Transforming the Indonesian uplands: marginality, power and production

Author(s) Li, Tania Murray
Extent xxiv, 319 p.
Topic HN
Subject(s) Rural development -- Indonesia
Language English
ISBN 9786610146437, 9057024012, 0203986121
Permalink http://books.scholarsportal.info/viewdoc.html?id=10919
Pages 14 to 71
INTRODUCTION*

This book aims to examine and re-assess the transformations occurring in the Indonesian uplands. The goal in doing so is, first and foremost, to draw attention to an area of Indonesia undergoing far-reaching political, economic, and social change, but about which there has been, thus far, very little synthetic and comparative discussion. Drawing upon current theoretical debates in social anthropology, development studies, and political ecology, the book addresses the changing histories and identities of uplanders, particularly as they relate to new modes of livelihood, and shifting relationships to the natural resource base, to markets, and to the state.

During the past twenty years, numerous studies have explored political-economic changes in Indonesia’s lowlands, focusing especially upon the impact of the “green revolution” in wet rice agriculture (Hart et al., 1989; Heyzer 1987; Stoler 1977). During the late 1960s and early 1970s, the widespread introduction of new strains of high-yielding rice and industrially-manufactured chemical inputs made possible extraordinary increases in foodcrop production. These programmes depended on more than the diffusion of socially-neutral technical inputs (White 1989). Access to green revolution technologies required new and administratively expensive credit programs, which often worked to the advantage of middle- and large-farmers, thus enhancing rather than diminishing rural inequality. Similarly, efforts to maximise farm profits encouraged farmers in many lowland regions to introduce more restrictive forms of labour organisation, which disadvantaged landless workers, especially women (Stoler 1977). The efficient distribution of inputs and the quick marketing of harvests also required massive investments in the construction and improvement of roads. This in turn

* Parts of this introduction draw from the conference statement “Agrarian Transformation in Upland Indonesia”, Robert Hefner and Tania Li, 1995. References cited in this chapter are found after Chapter 1.
facilitated the diffusion of new consumer goods, the movement of investors into rural agriculture, and the dissemination of new lifestyles. Finally, and perhaps most fundamentally, the success of “green revolution” initiatives was accompanied by, and indeed dependent upon, a significant expansion in state capacity. New programmes required government intervention into rural communities on a scale and with a duration not previously seen in the independence era.

Throughout the 1970s and the 1980s, as these changes (and others) were occurring in lowland Indonesia, upland areas in the hilly or mountainous interiors of most of Indonesia’s provinces were undergoing economic, political, and social changes of no less significance. Vast populations gain their livelihoods in upland regions through a mix of swidden farming, tree-crop cultivation, forest extraction, fixed-field permanent agriculture, and wage labour. As in the lowlands, recent years have witnessed road construction, crop intensification, capital investment, deforestation, and a movement of people and ideas on a scale unparalleled in contemporary times. With these developments have come fundamental changes in upland economy, polity, and morality, as rural people respond to new pressures and take advantage of new opportunities.

For a variety of practical and political reasons, the number of people living in Southeast Asia’s upland areas has routinely been underestimated (Poffenberger 1990: xxi). There is no official category under which upland populations are enumerated, but the number of people living in and around forests or directly dependent upon them may serve as a proxy: an official source (Bappenas 1993) acknowledges twelve million people while another source (Lynch and Talbott 1995:22, 55) estimates that the number is upwards of 60 million people. Many have lived in upland regions for generations, while others have migrated more recently in search of land and livelihoods.

Uplanders have been viewed variously as innocent tribals, maintaining distinctive traditional ways of life; as peasant farmers, albeit perhaps rather inefficient ones; as destroyers of the environment and illegal squatters; and, more recently, as expert environmentalists, holding the secrets to sustainable and equitable community based resource management systems. As these widely divergent perceptions indicate, there are several potentially and actually conflicting interests at work in modern Indonesia’s upland regions. For the Indonesian state, the primary concern has been to bring order, control and “development” to upland regions, while deploying upland resources to serve national goals. Para-statal and private interests view upland forests as a harvestable resource, and are also attracted by the possibilities for the expansion of commercial agriculture, often on a large scale. For many anthropologists, ecologists and social activists, the concern has been to preserve unique and diverse
ways of life, while helping upland people to gain more secure control over their resources and balance livelihood and sustainability concerns. Environmentalists lobby for conservation to protect biodiversity potential. Ethnic or regional politics are virtually impossible in Indonesia, and there are no visible groups representing the interests of upland peoples, but it can be assumed that their interests and concerns are diverse, and not identical with those of the other stakeholders.

A re-assessment of upland transformation must move beyond these preestablished agendas, and ask some searching questions about how contradictory pressures are experienced locally and how they are worked out in the context of every day lives and practices. If we are able to rid ourselves of the image of uplanders as innocents, victims or villains, and treat them seriously as agents contributing to the making of history, the questions become: What future is desired? How exactly is it being made? Under what constellation of opportunities and constraints? What, in short, are the processes through which upland change is occurring? These are the concerns at the core of this volume.

Reacting against the simplified portrayals of social transformation developed by modernisation theorists in the 1950s and 1960s, many historians and anthropologists suspect that comparative research is inherently and unacceptably reductionist. But the dearth of comparative projects has created difficulties of its own: “[S]ynthetic and comparative work is lagging well behind the production of detailed empirical studies. We face the danger that social researchers, disillusioned with the old theoretical certainties…will become very good at producing detailed case studies but rather bad at communicating the general implications of their work to a wider academic audience, not to speak of a wider public of development practitioners.” (Booth 1993:59). For the discipline of anthropology, Nicholas Thomas (1991:316) argues the need to “refuse the bounds of conveniently sized localities through venturing to speak about regional relations and histories”. He proposes a reinvigoration of comparative analysis on a regional scale as an appropriate framework in which to discuss processes of social change and differentiation, and the use of ethnography to generate wider argument.

In order to meet the challenges posed by comparative, policy-relevant analysis, this book adopts a rather distinctive approach. A feature of this approach is the attempt to bring uplands and lowlands, community and state, tradition and transformation, within a single field of vision. Therefore, while the social characterisation of the uplands could proceed (and most commonly has proceeded) by distinguishing Java from the Outer Islands, discussing Eastern Indonesia as a separate sphere, and emphasizing the difference between “traditional” or “tribal” people and the diverse mass of migrants who live alongside them, our emphasis is upon the processes which have constituted both differences and
similarities in upland and lowland ways of life. Further, while much of the existing literature about the uplands is centrally concerned with the ecological implications of agricultural production on sloping land, we are equally interested in the association of uplands with various forms of political and social marginality. In this volume, therefore, we link the conventional concerns of ecology with those of political economy and cultural studies, exploring the uplands as components of national and global systems of meaning, power and production.

As a physical category, the term uplands is rather loosely defined. Nevertheless, it is an indigenous category in much of the Archipelago, and is in common use in both the practitioner and scholarly literature on Southeast Asia written in English. According to Allen (1993:226, citing Spencer 1949:28), whose usage we follow: “uplands could be defined as containing a core of ‘hilly to mountainous landscapes of steeply inclined surfaces and the table lands and plateaus lying at higher elevations’. It might be added that the discussion concerns land which is not flood-irrigated, not the immediate coastal fringe, estuarine or alluvial plains and swampland, nor is it seasonally flooded.” The chapters in this volume relate to physical landscapes which fit within the broad category uplands so defined, while drawing attention to the ways in which the social and political dimensions of being upland, up-river and “of the interior” often overlap. There is no single English or Indonesian term which captures both the social and physical dimensions of the upland landscape. The social aspects resonate with the Indonesian term pelosok, roughly translatable as “the boonies”, while the term pedalaman, “the interior” is commonly used in Indonesia to refer to areas far from centres of government. As the unnamed reviewer of this volume noted, many of the “processes, histories, relationships and…discourses” explored in this book “are not unique to either the “uplands” or Indonesia”. Difficulties of definition notwithstanding, we hope that this observation makes the work presented here more, rather than less, compelling.

The premise of this book is that a broadly based examination of the uplands, one that cross-cuts geographic, social and conceptual spaces, and which pools insights from a range of disciplines and academic styles, has the potential to break new ground. There is no expectation that a totalising, definitive, truth about the uplands will emerge from the present endeavour, but only that selected issues will become more visible, and more complex. This is, to adopt Michael Dove’s term, an “engaged study”, which addresses real-world issues. It does so not by proposing solutions to upland problems, but rather by filling some of the analytical gaps that surround upland development agendas and practices, and placing practical concerns in a broader political and economic context. In order to do this, and to accomplish the task of comparison and synthesis, it is necessary to attend to patterns, processes and mechanisms of change.
(White 1989) at various points of intersection between the local and the
global. It is also necessary to focus the inquiry upon selected themes, and
search for concepts capable of generating fresh insights and explanations.

Three central analytical themes run through the volume. The first
corns the nature and effects of marginality and the related processes of
“traditionalisation” and transformation. The Indonesian uplands, we
suggest, have been constituted as a marginal domain through a long and
continuing history of political, economic and social engagement with the
lowlands. Marginality must therefore be understood in terms of
relationships, rather than simple facts of geography or ecology.

Dichotomous conceptions and related evolutionary models which
assume tradition, stasis, subsistence orientation, and general
backwardness to be natural features of upland populations are both
theoretically moribund and empirically unsupported. Transformations
(past or present) cannot be viewed in terms of the familiar impact myth,
which proposes that all was quiet before change arrived (market, state,
new crops, technologies, migrants and projects). Furthermore “tradition”
and the emergence and maintenance of distinctive ways of life have to be
viewed historically, as the outcomes of processes of marginalization,
“traditionalization” and, in some cases, ethnogenesis. Modern processes
of state formation (both colonial and post-colonial) and capitalist
expansion were stimulus to, and indeed part of, the emergence of many of
the institutions and practices usually regarded as “traditional”.

Second, there is a concern with the question of power, and the
characteristic ways in which it operates in upland settings. The
territorialisation processes through which modern states have attempted
to order and control upland resources and populations are of central
importance. So too are the informal, personalized lines of patronage
which tie upland and lowland elites to each other, and tie upland farmers
and labourers to those with access to state protection, authority or
sources of capital. Both these forms of power hinge upon the real or
supposed ignorance and isolation of uplanders. The definition
uplanders as backward people has legitimated harsh measures such as
land expropriation and forced resettlement as well as more or less
benevolent forms of paternalism and control. Assumptions about
isolation have been central to the construction of visions of
“development”, both conventional and green varieties. To the extent that
they ignore uplanders’ historical experiences and current aspirations,
“development” policies and programmes produce results which are often
problematic, if not actually perverse. Most upland people wish to have
access to the promised benefits of “development” programmes, but
contest the disadvantageous terms upon which their participation in
“development” is currently arranged.
Finally, there is a concern with the forms of production that take shape under the varied political-economic and ecological conditions prevailing in the uplands. These include shifting cultivation on “traditional” land or newly cleared or logged forest land; production of cash crops, such as vegetables and tobacco; tree crop holdings, large or small in scale; contract farming arrangements; plantation agriculture; and wage labour in extractive industries. These systems of production and the livelihoods they provide are more often found in combination than as separate pure forms. They do not coincide with, and indeed invalidate, the idea of clear cut social divisions (“traditional” shifting cultivators are often part time wage workers; estate labourers have small holdings; farmers working along logging roads include those indigenous to the area as well as newcomers). Each of these forms of production has been affected by increased accessibility to markets (an outcome of major road building and logging activities in the 1970s and 80s), and the introduction of chemical inputs, hybrids and new technologies, sometimes state sponsored but more often, in the uplands, adopted under local initiative. Yet much of the diversity, dynamism and productivity of upland environments, and the insight and creativity of upland populations, is overlooked in official “development” programmes and policies which assume a starting point at or near zero, and assert that the most pressing task is to bring change to areas where it has not (yet) occurred. Some “green” approaches also assume a subsistence orientation and degree of detachment from market-oriented production which was rarely present in the past, and is even less likely to be encountered under current conditions.

The attempt to identify a conceptual repertoire capable of exposing the processes at work in Indonesia’s uplands is pursued in Chapter 1. In that chapter, I elaborate upon the three themes summarized above, locating them in the theoretical literature and in the specifics of upland history, ethnography and “development” agendas. The chapter is not a blueprint or prescription for the chapters that follow, but rather an attempt to synthesise and make sense of the rich and diverse material presented in this book and other sources. Each of the subsequent chapters addresses a component of the overall problematic. They draw upon original ethnographic, historical and case study material from several regions of the country, but they are not designed to “cover” a representative sample of upland scenes. Rather, each attempts to identify and illuminate one or more underlying processes, as they are encountered in the activities and predicaments of upland life. The authors do not adhere to a single theoretical perspective. Drawing upon different disciplinary traditions and styles of inquiry, they offer a range of perspectives. Terms treated as relatively unproblematic in one chapter (state, uplands, tradition, culture, accumulation) are picked up and scrutinised in another so that, piece by piece, a deeper understanding of upland transformations can emerge.
The chapters relate to each other in the form of a constellation—each occupying a separate space but in dialogue with one or more of the other contributions and with the volume’s central themes. Such diversity seems to be inevitable in interdisciplinary work, and, in terms of the rather ambitious goals of the volume, both productive and necessary.

Contrary to the myth of unpeopled and unproductive upland terrains, and also to the administrative and scholarly obsession with lowland rice and colonial cash crops, Peter Boomgaard describes the early and spontaneous transformation of upland agriculture initiated around 1600 with the adoption of a New World staple, maize, and small holder tobacco. Through a meticulous examination of the archival record, he establishes a correlation in time and space of these two crops, together with livestock rearing. He uses this data to outline a complex, productive, and relatively sustainable agrarian system that was found in many areas of the Archipelago and persisted for several hundred years. While the full social and political implications of this system cannot be discerned from the sources available, he highlights some key points. Maize cultivation increased the carrying capacity of upland terrain, permitting more people to live at high altitudes. It was politically significant, therefore, in enabling some people to escape the oppression and insecurity of lowland polities and reconstitute themselves as “highlanders” or “tribes” on the peripheries of state control. At the same time, the co-existence of maize production with tobacco indicates that uplanders, for all their physical remove, did not seek cashless isolation: they were tied into lowland markets, as well as credit and taxation arrangements. The linkages between uplands and lowlands in the period discussed by Boomgaard were clearly complex, and involved varying combinations of resistance and collaboration in the service of both political and economic agendas.

Joel Kahn draws attention to the culturalising idiom favoured by officials and elites in characterisations of Indonesia’s diversity. Through this idiom, “relations between uplands and lowlands, core and periphery, inner and outer Indonesia, rich and poor, powerful and marginal,” which might be understood in terms of unequal access to resources and/or power, become cast in cultural terms as relations between distinct cultural groups. He examines the historical conditions under which this idiom emerged in highland Sumatra at the turn of the century. These conditions included colonial programs to intensify rule, the efforts of colonial officials and scholars of the “ethical” persuasion to preserve native “traditions”, and the activities of Minangkabau elites negotiating issues of modernity and identity while repositioning themselves in relation to the colonial regime. Kahn makes power an important focus of his investigation. Challenging the view that power in Indonesia can be understood in terms of apparently unchanging cultural
preoccupations, such as hierarchy defined in terms of distance from fixed centers, Kahn exposes the embeddedness of “traditional” forms of power in thoroughly modern processes of state formation and foreign-investment. In upland settings, local power brokers draw their authority and privilege not from monopoly of land (characteristic of lowland societies) but first and foremost from their connections with the colonial and post-colonial state, and/or large corporations, such as estates and multinationals. So positioned, they dispense favours, jobs, permits, contracts, support and, where necessary, protection from petty forms of legal and extra-legal rent-seeking and harassment. These kinds of relations (among others) are commonly read, or misread, through the optic of cultural difference.

Albert Schrauwers’ study illustrates, in rich detail, some of the culturalising processes outlined by Kahn in more general terms. Schrauwers challenges the assumption that the apparent “traditionalism” of upland peasantries results from a failure to adapt and change. Reporting on his study in the highlands of Central Sulawesi, he demonstrates that To Pamona “traditions” of complex, multi-family households, elaborate feasts and labour exchanges, and a moral economy of mutual assistance can best be understood in terms of the rational calculus of the market. Rather than signaling a retreat from or opposition to a market economy, these institutions co-emerged with it, under conditions of colonial tutelage. Forced down from their hilltop hamlets, settled in narrow valleys and required to develop sawah, the To Pamona were subject to a process of “peasantisation”. Inadequate land and capital, unevenly distributed, led to strategies of maximising inputs of unpaid family labour, accessed through an elaboration of “traditional” institutions, relationships and claims. Yet these practices are read by the state through a cultural lens as primordial attributes, thereby obscuring both their recent nature and the role of state policies in framing the context in which they emerged. Official rhetoric celebrates the communal character of Pamona society, while simultaneously denigrating it as backward and using it as a prime explanation for Pamona poverty and immiseration. Schrauwer’s study highlights the active engagement of upland people and state agencies in defining (and contesting) the terms under which agrarian transformations occur and the idioms through which they are managed and understood. It illustrates one of the many diverse forms that capitalism can take in upland settings and confirms that there are a range of modern pathways to “culture” and “tradition”.

The Nuaulu discussed by Roy Ellen, like the To Pamona, are officially designated masyarakat terasing (estranged peoples). They too were resettled under pressure away from their ancestral lands, moving in this case to the Moluccan coast. Yet the Nuaulu have retained, in their own minds and those of observers, the characteristics of an upland, forest
oriented people. Conventional wisdom might label this a case of persistent tradition. Yet there is much in Ellen’s account to disrupt the construction of Nuaulu as unchanging, traditional “others”. He shows that they became Nuaulu, consolidating a distinctive identity and tribal structure not in the “natural” domain of the forest but in interaction with coastal polities, colonial power and the spice trade. Moreover, their forest is not in fact “natural”, but a product of generations of human intervention and modification, blurring the stark distinction between forests and farms characteristic of bureaucratic schemes. Their views of nature and the environment are not fixed but have changed historically as Nuaulu have encountered different political and economic conditions. Having initially welcomed logging and transmigration as developments which increased their access to ancestral lands in the hilly interior and facilitated their hunting and cash cropping endeavours, they have since become disenchanted. To articulate their protest, they have adopted a new rhetoric, one which is recognizably environmentalist, and anticipates both in its tone and the technology of its delivery an urban, and possibly global audience. Nuaulu pleas for assistance could be read in terms of the impact myth: “isolated tribal uplanders invaded and threatened by outside forces” but such a reading would not capture the transformations in which they have participated over many centuries. Nor would it focus attention appropriately on the cause of Nuaulu frustration: not development itself, but the price they have had to pay for a development process which has enriched others but benefited them very little.

Anna Tsing’s account focuses upon the contemporary production of a tribal identity by innovative leaders engaging with “development” (both state and “green” varieties) in the Meratus Mountains of South Kalimantan. She discusses the strategies through which community leaders have drawn attention and resources to their locale. They have played, simultaneously, to a globally-constituted “green” fantasy formulated as tribal wisdom and to a state rhetoric that promises roads, facilities and other benefits to those who are primitive and backward, yet open to change and compliant enough to deserve favour. The context is one in which incursions by loggers, migrants, plantations, and transmigration schemes, plus the threat of involuntary resettlement, make the issue of Meratus control over their lives and resources a pressing matter. Rather than a story of victimization, however, she demonstrates the strength, limitations, and above all the ingenuity of Meratus participation in the reconstruction of the upland social formation. News reports, lists of tree species and medicinal herbs, and the production of maps are vehicles for the construction of a “tribal situation” which promises opportunities for collaboration and sets up arenas of ambiguity or “room for maneuver” within which Meratus advance their claims.
Outside “green” circles, tribal identity and the cultural difference attributed to uplanders continue to be viewed negatively, as signs of a development deficit. Michael Dove analyses the world view of plantation managers, and explores the logic through which problems over labour and land come to be represented as problems of primitive culture and irrationality. Para-statal and private sector plantations occupy an increasingly large space in the upland landscape and in “development” plans. Their expansion provokes a contest between state and local representations of upland realities, a struggle over meanings corresponding to the competition over resources and benefit streams. Dove identifies a remarkably consistent, pan-Indonesian tendency for managers to label uplanders tribal, primitive, ignorant, or simply backward and strange. The generality of this discourse indicates a language of power, which operates by apprehending economic conflicts as matters of culture and world view. By contrast, locals attribute planter behavior to familiar, potentially shared attributes—namely, greed and self interest. For plantations and their state sponsors, the primitive label provides a rationale for expropriation and justifies harsh discipline, as well as continuous efforts to direct, persuade and, if necessary, enforce conformity to the social and spatial requirements of “development”.

As an alternative to plantation agriculture, contract farming schemes are an increasingly significant way in which Indonesia’s upland cultivators are being incorporated into wider economic circuits and state-defined “development” agendas. Besides signaling a shift from mixed farming to monoculture, they reconfigure the physical, social and political landscape. Ben White’s study examines the experience of contract farmers in the hilly southern region of West Java, focusing upon a hybrid coconut scheme run by a large nationalized plantation corporation. He shows that contract farming communities deviate markedly from the neo-populist vision of homogeneous, modernising family farms which characterize official rhetoric. They reflect instead the uneven distribution of power and resources that preceded the scheme, and the new forms of patronage, resistance and accommodation that emerge in the context of its implementation. In the scheme he examines, profits overall fell short of economic projections, but some groups made significant economic gains: notably the government officials who were assigned the most fertile and accessible plots. Rich farmers whose valuable tree crops were bulldozed to make way for the scheme lost out. So too did poor farmers who, lacking connections, were allocated inadequate land. Most seriously marginalised were those excluded from membership of the scheme for expressly political reasons. Wage labour for absentee landlords was common, and poorer farmers also tended to be absent working for wages elsewhere. Women and children did most of the work demanded of contract farmers, even while official membership, resources and decision
making authority were vested exclusively in men. White’s analysis offers some insight into the patterns and processes that can be expected to emerge as contract farming expands over the vast upland areas outside Java.

The expansion of plantation production and contract farming notwithstanding, smallholdings are still the predominant form of upland agriculture. Krisna Suryanata describes the introduction of intensive fruit production on Java’s upland fields, as farmers respond to improved access to increasingly affluent urban markets. Although discussed by officials in the environment-and community-friendly rhetoric of “home gardens”, “agroforestry” and the restoration of “degraded uplands” commercial fruit production is still, as Suryanata argues, a “strategy of private accumulation”. Groves of temperate fruit require major investments of capital in terracing, seed stock and maintenance prior to the first yield. Interplanted annuals cushion the transition period, but soon yield to the more profitable crop. She compares two communities, one in which land owners have gradually lost control of their trees through leasing arrangement with capital-rich “apple lords”, and another in which lower capital require ments and a labour shortage favour share cropping arrangements. Despite the concentration of tree tenure, farmers in the apple area have still experienced a general prosperity resulting from high labour demand. In the orange district, in contrast, ownership is more equitable but production is unstable and income gains have not been sufficient to draw outmigrants back to the community. Both examples indicate that proponents of sustainable, subsistence-oriented livelihood systems for upland smallholders need to anticipate the ways in which farmers’ land use and investment decisions reflect opportunities, priorities and expectations framed within the broader national context.

Addressing issues of politics and identity as well as production, and covering both the colonial period and the present day, Tine Ruiter’s contribution connects many of the themes explored in other chapters. She investigates the formation of a Karo Batak peasantry on the borders of foreign-owned plantations in upland Sumatra. She shows how patterns of production, as well as patterns of leadership, hierarchy and “tradition”, were shaped through a process of interaction with the plantations and with the colonial and post colonial states. Colonial state “protection” for Karo land rights and traditions was half hearted. The authorities were forced to weigh the advantages of meeting Karo aspirations (and thereby securing their loyalty vis a vis the rebellious Achenese) versus the profits to be gained from the plantation sector. The Karo, for their part, have steadily pursued their economic goals, turning first to rubber and then to cloves, coffee and investments in education, all without state assistance and, to a considerable extent, contrary to plans made for them by the state. Ruiter focuses particularly on processes of class differentiation
within Karo villages, and the factors which contribute to or mitigate against it. Although they are not the centre of her analysis, she reveals also the extreme marginalisation of the upland’s poorest residents: landless Javanese, former plantation workers cast adrift in territory not their own.
Chapter 1
MARGINALITY, POWER AND PRODUCTION: ANALYSING UPLAND TRANSFORMATIONS
Tania Murray Li

The Indonesian uplands have been defined, constituted, imagined, managed, controlled, exploited and “developed” through a range of discourses and practices. These include academic work, government policies, national and international activism, and various popular understandings. Common to all of them is a perception of the uplands as a marginal domain, socially, economically and physically removed from the mainstream, “traditional”, undeveloped, left behind. Rather than accept the marginality of the uplands as a “natural” fact, I seek here to locate the constitution of marginality historically and in specific processes of knowledge, power and production.

I argue that the gap between the assumptions driving upland “development” (whether commercial, sustainable or conservationist in orientation) and the actual conditions that pertain in these areas requires some explanation. Following Dove (1985b), I suggest that the reasons for this gap are primarily economic and political. They have to do with instituting and sustaining, or critiquing and opposing, systems of accumulation and control. Representations of the uplands in terms of marginality serve particular agendas, and have real effects in the shaping of upland development. They cannot simply be dismissed as incorrect, and replaced with more nuanced historical and ethnographic accounts. They need to be examined in relation to the contexts in which they are generated and the purposes that they serve.1

MARGINALITY, TRADITION AND TRANSFORMATION: CONSTITUTING THE UPLANDS

The Social Construction of Marginality

The concept of marginality provides a point of departure from which some key dimensions of upland transformation can be exposed.2 Analysing the uplands in terms of marginality has three implications. First, uplands and lowlands are brought within a single
analytical frame, and treated as one integrated system (cf Burling 1965). Margins are an essential part of the whole, not separate, complete objects of study in themselves. Second, marginality is clearly a relational concept, involving a social construction, not merely a natural one (Shields 1991). Finally there is an obvious asymmetry between margin and centre: the two do not stand in a relationship of two equal parts of an encompassing whole. As Anna Tsing has observed, marginality is always “an ongoing relationship with power” (1993:90). The constitution of margins and centres is best understood therefore as a hegemonic project, subject to contestation and reformulation. Seldom if ever is it a completed, hegemonic accomplishment (Roseberry 1994). The cultural, economic and political projects of people living and working in the uplands are constituted in relation to various hegemonic agendas, but never are they simple reflections of them.

The social construction of marginality (as a hegemonic project) involves a process through which particular spaces become subject to descriptions which are simplified, stereotyped and contrastive, and then rated according to criteria defined at the centre (Shields 1991). The rating may be positive or negative: often it is disputed, or the subject of ambivalence. Margins are characteristically the site of nostalgia and fascination as well as derision. Regardless of the positive or negative valuation, “imagined spaces” or “place myths” become enacted; they form the prejudices of people designing policies, making decisions and interpreting outcomes, underpinning both the rhetoric and the substance of interventions made by the centre in the periphery (Shields 1991:47).

In Indonesia, the uplands are negatively associated with backwardness, poverty, ignorance, disorderliness and a stubborn refusal to live as “normal” citizens. A counterposing set of images, ones relating to freedom and the integrity of people, communities and environment, also exist. But the positive side of the dichotomy is rather weakened by the ambiguous character of the uplands environment. Most upland areas of Indonesia do not fit neatly into the contrastive schemes commonly encountered for the social organisation of space (cf. Short 1991). They are neither wild nor tame. The potentially positive attributes of wilderness (unspoiled hills and forests) are sullied by the presence of people and agricultural activities. Yet the agricultural activities that take place in the uplands seem too precarious to satisfy the nostalgic advocate of peasant life, iconified in Indonesia by the padi farmer. For those who support the idea of “traditional”, ecologically benign agriculture in forested areas, and are therefore prepared to merge the concepts of wilderness and farm, the commercial nature of many upland enterprises poses another problem. As an “imagined country” (Short 1991), the uplands are complex. There being little consensus on how to characterise the uplands and their deficiencies, proposed models of change (conservation, forest
extraction, smallholder support, plantation agriculture, transmigration) are, not surprisingly, contradictory.

Recognising similar complexities in India’s “agrarian environments”, Agrawal and Sivaramakrishnan (forthcoming) point to hybrid landscapes and explore the consequences of partitioning landscape into the environment (ideally untouched by humans), and the agrarian (clearly the product of human agency). One consequence has been a division of scholarship, studies of agrarian change focusing upon the agricultural heartlands, especially those affected by the green revolution, while environmental scholarship has been preoccupied with mountains, forests, tribal populations and semi-arid regions. This division obscures the connections between environmental change and agrarian structures, as well as the source of many “environmental” struggles in typically agrarian concerns. It obscures the role of humans in producing nature, even in apparently remote locales (see Ellen, Tsing this volume). It also lends itself to the construction of social typologies, the environment evoking an array of naturalised or exoticized terms such as “woman”, “indigenous”, “community” and “local”, reifications at odds with the diversity and flux of actual social formations. Their analysis offers insights into the ways in which upland terrains in India and also in Indonesia, as I will show, have been simultaneously “environmentalised” and “culturalised” in ways which mark them as both different and deficient.

**ConstitutingMargins and Centres in Indonesian Geography and History**

Although there are exceptions, to go upland, inland, towards forests, away from coasts and from sawah cultivation is, in many parts of contemporary Indonesia to move from domains of greater to lesser power and prestige, from centres towards margins. The association of the uplands with cultural difference, and the negative rating of that difference, has a very long history in Indonesia, and reflects changes taking place in the lowlands, especially along the coasts. Early converts to Islam, such as the thirteen century Samudra-Pasai dynasty on the North Sumatran coast, still felt the need for political and spiritual legitimation by the “existing powers of the interior” (Hall 1978:223). Ancient residents of the Tengger Highlands in Java were both feared and admired for their alleged spiritual powers (Hefner 1990). Over time, however, the locus of power throughout the archipelago shifted towards Islam and the coast (with the important exceptions of Mataram and the Minangkabau kingdom, both inland centres). There was a split between those who chose to live as Muslims on the coast or alongside the rivers, and those who preferred the uplands, jungles and interiors. Upland populations
and their habitats became quite consistently despised. In Sulawesi for example, the terms Toraja (Bugis, “people of the interior”) and Halefuru or Alifuru (Ternatan, wilderness, forest), both disparaging, were in common use in coastal areas in the sixteenth century. They were subsequently taken up and used by Europeans (Henley 1989:n54). From a coastal perspective, crucial political relationships were those connecting one coastal settlement to another through hierarchies of dependence and obligation. Rather than emphasise commonalties of culture across a given land mass, there was a marked social distinction between “people of the littoral kingdoms and the barbarian population of the tribal interior” (Henley 1989:8).

Across the archipelago coastal centres continue to relate both to their interior domains and also to other coastal centres. There are different models for apprehending the resulting relationships. For administrative purposes, the whole of Indonesia is linked by a singular hierarchy centred on Jakarta. In terms of culture, the official model of “unity in diversity” proposes a non-hierarchical reading of difference, and highlights culture (rather than, say, class) in the definition of the nation (Kahn, this volume). The model is belied by the numerous ways in which cultural standards defined in Jakarta frame official interventions in all fields (health, education, agriculture, housing, administration). Needless to say these standards are reconstructed in multiple ways according to local conditions, priorities, and room for manoeuvre (Schrauwers, Tsing this volume).

Besides the standards imposed by adherence to world religions, many of the cultural norms or standards by which the uplands have been judged deficient are a relatively recent invention. According to John Pemberton (1994) “Javanese Culture” was fashioned through a nineteenth century dialogue between the royal courts of Surakarta and the colonial presence. Against this culture the practices of minor aristocrats, urban commoners, lowland Javanese peasants, upland Javanese, all those off-Java, and uplanders off Java most of all, came to be judged both distinct and deficient. Thus, he argues, the cultural project of “majoritising” lowland Java has been, simultaneously, a project which “minoritises” and marginalises others on the social and geographic periphery of that self-defined centre.

**Countering Evolutionary Imaginings**

A feature of marginality as a social construction is the elision of differences in culture with differences in time, conceptualised in evolutionary terms. By virtue of living in “out-of-the-way-places” (Tsing 1993) uplanders have also (wrongly) been characterised “peoples without history” (Wolf 1982). From the perspective of those at the self-defined
centre, the uplands are deemed marginal because they have failed to change, “develop” or modernise. By implication, the difference observed at the margins confirms the distance that the centre has progressed. But the uplands (and other places and peoples normally characterised as “traditional”) have endured the same period of historical time as those places and peoples deemed “modern”. By rejecting the evolutionary assumption of a unilinear trajectory from traditional to modern, it becomes possible to look at difference as a historical product. Instead of assigning unfamiliar cultural forms to the category “tradition”, and reading them as relics from the past, attention can be turned to the processes through which diverse cultural forms are generated and maintained.

In the case of the uplands in Indonesia, renewed attention to regional histories reveals that centuries of interaction with the lowlands, with state programmes, and with national and international markets have been central to the formation and reformation of their cultures and practices, and to their very identities as “communities”. Distinctive traditions have been an outcome of change, not its antithesis. Moreover, change is not a new predicament faced by “traditional” people confronted by dichotomous choices between community and state, subsistence and market, past and future. Nor is it imposed unilaterally by outsiders, as the “impact myth” proposes. It is, rather, the result of creative engagement and cultural production.

Upland histories in Indonesia have been remarkably non-linear. They have involved a variety of crops falling in and out of favour according to the broader political and economic context; periods of strong engagement with markets, followed by disengagement; and periods of focused state attention succeeded by periods of relative neglect. The state of being a “traditional” tribesperson or upland peasant turns out to be not a starting point for, but a product of these complex histories.

According to Anthony Reid (cited in Colombijn et al., 1996), major population concentrations in pre-colonial Indonesia were located not on the coastal plains, but in the interior, and particularly the upland valleys and plateaux. The reasons for this were both economic and political. Sixteenth century reports (Reid 1988:19) describe livelihood systems in the interior of some of the eastern islands that were diverse and complex. Rice, for example, was planted on hillside swiddens, broadcast on flood plains, and transplanted into ploughed, bunded fields. Where terrain permitted, swidden was especially favoured because of its high productivity in relation to labour inputs. Surplus hill rice was exported through well established trade relations with lowland districts, while fish, salt and other items were imported (Reid 1988:28). Counter to the received evolutionary wisdom, hill rice, once thought to be a wild, “original” cultigen, turns out to be a strain developed from swamp rice,
selected for its productivity and the upland lifestyle it made possible (Helliwell 1992 citing Chang 1984, 1989).

If high productivity made upland livelihoods attractive, so too did the possibility of escape from oppressive systems of lowland rule, debt bondage and slavery. Some sanctuary was afforded by the difficult, forested terrain, although uplanders and residents of the small islands of Eastern Indonesia were still captured, victims of slave raids or of internal warring and disunity (Reid 1988:122). With the spread of Islam, which forbade the enslavement of fellow Muslims, pressure was increased on the animist frontiers. In Java, non-Muslim Tengger highlanders were enslaved by Mataram forces during the seventeenth century. The survivors retreated from the accessible, midslope region to the high mountain zones, where they built tightly clustered settlements on steep ridges well suited for defence (Hefner 1990:37–38). Likewise in Northern Maluku, early settlements were built in the hilly interiors for security reasons, and movement to the coast began only with the temptations of the spice trade (Andaya L. 1993; Ellen 1979).

Some of the production systems developed by those who have elected to live in upland terrains are especially adapted to conditions of political uncertainty and insecurity. Specialists in forest collection, such as the Penan of Borneo have long traded their products to settled agriculturists in return for staples and other valuables (Hoffman 1988). They have continued to balance limited agricultural production with forest-products trade over a period of centuries—not because of a failure to advance up the evolutionary ladder, but because of the positive advantages that such combinations provide. These include, most especially, the ability to retreat into the forests and subsist on sago when their relationships with farmers, trade partners and patrons threaten unacceptable levels of subordination (Sellato 1994).

Boomgaard (this volume) argues that it was the early and rapid adoption of maize, beginning in Eastern Indonesia, which permitted larger populations to subsist in upland zones. Maize facilitated the upward flight of the Tengger Javanese after the Muslim conquest of Majapahit (Hefner 1990:57). Political insecurity may also account for the adoption of maize and other new crops in the Lesser Sundas prior to European arrival. The development of lowland sawah can be explained similarly by a political, rather than an evolutionary logic. It was promoted or imposed by lowland or coastal lords not because of its productivity as such, but because it was suitable for cultivation by subjugated populations who were forced to concentrate at important trading centres and in other locales where they could be monitored, subjected to corveé obligations, and taxed.
Capturing Upland Wealth

Both the possibility of escape from subordination and the productivity of upland farming systems drew people towards or encouraged them to remain in the uplands. Besides agriculture, the uplands offer other sources of livelihood and profit, including forest products traded on international markets and mineral resources. In Borneo, according to Padoch and Peluso (1996:4), such activities have supported interior populations and attracted in-migrants for at least two thousand years, linking the most remote areas to regional and international systems of trade. A central concern of coastal powers has been to devise mechanisms for capturing some (or most) of the wealth generated in upland or hinterland settings.

Different political dynamics prevailed at different periods and in different regions. Some upland societies, especially in Eastern Indonesia (Timor) were themselves complex, stratified states. In others, for example Toraja in the nineteenth century, upland chiefs colluded with coastal powers in the oppression and enslavement of upland populations. Alliances between upland and lowland élites were shaped by struggles for control over the lucrative coffee trade. Coffee was also a source of rivalry between upland communities, setting off the skirmishes from which victims or slaves were generated (Bigalke 1983). Few pre-colonial states were powerful enough to exert systematic control over populations living in the uplands, and they did not even attempt to control territory (Bentley 1986). Where coastal powers were strong, for example, Jambi in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (Andaya, B. 1993), extraction of rice, pepper, and other interior produce was accomplished through coercive mechanisms such as levies and tolls, forced indebtedness and enslavement, as well as through enticements such as reduced corvée obligations. But downriver control was continuously contested. Resistance included boycotts and the transfer of business to more hospitable ports, withholding produce, refusing to accept credit, and eventually, abandoning the production of goods which tied people to unfavourable terms of trade (Andaya, B. 1993). Where highlanders had several choices of trade route, by trail or river, their autonomy was enhanced; it declined to the extent they were dependent upon a single riverine system (Bronson 1977). Coastal states in Kalimantan faced another dilemma: hinterland populations too well controlled tended to become Muslim and lose interest in forest collection (Healey 1985:18). Those determined to retain their autonomy could simply reject trade relations (Rousseau 1989:49) or bypass middlemen and debt bondage by developing an alternative mechanism to access imported prestige goods—the labour migration of young men (Healey 1985:5, 22). They also resorted to large-scale migrations involving whole communities moving
into the interior or closer to alternative, more hospitable trading centres (Healey 1985:16, 28).

Thus in economic and political matters the relationship between upland and lowland systems has long been marked by tension. The uplands were, in many parts of the archipelago, central to the prosperity of lowland and coastal states, yet their populations were treated with unmitigated derision and contempt. The difficulty of controlling the interior was construed (ironically but unsurprisingly) as confirmation of the cultural inferiority of its inhabitants. The uplands and interiors of Indonesia’s islands were complex and contradictory spaces: they could be domains of freedom and autonomy from oppressive lowland systems, or of powerlessness so extreme that people became entrapped and subordinated; they could be domains of high productivity, envied and sought-after by lowland profiteers, or of harsh and sparse livelihoods gained on the run. Regardless of which dynamic prevailed, people who lived in the uplands did so not by default, by-passed by history, but for positive reasons of economy, security, and cultural style formed in dialogue with lowland agendas.

*Tradition and Cultural Diversity as Regimes of Knowledge and Power*

Recent historical ethnographies have emphasised that the emergence of cultural distinctiveness among upland populations has been a two-way process—not the unilateral product of centralised lowland power, nor the unilateral product of tradition-bound people without history. According to Tsing, for example, the Meratus in the mountains of Southeast Kalimantan have “lived on the border of state rule and Banjar regionalism for centuries and have elaborated a marginality that has developed in dialogue with state policies and regional politics. Indeed... it is this elaboration of marginality that regional officials mistake for an isolated, primitive tradition” (1993:29). Kahn, Ruiter and Schrauwers (this volume) describe the elaboration of “traditional” forms of peasant production in the modern era. Hefner (1990:23) argues similarly that centuries of interaction and local creativity went into the formation of a “different way of being Javanese” in the Tengger Highlands. The early history of Tengger included a prominent role in state-sponsored religious cults of Majapahit, and a period as a refuge for Hindus fleeing the imposition of Islam, but it was in the context of compulsory colonial coffee production in the mid nineteenth century that highland culture was definitively shaped. In this period the physical landscape was transformed with the complete clearing of midslope forests. The population increased greatly with the influx of landless lowland migrants fleeing the even harsher conditions of compulsory sugar cultivation
Most importantly, the entire population was settled on the land, organised for production on a smallholder basis, and subjected to land taxes payable in coffee. A product of colonial policies, independent smallholding became the hallmark of Tengger cultural identity, a positively espoused and strongly defended way of life which highlanders contrasted with the subservience and indebtedness, as well as the airs and graces, of the rural Javanese lowlands. Tengger “tradition” thus emerged in the context of the regional and transnational political-economic histories of which Tengger has always been a part.

The disjunction between accounts which highlight the historical constitution of difference and marginality, and conventional accounts which characterise the uplands as places with “different” cultures but without history can be explained, I argue, not as a failure of knowledge, but rather in terms of regimes of truth and power. As noted earlier, a discourse about difference, cast as savagery, facilitated the enslavement and exploitation of upland peoples in the pre-colonial period. In the late colonial period the label “traditional” was deployed to explain (and justify) the underdeveloped state of Indonesia’s upland regions. It was a term that served to obscure the extent of change brought about by colonial rule. For example in Sumatra, where a lively indigenous commerce in gold, iron, textiles, cattle and tobacco had been displaced by enforced coffee cultivation, the slump resulting from coffee’s decline was interpreted by Dutch observers as evidence of a “natural”, traditional economy (Kahn 1993:173–179; Bowen 1991; Sherman 1990). So too in upland Java where the retreat of smallholders into a “grim subsistence agriculture” (Hefner 1990:11; Palte 1989) could be read as evidence of a failure to “develop”, as if poverty, tiny, marginal plots of land, and “traditional” practices of labour exchange and feasting had endured from time immemorial. Similar narratives are deployed, under parallel conditions, in contemporary upland Sulawesi, as Schrauwers (this volume) so clearly demonstrates.

The notion of “tradition” was also used quite deliberately to legitimate colonial policies of indirect rule. Early this century, various traditions and customs (adat) were codified by scholars and officials, and used as the basis for rule by Dutch-appointed “traditional” leaders.10 These frozen codes helped to obscure the extent and nature of changes brought about by the colonial regime (Barber 1989:95). The concept of the “adat community” assumed, as it simultaneously sought to engineer, a rural population separated into named ethnic groups with “traditions” stable enough from person to person and context to context to serve as definitions of group identity, and centralised political structures with recognised leaders capable of articulating a single “tradition” on behalf of the whole. These were assumptions that fitted some areas better than
others. In Minangkabau, for example, they conformed better to the identities that emerged during colonial rule than with those that preceded it (Kahn, this volume). As a result of differences in “fit” and, more importantly, different degrees of colonial interest in asserting control over the people and resources of particular locales, the process of “traditionalisation” or “adatisation” occurred unevenly across the archipelago. Those groups that underwent the adat codification process found their customs abstracted from daily practice, catalogued and held up as laws to be enforced by adat chiefs. In other regions, where this process did not occur or was incomplete, identities, practices and authority in matters of custom remained more flexible and diffuse.

The process of inventing or creating traditions was not only a colonial imposition. It has been a central and continuing feature of Indonesian modernity as those who are mobile (socially or geographically) seek to secure a sense of identity (Kahn 1993:122; Gibson 1994:160; Volkman 1985), while others turn to “tradition” in the attempt exert some control over their lives in changing times (George 1991; Schrauwers; Ellen; Tsing; this volume). Images of a traditional “other” are generated also by urban idealists and romantics (both Indonesian and foreign) seeking “traditional people” in whom to place their faith (Tsing, this volume). They are further enhanced as an urban imaginary becomes translated into a tourist agenda.

Finally, processes of traditionalisation or, to use Joel Kahn’s term “culturalisation”, are generated by the New Order regime, which needs a defined and controlled degree of “diversity” in order to promote its form of “unity” (Kahn, this volume; Pemberton 1994). As the Dutch had previously acknowledged, a minority becomes more manageable when it has been appropriately defined and pinned down spatially and socially. In Indonesia today, people without an acceptable “culture” or “tradition” cannot be readily incorporated within the state’s framework for “unity in diversity”. Whether they are advantaged or disadvantaged by this exclusion depends upon an assessment of the ways in which “tradition” and its associated images are taken up by various players, including uplanders themselves, in the formation and contestation of policies, practices and identities.

Reiterating a point made earlier: to acknowledge cultural difference is not necessarily to concede to a singular hierarchy that arrays difference in terms of centres and margins. The question of marginality is always an empirical one; it has to do with hegemonic claims and their local resonances, refractions and outcomes. Webb Keane (1997:38–39) makes this point: “To the extent that people understand themselves to be “marginal,” or simply “local,” they may be accepting at least some of the authority that makes somewhere else—the capital city, the nation, the state, the global economy—a proper, even foundational, frame of
He shows how the authority of the nation insinuates itself into people’s self-understanding, channelled as it is through the mundane disciplines of schools, village meeting halls and bureaucratic encounters. His analysis of local language and culture in Sumba indicates a hegemonic project which, for this locale at least, is quite far advanced.

Policy makers, administrators, activists and critics are primarily concerned with shaping the present and the future of the uplands; yet it is the past, represented in terms of “culture” and “tradition”, that dominates their discourse and shapes current practices and alternatives. For state agencies, environmentalists and social activists alike, assumptions about the marginality of upland ecologies, livelihoods and people form the basis of “development narratives” or “cultural scripts for action” (Hoben 1995). That is, they define problems, filter out contradictory data, and structure options in ways which enable and legitimise specific forms of intervention. It is, as I will show, essentially the same image of the “traditional” and/or marginal uplander that informs both the construction of state policies and also, paradoxically, their critique.

POWER, TERRITORIALISATION AND “DEVELOPMENT” AGENDAS

To define particular regions, peoples and practices as marginal, disorderly, traditional, and/or in need of “development” is not simply to describe the social world: it is to deploy a discourse of power. In this section I focus upon the creation and reconfiguration of margins and minorities as part of the dynamic of modern state formation. Central to understanding state formation (following Philip Corrigan 1994) is an account of how rule is accomplished. This is a matter more fundamental than the question of who rules, or even whose interests are served, and it takes us into the heart of state-systems, institutions and processes.

Of particular relevance in the contemporary uplands is the process of territorialisation defined by Vandergeest and Peluso (1995:387) as the process through which “all modern states divide their territories into complex and overlapping political and economic zones, rearrange people and resources within these units, and create regulations delineating how and by whom these areas can be used”. Territorialising initiatives have been undertaken by both colonial and post-colonial regimes prompted by a search for profit by favoured élites, for tax revenues to support administrative systems, or by the need to assert state authority in areas that, although they may lie clearly within national boundaries, are not fully enmeshed in state-defined institutions and processes. Ongoing and incomplete, territorialising initiatives are commonly contested by the populace. Moreover they involve many government departments, each
with different and possibly conflicting approaches. Strategies for increased control may include privatising natural resources (within state-defined frameworks) or direct management by state-agencies; encouraging settlement in unpopulated areas or forbidding settlement; centralising administrative authority or devolving authority to lower levels. The making of maps, the conduct of censuses, the drawing up of village boundaries and lists, the classification and staking of forests can all be seen as mechanisms to define, regulate and assert control over the relationship between population and resources.

Territorialising initiatives in the uplands of Indonesia (as well as Thailand, the focus of Vandergeest and Peluso’s analysis) have historically been less intense than those in the lowlands, but this situation is changing. State projects to intensify territorial control have been of central importance in transforming the uplands in recent decades. Their justification or, to use Hoben’s (1995) phrase, their “cultural script for action” draws upon a discourse about marginality which emphasises the unruliness and deficiencies of the populations and landscapes to which state-defined order and “development” are the common-sense, apparently a-political, response.

**Territorialisation Projects of the Colonial State**

As noted earlier, territorial control or the direct attempt to regulate the relationship between population and resources was not a feature of rule in pre-colonial state systems. Even in the densely populated pre-colonial negara described by Clifford Geertz (1980), critical relations of power and control were organised along interpersonal rather than territorial lines. There were territorially organised systems for village governance and the regulation of irrigation and production but these were designed to accomplish practical goals and were not marshalled in ways that helped to accomplish rule. Indeed there was little concern with rule as such, hence Geertz’s conclusion (1980:13) that the Balinese negara was a theatre state directed “not towards tyranny, whose systematic concentration of power it was incompetent to effect, and not even very methodically toward government, which it pursued indifferently and hesitantly, but rather towards spectacle, toward ceremony, toward the public dramatisation of the ruling obsessions of Balinese culture: social inequality and status pride.”

Modern state formation, and with it the process of territorialisation, began under colonial rule. An early goal was to increase state control over labour through the imposition of a territorialised system for village administration. The pre-colonial rural system in Java, characterised by personalised allegiances and channels of extraction, had been “unable to bind people to existing settlements for any length of time” (Breman 1988:
Fleeing debts and excessive corvée demands, people frequently moved off in search of less oppressive conditions with another master, or autonomy (often temporary) on a forest frontier. It was in the early nineteenth century that the colonial regime pinned people down into households and villages, surveyed land, fixed and enforced desa boundaries, and represented the result in maps, lists and censuses (Breman 1980, 1988). Contrary to the assumption that orderly, homogenous villages are a natural feature of the Javanese landscape, Breman argues that it was colonial policy which created the peasant village (1980:9–14). By the end of the nineteenth century, all the cultivable land in lowland Java had been brought into production, and “everybody was set in their place”, freezing the agrarian social structure in the “harnessed construction” of the desa community (1980:41).

In the uplands, territorialisation was initiated as an attempt to increase colonial control over natural resources and facilitate the release of land for large scale commercial agriculture. To this end the 1870 Agrarian Law restricted customary rights to land in favour of the state, and made swidden farming on extensive terrain, the management of lucrative tree crop groves, and long standing patterns of forest use illegal (Peluso 1990; Kahn 1993). To the extent that uplanders lost control over resources, or were forced to access them illegally, this law also served as a mechanism to gain control over labour. In the Javanese uplands colonial laws constricted villagers on the fringe of the island’s teak forests as poachers and thieves on state land. While not effectively excluded from the forests, their illegal status nevertheless made them vulnerable to state sanctions, facilitating their co-optation as forest labour on the most minimal terms and subjecting them to multiple supplementary forms of extraction and harassment (Peluso 1990:33–35).

In the Sumatran uplands at the turn of the century, state control over territory was incomplete. Villagers were able to reform themselves on the fringes of colonial plantations and retain a foothold on the land—particularly on the steeper, less accessible slopes. So long as upland populations had access to the means of production, however marginal the terrain, labour for the European plantations and resin forests had to be imported (Kahn 1993:246; Bowen 1991:79; Ruiter, this volume). Plantation labour was drawn from the landless, indebted, disciplined lowland Javanese population while native uplanders were, predictably, branded as lazy and deficient (Alatas 1972; Dove, this volume). In the indirectly governed territories the Dutch assumed that native rulers were in control over the so-called wastelands, and western entrepreneurs had to negotiate with them for access to land. Their arrangements led, however, to similar sets of restrictions on peasant access, and in some cases to protracted conflict (Ruiter, this volume).
Territorialisation and Development in the Post-Colonial Era

In the post-colonial period, state interventions in the uplands have come increasingly to be framed through a discourse of marginality and the need for “development”. Disorder in the relationship between people and the resource base is seen to stem, in part at least, from the deficiencies of upland culture and personality (Dove, this volume). To bring order where it is lacking, current mechanisms include the official designation of land as “forest”; the development of plantations and transmigration sites which bring well-ordered, usually lowland populations into unruly areas; the regularisation of spontaneous land settlement; and the resettlement of the so-called masyarakat terasing (isolated or backward tribes) into properly administered villages. These four approaches are somewhat contradictory, indicating the unfinished nature of territorialisation processes (Vanderveest and Peluso 1995:391), as well as the internal complexity of the governing regime. While they each have a territorialising dimension, they are framed in more particular terms, as initiatives designed to bring about one or other aspect of “development”.

In contrast to the lowlands, cadastral surveys and land titles are almost unknown in the uplands and territorial control is exercised most directly through forest law and policy (Barber 1989:5; Peluso 1992). Under the Basic Forestry Law of 1967, nearly three quarters of Indonesia’s total land area, including much of the uplands, is defined as “forest”, regardless of its current vegetation. This legal framework implies, from the outset, that most agrarian activities in and around the “forest” are illegitimate. But rather than confront the economic issues directly, transgressions are interpreted within a “development” rhetoric stressing personal characteristics of backwardness, ignorance and indiscipline. Forest-dependent villagers are said to have “low levels of awareness”, lack “advanced patterns of thought”, and have “inadequate consciousness” of the forest’s functions (Barber 1989:137, 172, 282) thereby legitimising intervention to provide appropriate “guidance”. Control is also exercised directly through military and police interventions to protect the “forest” from illegal incursions (Barber 1989:131–137; Tjitradjaja 1993). Java’s forests continue to be associated in state discourse with criminals and outlaws (Peluso 1990).

The significance of “forests” to the process of extending state control over the uplands goes considerably beyond any concern with trees. On crowded Java, according to Barber (1989:3–20), 50% of the population is landless yet 23% of the total land area is classified as national forest, off limits to agriculture or other uses. Within this area only traces of natural forest remain and state teak and pine plantations are largely unproductive. The landscape is characterised by secondary forest,
degraded land, and farms with more or less permanent crops. On the borders of this “forest” are six thousand villages, with 30 million inhabitants, mainly drawing their livelihoods from the forest as labourers and through illegal extraction and farming. With a burgeoning landless population, forest villages are placing increased pressure on upland watersheds, as farming extends and is intensified in the effort to meet subsistence needs. Since Java’s forests now contribute only a “minuscule portion of the nation’s forestry income” (Barber 1989:124), control over the population occupying this upland terrain, rather than the search for revenue or profit, is the major logic at work in Java’s forest management.

Political, economic and administrative control over a mass of impoverished and dispossessed “forest” villagers on Java, and a dispersed, often inaccessible population off Java, has not been easy to impose. Administratively, much power over “forest” areas, and therefore over most of the uplands, is concentrated in the Department of Forestry. For “forest” villagers on Java this one department dominates their interactions with the state, and has major influence over political, economic and security matters (Barber 1989:148). In the vast “forests” off Java, concessionaires with forest leases are delegated the same extensive powers. For the resident population, the only “room to manoeuver” arises in the spaces between the mandates of different government departments as these are interpreted by various parties at the local level (see Tsing, this volume).

In competition with the Department of Forestry, the Department of Agriculture has an interest in the massive logged-over (or burned-over) lands of Kalimantan for conversion to oil palm or other plantations, offering an alternative way to bring “development” to the huge land areas and populations under Forestry control. Social forestry programs can be seen, in part at least, as an attempt to forestall this alternative. Under the banner of “development”, “environment” and “participation”, social forestry programs promise to address the needs of the people by permitting limited agricultural activities to take place in “forests” under the control and guidance of the Forest Department (Barber 1989:229, 410–11; Djamaludin Suryohadikusumo 1995). Long time opponents, forest villagers are now to become allies of the Forest Department in its project to retain control over its domain. At the same time, coercive removal of those practising unregulated smallholder agricultural activities within “forest” zones continues to be government policy. Reinvigorated enforcement measures were announced in 1993 through a joint Decree of the Ministers of Forestry, Home Affairs and Transmigration dealing with so-called shifting cultivators and forest destroyers (Barber et al. 1995:15). People who farm within “forests” are to be identified and inventoried (located, listed, classified); they are then liable to be relocated into official
transmigration settlements (Departmen Kehutanan 1994; Barber et al. 1995:14).

The Transmigration Department is also a potential competitor when it seeks to have “forest” released for conversion to farms and new settlements. In the past, transmigration sites were mostly in the lowlands and their goal was irrigated rice production. Since suitable lowland sites have become scarce, however, the focus of the program has shifted to upland areas which would be suitable for either timber plantations (under Forestry control) or for commercial tree crop estates (under the Department of Agriculture) (Brookfield et al. 1995:89, 105; Hidayati 1991:43). The current mandate of Transmigration is to furnish (suitably disciplined) labour to exploit and develop underutilised resources, and thereby promote economic growth while also bringing political and administrative order to peripheral areas. Schemes for large scale agricultural development such as plantations and nucleus estates, sometimes pursued in conjunction with transmigration, have a similar effect: they enmesh territory and people in frameworks of state control, simultaneously reshaping the landscape, developing “model” settlements, and providing a clear rationale for the extension of roads and the administrative machinery of government. They include some of those displaced to make room for “development” and further marginalise others (White, Dove, this volume).

In economic terms, many of the large scale state schemes to realign people and resources are expensive, inefficient, and unprofitable (SKEPHI and Kiddel-Monroe 1993:245–259; White this volume). Where they disrupt people’s livelihoods, they are also unpopular, and must be implemented through coercive mechanisms (White, Dove, this volume). Yet they have important effects. While these projects may or may not bring in “development” (improved livelihoods, greater productivity, roads and services) there is no doubt that “development” brings with it the administrative and coercive machinery of the state. Moreover, the logic is self-confirming: to the extent that livelihoods are not improved, projects fail to produce, services are poor, and people recalcitrant, this only proves that a stronger state presence and more “development” are needed (cf. Ferguson 1994).  

In less grandiose fashion than transmigration and estate schemes, and often more peacefully, the intensification of state control over population and resources can also be accomplished by regularising the spontaneous incursion of migrants into frontier zones, especially where these have been made accessible by logging roads. Once newcomers have been organised into administrative units (desas), their daily activities can be monitored and regulated through the various village committees and institutions specified in law. As newcomers trying to make their way outside the formal structure of a project, they may be especially eager to
transform themselves into model communities and thereby legitimate their presence and consolidate their hold over resources. They want and need to be enmeshed in state systems in order to claim their place as citizens and as clients of state-officials and institutions. Order along the frontier is not guaranteed, however, as the processes of settlement and expanding state territorial control themselves routinely reproduce conditions for conflict. By ignoring the local populations and indigenous resource management institutions already in place, they provoke the events, cases, or situations which draw media attention and evince further rounds of state intervention. As critics of the Village Administrative Law No.5/1979 have often pointed out (Moniaga 1993), state administrative policies in frontier areas have been designed to dismantle local forms of order and regulation in order to substitute government ones, but this transition is not easily accomplished.

Some of the responsibility for refashioning indigenous institutions falls upon the Department of Social Welfare, through its programs for the so-called isolated and estranged people (masyarakat terasing). Tsing suggests that such people play an ideological role disproportionate to their rather modest numbers (about one million, Departmen Sosial 1994a: 1) as they:

have quietly become icons of the archaic disorder that represents the limit and test of state order and development. From the perspective of the elite, “ primitives”, unlike communists, are not regarded as seriously dangerous but rather as wildly untutored—somewhat like ordinary village farmers, but much more so. Disorderly yet vulnerable, primitives are relatively scarce, and their taming becomes an exemplary lesson in marginality through which the more advanced rural poor can be expected to position themselves nearer the centre (1993:28).

The continued presence of (a few) primitives on the periphery could be viewed as evidence that state projects to extend order and control remain incomplete. Yet, as Tsing suggests, their presence also serves as an opportunity to “re-state” and justify “development” agendas. Officials contrast the strangeness of masyarakat terasing to the positively valued, comforting homogeneity of the “ordinary, average, Indonesian” (bangsa Indonesia secara rata-rata dalam keseluruhan”, (Haryati Soebardio, Minister for Social Affairs 1993:vii). Guidelines for fieldworkers list the backward characteristics of masyarakat terasing and specify the physical, social and administrative elements needed to render them “normal” in national terms (Departmen Sosial 1994b). Increasingly, they are permitted to remain in their current locations (reorganised into newly built, standardised, more orderly settlements) but the model of “development”
to be pursued is pre-defined. Thus the presence of the “other” helps to affirm the characteristics of the “normal developed Indonesian person”, overriding, for a moment, the vast regional, class and other differences that characterise the Archipelago.

Local Hierarchies and Channels for State Power

For most Indonesians living in the cities or lowlands of Java, upland shifting cultivators or forest product collectors are very remote. TV images of wild people and places might confirm to viewers the superiority of their own modernity, but the groups most affected by their presence are those who encounter them directly: managers, officials, workers, transmigrants and farmers living in the uplands. These groups compete with them for resources and struggle to assert control over their land and labour. Among these diverse groups of outsiders (some of whom have been present for decades) the ease with which the local or “indigenous” people can be labelled primitive permits their claims to be ignored or dismissed (Dove, Ellen, this volume). Heterogeneous groups of newcomers can define for themselves an identity which centres on being, at the very least, more “developed” than the people already in place.

Ethnic stereotypes apart, both newcomers and long time residents of the uplands are divided along class lines, and their relationships with each other can be quite complex. Imported plantation labourers often seek to re-establish themselves as peasant farmers on the borders of estate land (Stoler 1985; Ruiter, this volume) and transmigrants unable to survive and prosper on the farmland allotted to them seek additional land (Hidayati 1991, 1994). Those with powerful patrons may simply take over, but many acknowledge that the locals have prior and legitimate land claims and seek to establish alliances or relations of clientship with them (Ruiter, this volume). In these interactions they reverse the state-sponsored ethnic hierarchy which asserts the superiority of the Javanese (and lowlanders) over uplanders (and natives). The position of “indigenous” leaders may also be complex. Some become brokers of land to outsiders and may betray the interests of their kin and co-villagers in favour of building alliances with newcomers and with patrons promising access to jobs, resources, or state power (Tjitradjaja 1993). In the uplands there is no simple correlation of ethnic identity with class status; nor is there a single trajectory of change prefigured by state plans and programs.

In frontier conditions such as those along the logging roads criss-crossing the uplands and interior of Kalimantan and other islands, the machinery of the state is often weak, and its representatives few. It is local patrons who act as brokers of state-derived power and largesse (land
rights, credit, subsidies, licenses, cf Hart 1989). Whether patrons are members of well-established local élites, wealthy newcomers, officials drawn from or posted to the regions, or some of these in combination, it is their links to specific state institutions, to senior officials, and to the idea of “the state” as a locus of legitimate authority that provides them with power in and over the periphery (Kahn, Ruiter, this volume). They help to operationalise, while at the same time they personify, various forms of institutional power and control. Patronage is quite clearly reinforced by “development”, as some profit from state hand-outs while others need more assistance to negotiate the increased array of rules and bureaucratic procedures that are part and parcel of territorialising processes in general and “development” in particular (White, this volume; Ferguson 1994). As Kahn argues (this volume), patronage is one of the characteristic ways that power works in upland settings. The fact that particular laws may be enforced or may instead be waived by “lenient” officials; the ways in which upland people are able to play one agency or official off against another; and the various forms of accommodation as well as conflict that arise are not accidents, but rather features of the relationship between “the state” and its citizens.24 Patronage is one way in which the categories centre and margin are articulated.

Strengths, limits and contradictions in state power, “development”, and green agendas

Not surprisingly, in view of the range of state agencies, corporations and local interests competing for pieces of the upland terrain, mapping efforts have intensified but they have not produced either clarity or consensus. In Kalimantan a major mapping effort with foreign co-operation was undertaken with a view to defining areas available for “development”, especially transmigration and oil and rubber estates (Repprot, cited in Peluso 1995:389–391). The report associated with these maps makes a claim for interpreting the “unclassified” portion in a manner favourable to the Department of Agriculture but disadvantageous both to the Department of Forestry and to customary land users.25 It is an interpretation which can (and probably will) be disputed piecemeal, as tussles occur over initiatives to realise the Repprot vision in particular places, conjuring up alliances and oppositions of a varied nature indicative of “room for manoeuver”, rather than the unilateral imposition of order as defined by a singular locus of state power (cf Tsing, this volume).26

Significant as state programs are, change in the uplands is not engineered from a single source. Some of the effects of state programs are unintended, indirect, or unforeseen. State programs for the uplands can
also be actively disrupted and resisted through evasion, breaches and non-compliance. This is the case in Thailand, where Vandergeest and Peluso (1995:416) observe,

Government agencies are continually reclassifying and remapping territory to account for how people have crossed earlier paper boundaries. State land management agencies are forced to recognize local rights deriving from local classification, modes of communication, and enforcement mechanisms. Programs such as those awarding limited land rights to cultivators in reserve forest areas are simultaneously a state attempt to contain people’s activities and a state response to what people had done to undermine previous such policies.

In Indonesia, the emergence of social forestry programs, the inclusion of forest-villagers in transmigration programs, renewed attempts to enforce forest boundaries, moves to bring administrative order to spontaneous land settlement, failures of resettlement schemes and increased willingness to service so-called masyarakat terasing in their ancestral areas all indicate that territorialisation projects of various state agencies have met with considerable degrees of resistance, and are being revised and reformed accordingly.

Just as the power of state institutions is not absolute, it must be stressed that it is not necessarily malevolent: as noted earlier, territorialisation is a normal activity of governments, not one peculiar to oppressive regimes. Environmentalists and supporters of peasant struggles who assume that “traditional” communities are inclined to oppose “the state” in order to preserve “their own” institutions and practices may overlook the extent to which uplanders seek the benefits of a fuller citizenship. Their demands commonly include access to roads, education, and health facilities. The oppositional characterisation of “virtuous” peasants and “vicious” states (Bernstein 1990:71) fails to do justice to the complexities of state-local relations and associated class structuring processes (Nugent 1994; Hart 1989). It neglects also the claims upon state institutions and programs for access to modernity which characterise many peasant and indigenous people’s movements (Schuurman 1993:27), just as others reject and resist state imperatives.

In the case discussed by Tsing (this volume), Meratus people did not oppose the territorial strategies reflected in mapping and road building; rather, they wanted to ensure that their community was on official maps and roads, a regularised and recognised component of the national framework. Similarly, administrative changes which subdivided previously unwieldy units into smaller ones reflecting actual patterns of settlement and interaction were experienced by Meratus not only as
intensifications of rule, but also as opportunities to form communities capable of interacting more effectively with state programs and obtaining access to development benefits. In the case described by White (this volume) villagers joining a contract farming scheme saw as its principal benefit the provision of official land titles to replace previous tenure arrangements that had proven insecure (even though, in this case, the insecurity had been caused by a state-sponsored program which had reallocated “their” land for new political and economic purposes). Complaints commonly encountered in the Indonesian uplands relate not to the concept of “development” as articulated by “the state”, but to particular, localised experiences with a development which removes sources of livelihood without providing viable alternatives, fails to bring promised benefits or distributes benefits unevenly (Peluso 1992; Ellen, this volume).

The evidence from these local studies seems to indicate that critiques of Indonesian state policies which propose that “the state” should retreat from the uplands, and leave indigenous people to manage their own affairs in their “traditional” ways, misrepresent the nature of upland life just as seriously as the “development” agenda they oppose. Promoted by national and international elites, and well intentioned (just as many government efforts are well intentioned), “green” agendas also depend upon simplifications and stereotypes. Ironically, the discourses of development and anti-development seem to rely upon the very same simplified images to advance diametrically opposed agendas. As Tsing (1993:32) points out: “Ecological activists argue for the conservation of Bornean rainforests based on images of nature-loving primitive tribes. Such images of primitive conservatism are also used by developers to prove the necessity for progress in the form of forced resettlement and export-oriented resource appropriation”.

Implicating the Indonesian state in forest destruction, proponents of “green” development models have declared indigenous or forest-based communities to be the appropriate keepers of this resource. Such communities are imagined to possess a set of characteristics counterposed to those of state agencies and other forest destroyers: they are tribal, or at least backed by centuries-old environmental wisdom; they have long been located in one place, to which they have spiritual as well as pragmatic attachments; they are relatively homogenous, without class divisions; they are not driven by motives of exploitation and greed; they have limited consumption requirements; and their collective desires focus upon the long-term sustainable management of forest resources for the benefit of future generations. For example, the environmental advocacy group SKEPHI emphasises the harmony between people and with nature that characterises “traditional” communities: “Under the traditional adat land rights system, land is regarded as the common
property of the community ... it is inalienable... people do not own the land on which they live and work; they merely control it... land belongs to God as the creator... In this way, respect for the land and its resources is maintained for the benefit of the community as a whole” (SKEPHI and Kiddell-Monroe, 1993:231–2). The implication of their account is that “tradition” (unlocated in time, geography or context) remains present in Indonesia’s “indigenous” communities, ready to be revitalised by enlightened state and NGO backing for “community forestry under the control of existing traditional institutions” (1993:262). The same account notes problems created by state policies in the uplands, such as displacement by forest concessions, trans-migration schemes and nucleus estates. Yet the changes these much-critiqued programs have brought to the uplands over the past five decades—new people, new landscapes, new communities, new classes, new infrastructure, new needs and desires, new engagements with market and state—are not factored into the solution proposed, one that looks principally to “tradition” for salvation.

Similarly, those concerned with the “right to survival of endangered cultures and tribal peoples” note the vulnerability of such people to the penetration of exploitative capitalism supported by state interventions to “modernise” and “develop” them. Yet they still imagine a group of “tribals, aborigines, natives, minorities, highlanders, forest people” sufficiently exempt from these processes to be “autochthonous minorities”, authentic candidates for protection (Lim and Gomes 1990:2).

Scholars and activists promoting common property regimes in the region also base their arguments upon a “communal presumption” rooted in the image of intact tribes. But tenure patterns have shifted historically with changing forms and relations of production in ways which cannot be captured by visions of an apocalyptic collapse of autonomous communities facing market and state “intrusions”. Development models emphasising sustainable development, community based resource management, and social forestry also assume that upland people have a natural environmental ethic, limited current market engagements, strong community bonds and minimal class inequalities (e.g. Kepas 1985). While some acknowledge the political and economic complexity of the uplands (for example, the introductory chapter of Poffenberger 1990), they proceed quickly to the practical matters of “tools and techniques of participatory management” and “empowering communities through social forestry” (Poffenberger 1990), assuming a consensus on the future of the uplands which is superficial at best.

The simplifications noted in the practitioner literature occur in part through the elision of categories. Uplands become equated with forests while farms are ignored, especially commercial farms and plantations. Upland people become equated with indigenous people, tribal people,
traditional people, forest-dependent people or shifting cultivators, belying the enormous diversity of ethnic groups and social classes that occupy upland terrain, and the alliances and identities formed in situ. An overwhelming image is that of victim, struggling against “outside forces” (capitalism, plantations, concessions, state development schemes) to maintain something old, but hardly engaged in creating something new. These elisions are not merely oversights, or the result of inadequate data. They are simplifications necessary to the critique of state policies, which rely, as noted above, on equally simplified representations of upland lifestyles and ecology. Instead of a dialogue between the state and its critics, a mirror effect simply inverts the categories (wise swiddener/destructive swiddener, valuable traditions/backward traditions) leaving the categories themselves essentialised and fundamentally unchanged. In between these opposing camps, uplanders must invent especially creative strategies in order to defend their livelihoods and advance their own agendas, attempting to turn both state and “green” discourse to their own ends (see Tsing, Ellen, Dove, this volume).

Like tradition and culture, environment and development turn out to be deeply embedded in questions of representation and power with both local and global dimensions (Bryant 1992, Moore 1993, Blaikie and Brookfield 1987). In the context of struggles over resources, “people may invest in meanings as well as in the means of production—and struggles over meaning are as much a part of the process of resource allocation as are struggles over surplus or the labour process” (Berry 1988:66). Such struggles take place within households, between communities, between communities and the state and now, increasingly, between communities and a global environmental lobby. They frequently invoke divergent images of community as a remembered past, a contested present, and imagined future.

**PRODUCTION, ACCUMULATION, AND IMAGINED FUTURES**

The familiar but indispensable investigation of the social relations of production and accumulation provides the third analytical frame through which upland transformations can be exposed. Also important is an examination of the culturally formed wants (Hefner 1990) pursued by uplanders and reflected in their patterns of production, investment and consumption. As Hefner observes, “Economic change is never just a matter of technological diffusion, market rationalization, or ‘capitalist penetration’. Deep down, it is also a matter of community, morality and power” (1990:2).
In keeping with the general assumption of marginality, there is a widespread perception in Indonesia that livelihoods in the uplands are inadequate and poverty widespread. Yet, as indicated earlier, large populations have been attracted to the uplands for their agricultural potential both for subsistence and for commerce. As is the case in the lowlands (Alexander et al. 1991), some of the more lucrative livelihoods have not been agrarian at all, but focused rather on extractive industries, trade and wage work. There has been much discussion of the ecological limits of upland agriculture and the fact that agriculture sometimes takes place in locations where, according to some technical or administrative criteria, it should not, has obscured consideration of the types of production that actually take place in upland settings. The “environmentalisation” of the uplands, together with the “culturalisation” already explored, strongly colour the ways in which upland landscapes and production systems are apprehended. Both the forms of upland production and the distortions commonly encountered in their characterisation are the subject of this section.

One reason for the assumed inadequacy of upland livelihoods is the consistent underestimation of both the extent and the productivity of upland agriculture. The conceptual hierarchy prioritising rice is such that upland food crops (maize, cassava) scarcely figure in archival records and are still under-recorded in official statistics (Boomgaard, this volume). Off Java, colonial administrators abhorred the apparent disorder of upland farms and sought to impose Javanese style sawah, a system of cultivation requiring intensive management, water control, and a diligence reminiscent of the Dutch polder (Colombijn 1995). They ignored or underestimated the smallholder cash crop production which has been a pervasive and long-standing characteristic of swidden systems (Dove 1985b). Throughout the colonial period, according to Henley and Colombijn (1995:3),

Where an innovation was indeed viable...the local population often recognised its value long before the Dutch did. Coffee, pioneered by indigenous farmers in both Minahasa and West Sumatra, is a case in point. The main effects of the subsequent Dutch interference in coffee cultivation...were simply to lower profits, to increase the element of compulsion correspondingly, and to shift production away from mixed swidden fields and home gardens into monocultural plantations which both interfered with subsistence farming and promoted soil erosion.
The significance of even large scale production within the uplands has sometimes been underestimated. The labour mobilised for upland coffee at the height of the Cultivation System was two to three times that mobilised for lowland sugar (White 1983:28, cited in Hefner 1990:41). Colonial profits, ecological impacts and social dislocations associated with coffee were immense (Hefner 1990:42), yet they have received less scholarly attention.

The proportion of Indonesia’s agriculture that takes place in the uplands is considerable. On Java, an island strongly associated in official discourse and the popular imagination with lowland sawah, rainfed lands and house gardens, located primarily in the uplands, account for more than half of the cultivated land (Hefner 1990:16). The extensification of agriculture in Java’s uplands is continuing as a result of pressure from growing populations and also as a result of the government goal of rice self-sufficiency, which has pushed non-rice annuals (palawija) onto upland fields (Hardjono 1994:183). Another pressure is the attractive profit to be gained from temperate fruit and vegetable crops, increasingly in demand in urban markets (Hardjono 1994:184; Suryanata, this volume). Outside Java, agricultural extensification has occurred to meet national export targets, with three million hectares converted to tree crops alone between 1971–86 (Booth 1991:54 cited in Hardjono 1994:201). Plantation lands in Indonesia already cover 35 million hectares, and it is estimated that a further 2.8–5.6 million hectares will be needed by the year 2000 (Bappenas 1993:12).

The area devoted to dryland agriculture, including shifting cultivation, has also increased in the past few decades. In the hilly interior of East Kalimantan, for example, plans to expand sawah during the period 1963–1983 fell short, but the dryland farm area increased from 96,000 hectares to 155,000 hectares (Hidayati 1991:38). Much of the expansion was the work of in-migrants, including transmigrants who fled failed schemes or expanded beyond the edges of their designated two-hectare plot as they adopted the extensive swidden techniques of their indigenous neighbours (Hidayati 1991:43, 1994). Some found themselves stranded by downturns in the logging or oil sectors which first drew them to the province while others were attracted to the province specifically for the opportunity to grow lucrative cash crops such as pepper, while meeting food needs through swiddening (Hidayati 1991:38, 45). In Sumatra too, smallholder cultivation has expanded into forested areas as a result of improved communications, current and expected land pressure due to transmigration, and the recognition that land claims are strengthened under both adat and national law by the presence of perennials (Angelsen 1995). Some of the agrarian changes that occurred in East Kalimantan and Sumatra were not the developments which were planned; nor are in-
migrants and indigenous farmers who are interested in claiming land and making profits from trees the kinds of people normally highlighted in discussions of shifting cultivation. Agricultural sector analyses tend to focus more on changes that are policy generated than those that are the unplanned, “illegal” or, from a state planner’s point of view, perverse outcome of millions of separate, smallholder decisions (Barbier 1989). Yet smallholder tree crops, mostly located in the uplands, contributed 12.3% to Indonesia’s gross domestic product from agriculture in 1992, while tree crops grown on estates (concentrated in Sumatra and West Nusa Tenggara) contributed only 4.9% (Barlow 1996:8). Para rubber was for some time the country’s third largest foreign exchange earner after oil and timber, 76% of it “produced in tiny gardens of a hectare or so, with century-old technology, by so-called “smallholders”” (Dove 1996:43). Because their operations are small in scale, and because many of them are carried out within “forest” boundaries and without state control or assistance, it is the low technology, errant location and indiscipline of smallholders that are observed, rather than their significant contribution to the national economy. As Dove (1996:47) suggests, estate development has been given priority because it “suits the general, overarching governmental imperative of centralised control and extraction of resources, whereas small-holder development only frustrates this imperative”. Smallholders reject estates or contracting schemes for these very reasons, as illustrated by Ruiter, Dove and White (this volume).

Characteristically, several types of activity and several sources of livelihood are combined in upland settings. Yet the models found in government reports are misleadingly simple. For example, the official document outlining the identification criteria for shifting cultivators and forest squatters envisages two quite distinct types of farmer. 1) The shifting cultivator, strongly traditional, resistant to change, engaged in production oriented primarily towards subsistence, who uses tree crops only as markers of land ownership and control. 2) The forest destroyer, whose main purpose is the illegal control of land for the purpose of growing high value crops such as pepper, coffee and cocoa (Departemen Kehutanan 1994). A similar dichotomy is found in much academic and advocacy literature, which distinguishes integral swiddeners (the traditional, ecologically benevolent ones) from shifting cultivators, assumed to be newcomers, interested in only in cash and unconcerned about environmental damage (Hardjono 1994:202; Kartawinata and Vayda 1984; Barber et al. 1995:10).

The dichotomous classification of farm types and farmers tends to reproduce the more general traditional/modern dualism critiqued earlier. It shares the problem of stereotyping, and underestimates the diversity, complexity and productivity of upland farming systems. In terms of farms, it emphasises extremes (sawah versus swidden, or plantation versus...
swidden), but glosses over much of the significant middle ground: tegal, dryland, tree grove/swidden combinations, commercial crops on smallholdings or in fallows, farming strategies which include both upland and sawah components. It also misses seasonal combinations that include fishing or wage labour, the activities of wage workers who farm around the edges of plantations or on logged over land, structural shifts in which farmers abandon their fields for a few years when better incomes are available in logging or construction work, and many other livelihood options that upland people have identified and pursued (Brookfield et al. 1995; Lian 1993). Finally, it tends to treat the upland farmer as a singular male subject, ignoring the diverse livelihood activities pursued by women, and the ways that these are restructured in the context of broad shifts in the regional economy, technical innovations, male wage migration, and official schemes and projects such as the contract farming scheme described by White, or the commercial fruit ventures described by Suryanata (this volume).

In social terms, the dichotomous model has only a limited space for recognition of the indigenous farmer who is innovative, dynamic, aware of market prices, very much interested in cash, and making investment decisions accordingly. The presence of such a character is somewhat acknowledged in Java. Hardjono (1994:188) notes that upland farmers are pragmatic and opportunistic, seeking maximum returns. But her remark is not intended to highlight how familiar and normal are the motivations of upland farmers; rather she observes that upland farmers are pursuing profits at the expense of the environment. Off Java, the pragmatic profit-seeking upland farmer is even less visible. At best, it is noted that the categories defined by dichotomous models can become “blurred”. But the strongly marked image is that of the uplander as victim of market and state, as when Barber et al. (1995) discuss swiddeners “forced to intensify” through planting tree crops, but hardly entertain the possibility that these farmers may in fact choose to plant these profitable tree crops for all the normal economic reasons.

**Ecology**

In the past two or three decades, research and policy have both tended to focus upon the ecological limitations of upland production. Observers note the poor quality of some of Java’s upland soils (Hardjono 1994:188) and the serious consequences of intensification upon a fixed land base: “Upland tegal lacks the ecological resilience of irrigated sawah. Worked intensively, it loses its fertility. Exposed to winds and rain, it erodes. Cultivated without fallow, it becomes an ideal medium for fungi and insect pests” (Hefner 1990:16). Green revolution chemicals have reversed some of the effects of fertility decline, but have not reversed
erosion, and these chemicals have had social and ecological impacts of their own (Hefner 1990:81–112). When pushed past a certain point, the regenerative potential of upland ecologies is limited, or is a very long term prospect.

It is also possible to exaggerate the risks of agricultural intensification in upland settings. Estimates of average fallows in Minahasan subsistence farming indicate that a “surprisingly intensive swidden cycle was maintained over a period of several decades without apparent loss of soil fertility” (Henley and Colombijn 1995:4). Land in Sulawesi reported by colonial officials to be “worn out” in the 19th century is still in productive use today. In Kalimantan, according to Brookfield et al. (1995:29–30, 135–136), large areas of what now appears to be primary forest were occupied in the past, and population in many interior areas was more dense 1–300 years ago than it is today. Brookfield et al. (1995:229) conclude that “trajectories can be reversed when driving forces and conditions undergo major change”. Potter (1996:25) suggests that the number and impact of spontaneous settlers, the “land-hungry migrants” observed practising shifting cultivation alongside logging roads may also have been exaggerated. Rather than consuming ever-greater amounts of forest and spreading out into the interior, they tend to stay close to the road itself as their point of access to markets. Similarly, when people in inaccessible villages are attracted to live near new roads, they increase resource pressure in the road corridor but presumably relieve pressure in their areas of origin (Potter 1996:26).

Thus the history of upland agriculture cannot be reduced to a story of ecological ruin. Nor is ecological change necessarily a story of impoverishment. Smallholdings carved out of the forest may become stable and profitable. The various state programs transforming the uplands (estate crop plantations, timber concessions, transmigration etc.) have different rates of economic return overall as well as for the various social groups affected by them. In terms of their capacity to support people over the long term, however, the verdict of Brookfield et al. on both the forest industry and large scale land conversion for agriculture in Kalimantan is guarded but positive (1995:83–111).

**Accumulation**

Directly or indirectly, simplified images of upland production and upland producers shape policies and programs, and also shape the characteristic patterns of accumulation that arise in upland settings. The image of upland farming as marginal or “near zero” facilitates its displacement by official schemes which assign the land to other purposes (Dove 1987; Hardjono 1994:203; Lynch and Talbott 1995:98). Once displaced, farmers are forced to reorganise their productive activities (yet
again) “on the margins” of official schemes and agendas (Schrauwers, Kahn, Ruiter, White this volume). In many cases they are pushed onto higher or more sloping terrain, confirming the impression that they disregard the environment. Robbed of their assets, they meet the expectations of poverty and disorganisation that require further “development” intervention.

Assumptions about the cultural otherness of upland people may also be translated into development initiatives which disadvantage them. Dove critiques conservationist agendas which propose that “minor forest products” be promoted to meet the (apparently limited) income needs of forest-dwelling people. It is lack of power which excludes such people from enjoyment of the most profitable forest product (timber), and they are regularly punished for converting land to profitable tree crops. Should their land or some “minor forest product” become especially profitable, these too are usually taken away from them: their poverty renders them ineligible as beneficiaries. Therefore, according to Dove, the “search for “new” sources of income for “poor forest dwellers” is often, in reality, a search for opportunities that have no other claimants—a search for unsuccessful development alternatives” (1993:18). Poverty, powerlessness and exclusion from valuable resources are integrally related. Such economic and political linkages are obscured when forest communities are viewed through a lens that stresses cultural difference and prioritises conservation, while implying that marginality is an elected way of life.

Agroforestry programs have been especially favoured in recent years, because they seem to offer a singular solution to the problematic of upland marginality and a script for action acceptable to many parties: they satisfy environmentalists by conserving soil and planting trees to intensify production on already-cleared land; they meet state-defined development objectives by stabilising farm locations, increasing market production and relieving poverty; and they satisfy social activists concerned to see the land rights of upland populations regularised and secured, and their local knowledge and capacities respected. Missing from this picture, however, is an appreciation of uplanders’ interest in, and vulnerability to, processes of accumulation. On this point several of the enabling assumptions (about priorities for conservation over production, egalitarian patterns of resource access and labour investment, and limited consumer desires) founder. Agroforestry technologies routinely fail to deliver the increased incomes promised, especially in relation to the labour invested, and some programs have resorted to coercion (see Lee 1995). When economically successful, programs may not conserve forests but rather encourage an expansion of agriculture into forested area as local farmers seize new opportunities rather than sitting back when their (supposedly limited) needs are met (see Tomich and
Noordwijk 1995; Angleson 1995). Another scenario has emerged in upland Java (Suryanata, this volume) where a technically successful transition to fruit-based “agroforestry” set up patterns of accumulation in favour of established village élites. These are not exceptional situations, and it is not clear that they can be rectified by better technologies and program incentives. They are the predictable outcomes of changing patterns of production and the dynamics of culture and class in contemporary upland settings. They tend to be ignored, overlooked or explained away in order to protect the “strategic simplifications” embedded in agroforestry initiatives.

The uneven reach of government programs also impacts on patterns of accumulation in the uplands, as it did in the lowland green revolution (Hart et al. 1989). Relatively small amounts of government credit are allocated to upland farmers (Palte 1989:208, cited in Hardjono 1994:184). Lack of subsidised credit and tenure insecurity in turn increase the problems of predation or exploitation by patrons and brokers noted earlier. In particular, high capital requirements and long waiting periods for the establishment of tree crops provide avenues for those with capital to acquire a stake in upland production, and sharecropping arrangements and indebtedness leading to loss of control over resources are typical (Poffenberger 1983; Li 1996a, 1997; Suryanata this volume).

Low prices for upland products are both a cause and a symptom of farmer vulnerability. Unlike lowland rice, which is destined for national, price-controlled markets, much upland produce is destined for international markets where prices are characteristically unstable. They are subject to boom-bust cycles which cannot be controlled at the national level (Hardjono 1994:185). Even when prices are high, however, the marketing chain reflects power imbalances which ensure that upland farmers receive only a small percentage of the gains. A recent reduction in the farmgate price for cloves, for example, reflected the increased profit margin officially assigned by the government to the clove marketing board (Sondakh 1996:161).

In Java, official sanctions and harassment of those living in and around “forest” areas reduce the bargaining power of both farmers and labourers (Peluso 1992). Despite the promises of social forestry, processes of class structuring proceed apace. According to Barber (1989) the predominant local labour relations (including unofficial absentee ownership and sharecropping) are replicated on “forest” lands, and familiar patterns of state patronage are well entrenched. On the most fertile “forest” lands, forester’s dispensations and connections to local government and the military permit favoured élites to engage in intensive commercial agriculture, thus positioning them to capture any subsidies or benefits. Only the most degraded land, yielding the lowest possible returns to labour and capital, is generally made available to the poorest people
under social forestry schemes. Thus the patterns of accumulation taking place in the “forest” zone in Java are masked by the “forestry” rhetoric in general, and social forestry rhetoric in particular, with its suggestion of reduced inequalities and “sustainable” production of trees and other crops.

In the “forests” off Java, it is common for powerful individuals to claim large areas along logging roads and then “sell” the land to latecomers, or have them work it as sharecroppers (Barber et al. 1995:3, 49). These forms of land-grabbing and predation exemplify the extreme inequalities of power that shape production relations in some upland settings. On the other hand, as noted earlier, where upland people are in control of their land, their labour is comparatively expensive or unavailable to would-be employers, placing a limit on some accumulative schemes. Contrary to the assumption that “traditional” swidden cultivators are the poorest people inhabiting the uplands, Brookfield et al. find good indications from contemporary Kalimantan that many of these people can and do adapt, intensifying their agriculture in quite productive and sustainable ways (1995:112–142). They suggest that the most vulnerable people currently in the uplands are relative newcomers: transmigrants who find themselves in impossible sites, or migrant workers left stranded by the timber industry’s decline. In many cases, they cannot return whence they came, and must find new work on terms which reflect their poor bargaining position. If they cross borders and become illegal migrant workers on Malaysian territory, they encounter further jeopardy (1995:235). Ruiter (this volume) describes impoverished, landless Javanese former plantation workers drifting around the Sumatran hills, looking for work, land and security with varying degrees of success.

Through these various mechanisms, some centrally designed and others unplanned, land ownership, land and tree tenure, work opportunities, wages and profits from upland production accumulate unevenly. It is necessary to restate, however, that uplanders may consider that they have much to gain, as well as the potential to lose, from their changing engagements with the market. There are both push and pull factors at work. The extent to which the remarkable transformation of upland agriculture which has occurred over the past twenty years has been smallholder initiated (rather than the result of direct or indirect compulsion) strongly suggests that the image of victim is too simple. As with “development” and state schemes, the complaint is not against market oriented production, but against the terms under which such production takes place, terms which reflect the uneven distribution of power.
Imagined Futures

Corresponding to the political and economic changes in which upland peoples have participated in the past few decades are changed notions of community and identity, new desires and aspirations, and revised images of what the future may hold. These are not easy to apprehend directly, since public statements about both community and identity change more slowly than the underlying sets of practices and relationships (Hefner 1990). Changing consumption styles and investment priorities provide some indication. Ruiter and Suryanata (this volume) find profits from upland agriculture being invested in improved housing, education and, in Muslim areas, the Haj pilgrimage. Villagers in the upland Citanduy area studied by Henri Bastaman (1995) have been acquiring the equipment for more elaborate, lowland-style food preparation, making trade in these items an important source of off-farm income. Well connected and wealthy villagers (who, incidentally, benefited disproportionately from a project designed to make upland farming more sustainable) were the first to seek investment opportunities in trade, transport and other sectors with higher status and more potential for profit than their upland fields. In upland Sulawesi, women and men have expressed to me their desire to be able to eat rice and fish and drink sugared coffee on a regular basis (like coastal people), and to sit back in between weekly harvests of cocoa rather than working and weeding endlessly in the swiddens. Yet they also remark that they cannot understand how the majority of coastal people, who are landless labourers, are able to survive on a daily basis without food gardens (Li 1996a, 1997).

Hefner (1990) illustrates some of the more subtle political-economic dimensions of intensified upland agriculture in the Tengger highlands. New crops and their associated technologies have tied people to markets to an extent unprecedented in the long history of upland market production, and cash crops have replaced food crops in many areas. They have required costly inputs, and the environmental damage resulting from some of them rules out the possibility of reversion to former crops and modes of subsistence should market opportunities recede. Yet, contrary to the “green” assumption that traditional/upland/peasant farmers would “naturally” give priority to subsistence and sustainability concerns, Tengger farmers and those studied by Suryanata and Bastaman have indicated a rather different vision. Many do not desire or anticipate a future for their children on the land, making it logical to invest profits, including those which result from environmentally unsound practices, in education and urban lifestyles. They thereby seek to equip their children with both the economic and cultural capital to leave the uplands and integrate into the urban/
lowland mainstream. Others, reduced to the status of wage labourers, may also exit the uplands but for different reasons and on different terms. Associated with greater inequalities, therefore, are new upland identities and aspirations, and new visions of self and community.

There is no single model for the transformation of upland livelihoods. Some upland areas have become more populated, drawing in wage workers and land hungry migrants. In others population has declined, a consequence of ecological collapse, limited opportunities or the pull of higher incomes obtainable elsewhere. Upland populations have different degrees of attachment to their current locales and different degrees of commitment to an agrarian future.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter I have argued that various aspects of real and supposed marginality are conflated in the uplands. They are regarded as distant places, fragile ecosystems, poverty stricken villages inhabited by “different” kinds of people and, from a political and military perspective, trouble zones. The conflation of overlapping dimensions of marginality produces an apparently “natural” fact, masking social and economic processes and the operation of power. In attempting to account for the marginality of the Indonesian uplands I have linked cultural practices and the production of images and representations to political-economic systems of accumulation and control. I have proposed that such an approach raises questions capable of illuminating the processes at work in Indonesia’s uplands, and generating explanations of a comparative nature.

Drawn from this perspective, a list of questions might include the following: How does the image of upland terrain as unproductive (physically and economically marginal) sustain a definition of the uplander as backward (socially marginal)? How does an assumed economic and social marginality promote and legitimise specific systems of accumulation (logging, conversion to estates, usury, price fixing)? When plantations prove unprofitable, “development” efforts “fail”, or displaced farmers become unruly, how does this serve to confirm initial assumptions about the overwhelming marginality of the uplands? How is it that the intensification of rule reproduces or intensifies marginality as one of its effects? How do margins look from the perspective of people who live or work in “out of the way places” (transmigrants, plantation workers, expatriate mine managers, officials), yet who consider themselves to belong to “centres” located elsewhere? How is marginality constructed culturally by the people whom outsiders take to be marginal by nature, and what are its political and economic consequences? How do margins and centres, communities and identities, become redefined in
the context of changing aspirations and commitments? What dimensions of change become visible once we move away from the restricted vocabulary counterposing an unexamined “tradition” to a narrowly envisaged “modernity”? Some of these questions are addressed in the contributions to this volume, while others remain to be explored.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Tim Babcock, Peter Boomgaard, Roy Ellen, Ruth McVey and an anonymous reviewer for detailed comments on an earlier draft of this chapter; also Diana Wong, Phillip Eldridge, Philip Morrison, Neil Byron and Donald Moore for their helpful suggestions.

NOTES

2 See King and Parnwell (1990) for a parallel examination of marginality in Malaysia.
3 The term coined by Kahn, this volume; see also Padoch and Peluso (1996) on the predominance of pristine nature and exoticized culture in historical and contemporary images of Borneo; a similar point is made by Ellen (this volume).
4 See the converging debates on this topic in anthropology (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992; O’Brien and Roseberry 1991; Gupta and Ferguson 1992) and development studies (Pieterse 1992; Pred and Watts 1992; Watts 1993).
5 H. Geertz (1963:12) offers a classic statement on the unchanging uplands.
6 See Wilk’s (1997) critique of the “impact myth”, and references cited earlier for problems with its dependency theory variant.
7 Fox (1992) describes the agronomic changes, but not their social and political dimensions.
8 See Henley (1994:44); Dove (1985b); de Koninck and McTaggart (1987). Healey (1985:8) mentions irrigated wet rice production in Kalimantan in highland areas beyond the reach of state authority but does not explain its rationale.
9 The riverine model of extractive relations works for much of the western archipelago, but not Timor or Maluku. See Andaya, L. (1993), Ellen (1979).
10 See Kahn (1993:78–110), Hooker (1983) and Ellen (1976) on the intellectual, economic and political rationales for colonial era adat law.
11 Li (1996a) describes Sulawesi highlanders who do not stress an ethnic identity nor envisage themselves as a bounded tribe; Li (nd) discusses historical and contemporary processes of “indigenous” identity formation.
12 See, for example, the discussion of ad hoc adat-making processes in Tsing (1990).
13 Under the New Order cultural difference has been bureaucratically “rationalised” at the provincial level, while local distinctions are ignored.
14 As Pigg (1992) shows in relation to Nepal, such scripts are not created nor imposed unilaterally but generated through cultural processes at a range of levels and sites.

15 See Joseph and Nugent (1994). Abrams (1988) usefully distinguishes between the idea of “the state” as a unified source of intention and power, which is an ideological construct or mask, and the state-system, the institutions of political and executive control and their key personnel. The state-system, through its everyday operations, produces (and disguises) the relations of power on which the reified idea of “the state” is based. See also Mitchell (1991).

16 I focus here on disciplines which are territorially based but see Mitchell (1991) on other state initiatives which intensify rule while rendering power internal to everyday practices. See also Ferguson (1994).

17 The desa reforms through which the colonial state claimed to be restoring villages to their “traditional” condition before the advent of despotic princely rule instead merely recreated despotism through the land monopolies and corvée rights granted to village officers; the difference was that the villagers were now “subjects” rather than personal dependents (Breman 1980:26–27). Boomgaard (1991) argues, contra Breman, that the pre-colonial Javanese village was a significant moral community, if not a unit of rule.

18 De Koninck and McTaggart (1987:350–1) argue that state directed land settlement schemes have a circular logic, routinely recreating the inequalities and impoverishment they are designed to redress since they produce not stable peasant environments but dynamic commercial ones in which labour and land are commoditized.


20 The cover design and many of the photos in Koentjaraningrat (ed.) 1993 show near-naked Irianese engaged in exotic dances and unfamiliar tasks, emphasizing the alien and primitive nature of masyarakat terasing. Questions of history and political economy are hardly mentioned; each chapter presents an apparently isolated “tribe” recently encountering change; current land struggles are not discussed.

21 Normality in Indonesia includes adherance to a world religion. As Gibson (1994) points out, it is religious conviction as much as administrative fiat which motivates officials and others to redress the spiritual poverty and pollution, as well as material poverty and disease, of those they envisage as primitives.

22 State Ministry for Population and the Environment, Act Number 10, 1992 acknowledges the right of indigenous people to retain cultural diversity as well as traditional land, but guidelines for implementation have yet to be developed.

23 See, for example, Robinson’s (1986) description of the class and ethnic dynamics of an upland mining town.

24 Relations between villagers and NGOs or corporations (especially major employers) may share in some of these features; see Kahn and Tsing, this volume.
In keeping with internationally acceptable rhetoric, and also some interpretations of Indonesian land and forest law, the report observes that customary land claims should be studied to ensure that land slated for development is unencumbered by prior claims. In effect, however, the report ignores such rights by deeming shifting cultivation a non-permanent land use, thereby finding a much larger land area to be “convertible” than previous planning efforts.

26 See Peluso (1996) on “countermapping” by communities and their NGO supporters in response to the territorialising strategies of various state agencies. Of central importance is the attempt to locate cultural groups on a spatial grid, in order to stake claims and contest the influx of newcomers. This type of information is “important but scarce” in Indonesia, as census data does not reveal ethnic/cultural affiliations (Peluso 1995:399).

27 See for example Banuri and Marglin (1993); Ghai (1994).


29 I discuss the national debate on indigenous people and land rights in Li (nd).

30 Lian (1993:333) disputes the viability and attractiveness of “tradition” as a solution to the contemporary problems of Orang Ulu in Sarawak.


32 See Dove (1985a); Kahn (1993); Li (1996a, 1997).

33 Peluso, Vandergeest and Potter (1995) observe that literature on forest-dependent people in Thailand focuses overwhelmingly on the “hill tribes”, who comprise only 2% of the population, and are a small minority of Thailand’s forest-dependent and upland peoples.

34 Rangan’s (1993) dissident account of the Chipko movement describes people driven to defend their livelihoods against environmentalists.

35 Similarly, C.Geertz (1963:116) characterizes the uplands and interiors of Indonesia in the colonial period as a “monotonous expanse of enduring stability” and “essentially unchanged swidden-making”, in which were “scattered” some dynamic, productive enclaves.

36 One major change in the structure of agriculture in East Kalimantan was a more direct result of government planning: the promotion of large scale plantations increased the allotted land area from 3716 hectares in 1963 to 256,162 in 1987 (Hidayati 1991:40).

37 Although he too emphasizes the distinction between “traditional” swiddeners and forest squatters, Tirtosudarmo (1993) makes a persuasive argument for treating the latter as determined and ambitious farmers: having left their previous locations in search of better opportunities in the forest fringe, they are unlikely to remain in transmigration schemes offering poor returns.

38 Poffenberger (1983) comments on the low visibility of dryland farming as a result of dichotomous models.

39 See also Li (1996b).

40 It seems that environmental transgressions by large scale forestry and agricultural concerns are less surprising, and therefore less offensive.
Enters (1995) describes farmers in Thailand limiting their participation to a “token line” and in the Philippines Brown (1994:56) describes the vigor with which NGOs and government agencies have promoted “sloping agricultural land technology” (SALT) and the reluctance of uplanders to adopt it, presumably because it does not benefit them.
References


nd, “Constituting Tribal Space: Indigenous Identity and Resource Politics in Indonesia”.


