional ways of life. His sculptures portray birds, pigs, men and women (in traditional dress), funerals and births, stone tools, animals linked to mythology, *honai* (homes), pig fences, gates

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[202] These birds are made of andesite and are said to be the size of the palm of the hand. A photograph of one of these birds is published in Pemerintah Daerah Tingkat II Jayawijaya (1995).

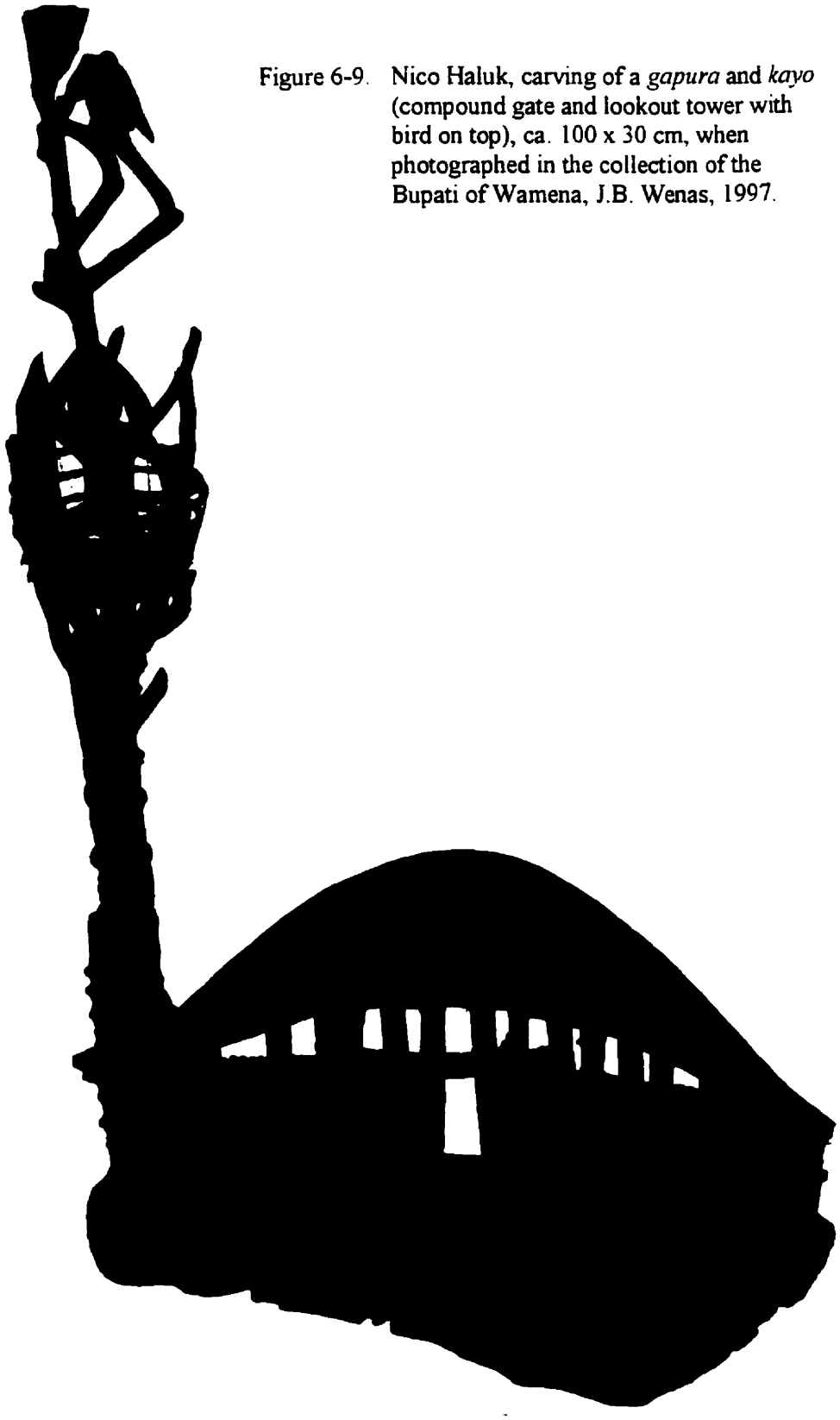

Figure 6-9. Nico Haluk, carving of a *gapura* and *kayo* (compound gate and lookout tower with bird on top), ca. 100 x 30 cm, when photographed in the collection of the Bupati of Wamena, J.B. Wenas, 1997.

and family compounds. Figure 6-8 portrays a Dani myth of how a local and courageous dog saved his village from a poisonous snake.

A Dani Compound Entranceway and "Kayo" (lookout tower), by Nico Haluk

The carving in Figure 6-9 is representative of Nico Haluk's carvings of daily scenes from traditional highlands life. The sculpture depicts a traditional *gapura* (gate) at the front of a family compound, with a *kayo* or watchtower alongside. A man is in the *kayo*, another is at its base and a third sits and plays a Dani jaw harp called *pikon*. This scene, like many of Nico's carvings depicts "a day in the life of a Dani warrior" and shows Dani men engaged in the daily activity of safeguarding the village from enemy attack, a constant fear in traditional Dani society. Ritualized warfare, was one of the main preoccupations of Dani men, necessary for the balance of the community prior to the arrival of missionaries and the successive Dutch and Indonesian governments, all of whom have banned the continuation of tribal warfare in the highlands.

In all of his works to date Nico has chosen not to incorporate elements from Indonesian or global cultural influences (predominantly through tourism) on highlands peoples into his works, even though the nearby town of Wamena has reached into his and other highlands villages for its sense of place.[203] As is typical of Nico's carvings, this scene depicts traditional Dani life and the unique local environment. It is painstakingly carved down to the finest detail. The men are all dressed in traditional everyday costume and wear penis gourds (*holim*) and cowrie shell adorned neckpieces which he referred to as *dasi*, the Indonesian word for necktie. Even the individual strands of grass piled on top of the compound wall are visible. Inside the compound fence is a single Dani *honai* (dwelling), where the men of the village would sleep. In traditional Dani society, men and women lived in separate houses. Men's houses are typically round and smaller than the houses where women would live (because they would have more than one fire for cooking).

Nico is interested in the technical aspects of carving, and he told me that he enjoys challenging himself to carve intricate details and cutouts into his works, usually carved out of a single piece of wood. Many of his carvings break or split due to the poor quality of wood available locally. His highly realistic style was established to set Dani carving apart from other more stylized carving traditions in Irian Jaya. The style of this carving is at odds with traditional

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[203] On my most recent visit to Wamena, several people told the recent news that a German resort developer had negotiated for a large area of land to build a 4 star hotel close to Siepkosi. The only road (unpaved) to the hotel runs through Siepkosi, directly past Nico's family compound. He seemed excited by the news that foreigners might come down this otherwise quiet road and wants to set up a studio on the road to sell his works directly to tourists.

Dani forms of visual expression which usually consists of simple abstract motifs carved onto functional objects such as spears. At the top of the *kayo* is a bird, Nico's signature motif. This piece is particularly interesting because of the skewed perspective in the carving. The upper portion of the carving is larger than the bottom portion which gives the impression of a bird's eye view of the village.[204]

The Bupati's office and his residence in Wamena, like many other prominent buildings in town, including other government departments, the main marketplace, the Museum Pilamo (see Figure 6-7), and the Wamena airport, are architecturally reminiscent of a Dani house or *honai*. These stylistic elements, including mushroom-top like roofs and rounded walls, might be thought to be in sympathy with Dani aesthetics, while being unmistakably modern and Indonesian in their use of materials such as painted cement, standard window frames, corrugated or flat tin roofing, interior and exterior floor tiles, electric lighting and gas cooktops. These buildings often have large gardens enclosed by a traditional wooden fence and in 1995 most of the main entrances were Dani *gapura*, or wooden gateways covered with a thatch roof.[205] At some government offices and businesses, this is where the *penjaga* or security guard sits.

Bupati Wenas has been credited with cleaning up the town of Wamena and painting it with some local colour. Nico Haluk explained that much of the present townscape - the clean streets with their shrubs and flowers, buildings in the Dani style and the decorative use of traditional pig fences and *gapura* - has occurred since Wenas took office in 1989. Architectural appropriation, however, would appear at odds with the continuing government effort to re-house Dani (and other tribal peoples in the country) into more "modern Indonesian" housing, which the government promotes with its *rumah sehat* or "healthy house." In his 1979 ethnography of the Grand Valley Dani, anthropologist Karl Heider quotes a government report critical of traditional Dani dwellings:

> Their housing is extremely poor. Huts are built of tree poles with thatched roof, primitive structures with no attention given to hygienic *or aesthetic* factors. The

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[204] I am unaware to what extent this effect was intended by Nico. His pieces frequently display distortions in spatial perspective, but this does not seem to concern him. He is more concerned that the individual objects or figures he carves are volumetrically proportional and lifelike as opposed to the whole composition or the spatial relationship of individual objects to one another.

[205] On my subsequent trips to the highlands in 1996 and 1997, I noticed that an increasing number of these wooden thatch *gapura* were being replaced with concrete replicas. According to people I spoke with, some local people were burning the old wooden *gapura* in symbolic acts of protest against the Indonesian presence, targeting government offices, banks and hotels (all of which are owned and often run by Indonesian migrants) in Wamena.

> people sleep on the floor, on a bedding of grass, around the fireplace for protection against the cold. In actual fact, they are eager to have proper houses like those used by people from other provinces... to attain such standards as will enable them to build houses and villages of the type found in other districts, and to keep them in good condition... (Government of Indonesia in Heider 1979:51).

Yet traditional *honai* cost nothing for local people to construct (with materials from their land) and the buildings retain warmth much more effectively than the *rumah sehat*. The other, immediate effect of the "rumah sehat" program is the breakdown of traditional family and community relations. The program does not seek to alter or improve the design of existing dwellings to make them more healthy for their inhabitants, but rather to replace them with a structure that is deemed appropriate by the National Government in Jakarta (see Chapter Three). Such impositions stifle local solutions, creativity and initiatives, and demonstrate the contradictions within the Bupati's role as agent of the Indonesian government and patron of a local, nascent art form. The Bupati's sponsorship of Nico can perhaps be better understood through further exploring the context of this art production.

In 1986, Irian Jaya was opened to foreign tourists for the first time since the Indonesian take-over in 1963.[206] The 1960s, 1970s and early 1980s were troubled times in the interior of Irian Jaya as the Indonesian state struggled to assert its control over widely dispersed and independent highlands communities. In 1971, the Indonesian Government established *Operasi Koteka* (or Operation Penis Gourd), which sought to replace traditional Dani apparel and nudity *(masih terlanjang)*,[207] with clothing and a Javanese sense of modesty. The program, largely conducted by the Indonesian military, was part of a broader effort to "civilize" highland communities and bring Irian Jaya into modern Indonesia (as discussed in Chapter Three). Such programs were common in Irian Jaya and reflect the official government position through much of the first three decades of Indonesian control:

> ... in August 1983... Indonesia's Foreign Minister, Dr Mochtar Kusumaatmadja, unwittingly revealed the true nature of the Indonesian dilemma over Irian Jaya. At a state banquet he assured his PNG hosts that Indonesia did not want to retain Irian Jaya as a "zoo"... Dr Mochtar also stated that Indonesia was in a hurry and

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[206] Indonesian government secrecy about its presence in Irian Jaya, particularly its military activities and the government's claim that foreign tourists were at risk because of random (or guerilla) acts of violence, had kept the province closed to all foreigners except those with official sanction (select missionaries and development advisers).

[207] A close reading of van der Sande (1907) reveals that this term has been used to describe some Papuan peoples for over a century. I am not suggesting that its use began with programs initiated by the Indonesian state, although the term is still commonly used by Indonesians from other parts of the country when discussing (some) Irianese peoples.

> could not, therefore, be overly sensitive in the pursuit of its overall aims... (Hastings 1984:129).

In 1984-85, the arrival of more than 10,000 Irianese refugees in neighbouring Papua New Guinea[208] drew international attention to such official and unofficial attitudes and policies and helped open the province to greater scrutiny. Rutherford suggests that policies also changed when "researchers and tourists in search of 'untouched' cultures butted heads with soldiers forcing the 'primitives' into pants" (Rutherford 1996:588). In the highlands, where tribal warfare had been banned, mock war (*perang-perangan*) is now permitted as part of Indonesian Independence Day celebrations every August 17th. This concession was presumed by the Indonesian authorities to be an opportunity for Dani to remember their traditions and honour their past heroes. A statue (by an anonymous Indonesian artist) of "Kur Mabel," one of the legendary Dani warriors or Big Men stands in the centre of Wamena town, surrounded by Indonesian government buildings (see Figure 6-6). On the road from Wamena to Jiwika, another Big Man is honoured in a more traditional Dani style. In the village of Akima, Eloksak's embalmed body rests in the smoky rafters of the men's house, imbuing all with his strength and courage (see Figure 6-10). This *mumi* (Indonesian) can be viewed and photographed by tourists for a nominal fee (around US$1), and together with the mummified body of Kur. Mabel at Jiwika, make up the most popular tourist sites in the Baliem Valley.

By 1989, when Wenas was appointed Bupati,[209] around 2250 foreign tourists (mostly from Europe) visited the highlands of Irian Jaya.[210] The Indonesian Government sought to rapidly increase foreign tourism to the province as part of its policy shift from "security" to "prosperity" which began in the early 1990s and which the Festival of Indonesia in the U.S. and the 'Visit Indonesia Year' were designed to promote (Rutherford 1997:380). By 1995, more than 6000 foreign tourists had visited the "Lost World of Irian Jaya,"[211] and government and business

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[208] In late 1984, several hundred Irianese (including cultural leaders and OPM freedom fighters), some of them deserters from local Indonesian military units, gathered in Jayapura and declared an Independent West Papua. Indonesia's security forces responded brutally to this attempt at independence, and many fled across the border fearing for their lives.

[209] Although Bupati work at a regional level, their appointment is by the National Government in Jakarta.

[210] I collected these figures on tourism directly from staff at the Department of Tourism in Wamena, not from any publication. Similar figures are also on public display in the Wamena airport.

[211] This common phrase used to describe Irian Jaya was coined in 1976 with the publication of a book commemorating the tragic early death of Robert Mitton, who had worked with mining companies prospecting in the interior of Irian Jaya during the early 1970s. The book contains many of Mitton's excellent photographs and diary entries, which document the six year period he spent working in the highlands.

optimism about the future of tourism in the province was growing rapidly. Several new hotels were under construction in or near Wamena,[212] and other hotels in the town were expanded or under renovation. Government policies attempted to demonstrate concern for local peoples as well as strengthen tourist attractions in the highlands and across the province.[213]

The Bupati sought to improve the tourist value of the town and limit migrant control of the local economy through the "Dani-fication" of the *Pasar Nayak* Market, the main marketplace in Wamena. Prior to his instruction, *Pasar Nayak* was run by migrants who would purchasing fresh produce from local villages and then resell it in the market for inflated prices. A similar cartel system meant that local peoples could only get a low "wholesale" price for the vegetables they had produced.[214] Now, only Dani peoples are entitled to sell produce in the open market while migrants continue to sell imported manufactured items and dry goods in stalls along the periphery of the market. Some Dani people sell their handicrafts in the *Pasar Nayak*. Men sell ethnographic objects, hand made jewelry of shells, pig tusks, and fossils and orchid fibres and tobacco, while women sell vegetables and *noken* or string bags, which are a local indigenous skill among highland women. *Noken* also form part of the traditional dress of Dani women, with both a functional and fashionable purpose and are the one traditional element still worn by virtually all women in Wamena.

Dani, who did not sell their handicrafts in the market, would often try to peddle their work in the streets. Their preference was to sell to tourists because selling to the migrant-run souvenir shops, they would have to sell at low "wholesale" prices and for common items there was a cartel system in place by the shop keepers that prevented the Dani from getting a good price. I observed the way this cartel system works, and it is similar to cartels used by the Southern Sulawesi migrants at the Hamadi market in Jayapura (where they control the fish and handicrafts markets). The Dani would enter the shop and offer items for sale, not stating their desired price. Then the shopkeeper would ask the artist the price once a "shop boy" (*anak buah*) or assistant (and perhaps others) had gathered to see what had been brought for sale. The Dani

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[212] The most luxurious hotel under construction in 1995 was the Honai Resort, "Where time stands still" outside Wamena on the road to Jiwika (rooms were expected to cost around US$100 per night). Most hotels in Wamena are not exceptional by Indonesian tourist standards.

[213] In Wamena, one of these programs aimed to improve skills and regulate the activities of men working as tourist guides. Many tourists with time to spend in Irian Jaya want to go trekking in the highlands and to do this, most want a local (indigenous) guide to accompany them.

[214] Dani women, who traditionally tend to food production in the highlands, grow a variety of vegetables for sale in the market in Wamena. Often fresh produce will be "back-loaded" onto empty planes returning to Jayapura from Wamena and then sold in the Jayapura markets. Almost all of this trade is controlled by migrants from other parts of Indonesia.

would state his price and the shopkeeper would scoff and offer a much lower (and firm) price. One of the shop keeper's assistants would then slip out the back of the shop and enter via the rear of the adjacent souvenir shops to tell other shopkeepers what the price was. Often the Dani artist would leave disappointed and try other nearby shops only to be told the exact same price.

The prices offered by the art shops in Wamena were generally extremely low. For example, a *koteka* (*holim* or penis gourd) was generally fixed at around Rp300 (three hundred Rupiah) or about twenty cents in 1995. These art shops would then haggle with tourists over price and sell the same gourds from Rp2,000 to Rp 8,000 depending on tourist savvy, decoration and size. When I returned to Wamena in 1997, this situation was even worse. Of the six or so souvenir shops in Wamena,[215] still none were owned by a local Dani person and they had all stopped buying decorated *koteka* from local people completely. Now Dani could only supply dried gourds (at Rp. 100 per gourd).[216] The shop owners had refined their operations so that their employees were finishing and decorating the *koteka* themselves. The most common decoration for these *koteka* (only those decorated by souvenir traders), was traditional Sentani motifs drawn directly onto gourds with red and black felt-tipped marker pens. Figure 6-11 shows these gourds glued to pottery models of *honai* in a kitsch fusion of motifs and media that reportedly sells well to Indonesian tourists. Souvenir shop employees have also learnt weaving and by 1997 were making their own "Dani" handicrafts and applying lacquer and finishing touches to carvings. It has been an effective way for the shop employees to fill their time since tourists had become sparse due to a hostage taking by the OPM.

The effect of politics on the sustainability of art practices

> On 8 January 1996, a large contingent of some two hundred men, armed for the most part with bows and arrows, took twenty-four people hostage in the [highlands] village of Mapnduma... seven Europeans and four non-Irianese Indonesians were taken... (Ballard 1997b: 469).

These foreign hostages were members of two separate research expeditions working in the remote southern highlands. OPM guerillas demanded that the Indonesian Government declare Independence for West Papua to guarantee the safe return of the hostages. Once again, international attention was focussed on Irian Jaya, and the international media gave considerable coverage to this incident, particularly in Europe. After four months, the hostages

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[215] This number does not include several small souvenir shops in some of the bigger hotels in Wamena.

[216] These gourds must be grown, dried, hollowed out and transported by local people to Wamena for sale.

remained captive in the jungle and mediation efforts by the International Committee of the Red Cross and local church authorities showed little promise. The military, which had shown restraint under international scrutiny eventually intervened with an operation that resulted in the execution of two Indonesian hostages and an undisclosed number of Irianese victims.[217] Additional hostage takings in this year (involving Indonesian migrant logging crews) did little to reassure potential tourists that this was an isolated incident. In 1996, around 2,500 tourists vacationed in Irian Jaya, and little has changed in Irian Jaya or Indonesia to restore tourist confidence.

The future for commercial art development around Wamena based on tourism remains very uncertain. Bupati J.B. Wenas retired in 1997 and left Irian Jaya to become the vice Governor of Manado, north Sulawesi. In that same year, Nico Haluk met with a field representative of the United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) based in Jakarta. Since the 1996 hostage taking (one of the European hostages was working with UNESCO), the organization has wanted to re-establish its presence in Irian Jaya. In 1997-98, it embarked on a project to help strengthen Dani production of carvings and handicrafts, through two non-governmental groups (NGOs) Yahubla, a local Dani NGO based Wamena, and Lembah Baliem (based in Jakarta). To date, UNESCO has provided some funding for the construction of a carving studio (*sanggar*), which was still under construction when I last visited Irian Jaya in April-June 1998. The intention of the studio was to provide an environment where artists like Nico Haluk could share their knowledge with young Dani artists keen to develop their skills. Unfortunately due to complicated personal politics among the Dani, the head of the local NGO partner with UNESCO has alienated himself from Nico Haluk and Nico is unwilling to be involved in the project. UNESCO hoped that they would be able to resolve this situation with the placement of a field officer (United Nations Volunteer) in Wamena, but by the end of 1998, this had not been accomplished and the future of the UNESCO carving studio remains unclear.

Nico Haluk continues to carve despite the recent lack of tourists and his frustrations with the politics surrounding the UNESCO *sanggar*. He is strongly motivated and determined to refine his carving skills and to express his sense of place through his work. He has made carving his livelihood and it has brought him recognition and status in his community. Nico wants to pass this gift down to his family and to open his own independent *sanggar*. He believes in the mythology of his own carving, to the point that he insists all Dani carvers should have to apprentice under him before they are allowed to carve. And for now, he has a new sponsor to

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[217] Evidence is still surfacing about the extent of the military operation that freed the foreign hostages, but all non-government reports conclude that significant human rights abuses were committed by the Indonesian military.

commission his works, who pays him the same and sometimes higher prices than what the Bupati paid. In the past two years, he has carved most of his pieces for Seiichi Okawa, a Japanese journalist who worked for twelve years with TEMPO magazine and now works for GATRA magazine. Okawa has established the "Indonesian Cultural Plaza" in Tokyo where he now exhibits arts from Kalimantan and Irian for sale over the Internet. In May 1999, he had more than twenty carvings by Nico Haluk, available for prices ranging from 60,000 to 400,000 Yen (approximately US$480 to US$3325 in May 1999). At the entrance to "Indonesian Cultural Plaza" near Shinjuku Railway Station in Central Tokyo, stands a two metre high Dani warrior carved by Nico Haluk of Siepkosi (Indonesian Culture Plaza website).

Micha Ronsumbre of Biak

Micha Ronsumbre is a Biak artist working within a modern Indonesian context, but committed to the continuance of Biak cultural knowledge through woodcarving. He is one of the best known carvers in Biak, and his work is highly regarded by foreigners, Indonesian government officials, Irianese and Biaks. Micha is a gifted storyteller and orator who enjoys teaching and discussing Biak culture, mythology and art. He generally starts with the phrase "in the beginning" when he explains the meaning of his carvings, detailing Biak cosmology, philosophy and history. He will discuss these to different degrees of depth depending on whether you are a family member, foreigner or potential competitor. Today Micha also teaches carving to other Biak people, but as they are also competitors to himself and his family, he feels restricted in what he can teach them. To give away too many of the family's secrets and techniques would rob them of a source of livelihood and prestige in their community. Micha explained to me that foreign researchers or buyers with plenty of time will learn more from him than he can teach his competitors, because some of his knowledge of Biak culture and artistic traditions are reserved for his descendants only, as their birthright.

The island of Biak has the longest history of continuous contact with European colonizers of any region in Irian Jaya. Almost 150 years of mission and colonial education and training in Biak and other north coast areas have given these communities familiarity with broad political, economic, social and religious issues as well as some of the strongest technical and literacy skills in Irian. For this reason, Biak peoples play prominent roles in regional development, particularly as government officials, teachers, clergy, police and military personnel. Their education and experience with the outside world has also led many others to take a prominent stand against both Dutch and Indonesian governments in defense of their own (or what they see as broader Irianese) cultural values.

By virtue of its location and topography, Biak, one of the Schouten islands to the north of the main island of New Guinea, along with the larger Geelvink / Cenderawasih / Saerera Bay (the names given by the Dutch / Indonesians / Biak peoples),[218] was among the first areas of New Guinea encountered by European explorers and missionaries. The arts of the region are characterized by the carving of canoes with elaborate filigree prow ornamentation, for the Biaks islanders were a seafaring people. Equally well known are carved figural sculptures, known in the literature by the Biak term *korwar*, which were produced in various styles throughout the Geelvink Bay (see van Baaren 1968 and 1992).

The majority of contemporary Biak carvings are of *korwar*, or what should be known by the more accurate local term, *amfyanir*. According to Micha Ronsumbre, the term *korwar* was erroneously applied by Western scholars to the ancestor carvings. *Korwar* is the term for the deceased ancestor embodied in the carving which becomes a new receptacle for the non corporal parts of humans that in Biak cosmology include the spirit or *rur* (Biak) and the shadow or *nin* (Biak). The *nin* and the *rur* require a new receptacle once the physical body has died, so that the two can be reunited. *Amfyanir* is a Biak word that means 'something that looks like', and refers to the physical object or the wooden carving itself, and is therefore only a receptacle for the ancestor's *nin* and *rur*. After death, the *amfyanir*, takes the place of the physical body or flesh (*kraf* in Biak language) and provides a new receptacle for the other two composite parts. These three components make up all matter in Biak cosmology, though all three need not be present in a given object or thing. A human person is comprised of all three. As one contribution of this thesis to the literature on Biak art, and in keeping with what I have learned to be the proper Biak terminology from Micha Ronsumbre, I will use the term *amfyanir* to refer to Biak carvings of ancestors and will use *korwar* when I am referring specifically to a deceased ancestor's spirit. I will maintain the erroneous use of *korwar* (to refer to a carved ancestor figure), when I quote directly from the writing of other scholars.

Most *amfyanir* were carved of solid wood, but occasionally the skull of the ancestor was inserted into a carved hollow cavity in the head. Both the inserted skulls and the *amfyanir* were sometimes decorated with cloth, shells, beads or pieces of bone to give the appearance of the ancestor. A proportionally large head, with a long prominent nose and wide mouth characterize

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[218] The population of Biak island is approximately 90,000, with close to 60,000 living in the region in and around the main administrative and commercial town of Biak. There are over 40,000 speakers of the Austronesian Biak language, with over two dozen dialects. Another 100,000 peoples in the broader Biak culture area located around the Geelvink / Cenderawasih Bay are second language speakers of the Biak language, from Waigeo island in the West to the Mamberamo river in the East, and including the islands of Geelvink Bay: Yapen, Biak, Numfor, the Kurudu islands, Moor islands and the Wandemen islands.

amfyanir in the Biak region (see Figure 6-12). The body of the figure is comparatively small, generally in a seated posture and holding a shield-like object in front of the body, which van Baaren and others believe represents one or two snakes, derived from a Biak myth in which a culture hero kills one or more snakes (the number of snakes depends on the version of the myth), which are believed capable of bringing great harm (van Baaren 1968:80).

These ancestor figures were used in the rituals and practices associated with burials[219] and ancestor worship. Families commissioned specialist artists or *mon* who were shamans with "a special and close relation with the spirits" (Kooijman 1961:45), to carve *amfyanir* after the death of a relative and then a ceremony would be held to call the spirit of the ancestor to come and reside in the sculpture. The *amfyanir* were kept in caves or in the rafters of homes. The *korwar* were consulted when the descendants, or the community in the case of ancestral village chiefs, needed the assistance of the ancestor in making decisions, especially in times of crisis (see van Baaren 1968:25). Offerings of tobacco and betel nut were made to *korwar* to keep them contented and inclined to offer sound answers. *Korwar* could only answer yes or no to questions posed to them. The questions posed to *korwar* usually related to matters of safety in long journeys on the sea for fishing, headhunting and raiding voyages, illness and settlement of disputes. If the answer was yes, the *amfyanir* would tremble back and forth and if it was no it would remain still. In this way, Biak people maintained a dialogue with their ancestors, whom they both respected and feared.[220]

Early Dutch missionaries and Dutch colonial officials demanded that Biak people hand over their *amfyanir* and other ritual objects to be destroyed, burnt or sent back to Holland to be placed into museums. The colonizers and missionaries saw these woodcarvings in a real and symbolic sense, as obstacles hindering their work to convert the local population into good Christians and loyal subjects. These carvings were a visual manifestation of a different belief system, a different identity and loyalty and perhaps most profoundly - a different way of conceptualizing the world. The colonizers took these physical manifestations of Biakness and symbolically removed them from the community, usurping the power that those objects once held in the community. By controlling the belief system, it was easier to control the subjects of the colony. Nonie Sharp illustrates how colonial government followed mission activities in the Geelvink Bay area:

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[219] Occasionally *amfyanir* were placed on top of graves (see van Baaren 1992:32).

[220] The most comprehensive publication on *amfyanir* is that by van Baaren (1968). A more recent article by van Baaren on the art of Geelvink Bay appears in Greub (1992).

> Early in the twentieth century pressure on local people was increasing. Missionaries of the Dutch Reformed Church... C.W. Otto and J.G. Geissler, had set up a [the first] missionary outpost at Mansinam on 5 February 1855 and at Manokwari in 1898. By the end of the first decade the Dutch administration made it compulsory for the people to engage in labour [and pay taxes] (Sharp 1994: 30).

Village chiefs and villagers were initially reluctant to part with their *amfyanir* and other precious objects and hid them to prevent having to turn them in to church and government authorities. As missionaries were successful (at least nominally) in converting the population to Christianity, with a mass-conversion of the population in 1908, the ritual carving of *amfyanir* is believed to have declined. Missionaries celebrated their perceived successes by displaying in Holland *amfyanir* and other "idols that were turned in by local peoples" as proof that these objects and the religious complex in which they functioned were being replaced by Christianity (Smidt 1992:195). While Biak people were willing to turn in their carvings, several stories indicate that the people still believed in their potency. One Dutch missionary who resided in Biak from 1920-52 reported:

> When the population of Korido was converted to Christianity, it happened, as in many other areas, that at baptism the people handed over their pagan attributes. This did not take place at the command of the missionary, rather the people themselves felt these things did not concur with their new belief. I received many korwars at that time, two of which were skull korwars.... When the man who was going to hand over the korwar came out of the house with it, a crowd, assembled before the home of the teacher, fled, a sure sign of how frightened the people were of this korwar (Agter in 1957 quoted Smidt1992:195).

Other authors have pointed out that Biak people regularly discarded their *amfyanir*, if they were not proving themselves worthy as oracles. Biaks believed the ancestor spirit (*korwar*) could leave the *amfyanir*, and if it did, the *amfyanir* would be dispatched, sometimes irreverently – thrown in the sea, or offered for sale to foreigners (Rutherford 1997:306; van Baaren 1992:28). The Utrecht mission society reported that carving of *amfyanir* made especially for sale to foreigners was taking place as early as 1874. The *amfyanir* sculptures made for sale or for amusement, were said to have no spirit or *rur* imbued in them, and were called "*korwar kaku*", (*kaku* is a Malay word which translates to 'stiff and rigid', perhaps implying lifelessness), to distinguish it from a real *amfyanir* (van Baaren 1992, p.28). Real *amfyanir*, because they were kept for years became worn with patina and often covered in layers of black soot from sitting in house rafters, or sun bleached and weathered from sitting in open faced caves on the sides of

cliffs. They could be distinguished from *korwar kaku* which were in newer condition, the wood not worn or blackened with age (van Baaren 1992:28, 32).[221]

Millenarian movements have been frequent among the peoples of Biak and Geelvink Bay. Kamma searched the historical records and counted forty-five separate instances of millenarian movements between 1854 and 1967 (cited in Rutherford 1997: 291). These generally occurred as reactions to cultural stress, including natural disasters and colonial pressures.[222] The largest known millenarian or *koreri* movement developed at the beginning of World War Two and culminated at the time of the Japanese invasion in 1942. This movement drew 30,000 followers (see Rutherford 1997). At these times cultural figures played a prominent leadership role in their communities. As Nonie Sharp explains

> In Biak society there is an intelligentsia – the shaman or mon, the poets and song people... in contemporary times the persons of special knowledge remain at the center of the culture; but this knowledge and these creative powers are less hereditarily grounded than in the past. People continue to know that certain places have a sacred significance as mythical centres, even though there may have been a collective forgetting of the full narrative which gives them this sacred character. Then there are people who 'know,' who carry on the cultural tradition in modern circumstances: these are the koreri people (Sharp 1994:15).

The art of woodcarving was a specialized and sacred activity in the past, and the secrets and knowledge of a woodcarver were passed down to sons, nephews and grandsons as part of their inheritance. Thus the skill and knowledge of a woodcarver was a family treasure, and some motifs relating to clan identity belonged to and were restricted in use to certain families. Micha is a firm believer that for culture to remain strong it must embrace and at times generate change. This is part of a cultural belief that is widespread in Biak and is fundamental to Biak spirituality and cultural identity embodied in the term *koreri*, which literally means "we change it" (Sharp 1994:5) and represents a vision of eternal prosperity (according to Micha). In the course of

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[221] I have not read that Biak people were in fact artificially aging *korwar kaku* at this to give them the appearance of real *amfyanir*, but I would not be surprised if this occurred as well. I have only had access to secondary sources for this type of information, however, because the early colonial and mission reports were written in Dutch. Several of the articles in Greub provide English translations of selections of these reports, as does van Baaren 1958, which is where I have sourced my information. Today, aging and antiquing of *korwar kaku* does occur, and I have seen several *amfyanir* in art shops that have been blackened, either with shoe polish or smoked. The crisp and unworn edges usually give away these newly aged carvings, though shopkeepers may still market them as being old to unwary buyers.

[222] *Koreri* movements did occur in pre-colonial times as well, and were not strictly a form of resistance against colonial rule. See Sharp (1994) and Rutherford (1997).

extensive research on Biak, anthropologist Danilyn Rutherford noted what seems to be a cultural trait among elderly Biak men:[223]

> Among those acknowledged as authorities on Biak, Mr. Fakiar is anything but exceptional. His predilection for writing is widely shared. Again and again, during my first months of research, friends would take me to visit a "very old" male relative who "really knew" about Biak traditions. This grandfather's data was often uncannily familiar, for the two of us had read the same Dutch texts. Interviews would begin with me and my informant pulling out our respective notebooks: mine was blank, his was filled with descriptions, which he would read and I would jot down. Aspiring experts with limited skills and libraries claimed to have their stories "written in their heads." Those who spoke without "proof" were said to be subject to whims that would lead them to supplement the truth. Everyone was eager to ground their words in the authority of the written trace.
>
> The notion that this trace should be foreign is also broadly shared. The least educated villagers told me to look for the truth about their clans in the "libraries" and "museums" over there. If the implications of such comments could be dizzying, there was a method to the mimicry. The fact that these "natives" acknowledged the colonial origins of their identity was more than simply proof of the power of "orientalism." Their constant appeals to the authority of the foreign tells us more about Biak than about the Western mind (Rutherford 1997:302).

This is very close to my experiences interviewing and talking with Micha. My lack of knowledge of Dutch, did not allow me to assess whether Micha was sourcing all of his "facts" from Dutch texts, and perhaps that does not matter if he is engaged in the process of reclaiming local knowledge for himself and other Biaks. Nevertheless, he was a wealth of information and went into much greater depth about his culture's traditions than other artists I spoke with in Irian. Interestingly, Rutherford noted that Mr. Fakiar told her on one occasion "Don't write!" which I also experienced several times with Micha. Some things were "off the record" and others were "for the record." At the time, I had attributed it to Micha's former position as a schoolteacher, but perhaps it relates to his role as cultural teacher, using a Biak style of oration.

Included in his repertoire of stories, is Micha's own analysis of how Biak traditions continue today but in a changing modern context. According to Micha, Biak art has both a cult and a cultural aspect, which he referred to in Dutch, as *kultus* and *kultur*. The cult role is the use of carvings in ritual and in the worship of ancestors and nature gods, which formed the basis of Biak animist religion prior to the conversion of the population to Christianity. The cultural aspect of this art is the imagery and mythology that can be identified as distinctly Biak. Micha

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[223] Micha Ronsumbre, at 52 is not a particularly old man by Biak standards, but he is a grandfather. He has five children and one grandchild.

explained to me how missionaries feared the cult status of Biak art and saw it as an impediment to converting the population. According to Micha, few men over the age of sixty continue to carve today, because they were too strongly influenced by the strictness of Protestant missionaries who taught them that if they carved, they could not be Christian. He has been accused by some Biaks as having *kembali kafir*, or returned to the ways of the infidels, or those who do not yet know Christ. But this is not the case, Micha like other Biaks, is Protestant and a religious man. Micha feels the people who accuse him in this way are unable to distinguish between the *kultus* or cult value of art and the cultural value, or *kultur*. Today the *kultur* side is dominant, he says, although Micha emphasized the cult value is not necessarily completely gone.

Micha acknowledges the new context in which contemporary Biak artists work, in a Christian community that no longer has a spiritual connection to traditional carvings and where many people are economically marginalized. For these reasons, there is now little market for Biak carvings among Biak people, and relatively few productive carvers. Biak communities were among those most affected by the transfer of power from Holland to Indonesia.[224] During their long period of direct colonial rule, the people of Biak became the most educated in Dutch New Guinea, and many were selected by the Netherlands government to form the parliament of an independent West Papua in 1961. This aspiration was shattered by the imposition of Indonesian control in 1963 and Biak people remember fondly their time under Dutch ("foreign") rule and the promise of self-determination.

Micha is a cosmopolitan man with many friends from around the world that visit him and commission carvings. He is very proud of his carvings and is always seeking out commissions to produce more. He has a long list of where his friends and his carvings reside today. Some are in Holland (including commissions done for the Leiden museum) and Europe, some in North America and some in Africa, Asia and Jakarta. In 1998, Micha spent several months doing work on government commissions in Jayapura. On several occasions when I met with Micha in

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[224] Given the way history has been written, there are few accounts of how New Guineans felt at the transfer of power when they had been promised independence by the Dutch. In Nonie Sharp's book, *The Morning Star in Papua Barat*, she details the life of Markus Wonggor Kaisiepo, who was elected by the people of Biak-Numfor to the New Guinea Council in 1961, but was replaced by his 'cousin-brother' who was appointed by the Dutch government and subsequently became the first Governor of Irian Barat under Indonesian rule. Wonggor Kaisiepo explains how Biak people felt they had been betrayed by the Protestant Church and Dutch officials who reversed their positions and began supporting Indonesian rule following pressure from the United States (in turn afraid of the communist overtures being made by Sukarno). Sharp writes, "Dutch pens stopped writing about the justice and realism of Papuan self-determination. A lost cause faded before the narrative of Papuan backwardness and the *realpolitik* of great power politics. The Papuan people were betrayed..." (1994:60). This perception seems to be widely held in Biak, and elsewhere in Irian, and is reinforced in Rutherford (1997).

Jayapura during April and May of 1998, he was carrying a photo album with him that contained photographs buyers of his artworks had sent him. Micha was carrying the album as he was trying to solicit more commissions with the provincial government and several banks in the area. I found it interesting that most of the photos were of the buyers of his works rather than of his actual carvings. Micha seemed to be collecting a photo album full of the people who had purchased his carvings or who were studying under him (I was in the photo album too!), perhaps to show that he is the choice of foreigners.[225]

Micha is one of the few artists who is mentioned by name in Kal Muller's tourist guidebook to "Indonesian New Guinea," and Micha is happy to meet new people with an interest in Biak people and culture. Muller (1994:68) writes:

> On the way to Bosnik, some 5 kilometres from Biak town, you can stop at Swapodibo Village to see the work of the carver Ronsumbre. He carves drums, canoes, ancestral figures and panels, all featuring ancient motifs and designs. A sign outside his house reads: "Sanggar Kerajinan" [handicrafts studio]. The items for sale, carved from local hardwood, include drums ($25-$30), model canoes ($40-$45) and stylized human figures (~$1/ inch of length).

Micha became an artist for many reasons which bridge the traditional and the contemporary. One contemporary motivation is to earn a living. Biak's specialist carvers in the past carved for similar reasons. It was their role in the community and it provided for their livelihood. In the past, Biak carvers were paid with gifts of porcelain, silver bracelets, machetes and food, and they were held in great prestige because they often had large and well decorated canoes, which were symbols of status (Ap 1982:2). As one of, if not the most established and well-regarded artists of Biak, Micha prefers to sell his work himself and to accept commissions. He is sufficiently well known by numerous foreign (largely European and North American) buyers to make a living selling his carvings. Micha often requires a deposit up front before commencing a carving commission, money that will assist him in supporting his family, while he "waits for the inspiration to hit him." By Indonesian standards, Micha's works are expensive – he prices most of his works by the centimeter (not inch), and does commissions mostly for

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[225] On one occasion, Micha even lent me his photo album so I could spend more time looking at it. I have seen some of the other photographs that Micha has and he has plenty of photos of his art works, which were also sent to him by his buyers.

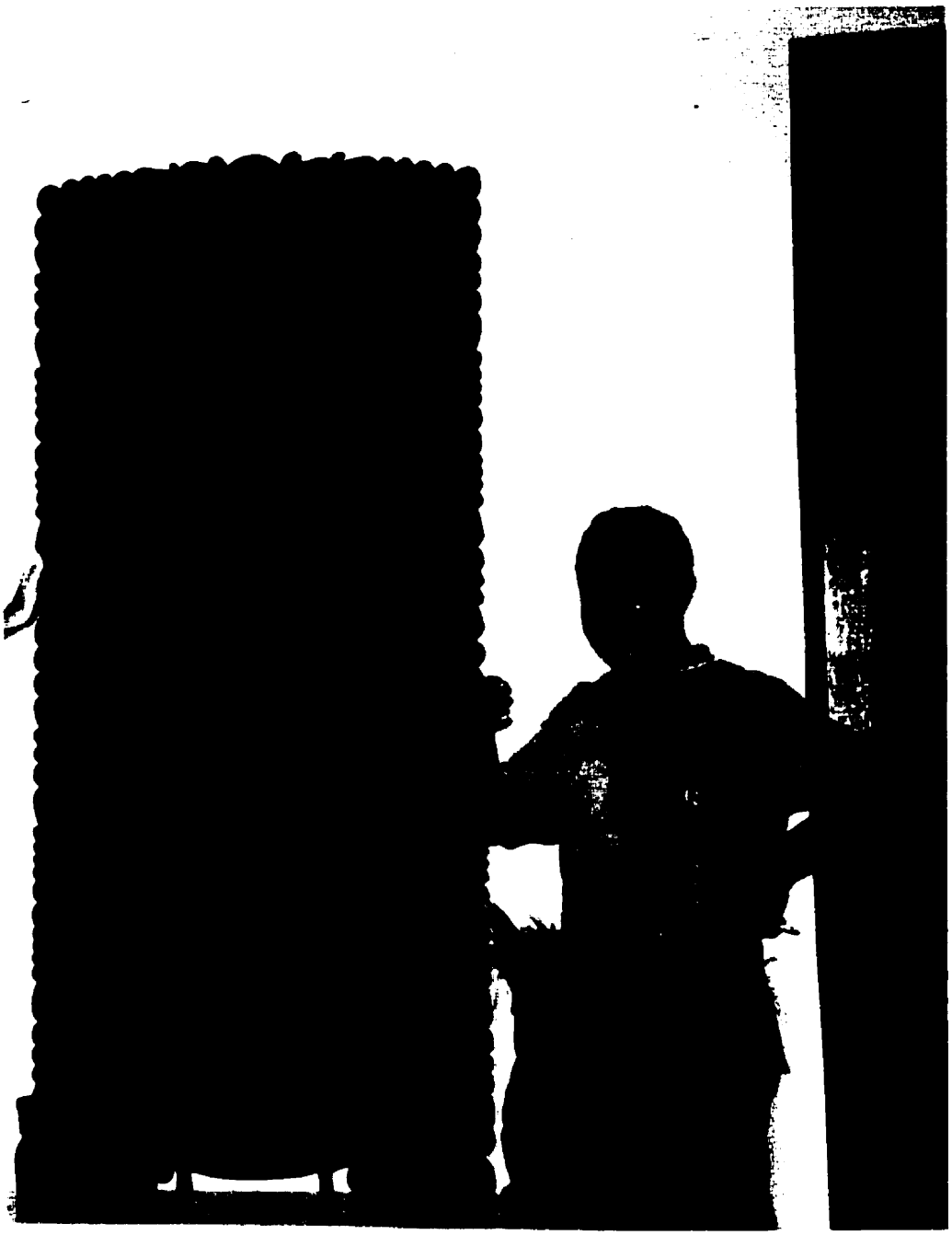

Figure 6-15. Micha Ronsumbre, carved door with Eagle and Snake myth, 1995, ca. 195 x 90cm, Collection of John and Pip Moore. (Photograph: John Moore).

foreigners, wealthy individuals and the provincial government, as he says the local government cannot afford his work.[226]

Micha's works also feature prominently as public art throughout Biak and the provincial capital of Jayapura. Micha's commissions include a series of four *amfyanir* now located outside the provincial governor's office in Jayapura (see Figures 6-13, 6-14). These figures were originally produced for the Loka Budaya Museum but were moved to the governor's offices in 1987 when an official function was drawing near and the space was not yet decorated. These figures are considerably larger than the older *amfyanir*, which were generally smaller than two feet in height; but they were designed specifically as public sculptures. Micha described to me the different contexts and demands that carvers in Irian today must work within. He does not see any problem with adapting one's body of work to suit new conditions, particularly if that means the tradition continues. Micha is currently working on a new commission of carvings for the governor's office. In recent years Micha has sought commissions that can place his carvings in more prominent locations as part of a strategy to increase the exposure of Biak culture in an increasingly Indonesian urban landscape. It helps that many government officials in Irian are from Biak or Serui Island (which is also in the Geelvink Bay cultural group), and are also keen to promote Biak culture.

Micha carves mostly *amfyanir* and drums for foreigners, which are among the most familiar Biak artforms. He also does relief carving on panels, many of which are displayed as wall decoration in banks and public buildings.

Inobobo, Eagle and Snake Door by Micha Ronsumbre

One of Micha's most notable foreign commissions included a door sized panel carved for a Canadian project officer working in Irian (Figure 6-15).[227] According to Micha, in the past all Biak carvings were functional in purpose. Interior carvings and panel pieces that were purely decorative were rare. Most panel pieces were ceremonial shields or doors carved or painted with motifs designed to frighten away evil (people or spirits) from entering the house, or to designate the status of the occupant. The motifs on this panel represent a Biak myth in which an eagle kills a giant sea snake, which was threatening to create turbulence and send a tidal wave to destroy the village of Korem in North Biak. It symbolizes the victory of good over evil and panels of this

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[226] The national government has not commissioned any of Micha's works, but the Minister of Culture, Haryati Soebadio, did visit Micha in the 1980s and purchased one of his carvings. Micha subsequently named one of his daughters Haryati.

[227] I thank John Moore for his contributions to this section, specifically with regards to the iconography of the door and the circumstances surrounding the commission.

style were usually placed on the wall opposite the front door of a family house so that it would be the first startling vision one would encounter upon entering the house. The two small seated figures in the center of the door represent the occupants of the house, who are threatened by the surrounding snake representing evil. The eagle and snake motifs flank both sides of the central vertical section of the carving. These carvings are in mirror image of one another, a common Biak style of composition. The eagle's wings can be seen along the vertical edges of the panel, the bird is in flight and can be seen flying from many different vantage points at the same time. The interior vertical sections that flank the central figures compose the snake. Biaks believed that when frightened, a potential evil-doer would forget the bad intentions they brought with them to the house, and would either be scared off or rendered friendly (for instance a person may have initially approached the door with plans for revenge which once startled would be completely forgotten).

This commission took Micha two years to carve, and some of the carving was done by members of his studio, who were mostly members of his family whom he was teaching. There are many different motifs on this door, which were described to me by Micha. I have not come across this design in any of the literature on Biak. Micha keeps his own pattern book and the design for this door appears in several variations, but all are representative of the same theme. The top central figure with the large head and pronounced nose reminiscent of the Biak style of carving the head as seen in *amfyanir*, is a mythical figure by the name of Inobobo, a grasshopper who was also a guardian and protector figure. Frogs and grasshopper figures were frequently used on door motifs because of their unpredictable nature and tendency to jump when they are approached. In terms of providing protection to the occupants of the house, the motifs were believed to have similar startling effects to the animals themselves. (When you startle a frog or grasshopper, you are usually startled yourself). The style of this carving is typical of Biak two dimensional design, characterized by deeply incised (or sometimes cut out) curvilinear motifs that create a highly stylized and difficult to read "local sculptural vernacular" (Kaufmann in Kaeppler 1995. 638).

Another of Micha's panels is located in the Museum Loka Budaya, across from the main entrance (Figure 6-16). This carving portrays a cultural hero from a Biak myth, and in this sense imparts a Biak identity or aesthetic to the foyer of the museum, which otherwise houses the flora and fauna collection. In Figure 6-17, Micha stands with a decorative panel he carved for the Buddhist temple in Biak in 1989. For the temple, Micha carved a series of window and door frames that combine the Buddhist lotus flower with Biak cloud motifs and *tifas* (drums). Here the

intent is assigned by the patron of the carving, the predominantly ethnic Chinese Buddhist congregation in Biak and represents their desire to be members of the Biak community. Ethnic Chinese, as in other parts of Indonesia, play a central role in the economy of Irian. They dominate commercial imports, retail, restaurants, hotels and many industries. While they are seen as economically powerful, they have been in Irian since Dutch times, and as an ethnic minority in Indonesia they share an affinity with many Irianese.[228]

A major government commission that Micha was involved in was the design and production of the Biak pavilion at the *Taman Budaya Irian Jaya* in 1995-96 (Figure 6-18). Micha chose the canoe as the foremost symbol of the Biak pavilion. It is made of painted concrete and displays the elaborate Biak style of prow decoration and a mythical *naga* or snake below. In the past, the carving of canoes was a sacred activity like the carving of *amfyanir*. Because of the extreme vulnerability of these vessels in the open sea, the designs represent animal bird and cosmological motifs believed to help guide the vessel to safety. An early missionary wrote, "Only a few men are capable of drawing these designs and figurines upon it and cutting them out. Before going to work, they drink a potion prepared from certain leaves, which they daub upon their breast and forehead. This is coupled with the superstition, that if an uninitiated person were to attempt the drawing or cutting of those figures, he would die suddenly or after a few days" (Missionary Jens in 1881, quoted in van Baaren 1968:82).[229]

Today, Micha observes some traditional taboos for carvers, and perhaps this is what he means when he says the cult aspect of Biak carving has not disappeared completely. Micha, unlike Sentani artist Agus Ongge, Nico Haluk of Siepkosi and Timothius Samin of the *Gedung Seni* Kamoro, comes from a long line of carvers. Micha went through a traditional selection process and initiation ritual to become a carver. As a child, his interest and propensity for carving was observed by his father and grandfather who were also carvers. Micha was chosen as the heir to the family's secret knowledge of Biak mythology and art. As a child he learned by assisting and observing. After he had completed his teaching degree at the Cenderawasih University in Jayapura, Micha's elder male relatives arranged Micha's initiation as a carver. Micha explained:

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[228] In the riots of 1996 following the death of Thomas Wanggai (see Appendix A), I observed that many Irianese were not targeting the businesses of ethnic Chinese people, they were targeting government buildings and Javanese and Sulawesi owned businesses. While Chinese and Papuan cultures have many differences, they both love their pigs and of those Chinese who are not Buddhist, many are Christian, and share being a religious minority in Indonesia as well.

[229] Few elaborately decorated canoes are used today in Biak. There used to be two types of canoes carved in Biak and the more elaborately decorated crafts were war canoes or *wairon*. Recent tourism development conferences in the province have proposed competitive team rowing in elaborately carved and decorated canoes (most canoes today are plainly carved and decorated and use outboard motors).

> One day I was told I must catch a big fish and bring it to my relatives. This was as a first point of contact. When I brought them the fish they began telling me the stories late into the night. They blessed me and told me that I would be known by many people. The next day they told me "Carve a sculpture." I did and they said to break it in half and burn it. Then I was told to stand on top of the coals and bathe in the smoke so that my body became imbued with the carving (*mandi asap patung supaya badan ini bau patung*). That sculpture was the mother of all Biak art.
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> The next day, during the wave season, my father took me to the beach and made me stand in the sea where the waves would rise up and hit me in the face. I was told the waves would wash away laziness and make me strong. In this way I was adopted as a carver. At night I was taken to the sea again, and I was told to drink the water with the animals that shine at night [phosphorescence], so that my eyes are always clear and can see.
>
> Then one day I was asked to accompany a cousin of my father's into the forest to the top of a mountain. When we reached the top of that mountain, my cousin told me "Look above that rock... See those leaves? Look at their shape, now take them and eat them. Rub them on your hands, joints and over your eyes. You mustn't tell the others this secret. They can eat the leaves too, but not know which tree they came from." Then we took a handful of the leaves back to the house, crushed them with a Triton shell and made a drink of the leaves mixed with palm wine – *tuak* or *saguer* (Indonesian and Biak). This mixture was placed in a coconut shell and they circled it around my head as they said certain words and then told me to drink. Then my father said "God bless you."
>
> Later, I will choose one child in my family to continue with the traditions the way that I have.

Carvers follow other taboos, for instance Micha does not eat the vegetable *labu* (a kind of watery squash) because he says it sits in the stomach and does not move. In Biak mythology, if poets and artists eat *labu*, they won't know the mystery of the myths. It is important to Micha that his knowledge remains in his family. While all of his children will receive some teaching, only one or two will "*makan daun*" or learn which leaves to eat. Micha has already decided who it will be, but he is waiting for the heir to finish his education first.

Micha is not only concerned with his own well being or that of his family, and he seeks opportunities where he can impart his knowledge or apprentice others in his culture. In May of 1998, while I was accompanying Micha on a tour of his artworks in the Jayapura area, we stopped at a house with an elaborately decorated exterior, on the main road between Jayapura and Hamadi that had Micha intrigued (see Figure 6-19). The house was painted with traditional motifs, including a canoe, drum, animal, mythological figures, and cosmological symbols, and made a strong statement of conscious identity. We discovered the house was owned by a family

from the island of Ambai in the Yapen-Waropen regency.[230] The eldest son, Soleman Karubaba had painted the designs, and he had only recently started to carve. He too, had "*makan daun*," and had been learning mythology from his mother and male relatives on his mother's side. Micha spent several days carving with Soleman at his home after meeting him and strongly encouraged him to make use of the gift he had been bestowed. Soleman seemed interested in carving, but was preoccupied because he was about to depart to a new job in the village of Demta as a teacher for a school run by a Korean logging company. It remains to be seen whether Soleman continues with his art. We also visited one of Micha's nephews on this day, and Micha showed him his photo album and left a pattern book of his carving designs for the young man to look at. "If you study this, people will come to you..." he said.

Micha is aware that young people are not always attracted to the idea of traditional arts. He tries to give young people a sense of the benefits of embracing their culture's traditions. He has stated "No young people like to continue with this carving so let me do it for them," and feels that village based traditional arts have been denigrated as *kampungan* or "countrified or boorish," by missionaries and successive governments who view them as pagan and primitive. He feels that government projects and sponsorship should do more to reverse these stereotypes. To this end, Micha and his friend Sam Kapissa, another prominent Biak artist, musician and dance choreographer ran the first carving *sanggar* / studio in Biak. The *sanggar* provided the older generation of carvers with the opportunity to teach the mythology and cultural significance of Biak traditions and arts to young people. The *sanggar* faced difficulties because of its inconvenient location in Swapodibo village on the outskirts of Biak town, and is now closed. The *sanggar* trained several young carvers who now produce carvings and sell them in the streets of Biak or to the art shops. Both Micha and Sam refuse to sell their works through any of the seven art shops in Biak that now cater almost exclusively to tourists, because they feel it is unfair that the owners of these shops, who are invariably entrepreneurial migrants from other parts of Indonesia earn more from the sale of a carving than the artist does by virtue of their position as middleman.[231] Most young artists do not have an established reputation or alternative employment that allows them to bypass these channels.

Many problems continue to exist for Biak carvers. The market is unstable and flooded with low quality carvings by aspiring artists, and there are few tourists to date despite elaborate

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[230] Ambai island is a tiny island approximately one hundred kilometres south of Biak, just below Yapen island. Ambai, and Yapen islands share strong similarities with Biak art and mythology.

[231] Of the seven art shops, Micha stated that six owners were from South Sulawesi, and one from Sumatra.

government plans developed in the early 1990s to turn Biak in to the next Bali.[232] The government and private investors began building a luxury tourist complex at Marauw in East Biak. To date only one of the planned hotels is finished, the Biak Beach Hotel, which was officially opened in 1996. This hotel and the entrance gateway and signs leading to the tourist enclave, are decorated with various carvings produced by Biak carvers. Some are monumental, others, such as an Asmat *bisj* pole that stands at the front of the hotel, represent art from around the province, but all the carvers were from Biak. Micha was not involved in the production of carvings at Marauw, however, because he was working on the Biak pavilion for the Jayapura Expo site.[233] Linked to this development, West Biak was designated to become a handicraft production centre for souvenirs, and plans were made to bring the first Javanese transmigrants to Biak for this work (Rutherford 1997:379). Even before the Indonesian economic crisis, these plans were moving slowly - no transmigrants have arrived, and few of the Biak Beach Hotel's 225 rooms were ever occupied.[234]

Sam Kapissa, who was recently elected to the Biak level II DPR – the Indonesian Legislative Assembly at the regency level and formerly worked with the level II department of Education and Culture (Depdikbud) as a free-lance cultural expert, has a desire to own an art shop of his own as soon as he can secure a loan or enough capital himself to cover the costs. Sam Kapissa is over 50 years old and has had this dream for many years. It does not make sense to either Micha or Sam that Biak people should not stand to profit most from their culture. When I last spoke to Sam Kapissa, he was hoping to receive a sponsorship of twenty million Rupiah from a European embassy, so he could build an art studio and shop in Biak town. Micha is now finalizing an arrangement with Cenderawasih University to begin teaching Biak carving and mythology to university students, and both men will continue to promote Biak art and culture in the face of continuing pressures to assimilate and control of artistic expression.

Analysis of main issues

The stories of Micha and Nico show the potential for local agency to allow local art traditions to continue and develop from the initiatives of artists. For the moment, both have

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[232] In the early 1990s, the government scheduled regular flights between Jakarta / Bali and North America to stop in Biak, but this service was cancelled in 1995. Few tourists left Biak's airport, most were entertained in the waiting room by a troupe of Biak dancers headed by Sam Kapissa while the plane was refuelled.

[233] There were approximately ten monumental Biak carvings on the hotel grounds, including an elaborate interior fountain – carving installation. The carvers were friends of Micha's.

[234] This hotel complex displaced several villages and has been the source of much controversy in Irian Jaya. For more about tourism in Biak, see YPMD 1996; Rutherford 1997; Howard and Sanggenafa 1997.

developed workable solutions to the problems they face, something other artists in Irian Jaya also seek. I have also attempted to show the agency of other Irianese artists featured in this thesis, even when the results of their actions were not what they had hoped to achieve. The main point is that these individuals and communities are continually trying to find new solutions and opportunities. While both Nico and Micha are still dependent on foreign buyers or patrons as in the case of Nico, their desire to be leading cultural figures is what drives their persistence in maintaining and developing local art traditions. I think this is where hope for the future lies.

CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSION

In this thesis I presented case studies and observations based on original research that reveal the context for contemporary art production in Irian Jaya, Indonesia. In conducting fieldwork for the thesis, I set out to explore the motivations and experiences of contemporary artists in Irian Jaya and the meaning their art holds for them and their communities. Initially, I did not find as many artists or traditional contexts for art production as I expected. The majority of scholarly writing on the art traditions of Irian Jaya, fixed in a pre-colonial context, had not prepared me for the situation I encountered in Irian Jaya.[235] My attempts to understand why and how circumstances have changed became the focus of this thesis. In all of the communities I visited, I observed various groups or individuals influencing and in some cases competing with local artists and communities for control of cultural expression and the benefits of cultural production, including the proceeds from sales of art and souvenirs, tourism performances and government sponsored dance and music competitions. At stake is the meaning and purpose of traditional and contemporary art forms and the ability to control the future directions these arts will take.

In Chapter Two, the thesis looked back to a time when control of cultural production was firmly in the hands of the originating communities. With over 250 separate ethnic groups in Irian Jaya it is beyond the scope of this thesis to elaborate in detail on these varied and remarkable traditions or the unique spiritual complexes in which they functioned. The roles of art and artists in these communities were based on long-standing traditions. These traditions, not static and unchanging, were renegotiated by communities when they felt it was necessary and when they had the opportunity to do so. The traditional arts of Irian Jaya in this pre-contact context were not intended for trade or use by outsiders, and were inextricably bound to local community life. Very little exchange in art or ritual objects took place with neighbouring groups, but when this did occur, negotiation and appropriate compensation was required.

While Chapter Two sketched fundamental points necessary to understand the transformations that followed sustained contact with foreigners through colonialism, Chapters Three through Six demonstrated that in Irian Jaya today, most arts no longer function in their past role in ritual, or even for the benefit of the community as a whole.

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[235] I would like to draw attention, again to the recent publications of Danilyn Rutherford, Jac. Hoogerbrugge and Michael Howard as exceptions to this observation. Much of their work has come out only recently, however.

Many artists in Irian Jaya today produce art primarily to earn money, which is now of enormous significance to their lives. With few opportunities for employment and education for local peoples in Irian Jaya today, artists use the money they receive from sales of their art for family expenses, to pay for school for their children, medical expenses and to upgrade their homes and economic status. Yet as this thesis points out, some of the traditional characteristics of and motivations for cultural production in these communities still exist. The importance to Irianese artists of passing knowledge of artistic processes and cultural pride to the next generation, whether through traditional means such as oral tradition, mythology or storytelling, or through contemporary methods of teaching government sponsored art classes, or writing down what is known about these traditions and the meaning of motifs in manuscripts, has all been documented in the case studies.

In Chapter Three, I detailed the prerogatives and cultural assumptions that foreigners from diverse backgrounds brought with them to New Guinea. Moving chronologically from the beginning of Dutch colonial encroachment to the recent cultural policies of the Indonesian New Order government, this chapter introduced the overwhelming catalysts of change in the arts of Irian Jaya. For the sake of analysis, I considered these outside actors from the vantage point of the categories of global and national.

International or global influences on art production, including those of colonial officials and missionaries, started the process of destabilizing traditional complexes of worldly and otherworldly authority. The early colonial and missionization process was based on a presumed Western cultural superiority and racism, which saw Irianese peoples (and other colonized peoples) as "primitives", "heathens and "savages." Not initially valued by foreigners as 'art', many of the objects in use by communities were destroyed or confiscated and placed in what eventually became Western museums. Since the late 1800s, certain of these objects previously valued as curiosities or ethnographic objects, have been drawn into the Western classification of "art" under the label of "primitive art". Studies of "primitive art" did not treat these artists as if they had much in common with Western artists who were capable of genius and invention and "discovering" the aesthetic of the "primitive". "Primitive" or "tribal" artists (as they later came to be known), were for several decades not considered important sources of knowledge on a work of art and were often left anonymous.

In keeping with contemporary approaches to (art) historical writing about non-Western cultures, this thesis has attempted to feature the voices of artists and local peoples, an approach that had yet to be undertaken in artistic studies of Irian Jaya. There is still plenty more scope for this in the future, and for history to be recorded for academic use by Irianese themselves (whether

written or recorded oral histories) as Agus, Micha and Nico have been doing. This is not to belittle the value of previous scholarship on the arts of Irian Jaya, as these publications (with their early descriptions, accompanying illustrations and photographs) are important sources for understanding the variety of objects and cultural diversity in Irian Jaya. As was illustrated in the case studies, in the frequent absence of originals or unbroken traditions, they are often used as pattern books today.

As ethnographic or art objects gradually became scarce due to changing lifestyles, private collectors, museum collectors and primitive art dealers headed into the field to snatch up remaining pieces. Ironically, the near disappearance of these art traditions, is what 'saved' them. Due to the value often placed on that which is rare (one Western assumption of "art" and a premise of value on the international art market), the demand for art from Irian Jaya increased and this contributed to the potential for revival although subject to the terms and forces of this external market. Cultural tourism has similarly targeted the West's current interest in 'vanishing peoples', and this has had some effect in preventing the complete loss of local traditions, though again, according to the terms of outsiders. Since the majority of buyers of contemporary Irian Jaya arts are art collectors or dealers and tourists (both domestic and foreign), artists are under significant economic pressure to accommodate the desires and tastes of these often contradictory markets, or sell nothing at all.

The national section of Chapter Three described the effects of the Indonesian government's cultural policies on art production in Irian Jaya. While the government once banned many art practices, the Asmat Art Project proved that art could be developed towards new commercial interests in the province. In 1969, the Asmat Art Project was the first contemporary art-as-development-project in Irian Jaya and aimed at the revival of Asmat art. This thesis demonstrates how this project became a model for the development of contemporary arts in other regions of the province, and gave new motivation to artists, including monetary rewards and, importantly, competition, as well as the auction format, emulated by the Freeport sponsored Kamoro-Sempan Cultural Festival in April of 1998, and the Jayapura Barkcloth Exhibition.

The Indonesian control of Irian Jaya, essentially a neo-colonial situation, is one that the Indonesian government attempts to justify to its entire population. Because the nation of Indonesia is made up of hundreds of previously politically separate ethnic groups, cultural expression has been carefully manipulated to exemplify the concept of "Unity in Diversity". Irianese, racially and ethnically distinct from other cultures in Indonesia, are under pressure to assimilate into Indonesian national culture and to express their cultural identity in ways that assert foremost their allegiance as Indonesians. Many Irianese people, as discussed in Chapter Three,

are not content to be absorbed into Indonesia, particularly when this nation takes most of the profits of resource exploitation from Irian Jaya and funnels it into the pockets of Javanese and Jakarta based government, business and military elite. Furthermore, the racial and cultural differences of Irianese peoples and their arts are generally not celebrated as being of the same calibre as those in other regions of the archipelago. Indonesian culture programs have often attempted to 'improve' Irianese cultural expression - which in effect has been to Indonesianize Irianese arts - while other cultural expression about political issues or contemporary concerns of Irianese peoples is restricted. A homogenizing effect on the arts is becoming apparent, particularly in Irianese dance and music performances and in contemporary urban design. Why has it been necessary, for instance, to send Irianese carvers to Java and Bali for carving lessons, when there are world renown carvers – the Asmat, who could have exchanged skills with other Irianese?

I also included in Chapter Three a section on local initiatives and prerogatives, in order to reaffirm that though economically and politically disempowered, local groups have reacted and attempted to influence their situation, both for their personal benefit and for that of their communities. To summarize briefly, we saw how artists were eager to trade their objects for items they desired with early collectors. Not all objects were willingly sold or given up, however. Artists also observed the tastes and preferences of those who bought their art, and were quick to produce some objects specifically for sale to foreigners.

Local communities in Irian Jaya today, often small and disempowered, are under pressure, both forceful and subtle, to assimilate into the Indonesian State. In all chapters, we saw how Irianese artists are in an economically disadvantaged position for starting their own businesses and art shops. The Indonesian government's lack of regulation makes it easy for non Irianese producers and middlemen to take control of the trade in Irianese contemporary arts. Irianese people and artists have little to no control of the proceeds from their cultural heritage, in traditional arts, contemporary arts or tourism. This situation mirrors that of employment in the province, and opportunities in education and skills training. As a result, a growing provincial identity and awareness, a common bond, has united Irianese peoples and artists, particularly in urban areas. This has contributed to a sense of ownership of cultural property and an awareness of the need to reclaim cultural control.[236] The Indonesian government strictly controls the desires

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[236] Artists in Irian Jaya today frequently told me that they enjoy the provincial art competitions such as the annual Expo in Jayapura and those sponsored by Depdikbud or other government departments like Small Scale Industry or Tourism, because it gives them an opportunity to meet their Irianese brothers and sisters they are otherwise less likely to meet.

of local peoples for more dynamic cultural venues and spontaneous cultural expression. In the early 1980s, Arnold Ap was transforming the Museum Loka Budaya into a living cultural centre, controlled by Irianese people, but this invigorating of Irianese cultures was feared and not tolerated. Arnold Ap, who was imprisoned and died for his beliefs, is a hero for many people in Irian Jaya, particularly artists, but no monument is permitted to honour him. He is considered a visionary and a martyr, whose death ensured that his dream of a living cultural center and a dynamic Irianese culture for Irianese peoples would not been forgotten.

In the case studies presented in Chapters Four, Five and Six, cultural production in Irian Jaya was discussed in the light of contemporary opportunities and constraints. Common themes that feature in each of these regions are the decline and revival of art, the role and effects of patronage, the appropriation of artistic motifs and the struggle for control of cultural expression and profits, and the current and future sustainability of the art forms being 'revived'. In each chapter I began with a regional history of the contact and relations that developed between local communities and foreigners. The role of foreigners in initiating the breakdown of traditional community structures, the responses of local peoples and the resulting decline of artistic practices is evident in each case study. Ironically, both the destruction and the revival of art practices in the Asmat, Kamoro, Sentani-Jayapura, Dani and Biak cultural regions was initiated or influenced by foreigners. Thus the shift from the "security to prosperity approach," recently implemented by the Indonesian government, has precedents in the activities of the earlier Dutch colonial administration and missionaries who destroyed and dismantled those elements in indigenous society seen as obstacles to their authority, security and success. Years later, when these foreigners felt that security had more or less been attained such harsh policies no longer seemed necessary. Once pacified, converted, and 'civilized' indigenous peoples were no longer as threatening or feared, making it possible to allow select elements of their cultures to return.

Local cultures are not, however, without agency or the ability to be threatening to outsiders they find undesirable or problematic. On the contrary, I feel that cultural unity, pride and identity continue to be intimidating factors to outsiders in Irian Jaya. Freeport and the Indonesian government in their attempts to prevent backlashes by disgruntled local peoples continue to take measures to create the impression that they support open and dynamic cultural expression by Irianese peoples.

Chapter Four explored the role of the multinational mining company, Freeport McMoran in sponsoring a revival of woodcarving and art production among the Kamoro people indigenous to its Contract of Work. In the case of the Kamoro, what is hailed and advertised by Freeport as a revival of Kamoro arts due to its sponsorship, brings to question the role of patronage and the

motivation behind corporate philanthropy. Freeport promotes itself as benefactor and patron of culture and hence a beneficial presence in the area (irrespective) of its mining operations. Yet Freeport's sole focus is on mineral extraction as reflected in the managing director's recent announcement that the company's new policy was to "hunker down and go". This statement is consistent with the drastic reduction in local community development programs in the past few years and the company's assertion that responsibility for the welfare of local peoples rests with the Indonesian government. In this climate, Freeport's art sponsorship appears to be little more than a public relations exercise.

From the perspective of the history of art among the Kamoro, there has unquestionably been a revival of arts in the area. But what is the nature of the revival? Freeport uses the carvings produced by Kamoro people in landscaping and interior decoration in its company enclave of Kuala Kencana, the *Rimba Irian* golf course and the Sheraton Inn. This creates the appearance of a happy coexistence between the company and the local people, which is in stark contrast to reports of human rights abuses and demonstrations by Irianese in and around the mining operations. Freeport, as patron, manipulates culture to its own ends, choosing to acknowledge traditional arts while rejecting traditional land tenure and spiritual and historical associations and connections to land. In this sense, Freeport's appropriation of Kamoro culture for its own purposes can be understood in a similar way to its appropriation of land, even though the Kamoro people are not protesting directly and appear to have participated willingly in art production for Freeport (though tempted with monetary rewards to which they have limited access in Freeport's mining operations). This may represent the Kamoro's hope to be included in Freeport's programs and future planning.

The question of whether or not the revival of Kamoro arts is sustainable in the long term is more difficult to answer. Forms of art not seen in years (at least by Westerners) have been stimulated by Freeport's sponsorship. But with the completion of Kuala Kencana, Freeport's commissions have decreased. Once company employees own one or two pieces each, what will happen? Given that so few Kamoro actually have jobs with the company or any other employment, they will be unable to commission carvings themselves. Tourism has not been encouraged in the area because of the problems between local people and the mine. Basically, until Freeport addresses more complex issues of its past and present social and employment policies, it seems unlikely that their sponsorship of art will be enough to sustain this revival of carving traditions. As for the Kamoro-Sempan cultural festival of 1998, it was intended to be an annual event, although the event was by invitation only in 1998 because the company (ever mindful of its public image) wanted to do a trial run before opening it up to the public. I have

recently heard that a 1999 Kamoro auction is set to take place in October on the weekend following the annual Asmat auction, presumably with hopes that visitors who make the trip to the Agats auction will also be able to stay for the Kamoro auction. It remains to be seen whether Kamoro art will receive as much acclaim as Asmat art.

Nevertheless, Kamoro people seem to have retained in collective memory more of their traditional culture than was predicted in the writing of Father Trenkenschuh in 1970 or by Simon Kooijman in 1984. Kooijman stated that there had been no carvings produced in the area since 1955 (Kooijman 1984:164), even for sale to foreigners. In my opinion, the current revival has been of benefit to Kamoro art, although I also firmly believe that Freeport's attempt to integrate itself into the local landscape should be the subject of vigorous scrutiny. There was a great deal of enthusiasm for Kamoro culture at the gathering in Hiripau for the Kamoro-Sempan Cultural Festival 1998. Late in the evening on the last night, after Freeport staff and organizers had all gone home, most to Kuala Kencana roughly 60 kilometres away, and women and children had gone to bed, several groups of Kamoro men gathered under the *pendopo* stage built specifically for the event and began to *pukul tifa* (Indonesian for playing the drum) in competing circles with accompanying singers. The men continued through to the morning playing and singing, and in the morning women and children joined them. This was an event the Kamoro held for themselves, possibly to show Kamoro from other villages that even in Freeport's shadow this local community was still strongly engaged with Kamoro traditions.

In Chapter Five I discussed how the recent revival of barkcloth painting in Lake Sentani and the surrounding Jayapura area started with foreign collectors who took photographs of old paintings to the communities to see if any painters still remained. In contrast to the first revival of barkcloth in the 1930s, in the 1990s Sentani artists, in particular those from Asei Island, have had to compete with middlemen for control of proceeds from art sales. When I first encountered barkcloth for sale at the Museum Loka Budaya (at the Universitas Cenderawasih) in 1995, I paid between Rp. 50,000 – 75,000 for barkcloth paintings of approximately 70 x 80 centimeters in size (at the time approximately US$ 23 - 34). In early 1996, Agus Ongge told me he was receiving 10,000 Rp (approximately US$4.50) for his paintings, which he had been selling to the Museum. He seemed genuinely shocked when I told him how much I had paid for the paintings, which he frequently delivered to the museum. This problem has continued for all Sentani artists due to their proximity to the Jayapura area, where there is a lot of competition for the sales of art and souvenirs. The Indonesian government's policy of lifting restrictions on carving rights and encouraging spontaneous entrepreneurial migrants to Irian Jaya (generally from South Sulawesi) who establish themselves as merchants and drive Irianese peoples out of selling in regional

markets, in effect turns the Irianese people into wholesalers who get an extremely low share of the profits from their own cultural production.

Sentani artists have at times enjoyed the patronage of foreign ex-patriots, researchers and occasional tourists who go directly to the communities and buy art for roughly the same price as can be found in the Hamadi art market. As a result, artists stopped selling to middlemen and waited in their communities for foreigners to visit. Nico Tanto, of the Museum Loka Budaya, told me in an interview that he was no longer prepared to tell foreigners the names of villages where he was sourcing his stock because on a recent trip he had found that artists were unwilling to sell to him for less than they could sell to foreigners, and this would ruin his business. Fortunately for the middlemen, it is prohibitively time-consuming, expensive and often inconvenient for foreigners and tourists (without language skills) to travel to Asei, the barkcloth village or to Babrongko the carving village, as you must travel by dugout canoe to get there or hire an expensive motor boat. It is also fortunate for the middlemen that there are more artists than the market can support, so they can generally still source paintings even though they may not be of the best quality. This does not appear to deter foreign or domestic visitors from buying barkcloth, and many seek artworks merely as souvenirs of their travels.

Over the past four years of my field trips, I have seen the quality of barkcloth paintings steadily decline. This problem stands to worsen further due to the activities of the migrant entrepreneur Hamzah and his continuing barkcloth exhibition and auction promotions. Since my last field trip, I have learned that in late November of 1998 Hamzah took an art show of this type called "Panoramic Paintings on Tree Bark from Irian Jaya" to Jakarta where it was exhibited in the Hotel Indonesia in central Jakarta. Less than a third of the paintings exhibited were in the traditional Asei style (presumably) by Asei artists and the rest were of the acrylic on Barkcloth Hamadi style by migrant artists discussed in Chapter Five.[237] These statistics show an accelerating trend that highlights the threat of Indonesianization to local traditions and show that local artists are seriously disadvantaged both politically and economically. These developments represent the biggest threat to traditional barkcloth in the Sentani area. With the apparent lack of concern about these issues shown by the Indonesian government, its role in the revival of local traditions to serve the creation of an Indonesian national identity can be seen to have a homogenizing and detrimental effect upon local artists and regional art forms.

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[237] I learned of this exhibition through personal communication with James Barker, a field collector and dealer of Indonesian art. This exhibition was reported in the Jakarta Post where it was stated that thirty traditional paintings and eighty modern paintings were displayed. (Kartohadiprodjo 1998).

What hope is there that local artists will be able to regain and maintain control of their traditional artforms in this climate? As a final point in Chapter Five, I mentioned the recent instructions of Theys Eluay, (Sentani tribal leader and head of the *Lembaga Adat Irian Jaya*—Coalition of Tribal Leaders of Irian Jaya) to local artists to be protective of Sentani traditions. The activities of Hamzah that I witnessed in May of 1998 took place when Theys and many other Irianese leaders were in Jakarta meeting with newly appointed President Habibie about the future prospects of Irian Jaya's autonomy. Though I was unable to meet him, I feel this instance of cultural appropriation would be of serious concern to Theys and other Irianese community leaders. Cultural and economic appropriation, as well as a lack of political autonomy and concern for the interests of Irianese, are fundamental reasons behind Irianese desires for independence from Indonesia. The current transformations in art production in Irian Jaya must, therefore, be considered in this broader context of Indonesian rule, which has left Irianese artists in complicated predicaments. It remains to be seen how Sentani artists will react to these current developments.

In Chapter Six, I discussed two artists, Nico Haluk and Micha Ronsumbre. I found these two artists had more positive stories to tell than the contexts examined earlier. Both have found ways to gain direct access to global markets, so that they can stay in control of their art production with little interference from middlemen. The early patronage of the Bupati (Regent) Wenas of the Jayawijaya highlands Regency of Irian Jaya was extremely important to Nico. Nico's artworks were given by the Bupati as gifts to visiting government officials, and might be seen as serving a similar purpose in creating a favorable public image (that Indonesians of all ethnicities can happily coexist in the highlands of Irian Jaya), as the Kamoro arts do at Freeport facilities and at Freeport sponsored art exhibitions. J.B. Wenas won many awards for his government's transformations in the highlands hub of Wamena throughout the duration of his term of office there. His final award was a prestigious repositioning as Assistant Regent in his home district of Manado, in North Sulawesi.

Nico has found a new patron in the GATRA journalist Seiichi Okawa and this has made him very happy. Though Okawa is also a middleman, he pays Nico high prices for his works which he markets for three or four times the price in his gallery in downtown Tokyo and via the internet. This is remarkable for Nico who now has the opportunity to communicate directly (through his art) the ways in which he would like his culture to be presented to outsiders. Nico began carving and developed his own style in reaction to the sales of stock stereotype souvenirs to tourists such as the penis gourd. He feels this is just an item of clothing to highland peoples and is concerned that many outsiders consider it to be proof of the backwardness and lack of

sophistication of highland peoples. Nico, however, is proud of his culture and the figures in his sculptures wear traditional dress including grass skirts and penis gourds, but these are contextualized into scenes of local mythology and scenes of traditional life and customs where the penis gourd is not simply a novelty or curiousity. Nico also solved a problem facing highland peoples who watched tourists leave with Asmat art sold to them by migrant merchants in control of the souvenir trade, by developing a local style of carving that seems to be reasonably popular. Nico hopes that Seiichi Okawa's sponsorship of will enable him to build a carving studio on his property where he plans to market his own work and that of his students without the involvement of middlemen.

Micha Ronsumbre from Biak represents the strength of cultural tenacity against overwhelming odds. Micha was initiated as a Biak artist in the traditional way. He plans to carry on this tradition and impart his skills and knowledge to a young member of his family. Micha claims that the initiating of artists and the passing down of Biak cultural traditions and knowledge continued 'in secret when necessary', creating an unbroken tradition that has endured through a century and a half of missionary and colonial presence in the Biak area. Micha produces high quality carvings that are extremely detailed and painstakingly carved. His carvings are an important source of pride to him, as are the techniques and traditions that he has inherited. Micha enjoys teaching others about Biak culture, and one of the ways he does this is through his art. He has forged many links with foreign and national collectors, and is able to make a good living as an artist without having to compromise on price or on the quality of his work. Micha believes that there are some Biak carvers who should be artists and remain true to their traditions and maintain the integrity of traditional works. Others can fulfill the less stringent requirements for carving souvenirs, but those dealing with Biak culture should be Biak people, and the profits should go to Biaks. Both Nico and Micha represent the ability of local artists to be innovative in contemporary circumstances, and to produce art that is of significance and relevance to their local communities.

In this thesis I have considered the following question: What can the stories of artists in Irian Jaya today communicate about the broader circumstances of their lives and the lives of local communities in a contemporary context? Is it possible to separate art from life? In the past art was inextricably bound to community life, and I believe it remains so today, though in different ways than earlier. In all of the case studies presented in this thesis, local artists and their communities are confronted with national and global forces, sometimes operating at a regional level. These challenge their cultural expression and identity, inciting them to respond or risk giving over control of their cultural expression and the broader socio-political dimensions of their

lives. While loss of control and even loss of traditions may seem inevitable at times, many Irianese peoples have shown enormous resilience in maintaining hold of their art traditions, although the meaning of these have changed. Irianese people are not as bound to the idea that their traditions should not change as Westerner collectors and scholars have been or to the idea that they should change rapidly, as the Indonesian government and development narratives suggest they must. Irianese people are increasingly drawn into broader contexts and they respond in ways that are neither traditional nor modern, as their lives remain rooted in both. In facing the future, Irianese artists are intent on achieving change, but also on maintaining continuity. All of the artists I met called themselves artists, all felt tied to their past, and to the artistic traditions of their community.

While the examples of patronage in these case studies represent empowering opportunities and important sources of revenue for artists without the economic resources to act independently, patronage, by virtue of the power disparity in the relationship between patron and artist, also enables patrons to manipulate cultural production to their own ends. It has been demonstrated in this thesis that this does not always serve the broader interests or concerns of Irianese artists or communities, as powerful patrons appropriate cultural production to create the appearance of cultural harmony. This is particularly apparent in the case of patrons with strong vested interests in Irian Jaya such as Freeport and the Government of Indonesia.

Irianese are disadvantaged economically and politically, but Irianese artists recognize that cultural pride, resolve and their ability to express these in the face of adversity can not be taken away from them. They can conform to outside expectations when they see it is advantageous for them to do so but this does not mean they have given up their agency. Many Irianese artists are returning to local traditions as part of an attempt to (re)define themselves and their community. In reaction to the negative definitions imposed upon them, particularly by the Indonesian government, many Irianese people are intent on maintaining their pride in their ethnic and provincial Irianese identity.

Serious questions facing these artists have been considered throughout the thesis. Many artists frequently drift away from their craft for days and weeks at a time because the return they receive does not sustain them. Artists who can't sell their work themselves due to a shortage of tourists, will sell their work to market merchants for much less than what they feel it is worth to get money for their daily expenses. When collectors and ex-patriot workers are not in Irian Jaya to buy art, artists such as Agus Ongge, and the carvers of Babrongko must find new places to sell their work. Most artists have families to support, and apart from producing art, they also contribute to the tending of gardens and raising animals for food. Some will work in the nearby

towns such as Sentani, Jayapura, Biak, Wamena or Timika for a wage, all of which cuts significantly into their time for producing art and possibly reduces their motivation to produce art. The importance of developing a sustainable market for the art of Irianese artists in their various communities cannot be understated.

In order for art and cultural expression in Irian Jaya to be sustainable, I feel it must retain meaning and relevance to local communities and artists. One potential criticism of contemporary art in Irian Jaya today is that artists are simply copying or making replicas of past cultural objects no longer in use in these communities. If this is all that is taking place, will not traditions become static and lose its meaning to local peoples? What, if anything, can these objects mean to local peoples today, and why do they not seem to speak of contemporary issues, concerns or ideas of relevance to contemporary life in Irian Jaya? I would argue that by returning to the production of traditional objects, Irianese artists are attempting to assert difference and to maintain pride in their cultures, whether as Biaks, Danis, Sentani people, Kamoro, Asmat or any of the other tribal groups in Irian Jaya today. This is their reaction to their contemporary situation and represents their allegiance to local cultures and their desire to not be culturally assimilated into the nation of Indonesia. Present conditions for the expression of culture in Irian Jaya do not allow Irianese to express difference and their desire for autonomy in more direct ways. A return to patronage by the communities within which these artists work and live is a necessary stage in making these arts both relevant and sustainable in the future.

I cannot overemphasize how important it was to this thesis to have had the opportunity to travel to several locations, and to return to most of these locations a few times to see what new developments had occurred in my absence. In this way it was possible to observe how quickly situations can change to give the future a whole new outlook. While it is unlikely that drastic changes will occur with regard to political autonomy in Irian Jaya, it is clear that Irianese people and artists will continue to strive to maintain their sense of cultural identity, on their own terms.

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APPENDIX A

TIMELINE OF RECENT EVENTS AND RESEARCH WORK IN IRIAN JAYA

This is a timeline of recent events reported in Irian Jaya with immediate significance to my fieldwork and this thesis. Immediately following the timeline is a list of dates and locations of field research conducted for this thesis.

October 17, 1990 - Airport facilities in Timika burnt in protest at the appropriation of land for construction of a Sheraton Hotel to serve Freeport guests and employees (Ballard 1996: 36).

June 19, 1991 – New Freeport Indonesia contract signed with the Indonesian Government allowing a 30-year access for the Freeport Contract of Work (Ballard 1996: 37).

April 26, 1993 – "Location permit (*Izin Lokasi*) decree by Governor of Irian Jaya defines boundaries and reserves land for development of New Town. Local protestors block New Town access road" (Ballard 1996: 37).

June 23, 1994 – The Morning Star flag of the OPM is raised at Tsinga village in the Freeport concession area. During the final six months of 1994 more incidents in the region result in the shooting of several Freeport employees and soldiers by the OPM, and the death and disappearance of up to 60 local villagers (Ballard 1996: 38).

December 6, 1994 – "Land Title (*Hak Guna Bangun*) for New Town issued by BPN to PTFI" (Ballard 1996: 38).

December 25, 1994 – The Morning Star flag of the OPM is raised near Tembagapura (the mine site), accompanied by a demonstration of local villagers which results in two Amungme being shot and killed and others arrested (Ballard 1996: 39). In the following days, other villagers are arrested and detained and one suspected OPM member is killed.

March, 1995 – Three local villagers die in custody at the local police station in Timika.

April 5, 1995 – Australian Council for Overseas Aid (ACFOA) release a report detailing serious human rights abuses in and around Freeport Indonesia's area of operations (ACFOA 1995).

April 7, 1995 – "Indonesian government denies ACFOA claims" (Ballard 1996: 39).

May 2, 1995 – Controversy erupted at the University of Texas over the proposed naming of a new Molecular Biology Building, as the "Louise and James R. Moffett Building", with one wing designated as the "Freeport wing", after C.E.O. of Freeport, Jim Bob Moffett donated $2 million to the University of Texas and Freeport donated $1million. Students and professors unhappy with accepting a donation from Freeport given the company's environmental and social history in Irian Jaya, condemned the name and asked the building to be renamed. The Faculty Council supported the students decision, but they were prevented from requesting the Moffetts to consider a name change when the Dean's council of the University overruled the decision. The building received the Moffetts' name, and one anthropology professor, Dr. Steven Feld, resigned from the university in protest to the decision. (Boyer's Irian Jaya web page covers this issue extensively).

August 29, 1995 – ACFOA releases internationally a report by Bishop Munninghoff of Jayapura which elaborates on 1994/95 human rights abuses in the area surrounding the Freeport mine first made public in the ACFOA report of April 1995.

October 10, 1995 – The Overseas Private Investment Corporation issues a letter to Freeport indicating its intention to cancel Freeport's US$100,000,000 of risk insurance on October 31 1995.

December 5, 1995 – President Suharto officially opens Freeport's New Town, naming it *Kuala Kencana* (River of Gold) and inaugurating the centerpiece of the new development, the monumental sculpture *Shield* by Nyoman Nuarta.

January 8, 1996 – OPM take two groups of researchers hostage in the Lorentz Nature Reserve in south central Irian Jaya. Seven Europeans, four Indonesians and several Irianese are held captive for four months while negotiations continue between the OPM and Indonesian military brokered by local church groups and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). By May 15th, in the confusion of an Indonesian military offensive, most of the hostages escape to freedom but two of the Indonesian hostages are executed by their captors. Three less prominent OPM hostage takings were reported in other parts of Irian in 1996.

March 10, 1996 – 200- to 300 Waa/Banti residents riot in Tembagapura, 15 people are injured. Freeport is shut down as a result (Ballard 1996: 43).

March 12, 1996 – Around 500-3000 people riot in the Timika area, and the military rushed reinforcements to the region, boosting the total military presence in the area to 900. Various company facilities were damaged, and rioters were dispersed with rubber bullets (Ballard 1996: 43). The mine re-opened a day later.

Also on this day the prominent independence activist from Biak Island, Dr Thomas Wanggai, died in Cipinang Prison, Jakarta. Wanggai's death was considered suspicious by some Irianese, despite claims by an ICRC doctor that he had died of natural causes.

March 14, 1996 – President of Freeport McMoran, Jim-Bob Moffett, meets with Indonesian government, military and local community leaders at the Timika Sheraton (Ballard 1996: 43).

March 18, 1996 – A funeral procession intended to accompany the body of Wanggai from Sentani Airport to Jayapura's suburb of Dok Lima, resulted in a riot in the outer suburb of Abepura. Four people were killed, many shops were looted and burnt and over 100 people in Jayapura were arrested.

The Indonesian Military announced that Timika would become a permanent base for 1850 military personnel (Ballard 1996: 43).

April 5, 1996 – Troop numbers in Freeport COW area increase to an estimated 3000" (Ballard 1996: 44).

April 13, 1996 – Freeport President, Jim-Bob Moffett "made an offer of a complex package of financial arrangements, which included earmarking 1 percent of Freeport Indonesia's annual revenue for development programs for the local communities over a period of ten years (the 'Integrated Timika Development Plan')..." (Ballard 997,473). Freeport's solution did not satisfy Amungme leaders, as indicated by events on April 29, 1996.

April 29, 1996 – The Amungme tribal leader, Tom Beanal, filed a US$6 billion class action lawsuit in the US District Court of New Orleans against Freeport McMoran of New Orleans (the parent company with an 82% equity in Freeport Indonesia) for "eco-terrorism" and "cultural genocide." This case was dismissed on April 9, 1997 (see Boyer 1999)

April 23, 1997 – Tom Beanal refiled his second class action against Freeport Indonesia for "crimes against humanity." This case was dismissed by on August 8, 1997.

May 1997 – Irian Jaya begins to be affected by a drought (related to the El Nino southern oscillation) which seriously disrupts food production for more than 12 months. The number of deaths in Irian Jaya from the drought and associated famine was higher than for all other provinces of Indonesia (Ballard 1998: 433).

October 1997 – The Asian economic crisis begins to become evident in the exchange rate for the Indonesian Rupiah. In July 26, 1996, the rate of exchange was USD$1=2,338 Rupiah. By October 1997, the rate was US$1=3,420 Rupiah and by December 1997, it had fallen further to US$1=6,200 Rupiah. On January 20, 1998, the rate was US$1=12,000 Rupiah (figures from Robert S. Boyer's Irian Jaya Website 1999). "At the end of 1997, the Indonesian Rupiah was the worst performing currency in the world" (Ballard 1998: 434).

December 1997 – In 1997, Freeport's Indonesia provided over 88 percent of Irian Jaya's export income (Ballard 1998: 438).

April 23-27, 1998 – The first "Sempan-Kamoro Art and Cultural Festival", promoted and paid for by Freeport Indonesia, was held at Hiripau, southwest of Timika.

May 21, 1998 – President Suharto resigns amid nation-wide protests. Vice-President Habibie becomes Indonesia's third President.

May 23, 1998 – The first Bark Cloth Exhibition and Auction was held in Jayapura.

July 1998 – Pro-independence flag raising demonstrations take place across Irian Jaya, and protestors are shot and killed by the Indonesian military in Jayapura and Biak. In Sorong, Wamena and Manokwari demonstrators are arrested and some property is damaged. In late July, a new organization called FORERI (Forum for the Reconciliation of the People of Irian Jaya) is formed of church and tribal leaders and non-government activists, with the intention of "addressing the aspirations of the Papuan people through a national dialogue" (Human Rights Watch Asia 1999)

October 1998 – Morning Star flag is raised in Manokwari, with subsequent rioting and arrests. During this month, six prominent Irianese leaders and members of FORERI - including Theys Eluay - are placed under house arrest for their activities in pro-Independence activities.

November 1998 – Irianese leaders openly call for Independence and a national dialogue with President Habibie over the future of Irian Jaya.

February 26, 1999 – Irianese leaders, including Irian Jaya Governor Freddy Numberi and Amungme leader Tom Beanal, met in Jakarta for a "national dialogue" with President Habibie on the possibility of autonomy for Irian Jaya. When he arrived back in Irian Jaya on March 13, Governor Numberi reported that "The President only said Irian Jayans should reconsider their demand for independence. This means the head of state doesn't support it" (Antara Newspaper,

March 13, 1999). Following this dialogue, the police officially banned the "socialization" (discussion) of this meeting in Irian Jaya, claiming that this could destabilize the Indonesian General Election process.

May 4, 1999 – "Habibie reiterated on Monday that Irian Jaya was an integral part of Indonesia and the government would firmly crack down on any separatist activities" (Jakarta Post, May 4, 1999).

June 7, 1999 – Indonesian General Elections.

July 1999 – Flag raisings and protests were reported in the Irian Jaya towns of Jayapura, Sorong, Nabire, and the village of Genyem (west of Jayapura).

August 2, 1999 – Police report hundreds of protestors joined a peaceful rally in Timika demanding independence for Irian Jaya. Eyewitness reports suggest up to 5,000 protestors marched through Timika and that they presented a petition to the Regent of Mimika (AFP, August 2, 1999).

August 7, 1999 – Five prominent Irianese, including Tom Beanal, had their rights to travel overseas revoked without explanation by police in Irian Jaya.

RESEARCH TRIPS TO IRIAN JAYA 1995-1998

The following is a list of dates and locations of field research conducted for this thesis.

1995 April (1 week): Biak, Manokwari, Ransiki.

Early October to mid December (2 months): Sentani, Jayapura, Wamena, Agats, (overland trek by foot and dugout canoe from Wamena to Agats), Timika, Biak.

1996 Late February to late April (2 months): East Timor, Jayapura, Sentani, Anggi, Wamena, Timika.

Late October to mid December (7 weeks) Jayapura, Sentani, Biak, Wamena.

1997 Late January to mid March (6 weeks): Sentani, Jayapura, Northwest coast villages.

April (1 month): Sentani, Jayapura, Wamena.

1998 Late April to early June (6 weeks): Timika, Jayapura, Sentani, (while Micha Ronsumbre of Biak was living in Jayapura).

APPENDIX B

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Copyright permission granted by James Barker for use of photographs taken by him, received by e-mail, August 31, 1999.

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FIGURES

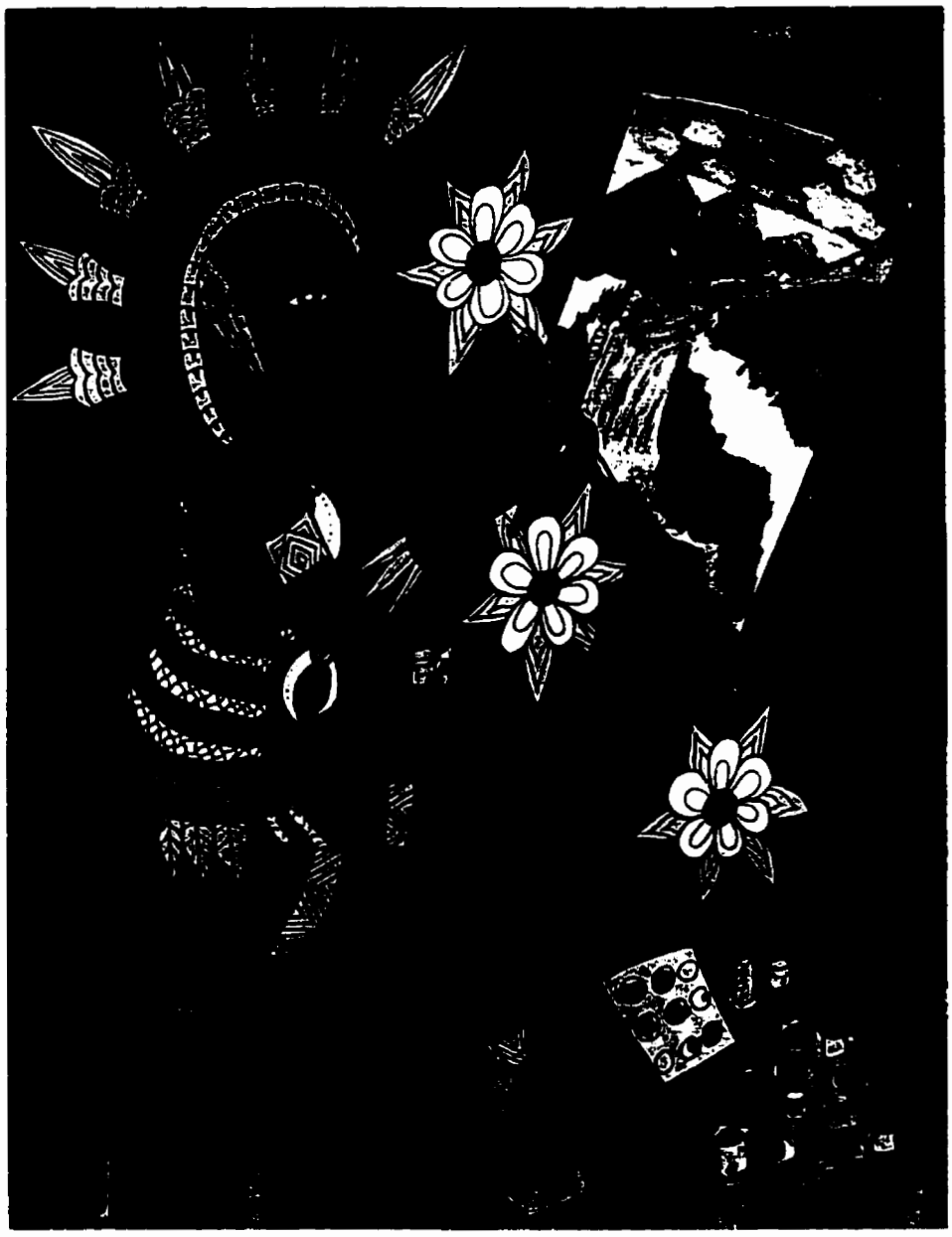


Figure 1-1. Oscar Towa, *Papua New Guinea Artist*, 1994, gouache on paper, National Gallery of Australia (Cochrane 1997:cover).

Figure 1-2. John Siune, *PNG Crisis*, 1996, acrylic on canvas, 190 x 190 cm., Jean-Marie Tjibaou Cultural Centre, New Caledonia (Cochrane 1997:42).

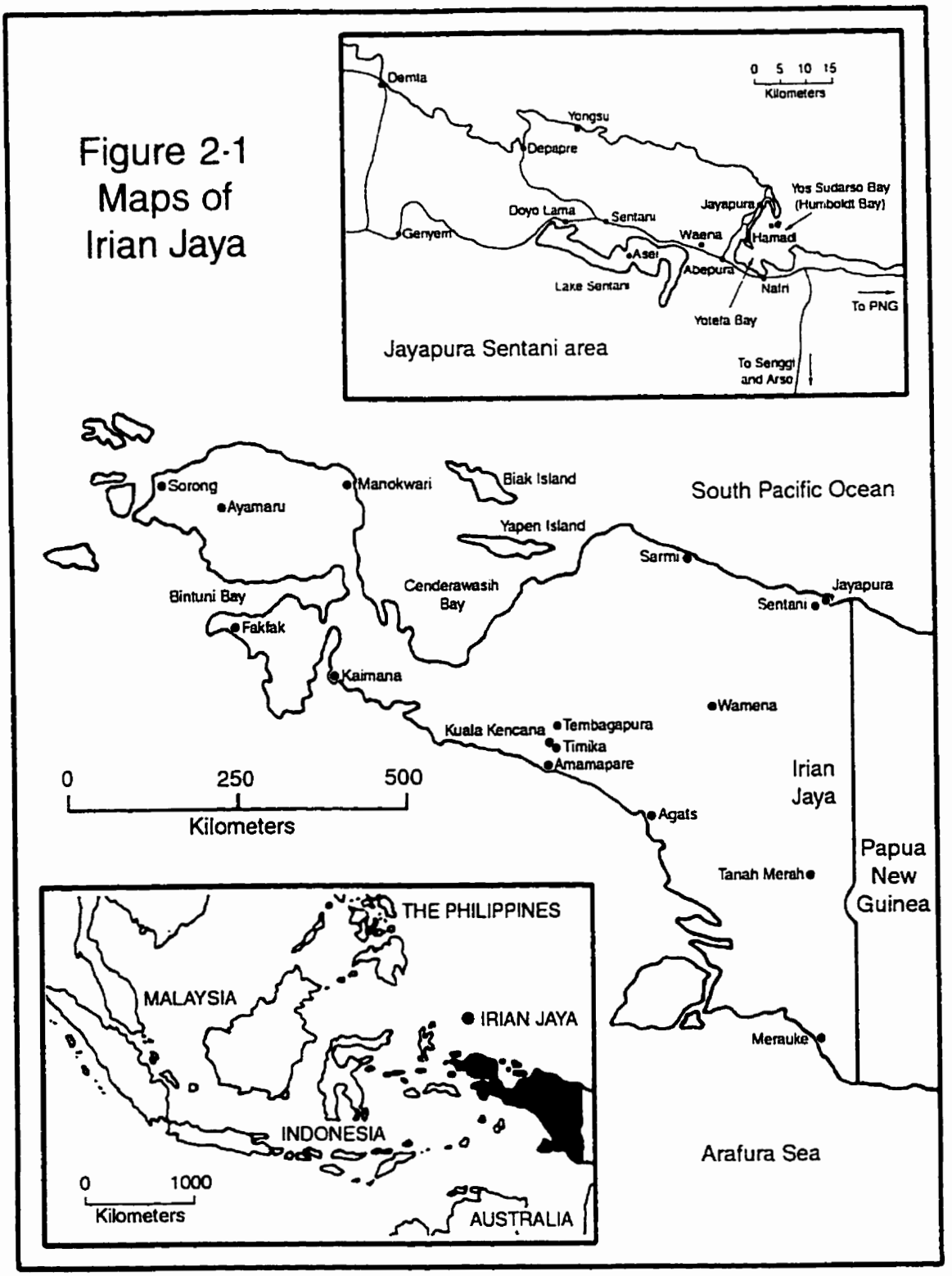


Figure 2-1
Maps of
Irian Jaya
Jayapura Sentani area
0 5 10 15
Kilometers
Demta
Yongsu
Depapre
Yos Sudarso Bay
(Humboldt Bay)
Jayapura
Doyo Lama
Sentani
Genyem
Waena
Hamadi
Asei
Abepura
Lake Sentani
Nafri
Yotefa Bay
To PNG
To Senggi
and Arso
South Pacific Ocean
Sorong
Manokwari
Biak Island
Ayamaru
Yapen Island
Sarmi
Jayapura
Sentani
Cenderawasih
Bay
Bintuni Bay
Fakfak
Kaimana
Wamena
Kuala Kencana
Tembagapura
Timika
Amamapare
0 250 500
Kilometers
Irian
Jaya
Agats
Papua
New
Guinea
Tanah Merah
THE PHILIPPINES
MALAYSIA
IRIAN JAYA
Merauke
INDONESIA
Arafura Sea
0 1000
Kilometers
AUSTRALIA

Figure 2-2. Tinus Melangsena, carved housepost, Babrongko, Lake Sentani, 1997.

Figure 3-1. "Burning Idols" from *Missionary Sketches* periodical, 1819 (reproduced in Thomas 1991:155).

Figure 3-2. Palm wine ladles from Ayamaru, at Nico Tanto's Art Shop in Abepura, 1998.

Figure 3-3. Asmat Museum of Culture and Progress, Agats, 1995.

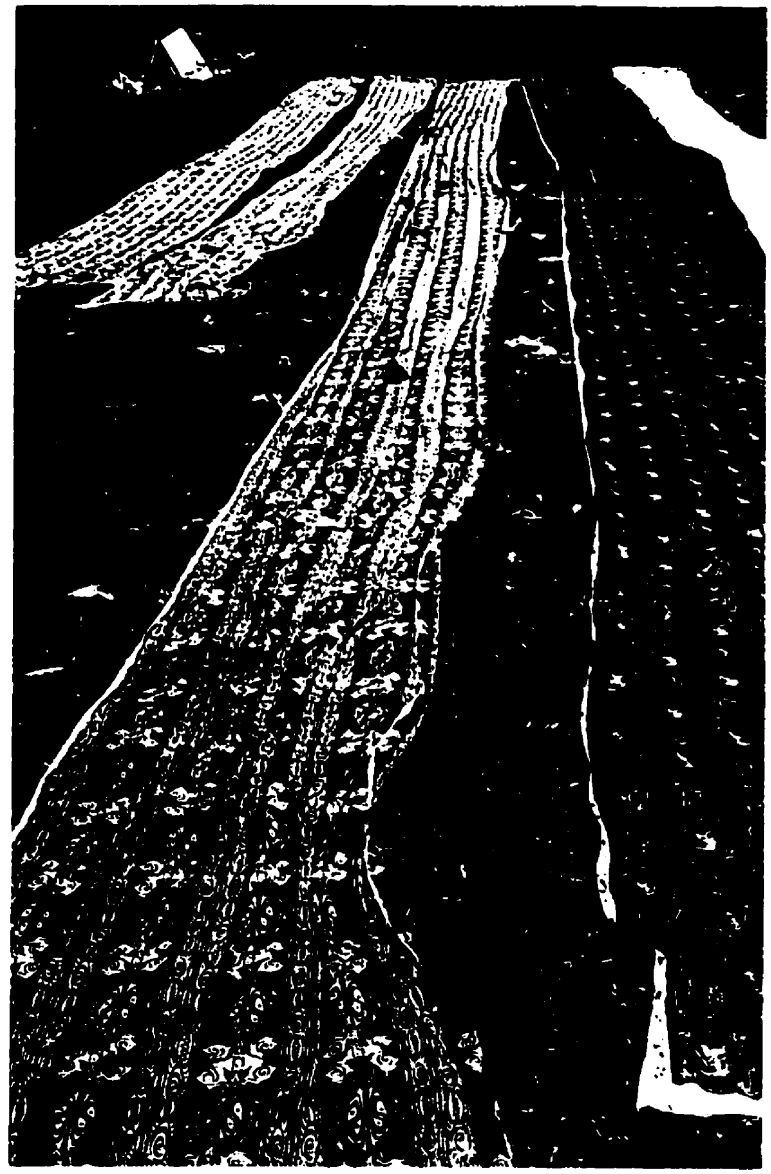


Figure 3-4. *Cap* (stamp) printed batik cloth with Irianese motifs, drying at the Batik Irian Jaya Factory, (on the front left cloth the motifs are from Lake Sentani), Waena, 1997.

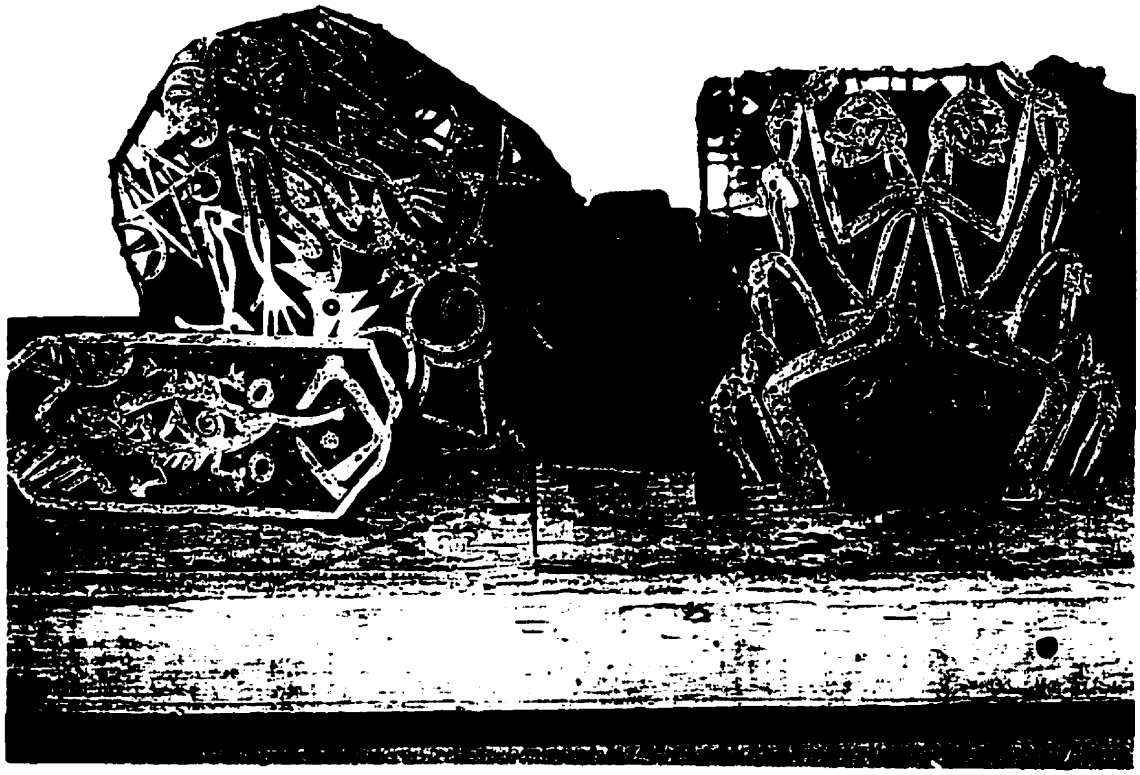


Figure 3-5. Batik Irian Jaya metal *cap* batik stamps imported from Java, (the motifs on the stamps are, from left to right, derived from Yaffi, Asmat, Nafri and Asmat), Waena, 1997.

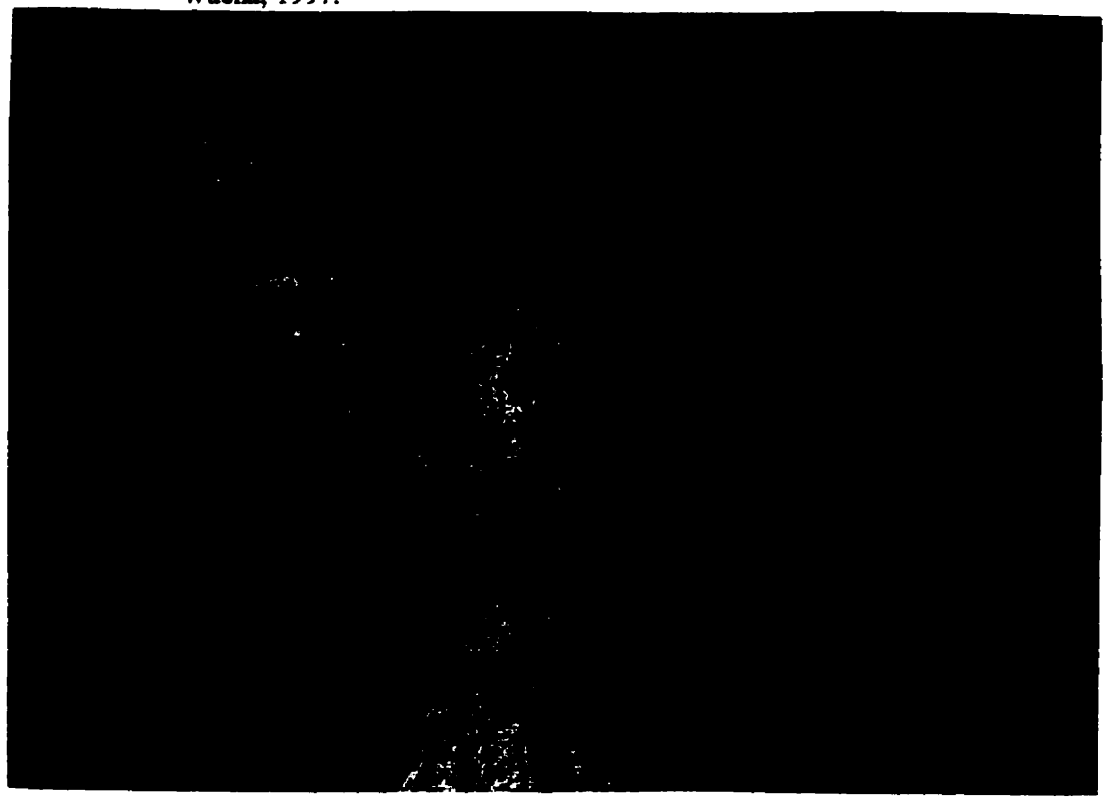


Figure 3-6. Edhi Sunarso, *Monumen Pembebasan Irian Barat* (Liberation of West Irian Monument), 1963, Jakarta (Muller 1994:57).

Figure 3-7. *Pembangunan Suku Mukoko* (Development of the Mukoko Tribe), book cover illustration (Iskandar 1963:cover).

Figure 3-8. *Gotong-Royong* (Mutual cooperation) monument / fountain in downtown Jayapura, bronze and painted concrete, photographed May 1998.

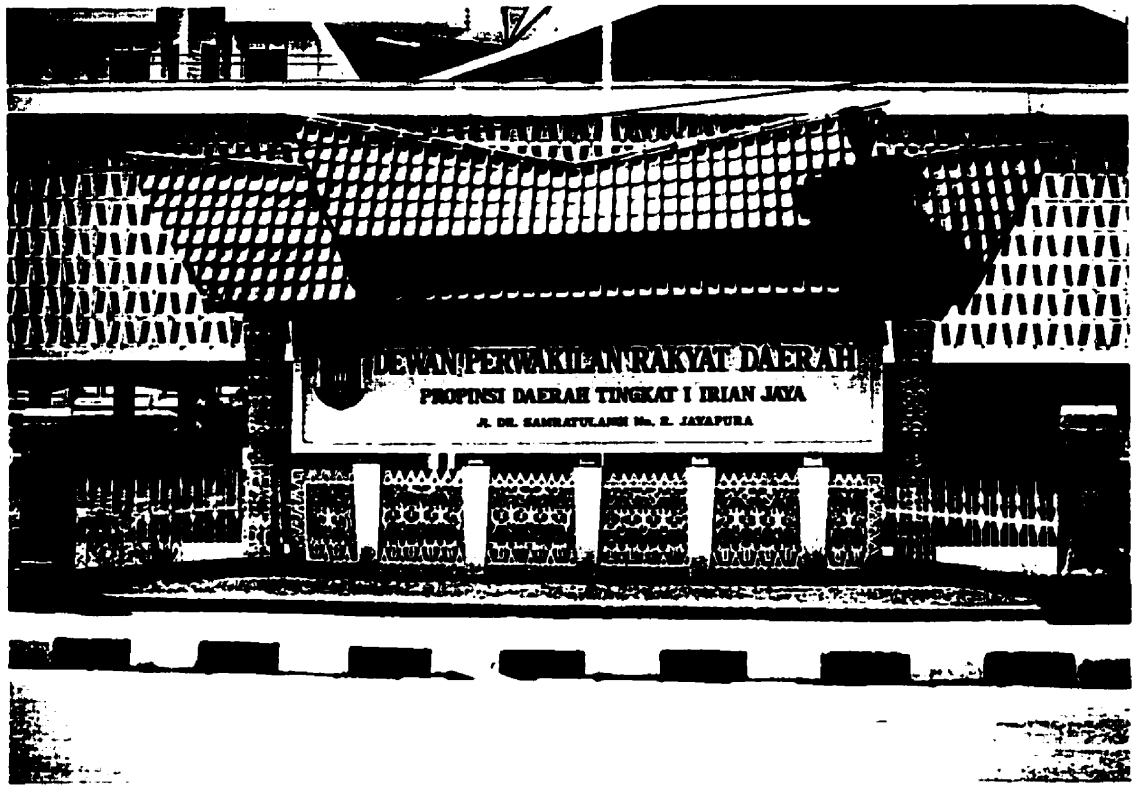


Figure 3-9 Sign in front of the *Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Irian* (Provincial Legislative Assembly) building in Jayapura.

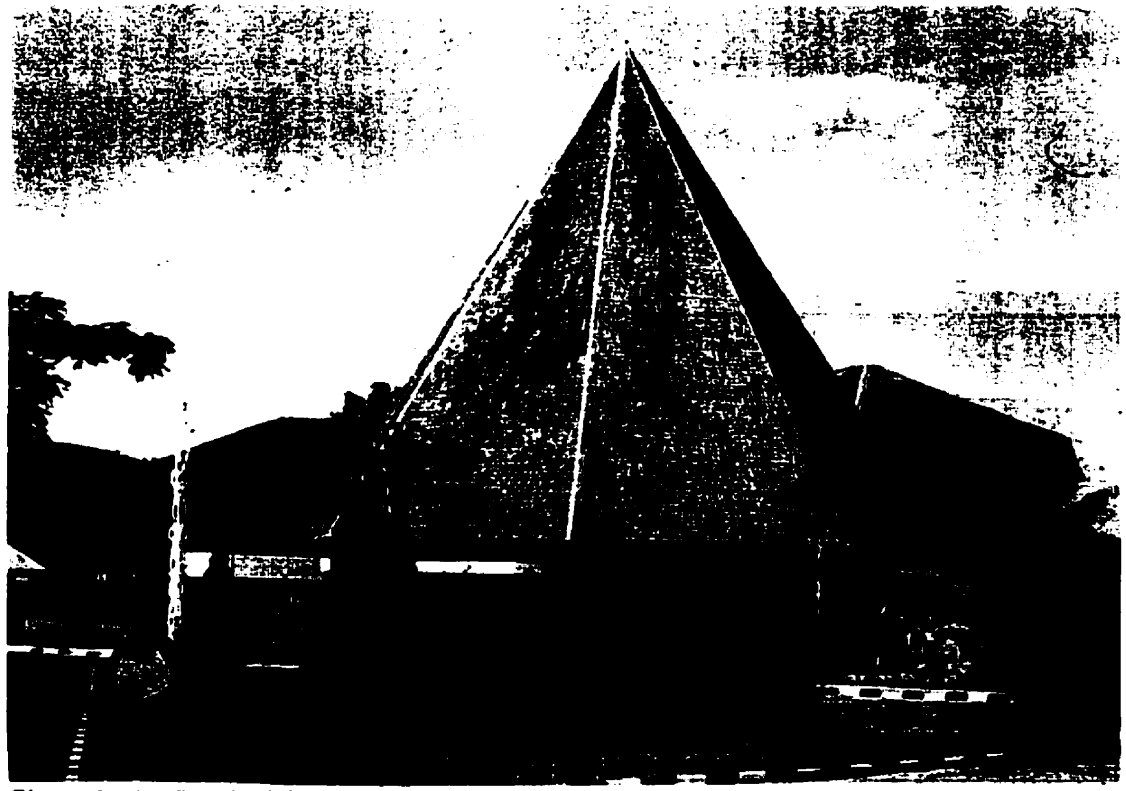


Figure 3-10. Provincial Museum of Irian Jaya (with map of Irian Jaya to the right of the entrance with no indication of Papua New Guinea to the east), Waena.

Figure 3-11. Provincial Museum of Irian Jaya with painted concrete replicas of a Sentani house post and an Asmat *bisj* pole, Waena

Figure 3-12. *Taman Budaya Irian Jaya* (Irian Jaya Culture Park), Waena, 1998.

Figure 3-13. Asmat artist carving for tourists at the Irian Jaya pavilion, *Taman Mini Indonesia Indah*, (Beautiful Indonesia in Miniature) theme park, Jakarta, 1995.

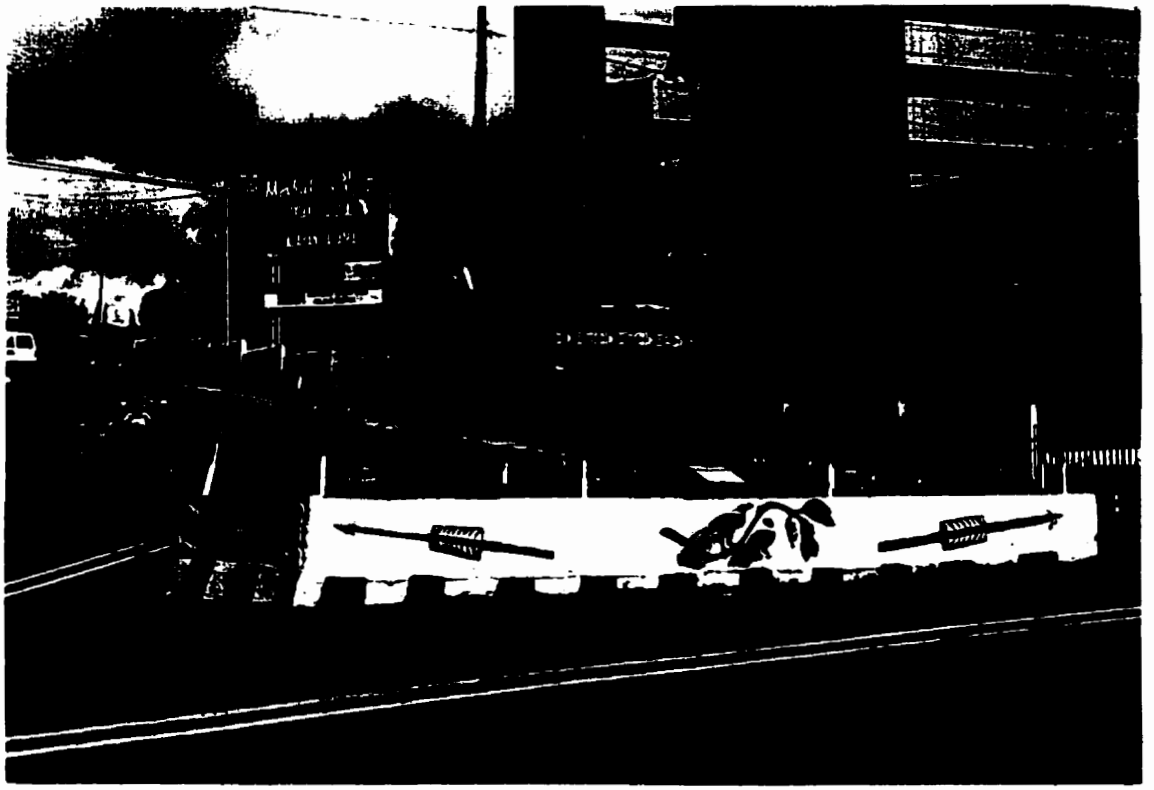


Figure 3-14. Painted concrete sculpture of a North Coast style canoe at a roundabout in downtown Jayapura, 1998.

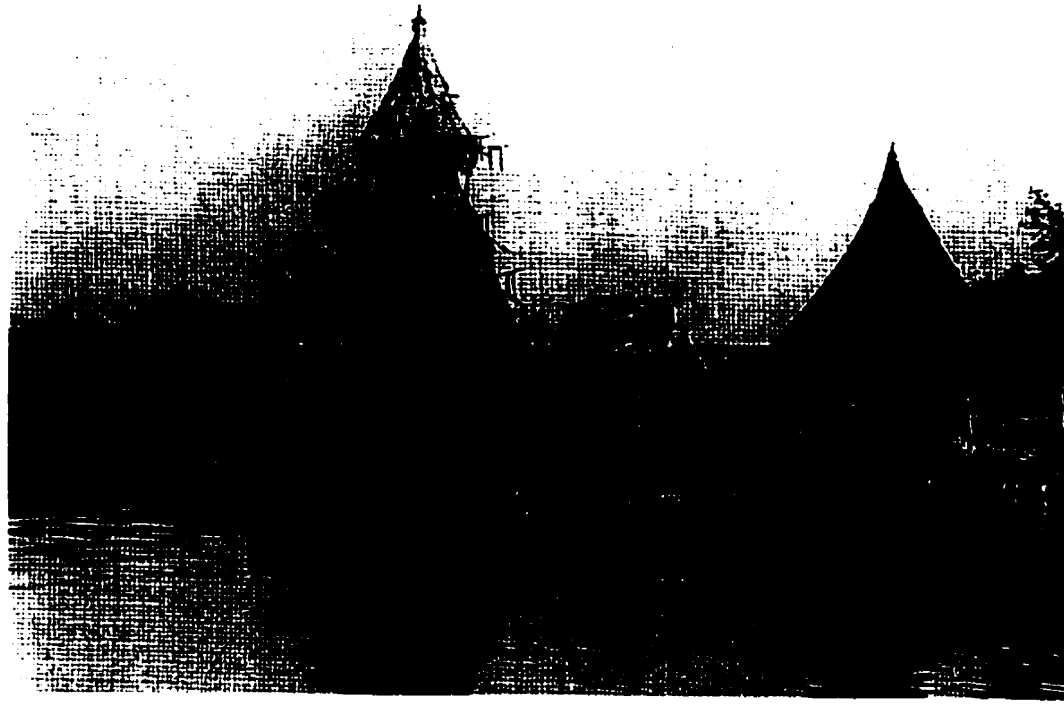


Figure 3-15. *Kariwari* (men's house) in Tobati, Yotefa Bay, Irian Jaya (photographed by H.F. Tillema, 1924, reproduced in Greub 1992:75).

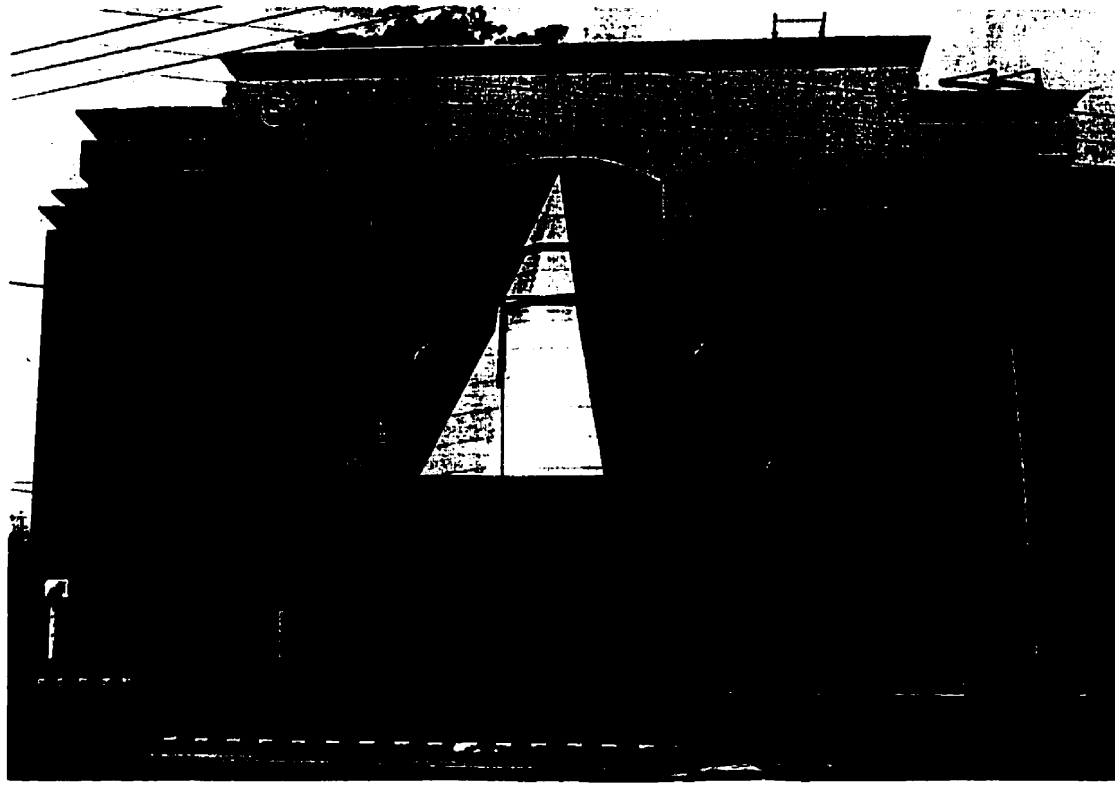


Figure 3-16. PELNI (Indonesian National Shipping Lines) office with a stylised Tobati *kariwari* men's house above the main entrance, Argapura (suburb of Jayapura), 1998.

Figure 3-17. Lampposts with stylised Asmat motifs in downtown Jayapura, 1998.

Figure 3-18. Server wearing uniform with batiked Asmat motifs in Jayapura, 1998.

Figure 3-19. Baso Basri's 'Irian Jaya Primitive Art Shop' in Kuta, Bali, with Asmat and Kamoro poles and Asmat shields out front, 1998.

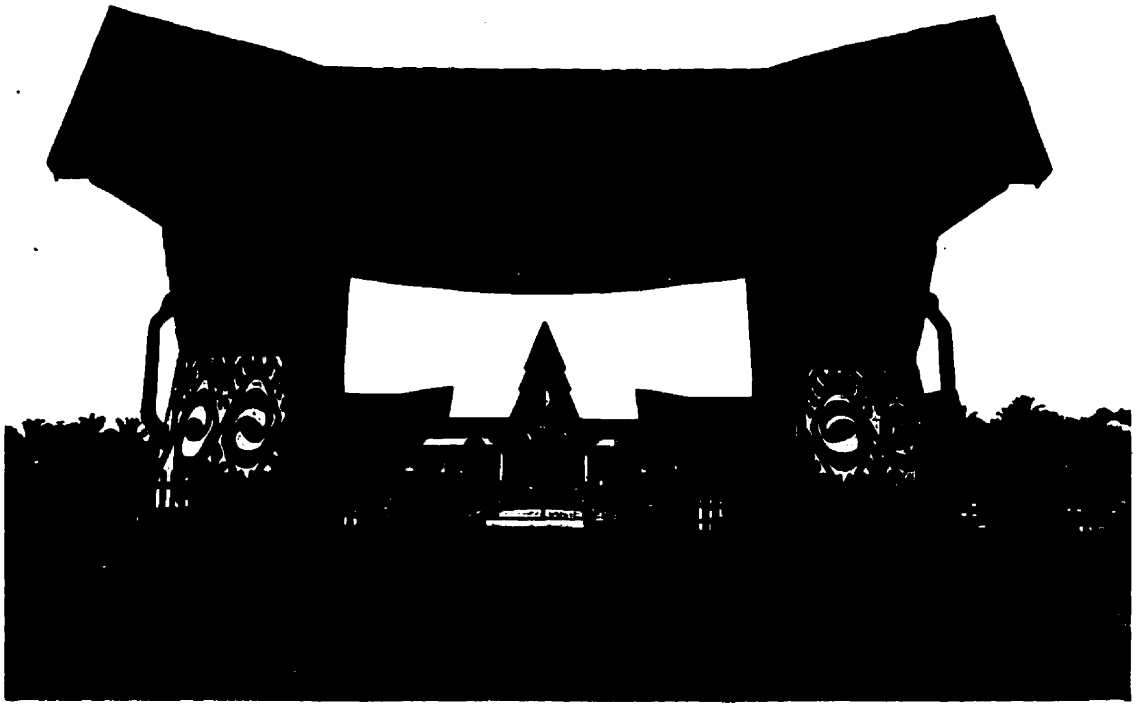


Figure 3-20. Gate to the Hotel Sentani Indah, in the shape of a split *tifa* (drum), with a traditional house shape above the main foyer of the hotel, Lake Sentani, 1998.

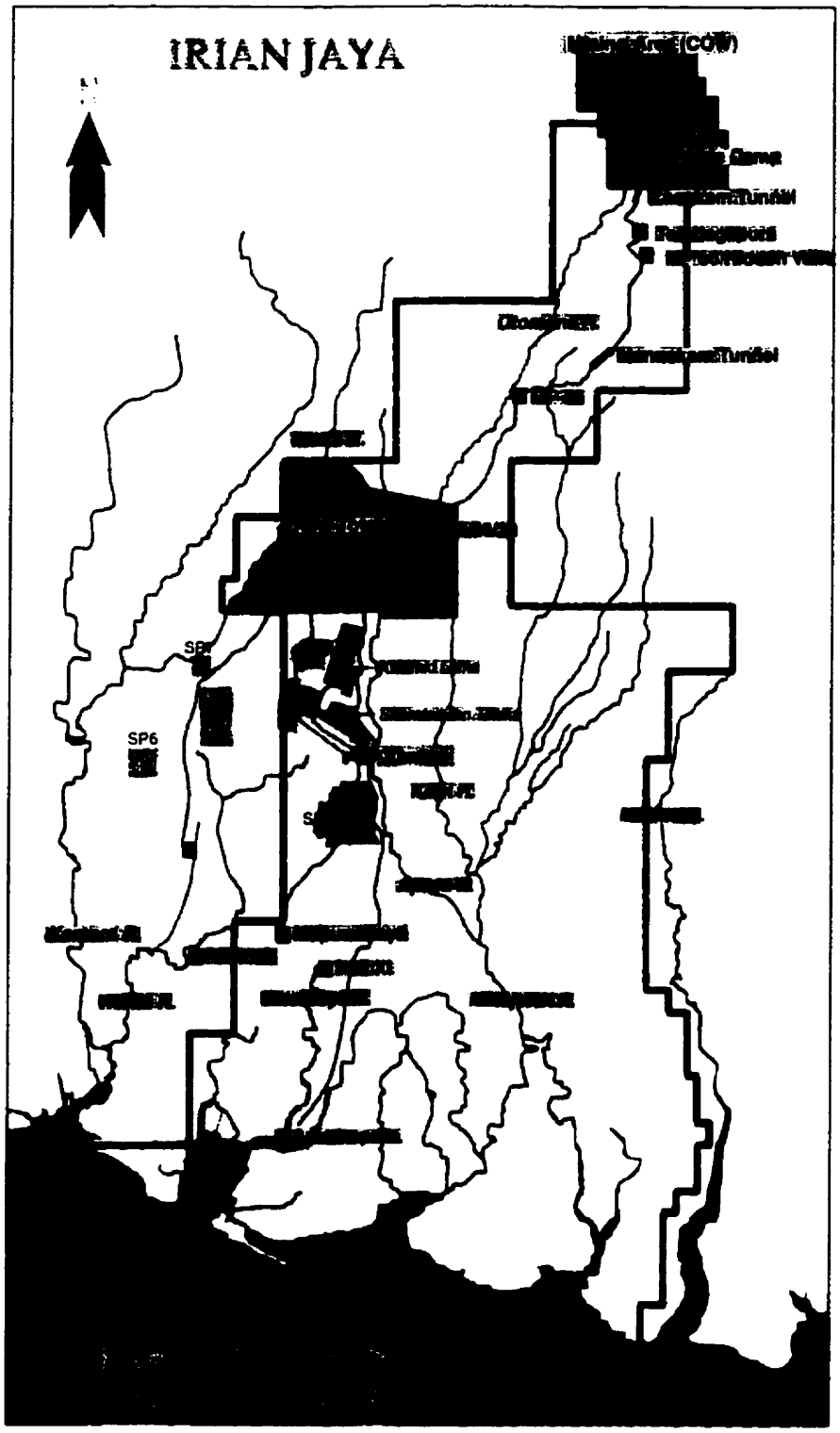
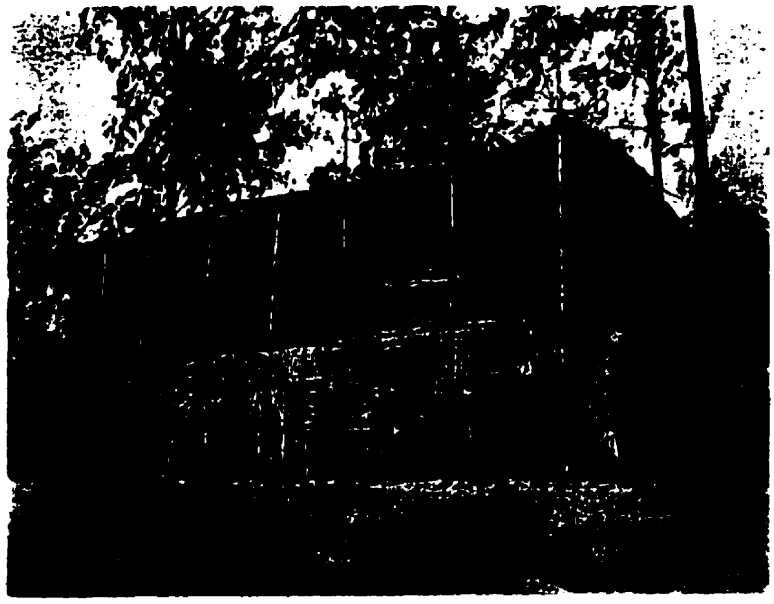


Figure 4-1. Map of Freeport Indonesia's area of operations in Southwest Irian Jaya (IRIP 1995:19).

Figure 4-2. The *Gedung Seni Kamoro* or Kamoro Arts Center, Timika, 1995.



A HOUSE FOR CEREMONIES, MIMIKA.

Figure 4-3. Kamoro ceremonial house for the nose-piercing ceremony, near the mouth of the Mimika River (Wollaston 1912:48).

Figure 4-4. Carving *wemawe* (figural sculptures that in their original context represented ancestral figures), in the *Gedung Seni Kamoro* work yard, Timika, 1995.

Figure 4-5. Billiards Room with Asmat shields and spears, Sheraton Inn, Timika, 1995.

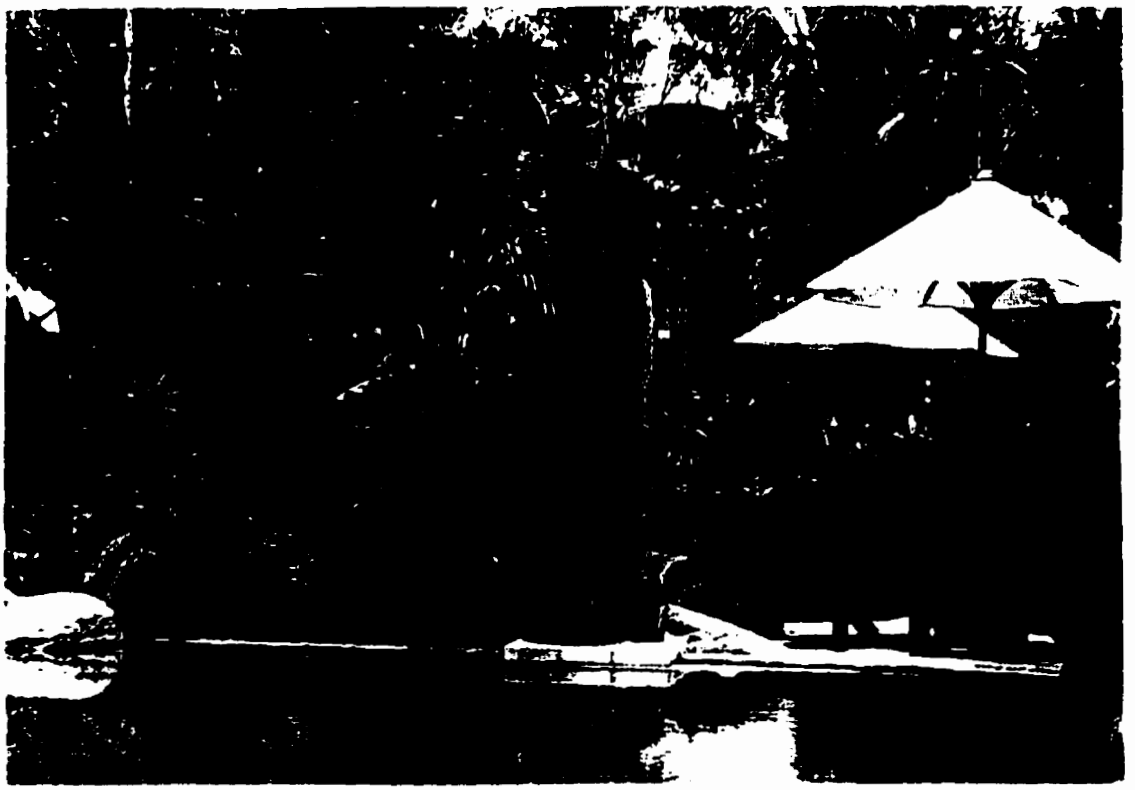


Figure 4-6. Gedung Seni Kamoro, carving of a *wemawe* holding a drum by the pool, Sheraton Inn, Timika, 1995.

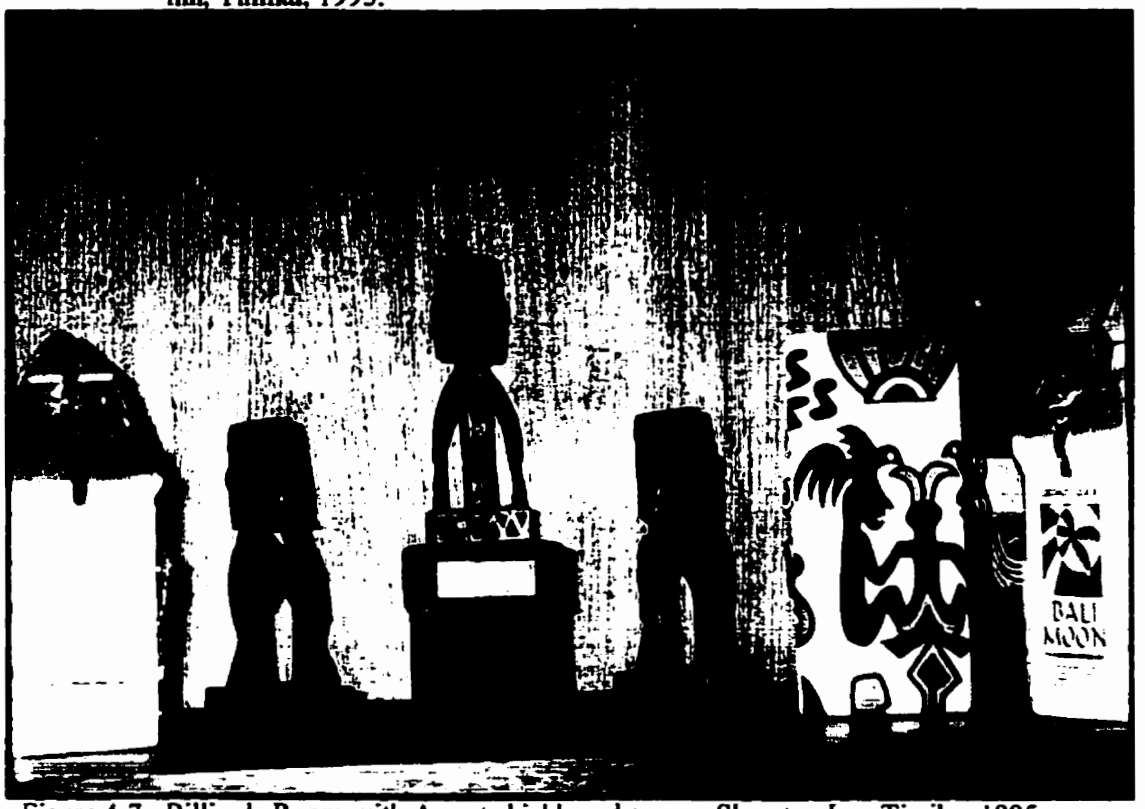


Figure 4-7. Billiards Room with Asmat shields and spears, Sheraton Inn, Timika, 1995.

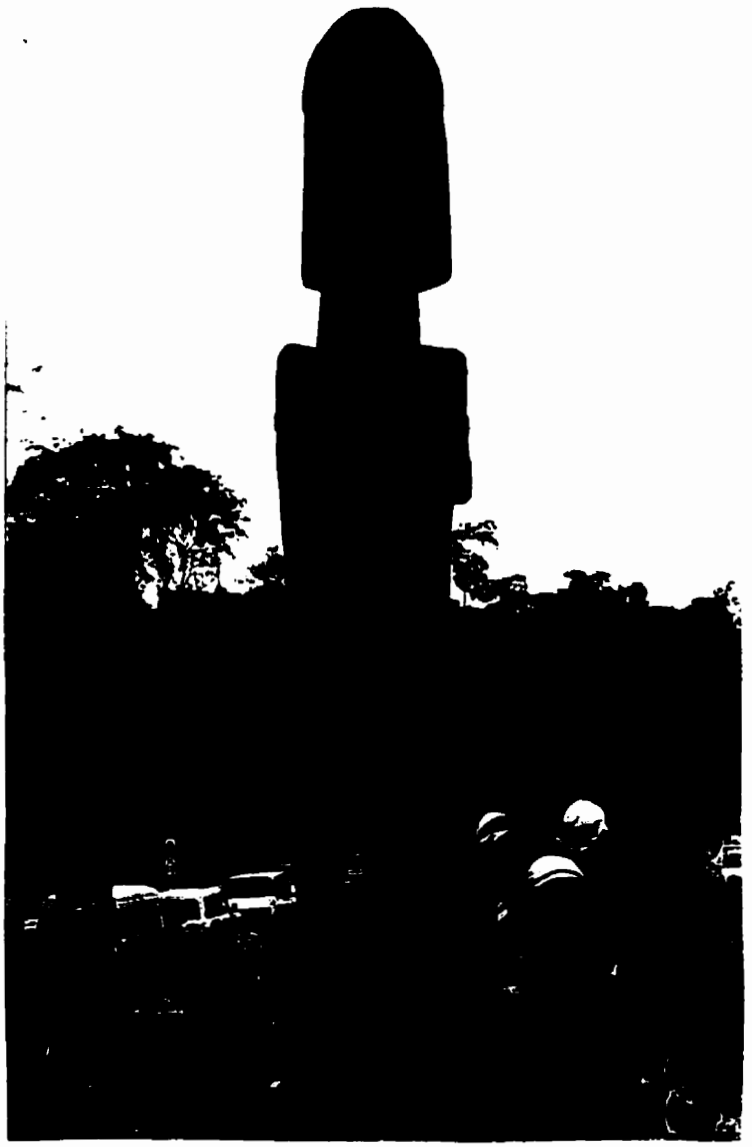


Figure 4-8. Kamoro pole raising ceremony at entrance roundabout, New Town (a day before it was renamed Kuala Kencana), December 4, 1996. The poles were made by *Gedung Seni Kamoro* carvers.

Figure 4-9. Nyoman Nuarta Studio, *Shield*, centerpiece of the *alun-alun* (town square) of Kuala Kencana, 1995, cast bronze on fountain base, ca. 10m x 4m.

Figure 4-10. Making lamp shades from copper sheeting for the *Rimba Irian* Golf Club at the *Gedung Seni Kamoro*, 1995.

Figure 4-11. *Gedung Seni Kamoro*, copper punched lamp in the *Rimba Irian* restaurant, 1998.

Figure 4-12. Bena with his carving of an *Asmat Golfer*, at his studio near Mapurujaya, April, 1998.

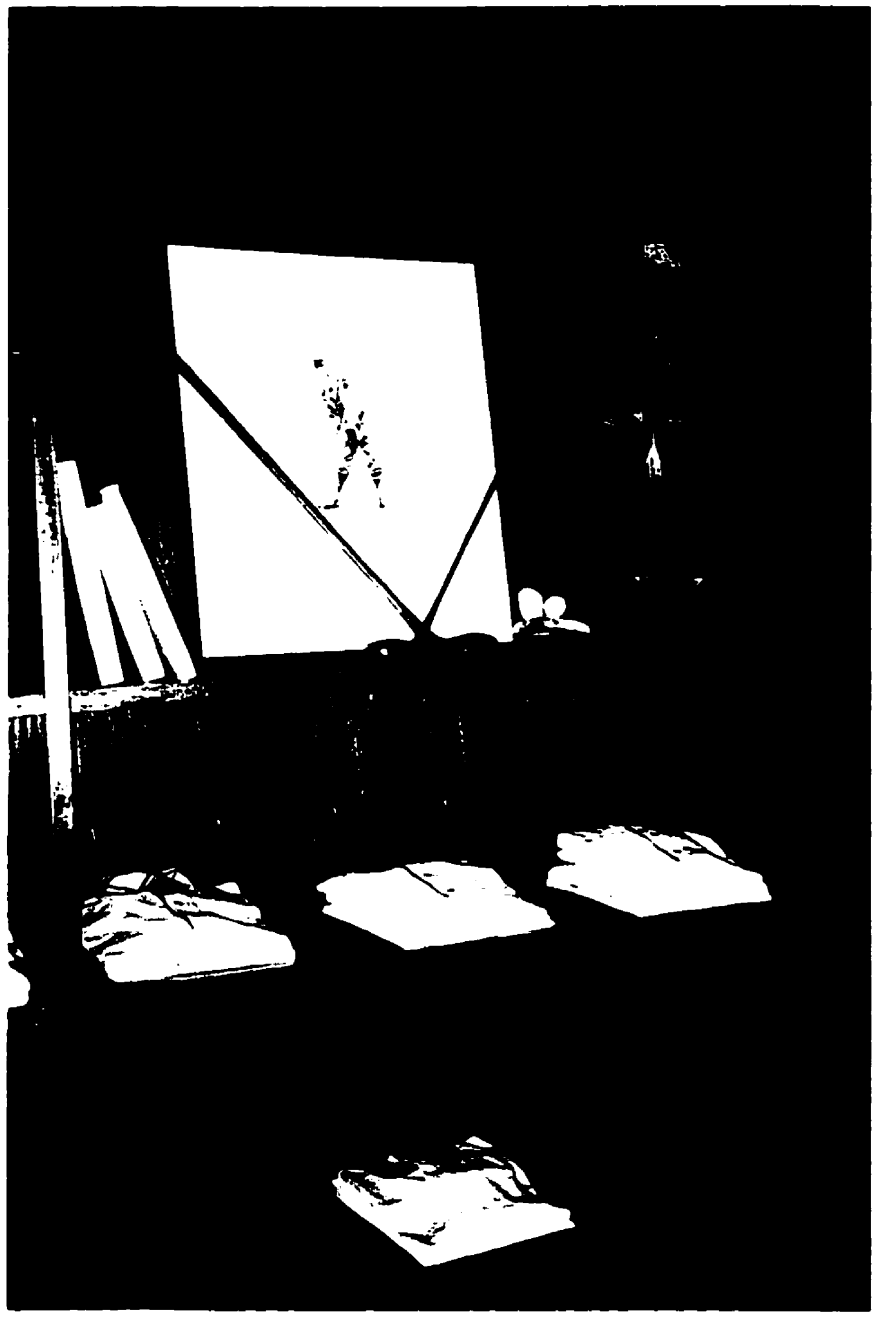


Figure 4-13. Bena, *Asmat Golfer* in the *Rimba Irian* Golf Club Pro Shop, Kuala Kencana, 1998.

Figure 4-14. Kamoro-Sempan Art and Cultural Festival venue, Hiripau village, April 27, 1998.

Figure 4-15. Art auction, Kamoro-Sempan Art and Cultural Festival, Hiripau village, April 26, 1998.

Figure 4-16. Kamoro artists selling at the periphery of the auction. Kamoro-Sempan Art and Cultural Festival. Hiripau village. April 26. 1998.

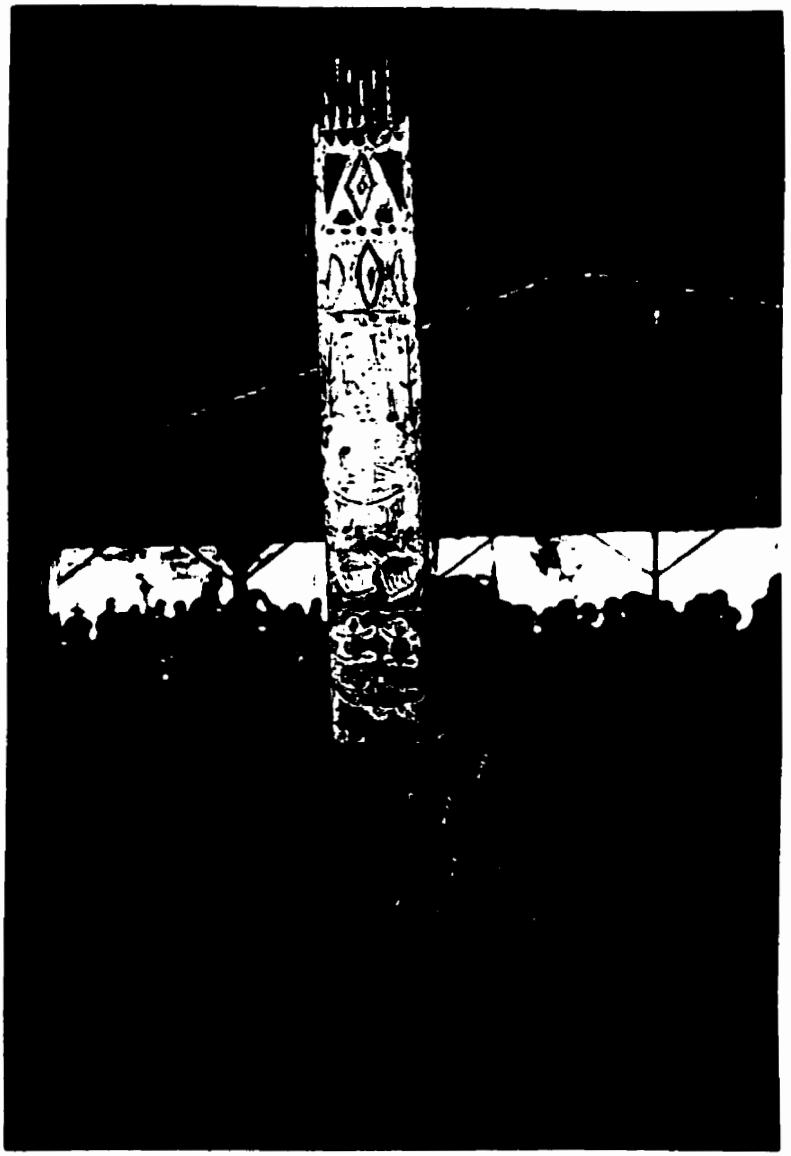


Figure 4-17. Kamoro carver with *yamate* (panel / shield) carving. art auction, Kamoro-Sempan Art and Cultural Festival, Hiripau village, April 26, 1998.

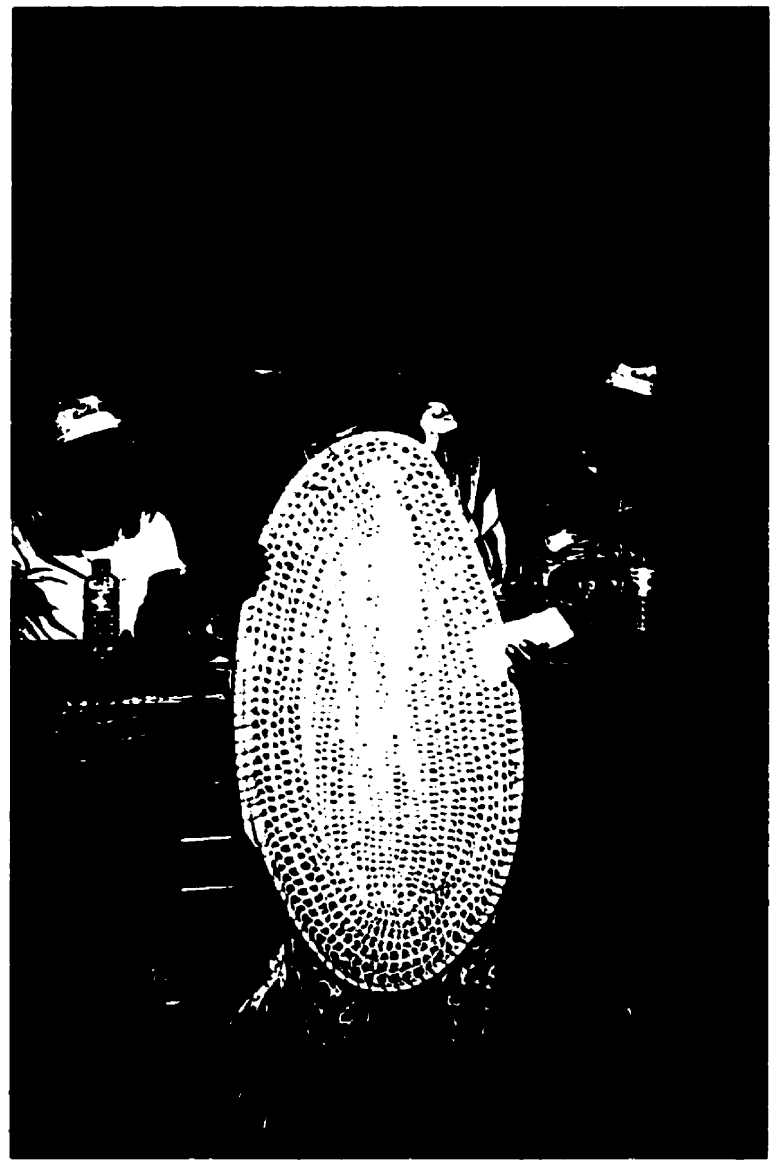


Figure 4-18. Kamoro woman displaying her woven fishing net during the art auction, Kamoro-Sempan Art and Cultural Festival, Hiripau village, April 26, 1998.

Figure 4-19. Kamoro woman displaying carved sago bowl during the art auction, Kamoro-Sempan Art and Cultural Festival, Hiripau village, April 26. 1998.

Figure 4-20. Kamoro dancer (from Pongoro village), wearing painted bark cloth costume, dance competition. Kamoro-Sempan Art and Cultural Festival, Hiripau village, April 26, 1998.

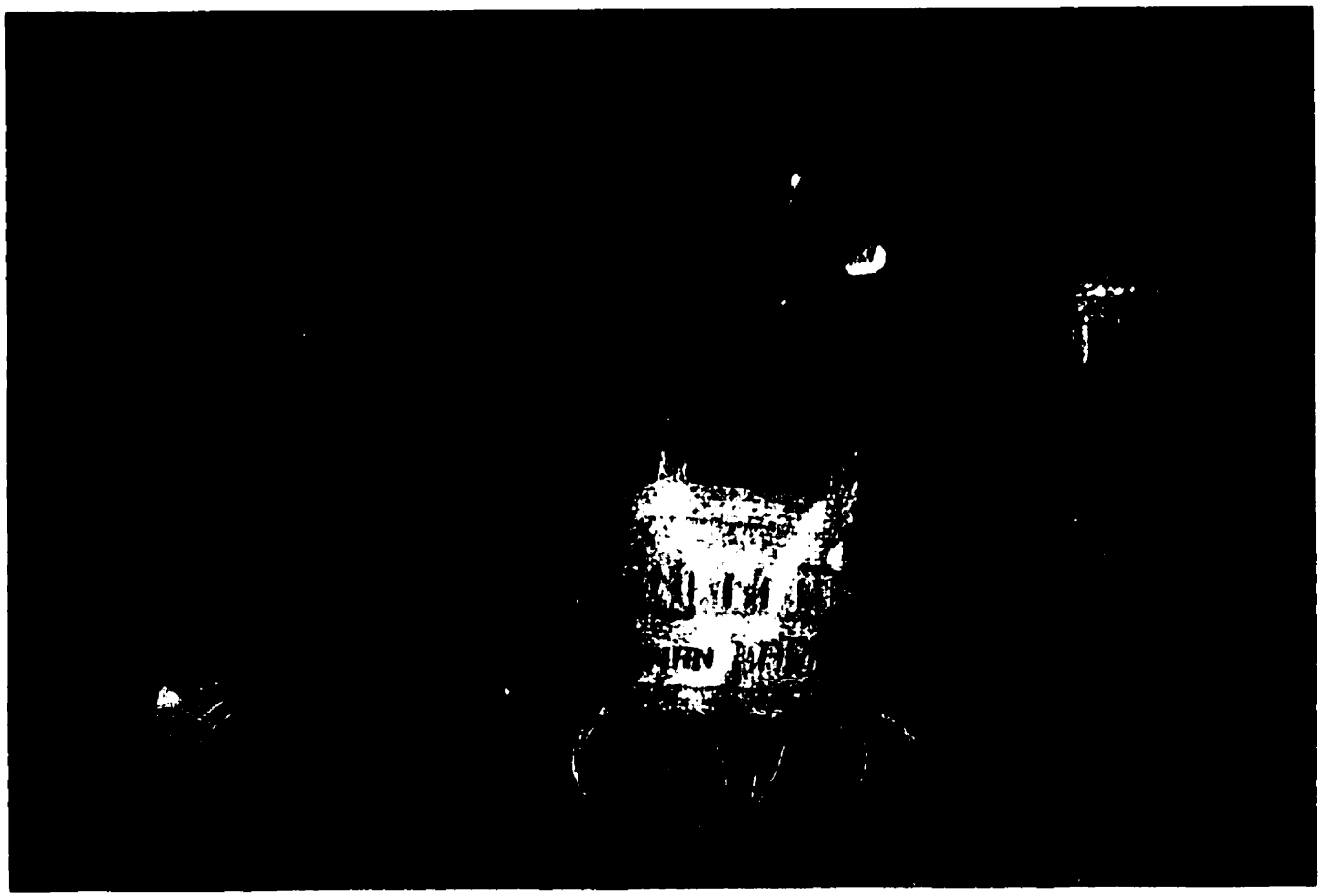


Figure 4-21. Kamoro dancer wearing a plaited leaf vest with the words "*pakaian adat*", Indonesian for "traditional costume" painted on the back, dance competition, Kamoro-Sempan Art and Cultural Festival, Hiripau village, April 26, 1998.

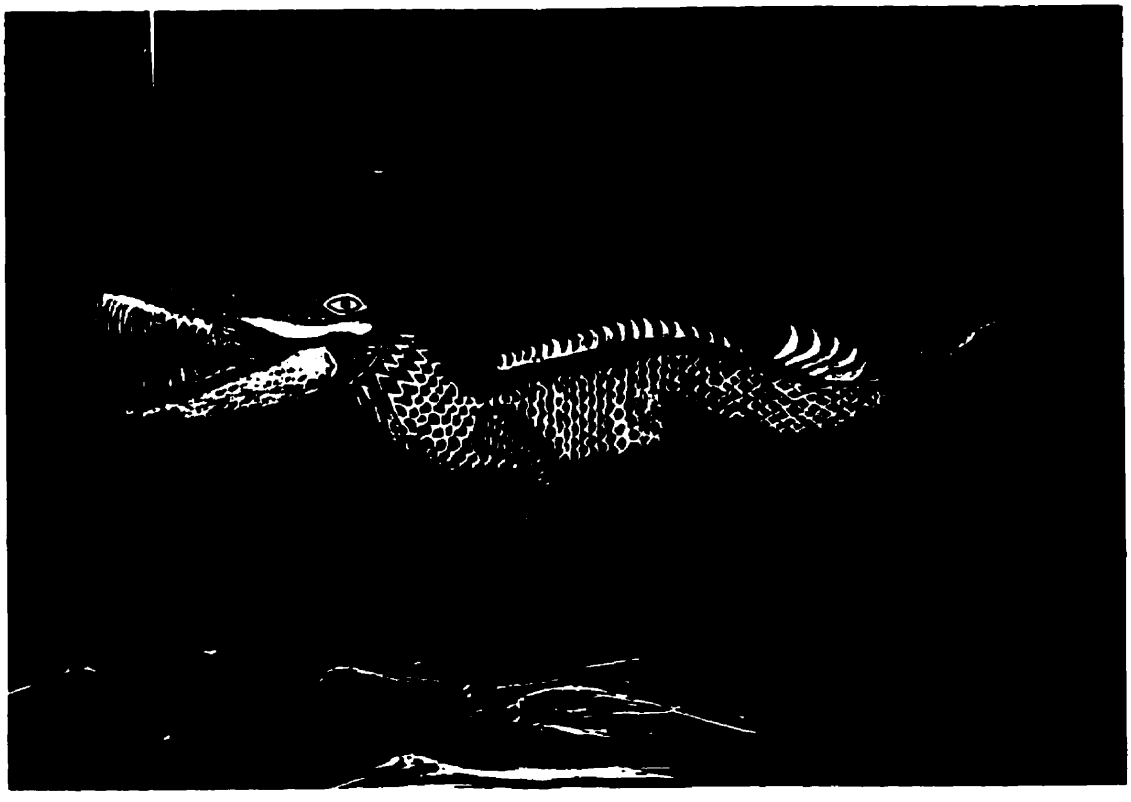


Figure 4-22. Komodo dragon carving used as a prop by a Kamoro dance group from Pongoro village, dance competition, Kamoro-Sempan Art and Cultural Festival, Hiripau village, April 26, 1998.

Figure 4-23. Lobby of *Rimba Irian* Golf Club with Kamoro *wemawe* (carved ancestral figures) produced at the *Gedung Seni Kamoro* used as ashtrays. *Rimba Irian* is in the Freeport Indonesia company town of Kuala Kencana.

Figure 5-1. Photograph of women wearing barkcloth skirts with prepared barkcloth drying in the background, Asei Island, Lake Sentani, 1903 (from Nova Guinea Expedition 1903 in van der Sande 1907: Figure 147).

Figure 5-2. Ornamented barkcloth hanging next to a grave in the village of Siboiboi, Lake Sentani, 1926 (photographed by Paul Wirz, reproduced in Greub 1992:130).

Figure 5-3. Agus Ongge (of Asei island Lake Sentani), *ohote* (bowl), ca. 40 x 60cm, 1996.

Figure 5-4. Traditional Sentani men's house, Asei Island, 1903 (van der Sande 1907: Figure 157).

Figure 5-5. Decorated house posts of *ondoforo* house (tribal chief) of Asei Island, 1926 (photographed by Paul Wirz, reproduced in Greub 1992:89).

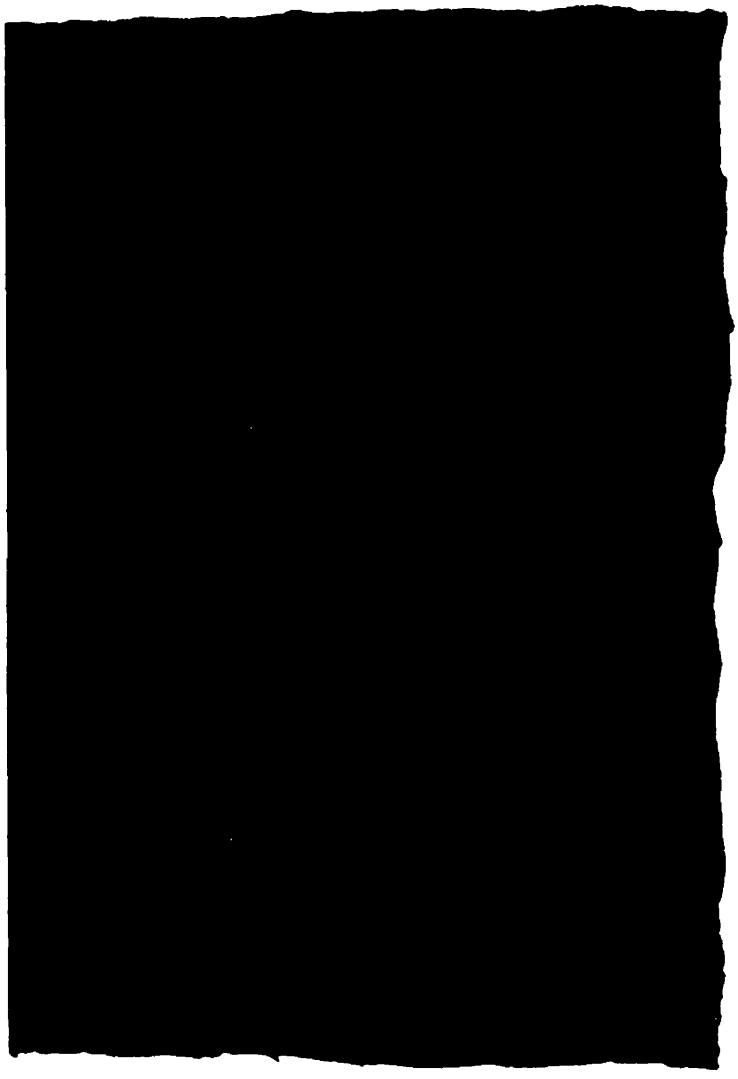


Figure 5-6. Lake Sentani painted barkcloth, collected by N. Halie before 1931, 64 x 37cm, Tropenmuseum, Amsterdam 666-320 (Greub 1992:133).

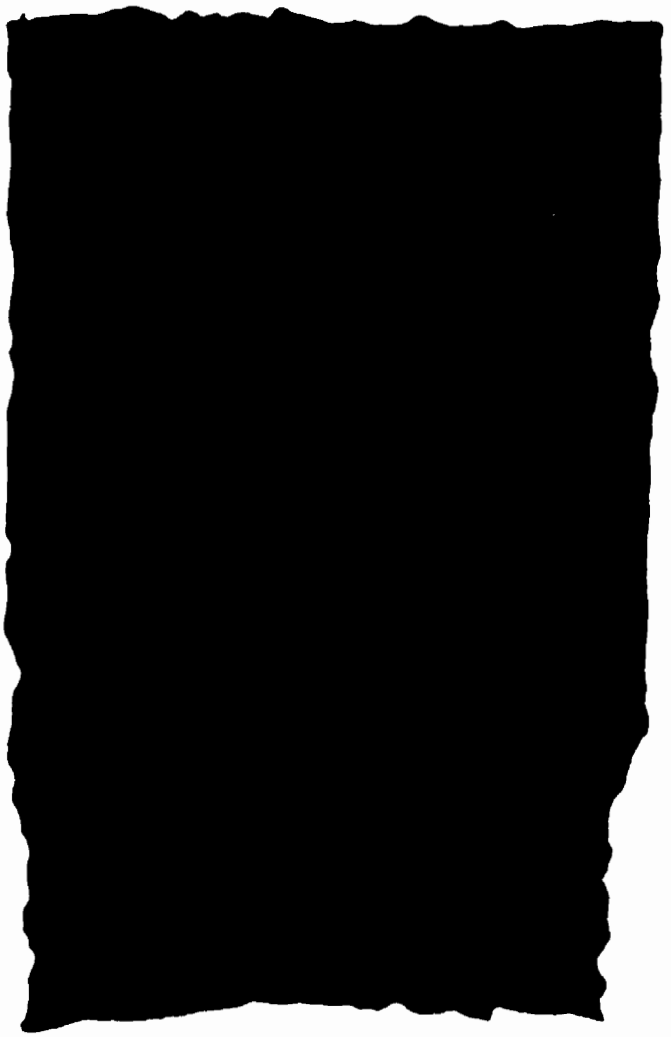


Figure 5-7. Lake Sentani painted barkcloth, 1933, 132 x 81cm, Tropenmuseum, Amsterdam 853-1. (Greub 1992:136).

Figure 5-8. Yotefa Bay painted barkcloth, collected before 1938; 150 x 95cm, Volkenkundig Museum "Geradus van der Leeuw," Groningen, the Netherlands (Greub 1992:131).

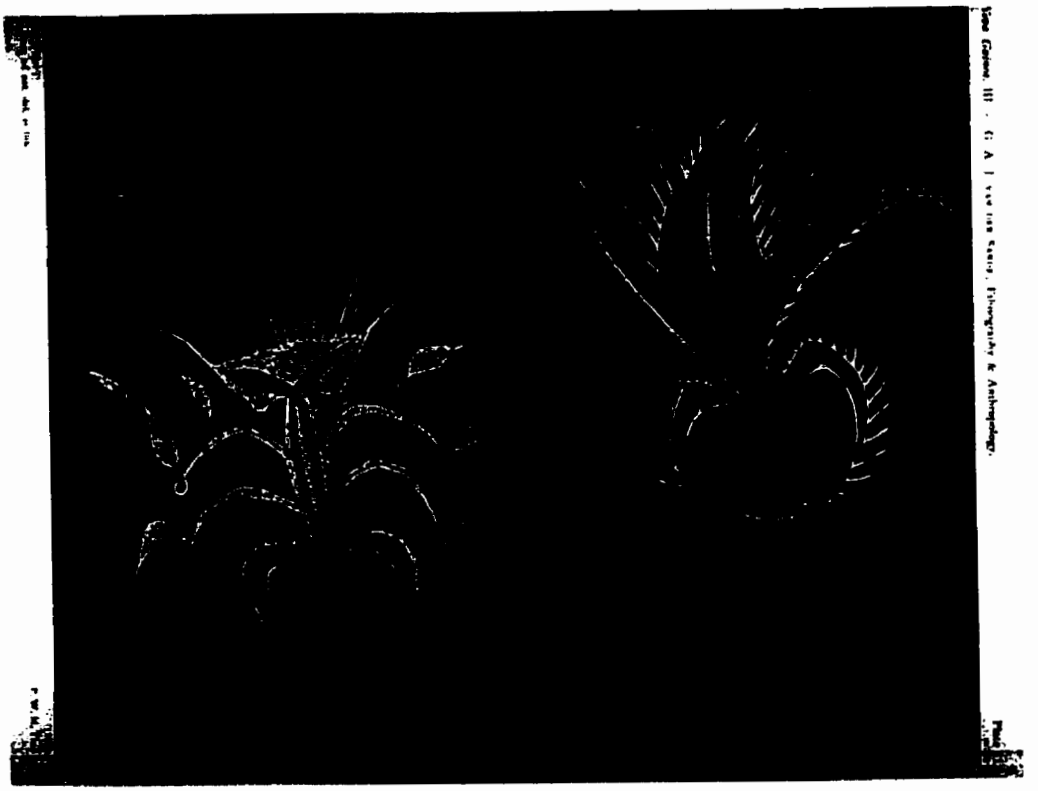


Figure 5-9. Sea spirit motifs from two pots collected in the Yotefa Bay area by van der Sande in 1903 (van der Sande 1907:Plate II).

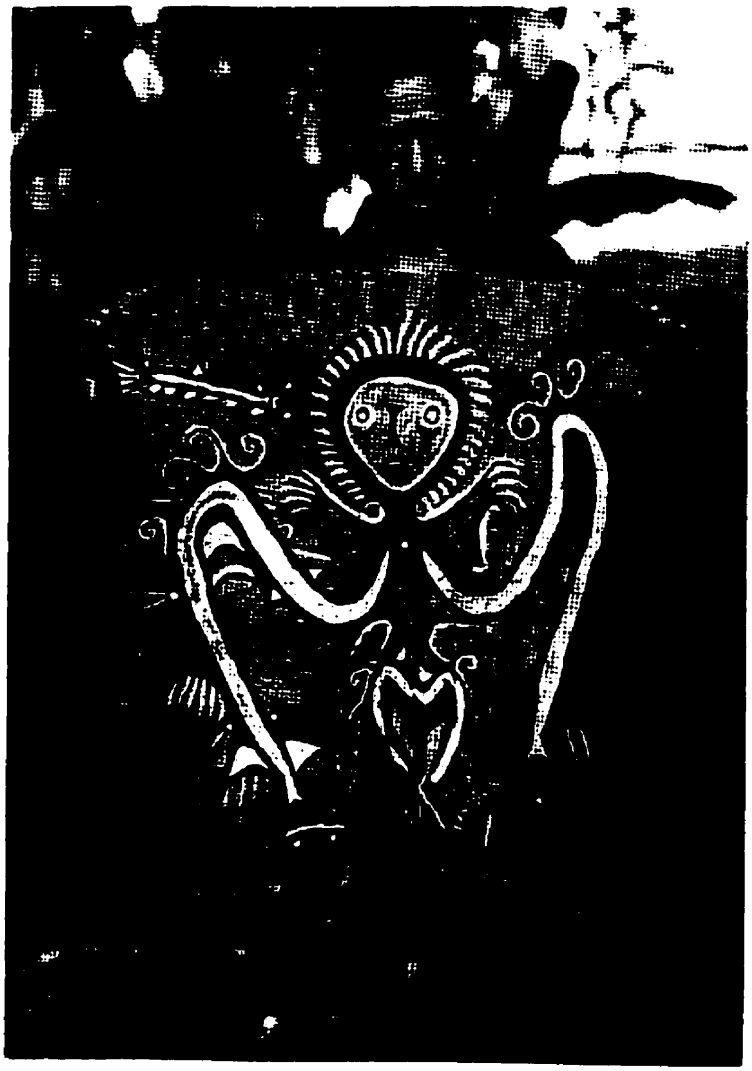


Figure 5-10. Nyaro Hanuebi (of Nafri village, Yotefa Bay), painted barkcloth, 1971, collection Jac. Hoogerbrugge (Greub 1992:139).

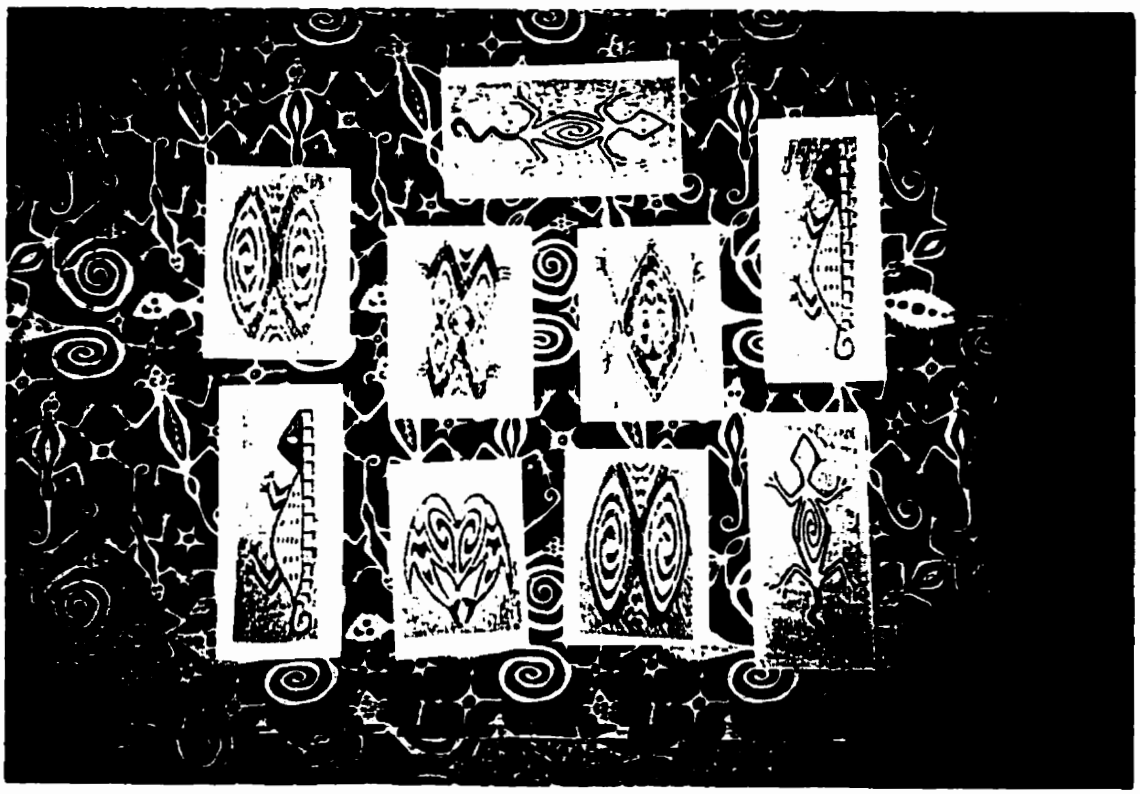


Figure 5-11. Stenciled barkcloth cards sold at the P3W *Pusat Pengembangan dan Pembinaan Wanita* (the Centre for Women's Development) Waena, 1998.

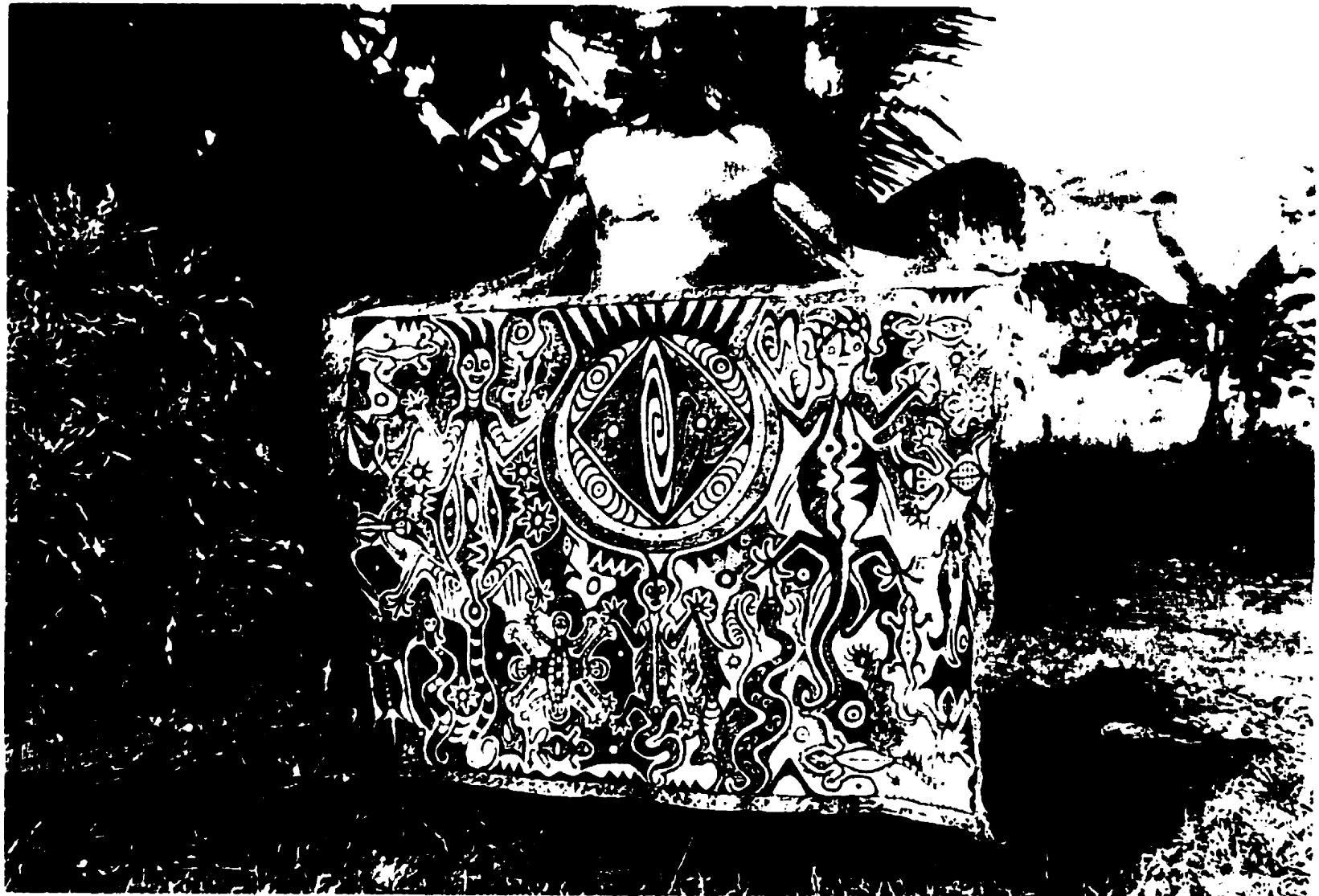


Figure 5-12. Seru Ongge (of Asei, Lake Sentani), painted barkcloth, ca. 150 x 100cm, 1992. (Photograph: Nico Tanto).

Figure 5-13. Agus Ongge, painted barkcloth, ca. 100 x 60cm, 1997.

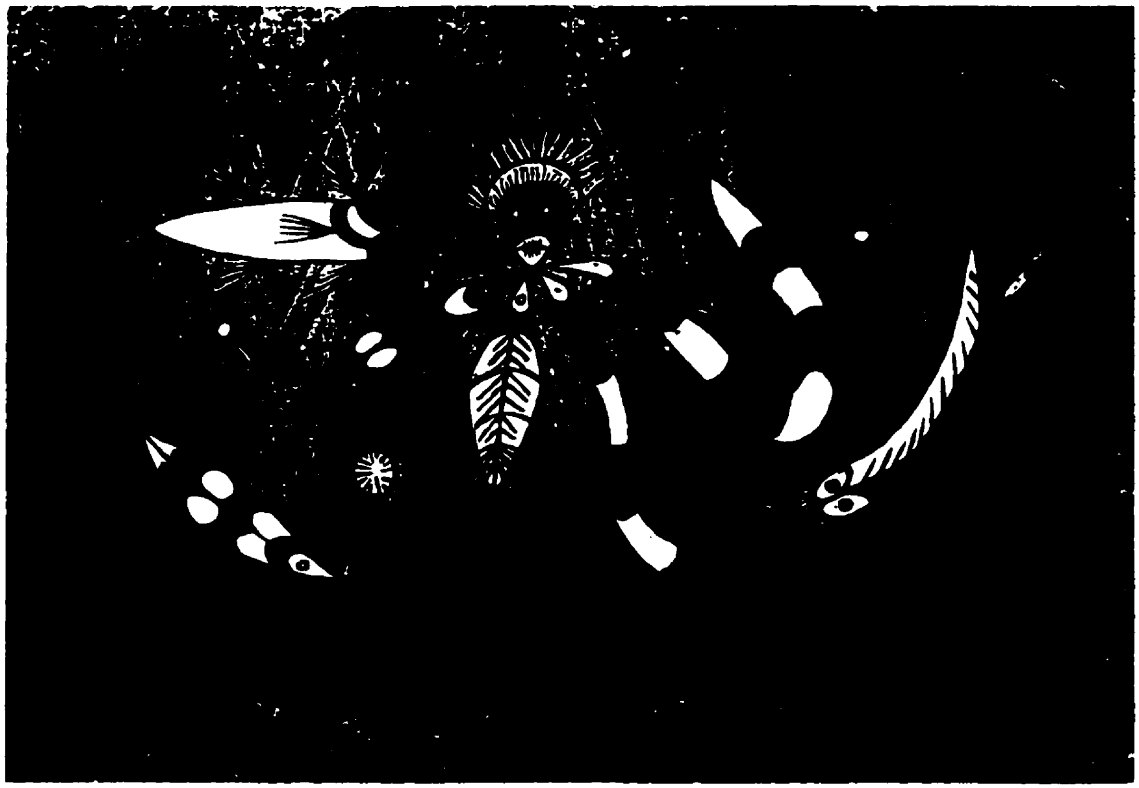


Figure 5-14. Agus Ongge, painted barkcloth, ca. 120 x 60cm, 1997.

Figure 5-15. Agus Ongge, painted barkcloth, ca. 110 x 70cm, 1997.

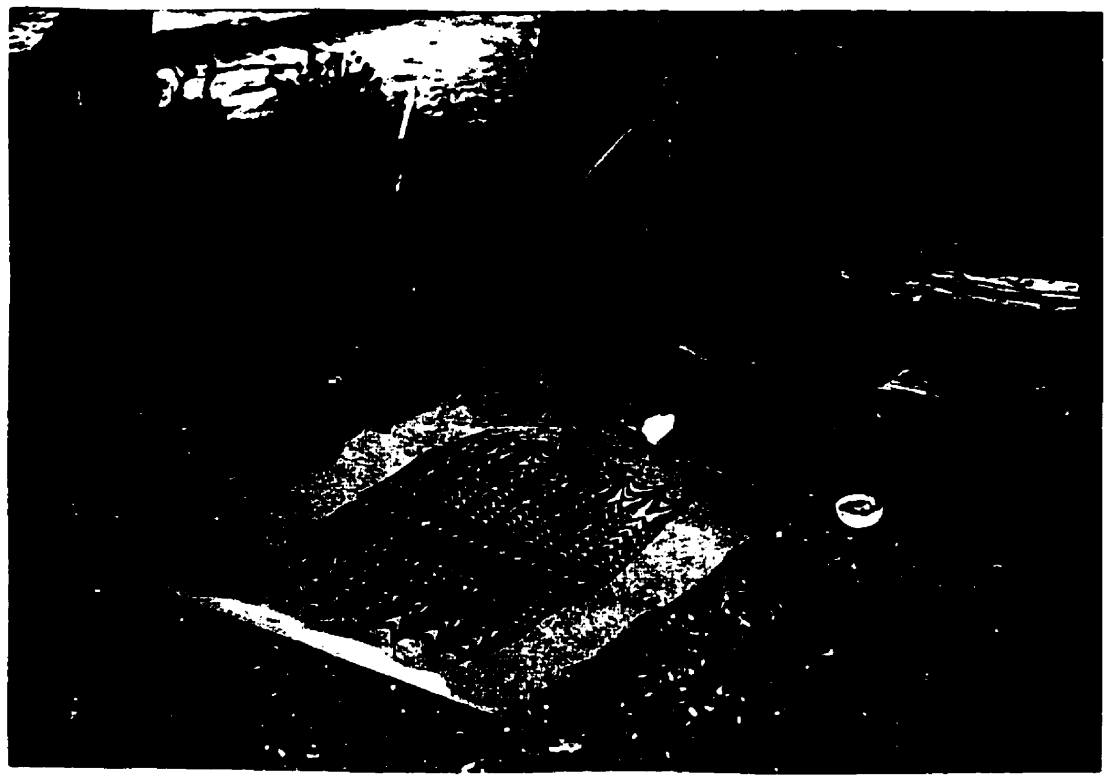


Figure 5-16. Artist unknown, Asei Island, Lake Sentani, stenciled barkcloth with bird of paradise, *tifa* (drum) motif, gecko and *fouw* motifs, commercial paints used, ca. 60 x 45cm, 1997.

Figure 5-17. Agus Ongge painting barkcloth on Asei Island, 1998.

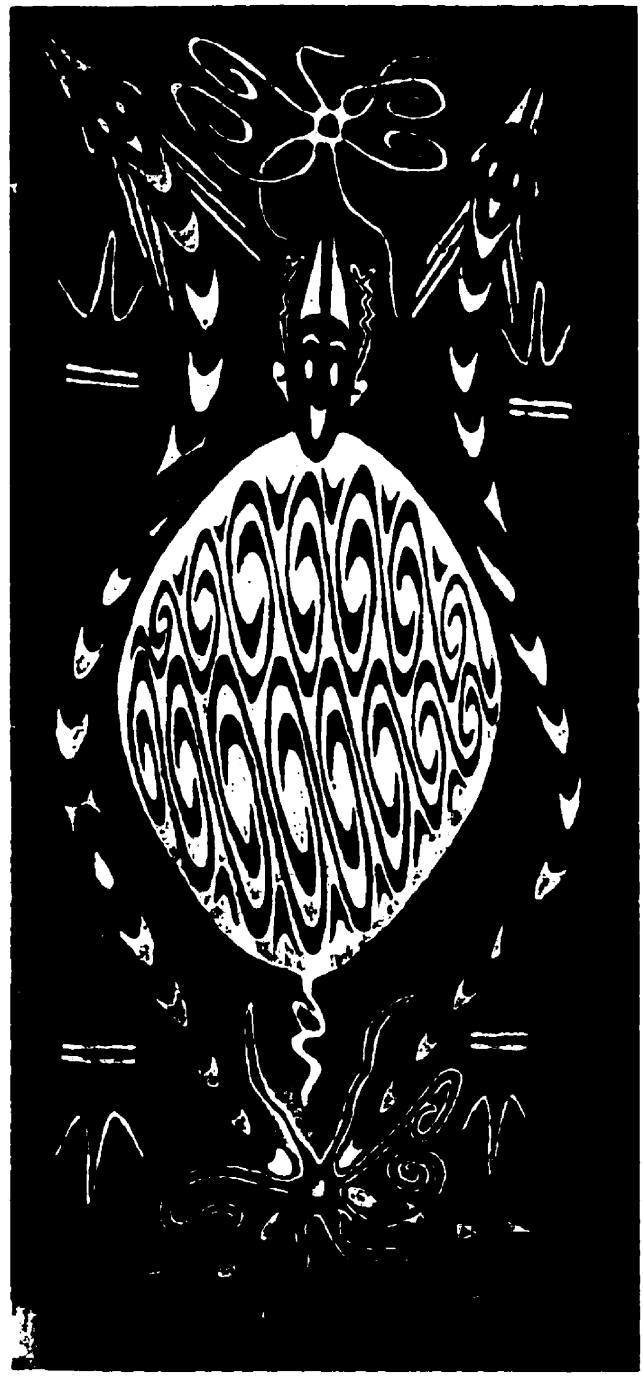


Figure 5-18. Artist unknown, Asei Island, Lake Sentani, painted barkcloth with *ohote* (bowl) motif, a *kreasi baru* (new creation, not an original Sentani design), ca. 70 x 35cm, 1997.

Figure 5-19. Artist unknown, Hamadi market, Yali (highlands tribe) man and woman, acrylic on barkcloth, ca. 160 x 100cm, 1996.

Figure 5-20. Painted barkcloth laid out on the ground for sale to tourists, Asei Island, 1998.

Figure 5-21. Dancers in costume preparing for the arrival of the Mermosz (cruiseboat) tourists, Asei Island, 1997.

Figure 5-22. Artist unknown, Hamadi market, acrylic on barkcloth, image is of an Asmat man carving a *bisj* pole, ca. 100 x 70cm, displayed at the Barkcloth Exhibition and Auction, Jayapura, 1998.

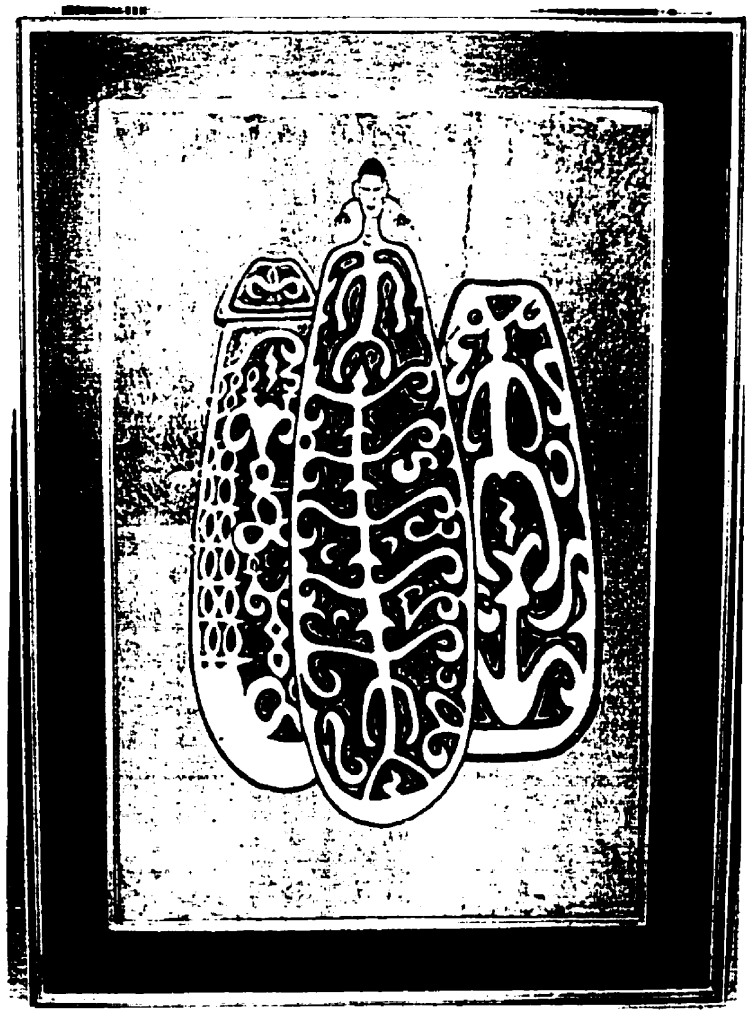


Figure 5-23. Artist unknown, Hamadi market, acrylic on barkcloth, image is of Asmat shields, ca. 150 x 90cm, displayed at the Barkcloth Exhibition and Auction, Jayapura, 1998.

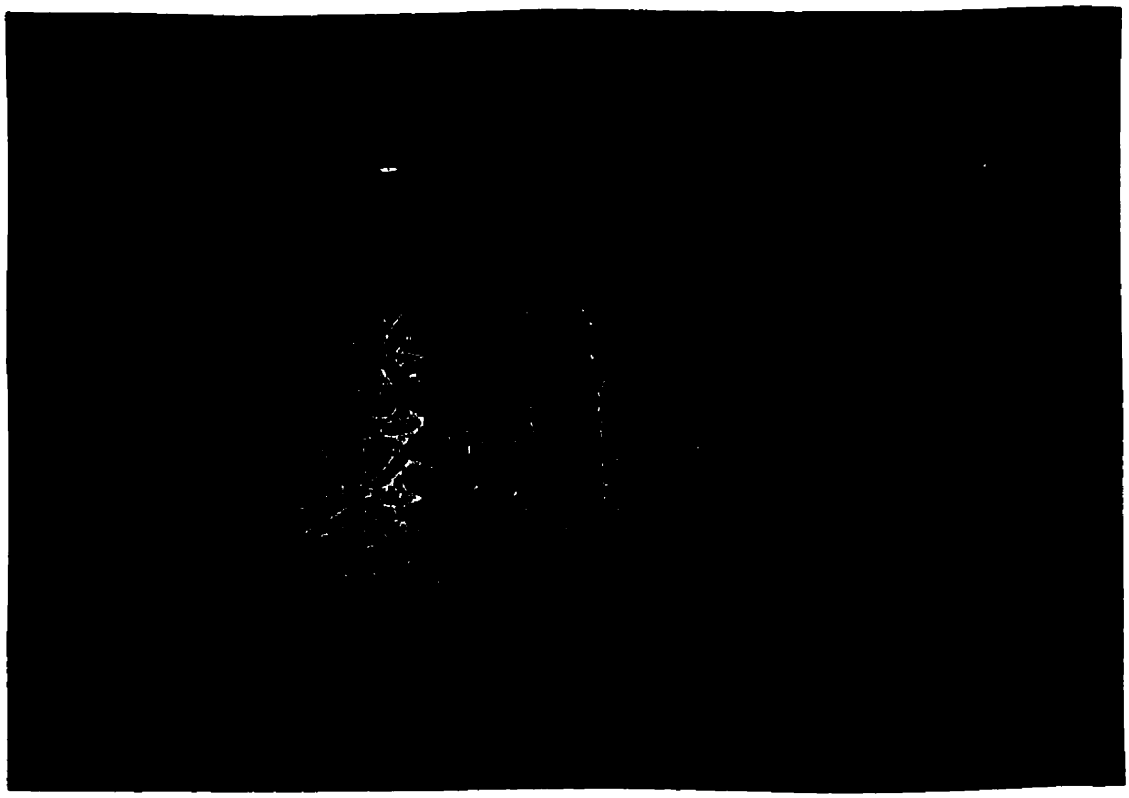


Figure 5-24. Asmat shields in Agats storehouse, Agats, 1995.

Figure 5-25. Artist unknown, Asei Island, Lake Sentani, painted barkcloth, ca. 100 x 70cm, displayed at the Barkcloth Exhibition and Auction, Jayapura, 1998.

Figure 5-26. Rizal, three acrylic on barkcloth portraits auctioned off at the Barkcloth Exhibition and Auction, Jayapura, 1998. The portraits represent, from left to right: the Governor of Irian Jaya and his wife – Fredi and Annie Numberi; the Pangdam VIII Trikora (*Panglima daerah militer* – the Territorial military commander of Irian Jaya) – General Amir Sembiring and his wife, and an anonymous Dani man referred to as the *Kepala Suku Besar*, or tribal leader.

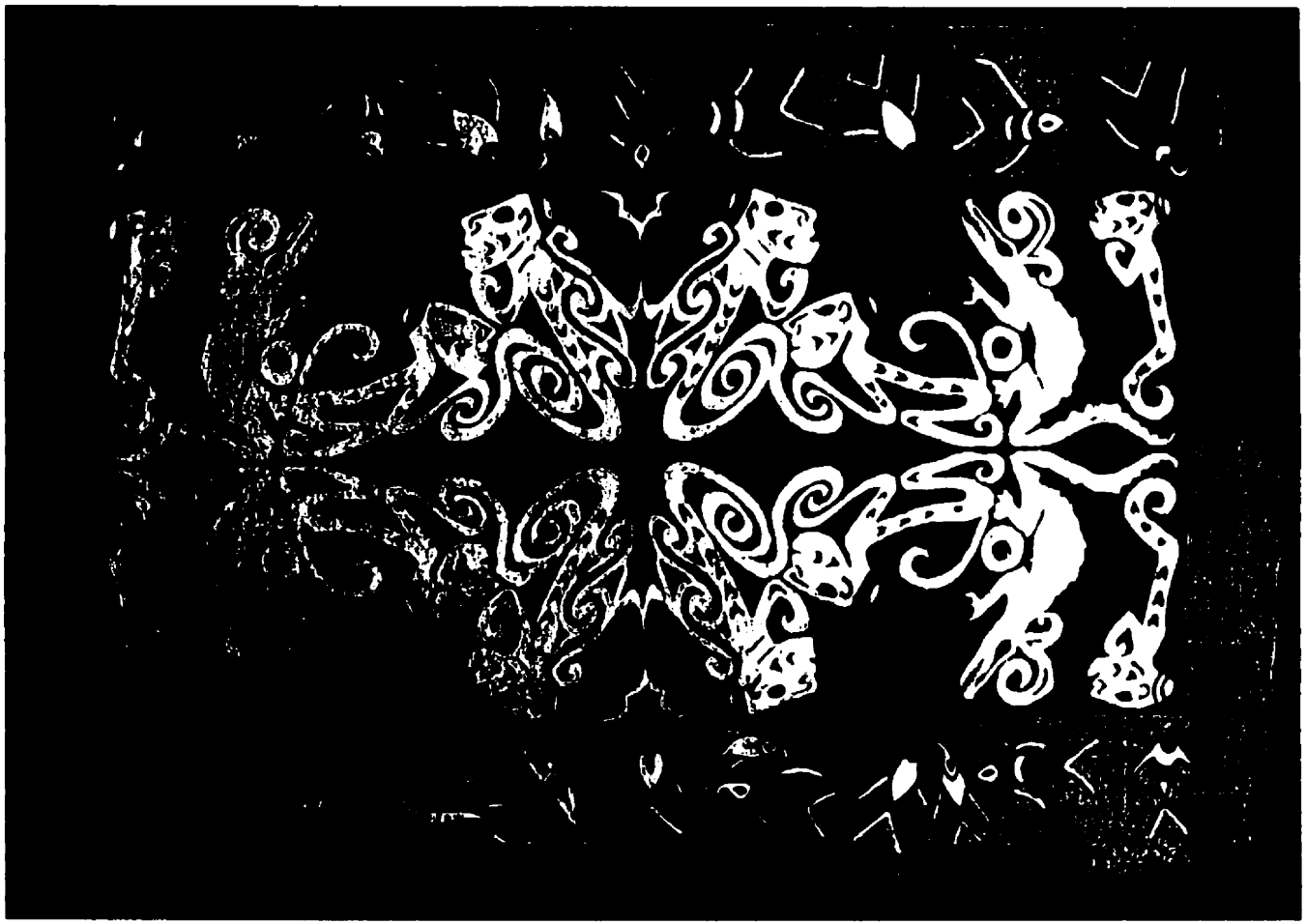


Figure 5-27. Stenciled barkcloth with Asmat and Sentani motifs, Asei Island, 1998, ca. 53 x 81cm (Stencil design by Agus Ongge and John Ohee, painting attributed to Syors Ibo).

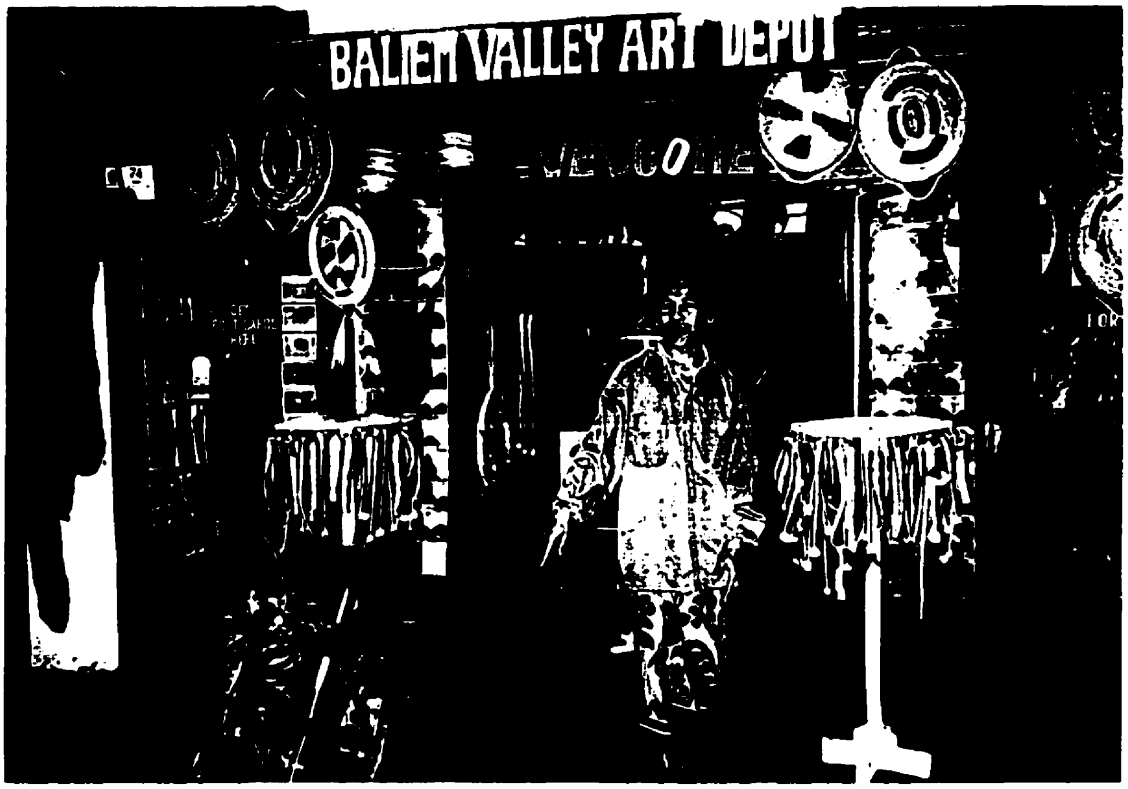


Figure 6-1. Baliem Valley Art Depot, Wamena.

Figure 6-2. Meeting with Nico Haluk (in white shirt), and souvenir art peddlers, Syahrial Jaya Hotel, Wamena, 1995.

Figure 6-3. Nico Haluk's first arrow, 150 cm long, when photographed in the collection of the Bupati of Wamena. J.B.Wenas.

Figure 6-4. Nico Haluk, carving of a *kayo* (Dani lookout tower), 90 cm high, when photographed in the collection of the Bupati of Wamena, J.B.Wenas, 1997.

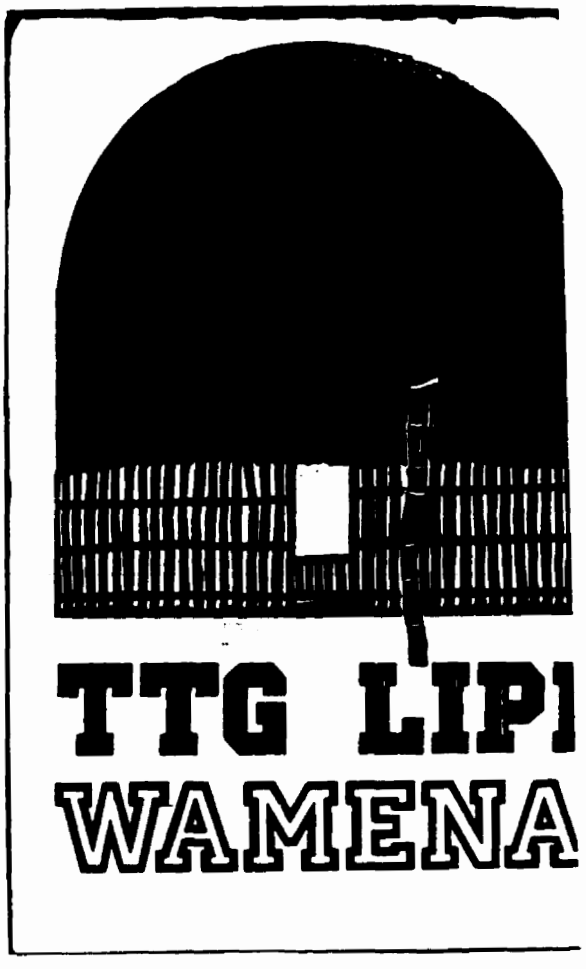


Figure 6-5. Sticker with image of a Dani *kayo* (or lookout tower), used by the local Wamena branch of LIPI (*Lembaga Ilmu Pengetahuan Indonesia* – the Indonesian Academy of Sciences), to symbolise their vision towards the future.

Figure 6-6. An Indonesian monument to the famous Dani warrior and tribal leader Kur Mabel (who lead the Kurima Dani), in central Wamena, 1997.

Figure 6-7. The *Museum Baliem Pilamo* (Baliem Pilamo Museum) in Wamena, 1997.

Figure 6-8. Nico Haluk, carving of the Dani myth of the dog that killed the snake and saved the village, 1997, (collection of Robyn Roper).

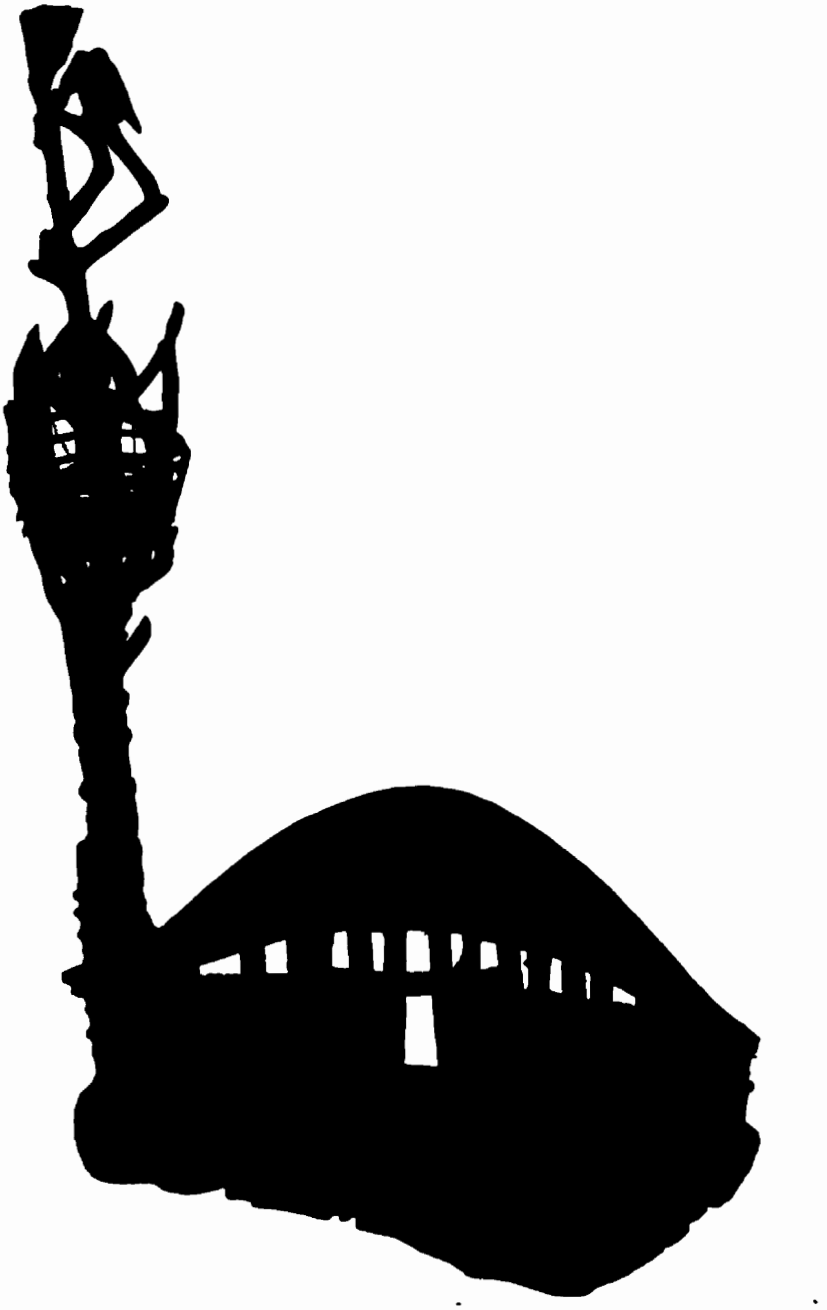


Figure 6-9. Nico Haluk, carving of a *gapura* and *kayo* (compound gate and lookout tower with bird on top), ca. 100 x 30 cm, when photographed in the collection of the Bupati of Wamena, J.B. Wenas, 1997.

Figure 6-10. Dani men displaying mummy, (*mumi*) at Akima, Baliem Valley, 1997.

Figure 6-11. *Koteka* and *honai* souvenirs (penis gourds decorated with markers glued on top of small ceramic *honai* (traditional highlands dwellings of the Dani and other tribes), made by shop assistants in an art and souvenir shop at the Hamadi market. Jayapura, 1998.

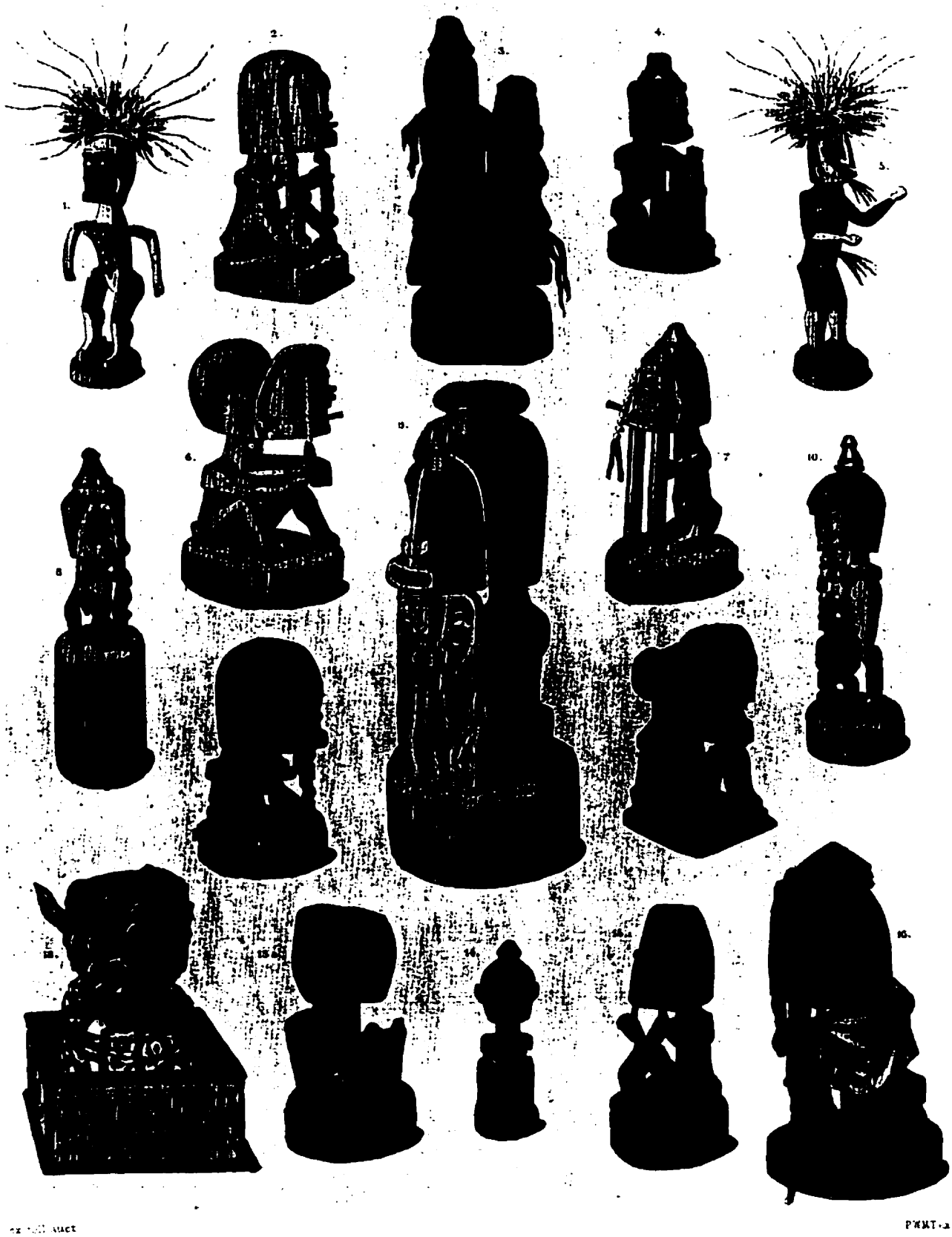


Figure 6-12. *Korwar/ amfyanir* figures as presented in a plate from deClerq (1893:Plate XXXV).

Figure 6-13. Micha Ronsumbre, *Amfyanir*, 1986, commission at the Irian Jaya Governor's Office, Jayapura.

Figure 6-14. Micha Ronsumbre, *Amfyanir*, 1986, commission at the Irian Jaya Governor's Office, Jayapura.

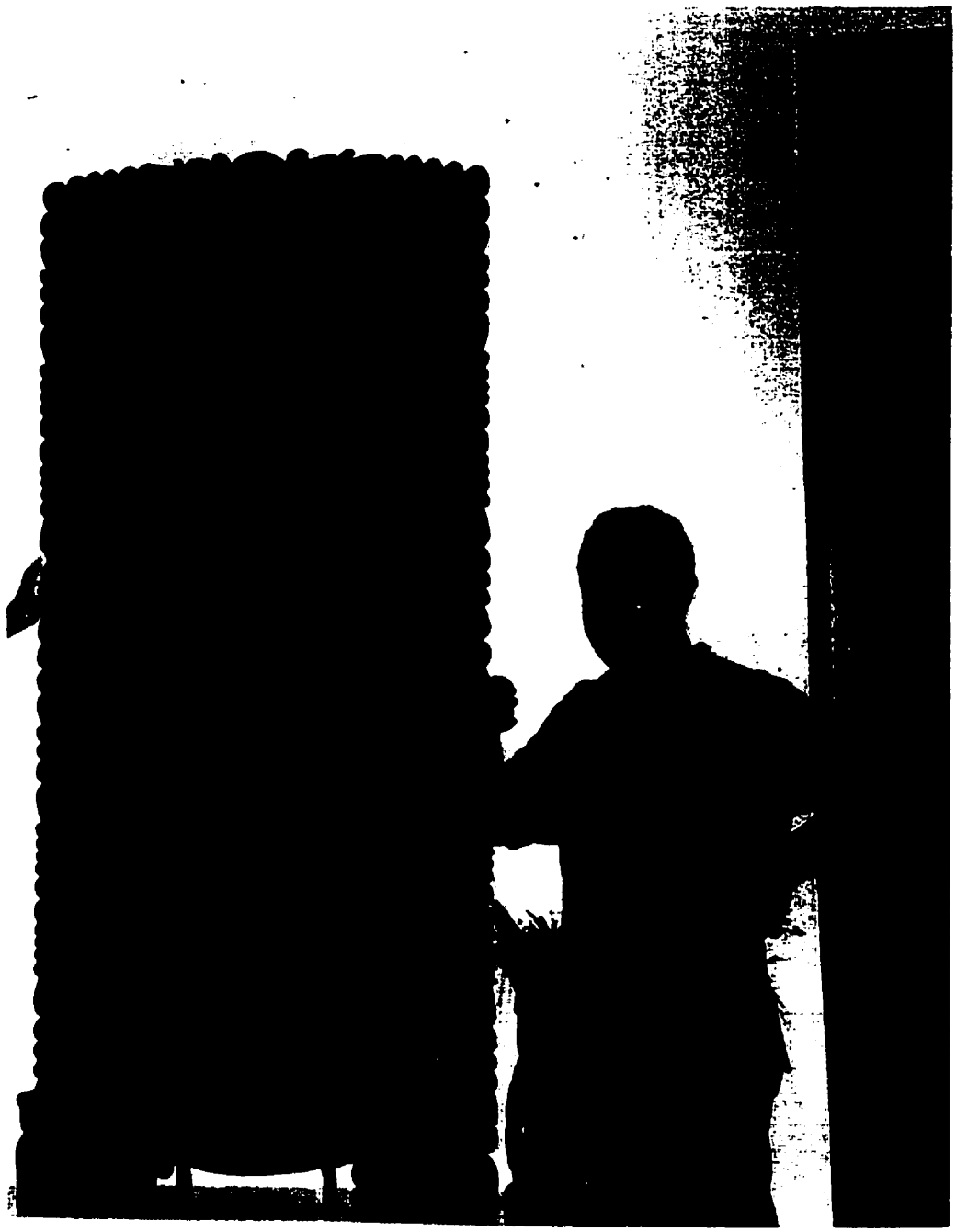


Figure 6-15. Micha Ronsumbre, carved door with Eagle and Snake myth, 1995, ca. 195 x 90cm, Collection of John and Pip Moore. (Photograph: John Moore).

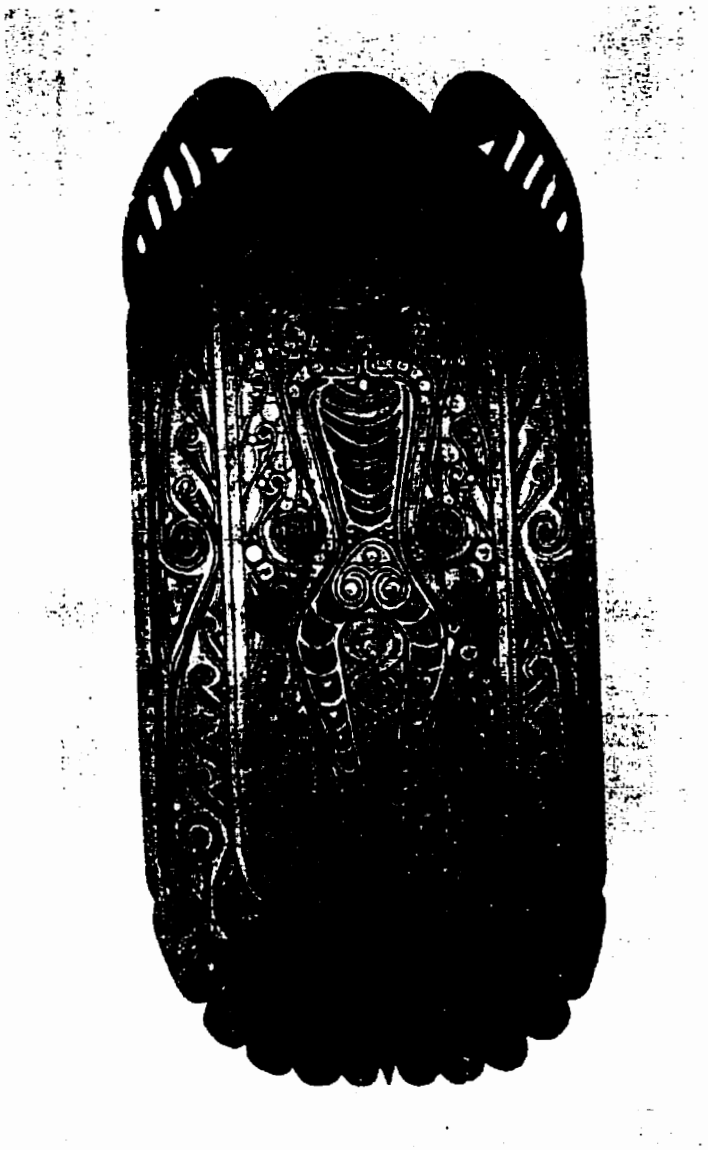


Figure 6-16. Micha Ronsumbre, carved wall panel at the Loka Budaya Museum, Abepura.

Figure 6-17. Micha Ronsumbre, carved window frame with lotus motif for the Biak Buddhist temple, 1989. (Photograph: John Moore).

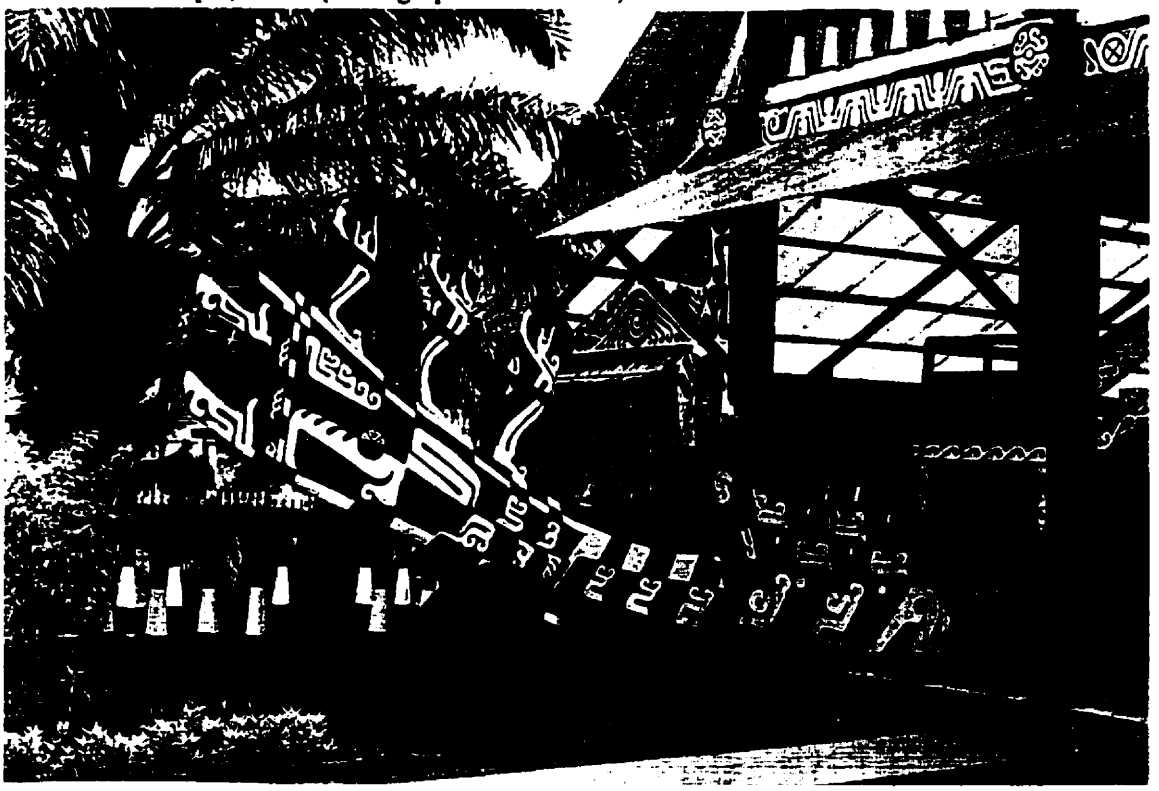


Figure 6-18. Micha Ronsumbre, painted concrete replica of a Biak canoe, 1995, *Taman Budaya Irian Jaya* (Irian Jaya Culture Park / Expo site), Waena.

Figure 6-19. House painted by Soleman Karubaba (left), Argapura (suburb of Jayapura). 1998.