USE OF THESES

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YOUTH AT THE CROSSROADS:
THE POLITICS OF IDENTITY AND BELONGING IN TIMOR-LESTE

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ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the construction of Timorese youth identity through time and space. I focus on younger generation Timorese who were educated under the Indonesian New Order regime and attempt to shed light on the consequence of their struggles for belonging in the nation-state during the critical years of Timor-Leste’s independence, from 2002 to 2008.

My research diverges from the dominant approach in the emerging field of Timor studies that tends to view Timor through the narrow lens of conflict and positions Timorese people as mere victims. Instead, it explores youth’s attempt to make meaning out of their histories of conflict through an ethnographic account of their cultural expressions. By doing so, I shift the analytical focus from conflict to raise other questions about the nature of youth identities, independence and the nation-state in Timor-Leste.

This thesis traces how the place of youth in Timor-Leste has changed over time. During the national resistance, youth became important symbols of nationalism. Upon independence, youth found they were no longer critical constituents in the national agenda. As Timor-Leste moved to independent nation-statehood, it had to redefine the limits of belonging. Because of young Timorese’ engagement with Indonesia, primarily as subjects of its education and language policies, they were marginalised from the new national narrative that put a greater focus and orientation towards Portugal. This marginalisation acted as a catalyst for young Timorese to persistently express a sense of identity and belonging in time and place.

I begin by tracing the historical underpinnings of Timorese youth identity created in a vortex of modernity where anti-colonial nationalism and masculine patriotism was strongly emphasised. Throughout the Indonesian occupation, young Timorese molded their gendered identities and sense of community from personal and collective experiences of violence and fear. After independence, this critical community began to disintegrate. In an era marked by colonisation, power structures and relations often recurred as boundaries of self-definition delineated during independence.

Through their engagement with Indonesia, international discourses of human rights, and transcultural expressions of identity, young Timorese defined their own sense of cultural citizenship following independence through music, poetry and literature. This fed into discourses on truth and justice expressed through very specific memories of Indonesia in print media and film that came to underlie attempts to maintain a sense of cultural citizenship. As the 2006 crisis demonstrated, the limits of cultural citizenship became evident as the politics of defining belonging reemerged. However, as this thesis illustrates, historical, gendered and transcultural references are continually called upon in young Timorese’ attempts to construct their identity and forge a place of belonging in independent Timor-Leste.
MAP 1
Indonesia and Timor-Leste in relation to Australia and Southeast Asia.
Source, Cartography, ANU.

MAP 2
Timor-Leste. Source, Cartography, ANU.
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Glossary

(Tet.) Tetun word
(Ind.) Indonesian word
(Port.) Portuguese word
(Ft.) Fataluku word

A Voz de Timor The Voice of Timor newspaper produced by the Generation of ’75 during the anti-colonial movement of the 1970s.

ABRI Angkatan Bersenjata Republik Indonesia (Armed Forces of Indonesia), now known as Tentara Nasional Indonesia (TNI).

AETIL Asso9iao dos Estudantes Timor-Leste (Association of East Timorese Students) formed in Yogyakarta, Indonesia after Timor gained independence.

AJI Asosiasi Journalis Independence (Alliance of Independence Journalists).

AMP Aliansa Maioria Parlamentar (Parliamentary Majority Alliance) was established after the Parliamentary Elections held on 30 June, 2007 and led by Xanana Gusmão’s political party, CNRT.

ASDT Asso9iao Popular Democratica Timorense (Timorese Popular Democratic Association). The democratic socialist ASDT party was formed in 1974 and claimed the immediate right to independence from the Portuguese colonial regime. It was reformulated as Fretilin in 1975.

Asrama Indonesian government boarding house where many Timorese students lived in Yogyakarta pre-1999.

Assimilados (Port.) Term used by the Portuguese colonial regime for category of indigenous Portuguese-speaking elite.

Bahasa Indonesia National language of Indonesia which was taught in Timorese schools from 1976-1999.

Buibere (Tet.) Originally a Mambai term for ‘woman’; female counterpart of the iconic Maubere figure.

CAVR Comissão de Acolhimento, Verdade e Reconciliacãº de Timor-Leste Timor-Leste Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation (better known by the Portuguese acronym CAVR) was set up in 2001 and functioned from 2002 until its dissolution in December 2005 mandated by UNTAET Regulation 2001/10 to undertake truth seeking for the period 1974-1999.

Civilizado (Port.) Civilised; Timorese eligible for Portuguese citizenship.

Clandestine One of the three fronts in which Timorese resistance against Indonesian occupation was fought. The Timorese urban student movement played a critical role in the clandestine movement.
CNRM Conselho Nacional da Resistência Maubere (National Council of Maubere Resistance). The CNRM was established in 1987 when resistance leader Xanana Gusmão resigned from Fretilin and declared the end of the politics of ‘party ID cards’ in favour of national unity or ‘non-partisanism’ (apartidarismo).

CNRT Conselho Nacional da Resistência (National Council of Timorese Resistance). The CNRT was established in April 1998 as the peak body of the East Timorese people’s resistance to the Indonesian occupation of East Timor.

CRRN A National Conference in 1981 in East Timor led to the creation of the National Council of Revolutionary Resistance (CRRN). Xanana Gusmão was elected Political Commissar, President of CRRN and Commander of the armed forces of the independence struggle, Falintil.

Ensino de Adaptação (Port.) ‘Adaption’ education system policy in Timor Leste until 1975.

Estado Novo (Port.) New Estate, Portuguese fascist regime established in 1933 under the dictator Salazar.

Falintil Forças Armadas de Libertação Nacional de Timor-Leste (Armed Forces for the National Liberation of East Timor) Falintil was established in late 1975 as the military arm of Fretilin but was later disengaged from Fretilin to represent the whole of the resistance movement against Indonesian occupation.

Fataluku One of the principle ethnic-linguistic groups located in Timor’s far east in the district of Lautem.

F-FDTL Forças de Defesa de Timor Leste (Timor-Leste Defense Force). The F-FDTL was re-constituted from the national liberation movement and guerilla army known as Falintil (Armed Forces for the Liberation of East Timor).

Firaku (Tet.) Term that originated in the Portuguese colonial era to refer to people from the east; stereotypically characterised as temperamental, stubborn, trouble-makers; often considered to apply primarily to Makassae speakers.

Fretilin Frente Revolucionário de Timor-Leste Independente. The Revolutionary Front for an Independent Timor-Leste was founded on 20 May 1974. It began as a resistance movement that fought for the independence of Timor, first from Portugal and then from Indonesia, between 1974 and 1999. It was originally called the Timorese Democratic Association (ASDT). After Timor-Leste gained its independence from Indonesia, Fretilin became one of several parties competing in a multi-party system.

Galaxy Band Name of a music band consisting of young generation Fataluku speakers.

Gembel (Ind.) Vagabond, vagrant. Name of a youth cultural group established in 2003 in Dili.

Generasi Supermi (Ind.) (Supermi Generation) derogatory phrase first used by the Generation of ’75 to refer to the Indonesian-education Generation of ’99 and inferring their association with Indonesia, producer of the instant noodle brand, Supermi.

Geração Foun (Tet.) Indonesian-educated youth generation also referred to as the Generation of ’99 and played an important role in Timor’s independence from Indonesia.
Generation of '75  Portuguese-educated youth generation who were involved in the anti-colonial movement of the 1970s.

Golkar  Golongan Karya State political party under the Indonesian New Order.

Kla’ak Semanal  Tetun-language newspaper established in 2006 (consisting of many of the same journalists who had worked with the magazine Talitakum).

Kos  (Ind.)  Indonesian privately owned boarding house.

KTP  (Ind.)  Kartu Tanda Penduduk (Indonesian identity card) has been mandatory for every Indonesian citizen since 1965.

IMPPETTU  Ikatan Mahasiswa, Pemuda dan Pelajar Timor Timur (The East Timorese Student and Youth Association) was established during the 1990s as a tool of control of the New Order government. It was mandatory for all Timorese students to join the organisation which was later politicised by RENETIL.

Le Ziafal  (Ft.) Fataluku term for a traditional house originating from the eastern district of Lautem. Also the name of a Timorese youth theatre group established in Yogyakarta in 1997/1998.

Loromonu  (Tet.)  Sunset; people originating from the districts of Bobonaro, Covalima, Oecussi, Liquica, Ermera, Aileu, Ainaro, and Manufahi.

Lorosa’e  (Tet.)  Sunrise; people originating from the eastern districts of Baucau, Viqueque, Manatuto and Lautem.

Lulik  (Tet.)  Sacred rites or objects.

Malae  (Tet.)  Foreigner.

Mambai  The largest Timorese ethnic group, concentrated in the mountainous districts of Aileu, Manufahi, Ermera, and parts of Liquisa ans Manatuto.

Maubere  (Tet.)  A Mambai word which was used by the Portuguese to mean backward and primitive, as a way of denigrating the Timorese peasantry. Fretilin made the word a symbol of their own: to be a maubere (‘my brother or friend’) was to be a son of Timor. The term came to symbolise the reassertion of Timorese culture and the struggle against poverty and colonial subordination.

Mestiço  (Port.)  Mixed heritage Timorese.

Movimento  (Port.)  The movimento was the first marker of a Timorese nationalist sentiment among youth of the 1970s and includes such people as Jose Ramos-Horta, Mari Bin Alkatiri, Nicolau Lobato, Borja da Costa, and Abilio Araujo.

Não indigeno  (Port.)  Native Timorese eligible for Portuguese citizenship.

NKK/BKK (Normalisation of Campus Life/ Bodies for the Coordination of Student Affairs). This set of New Order policies were introduced in 1977-1978 with the objective of depoliticising student activity by banning freedom of association and establishment of student groups.

Operasi Kikis (Ind.) Operation Eliminate was conducted by the Indonesian military in 1981 by forming a human fence (using many young Timorese) around Mount Matebian. Despite its efforts, it did not succeed in capturing any significant numbers of Falintil.


Pancasila (Ind.) The ideological basis of the Indonesian state. The five basic principles are: belief in one God; just and prosperous humanity; unity of Indonesia; representative government and social justice.

Pembangunan (Ind.) Official Indonesian Government development program.

Pemuda (Ind.) Youth. A keyword throughout the Indonesian Sukarno and Suharto eras and closely linked to nationalism.

PETRUS (Ind.) (Penembakan misterius) ‘Mysterious’ killings of suspected criminals, mostly of young tattooed men, conducted by Indonesian security forces on the streets of Indonesia, in particular in the main cities of Yogyakarta and Jakarta, from 1983 to 1985.

Portugalização (Port.) Process of Portuguese cultural assimilation.

Pramuka (Ind.) Indonesian scout movement.

PRD Partai Rakyat Demokratik (People’s Democratic Party) formed out of the Indonesian student movement in the mid-1990s.

Rakyat (Ind.) The people/masses.

RENETIL Resistencia Nacional dos Estudantes de Timor Leste (East Timorese National Students Resistance) founded June 29 1989 in Denpasar Bali.

Revolução dos Cravos (Port.) Carnation Revolution, 25th April 1974: a bloodless coup hastened by a left-turn in Portuguese politics that precipitated the decolonisation of Portugal’s ‘overseas provinces’.

Sahe Research Institute Formed in Jakarta as Sahe Study Club in 1998, and later established in Dili as a local NGO after independence (it has since changed its name to Institute Edukasaun Popular – IEP). The Sahe Research Institute includes the Sahe Media Popular Unit (SAMEP).

Tais (Tet.) Traditional women’s cloths with tie-dyed thread woven on a simple back strap loom.

Talitakum National publication for Timorese student movement established in Java and returned to Dili after 1999 and disbanded in 2003. Many of the same journalists established Kla’ak Semanal.

Tenaga Bantuan Operasi (Ind.) Indonesian Military Operations Assistant, TBO.
Tetun  Lingua franca of East Timor.

Truth and Friendship Commission (TFC/CTF)  The commission was jointly established by the governments of Indonesia and Timor-Leste in 2005 and was mandated to establish truth around human rights violations that occurred in Indonesia leading up to and after the 1999 plebiscite in Timor-Leste.

Uma Lulik (Tet.)  Traditional sacred house where ancestral bones and sacred objects are kept.

UNTAET  The United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor provided an interim civil administration and a peacekeeping mission in East Timor. It was led by Brazil’s Sergio de Vieira de Mello (United Nations Administrator) and the Philippine’s Lieutenant General Jaime de los Santos (Supreme Commander of the United Nations’ Peacekeeping Force). UNTAET was established on October 25, 1999 and abolished on May 20, 2002 with most functions passed to the East Timor government. The military and police forces were transferred to the newly created United Nations Mission of Support to East Timor (UNMISET).
CHAPTER ONE

Weaving Lives Together

Before independence, people were really strong in fighting to win the war – they wanted freedom – and after we gained freedom, it’s like everyone has a hangover...

Melli, from Galaxy band commenting on their album, Laran Beik (Hangover).
Melchior Fernandes, known as Melli, and his band Galaxy, come from the district of Lautem, in Timor-Leste's far east. In 2006, the band produced an album titled *Laran Beik (Hangover)*, which has since aired on radio in Timor-Leste and been released on CD and sold in Timor, Indonesia and, further abroad in Australia and Malaysia. Melli, the lead singer, wrote many of the songs while he was studying in Yogyakarta, Central Java, Indonesia and the album was produced in the city of Bandung, West Java, Indonesia. With reggae and metal inspired beats and rhythms, the lyrics reveal a social commentary on the situation in Timor after independence and focus on the importance of peace and places of origin. As Melli expresses, to have a hangover feels like your insides are *laran beik*; stupid, muddled and confused. The euphoria of gaining independence from Indonesia in 1999, and formally recognised in 2002, has long since passed and Timorese are now reflecting on and making meaning out of the many years of conflict, social upheaval and geographic, social and cultural displacement they have experienced.

The album, *Laran Beik*, is significant for the ways in which young Timorese are reflecting on and expressing their experiences of the national resistance to Indonesian occupation and independence in 2002 through cultural production. This thesis explores the intricacies of this metaphoric hangover of independence from the perspective of a core group of young Timorese who were educated under the Indonesian New Order and during the early years of independence.

The focus of this study is the younger generation of pro-independence Timorese who were involved in the clandestine movement during the Indonesian occupation. This generation is referred to as *Geracão Foun* (Tet. new generation) or the Generation of '99.¹ The research participants in this study consisted of about 50 Timorese men and women aged between 20 to 35 years. During the period this research was conducted (between 2000 and 2008), they lived in the capital city of Dili, the districts of Timor-Leste and various cities in Indonesia. Their places of origin included both eastern and western areas of Timor-Leste, although many came from the district of Lautem, in the country’s far east.²

The research participants included tertiary students, NGO workers, journalists, unemployed people, musicians, poets, writers, and performers.³ Some were married

¹ There are a variety of terms to describe young Timorese including *klosan* (Tet. unmarried), *foin sae* (Tet. just rising) and *juventude*.

² The ethno-linguistic group, Fataluku, is located in the far eastern tip of Timor-Leste. Fataluku speakers number around 35,000 and share many cultural features with their Austronesian speaking neighbours (McWilliam 2005). A high number of pro-independence supporters were based in the district of Lautem. Because the forests of Lautem provided a long-term refuge for armed resistance it consequently came under intense military surveillance. The military violence and oppression only served to cement support for the resistance.

³ I have used pseudonyms where participants asked for their identities to be obscured or where I have seen fit. Pseudonyms appear as a singular name. I have kept original names where they appear in full.
with children and others were single and childless. It is important to note that not all of these young people knew each other. They nonetheless shared the notion that they were part of an imagined youth community based on their experiences as children and teenagers in the national resistance movement.

By locating this group of young Timorese at the centre of my research, this study explores the creation, maintenance and reproduction of gendered youth identities and youth’s attempts to belong within the postcolonial nation-state. Through an ethnographic account of their histories, geographies and expressions of feelings, music and memories, I raise fundamental questions about the nature of independence, the nation-state and the context of Timorese youth in time and space.

I begin this journey by locating Timorese youth identity in an historical context of Portuguese colonialism when youth became inextricably bound in processes of nationhood. While youth identity was formed in relation to the nation, it is not limited to one locality; rather the experiences of different times and places are the hallmark of a social category. My approach to the construction of youth identity therefore, follows Stuart Hall (1990: 225) who stated that:

Cultural identities come from somewhere, have histories. But like everything which is historical, they undergo constant transformations. Far from being externally fixed in some essentialist past, they are subject to the continuous “play” of history, culture and power.

The cohort of Timorese born in the years after the Indonesian invasion in 1975 experienced life and the world differently from their parents. They came of age during the Indonesian New Order that reigned from 1966 to 1998. A whole generation was seriously affected. Youth were not only denied their childhoods but were also not given the full benefits of adulthood. They became ‘ex-children’ (Feldman 2002) in the resistance struggle and experienced a sense of social liminality. Bereft of family succor, the young Timorese in this study cultivated other family-like structures along generational lines within the clandestine resistance movement.4

The nature of war meant young Timorese became adults in a period marked by instability, violence, and fear. To survive, they necessarily withdrew from familiar sociality and absorbed what cultural referents they had in building themselves a new community with different values, ideals, and worldviews from those of their parents. What can we learn from their accounts about the new forms of identity they developed from these interstitial positions and the types of agency they were able to exercise? What sort of gendered subjects did they become? And how did their histories shape how they have experienced independent nationhood and how they face current challenges?

4 The national resistance was divided into three fronts; the diplomatic front overseas, the Falintil armed resistance, and the clandestine front. Young Timorese became crucial in the later years of the resistance in the clandestine front.
In this chapter, I first introduce the situation after independence which sparked an acute sense of generational difference based around issues of language. Second, I discuss my methods and research approaches characterised by extended periods of participant-observation with key communities. Third, I review some of the current literature in the newly emergent field of Timor studies which is typified by a conflict paradigm. Fourth, I introduce my approach to Timor studies in relation to this conflict paradigm and discuss some of the main theoretical tenets that inform my thesis including notions of postcolonialism, interconnection and citizenship and gesture toward some of the questions that my research raises. Fifth, I discuss my original contributions to the field, which are characterised by a longitudinal study of young Timorese and a critical look at the impact of Indonesia on the construction of youth subjectivities. Finally, I outline the structure and arguments of subsequent chapters.

The Nation-State and Generational Differences

Timor's independence from 24 years of Indonesian occupation was experienced by Timorese as a profound disjuncture: those who had resisted Indonesia felt they did not receive adequate recognition for their sacrifices in the struggle while 'former collaborators and returned diasporas' (Traube 2007: 21) from Portugal and Australia were reaping the benefits. Anthropologist Elizabeth Traube, in her work among the ethno-linguistic group of the Mambai, found a broad vision of redistributive justice that became a national trope. This vision centers around the idea that the nation was won through suffering and sacrifice; it was ‘purchased’, the saying goes, ‘not with silver or gold, but with the blood of the people’. As Traube (2007: 21) explains, ‘the formula is simple: those who pursued their own selfish interests and prospered under the occupation should be made to pay, while those who suffered and sacrificed for independence should be recompensed.’

While the population at large felt disappointed with independence, young Timorese in particular publicly expressed their disillusionment. They articulated a sense of injustice and felt they had not been afforded adequate recognition or involved in the processes of the nation-state. This sentiment intensified when decisions at a national level worked to marginalise young people from national narratives of belonging and nation-state processes. During the resistance, discourses surrounding 'heroic' youth firmly lodged the importance of young Timorese in society. Upon independence, youth found they were no longer critical constituents in the national agenda. As many young Timorese pointed out, 'it was as if we ceased to exist'.

A sense of marginalisation among young Timorese was compounded by the fact that an older generation with a different cultural orientation dominated the government. The older generation of Portuguese-educated elite became known as the 'Generation of '75'.
They came of age during a dynamic period when Portugal went through a process of decolonisation sparked by its so-called Carnation Revolution that effectively delivered Portugal from authoritarianism to a democracy. The Portuguese-educated generation was able to gain power when the United Nations (UN) handed over sovereign power in 2002. The Portuguese-educated generation managed to ‘capture the state’ (Alavi 1973) – because they fit the model that the international community, namely the UN, wanted and had the management experience to support such a role. The older generation had easily recognisable, manageable, organised political parties and were experienced leaders, having led the resistance struggle from abroad during the 24 years of occupation. These units were considered the ‘local political counterparts’ that the UN was so keenly looking for, to fit its existing operational models (Federer 2005). The older generation pushed for Portuguese to be adopted as the country’s official language, thereby maximising their own advantage and purchase on the nation through the creation of a linguistic barrier.

Language was the primary way in which the new nation-state could define belonging. This triggered discontent among young Timorese and this deepened generational tension. In an effort to distance itself from the horrors of the Indonesian past, Portuguese was declared the co-official language of Timor-Leste along with Tetun. English and Indonesian were allocated as working languages in the Constitution. The new focus on Portuguese language was key to the new nation-state’s reorientation towards defining its identity as linked to the coloniser, Portugal and not Indonesia. This was in spite of the fact that anywhere between five and 20 percent of the population spoke Portuguese fluently at the time (Hajek 2000). The announcement on the language policy came just before the Portuguese President Jorge Sampaio arrived in Timor on February 1, 2000. Xanana Gusmão, President of the CNRT at the time, announced:

We will keep Portuguese as the official language. Our position is clear, the official one will be Portuguese because it is part of our heritage. It is a political decision... If the Portuguese left many years ago the Dutch would have taken over this area and we would have become a part of Indonesia (UNTAET 2002).

Young Timorese found that this decision marginalised their own life experiences, language fluency and personal histories of living under the Indonesian New Order. This was expressed as an imposition ‘of a tiny elite trying to impose their will on the majority’ (Guterres cited in Talitakum 2005: 35). Liliana, a young Timorese who

5 For more on the language issue, see Kerry Taylor-Leech (2007) and Michael Leach (2003).
6 The CNRT, Conselho Nacional da Resistência (National Council of East Timorese) was established in April 1998 and was the peak body of the Timorese people’s resistance to Indonesia. Its members were drawn from all of the political parties. On 29 June 2007, Xanana Gusmão established the National Congress for the Reconstruction of East Timor (Congresso Nacional da Reconstrução de Timor – CNRT) as a political party and ran in the Parliamentary elections held on 30 June 2007. There is no doubt that the mobilisation of such a popular name as CNRT and its inclusive undertones served to bolster the party’s support. It gained 20 percent of the vote and through a coalition formed the AMP (Alliance of Parliamentary Majority) government.
studied in Indonesia during the 1990s, expressed her skepticism about the choice of Portuguese as an official language citing Portugal’s distance, both geographically and mentally, from the lives of many young Timorese. She explained:

The language policy made us feel like we don’t belong. We want to maintain our relationship with Indonesians. We don’t have a problem (Tet. la iha problema) with Indonesian people... Indonesia is our neighbour. Not Portugal. I am just unable to understand how Portuguese language was meant to benefit our tiny nation of majority Tetun speakers. If we had made the official language Tetun with loan words from the rich (Ind. *kaya*) local languages, and even Indonesian, call it Malay or whatever you want, then we would all feel like we had a stake in this... like we belong.

From 2003 to 2004, I lived in Dili and worked as an Indonesian language translator in a joint Timorese government/UNMISET initiative, providing translation services to government ministries. This language unit included a Tetun and a Portuguese translator, both of whom were Timorese nationals. Debates at the time about Timorese identity and language played out in our tiny office in the Palácio do Governo that had previously been used as a cash safe for past colonial regimes. The Portuguese translator, Jacinto, was a middle-aged man of *mestiço* origins and the Tetun translator, Naldo Rei, was a young generation Timorese who had spent time in Jakarta before being exiled to Australia. Then there was myself, an Indonesian translator and a *mala* (Tet. foreigner). The linguistic constellations were endless. Neither Naldo nor I could speak Portuguese fluently. Jacinto could speak no Indonesian but was fluent in English. We all had different formulations of Tetun. Our debates in the Palácio do Governo about the place of Portuguese and Indonesian language in newly independent Timor reflected the exchanges concurrently underway in the parliament, on the streets and in the homes of Timorese.

These debates were not merely about language but underlined the cultural repositioning of Timorese citizens after independence. Again, our tiny office in Dili became a microcosm of wider social transformations. Naldo would chide Jacinto as Tetun and Indonesian translation work piled up on our desks and he, as the Portuguese translator, would be left idle. While Naldo would claim that Portuguese was not a useful language in today’s Timor, Jacinto would always respond by drawing on the perceived

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8 A Portuguese term relating to mixed ancestry. In this case it refers to mixed Timorese and Portuguese parentage.
9 At the time, Naldo Rei was also working on his book, *Resistance. A Childhood Fighting for East Timor* published in 2007 by University of Queensland Press.
10 Although Tetun was included in the Constitution as the national language, it was still an undeveloped language in the sense that it was yet to be standardised. In our translation unit, words that lacked a Tetun equivalent would be replaced by an Indonesian word (by me), a Tetun-Therik or Indonesian word (by Naldo) and a Portuguese word (by Jacinto).
11 After the unit closed, Indonesian was no longer used in training, making it difficult for the mostly Indonesian and Tetun-language speaking government staff.
superiority of Portuguese civilised behaviour. ‘The ‘Indonesians’ had no manners – they taught you to eat with your hands!’ Jacinto would exclaim as Naldo and I would be eating our usual lunch of *etu* (rice) with *ikan* (fish). ‘Portugal is the one who civilized us!’ Jacinto’s jokes were illustrative of the claims on authenticity and legitimacy that reflected the source of generational tension between Portuguese-educated elite and Indonesian-educated Generation ‘99.

Mirroring these lived experiences was the development of a national narrative of belonging which positioned Indonesian influence as negative. Young Timorese were pejoratively dubbed the ‘Supermi Generation’ (Ind. *Generasi Supermi*) or ‘Supermi Degrees’ (Ind. *Sarjana Supermi*) by the Portuguese-speaking elite and thus denied them a rightful place of belonging in the new nation-state. Both of these terms refer to the younger generation’s education under the Indonesian New Order and more specifically, the tertiary education. ‘Supermi’ is an iconic Indonesian brand of instant noodles and the label suggests that they are soft like instant noodles and lack strength and wisdom; have an instant (Ind. *instan*) attitude toward life and do not possess strong morals or leadership qualities. This negative marking of the younger generation’s link to Indonesia questions their legitimacy as subjects of national belonging and denied them access to decision-making arenas. The elite constructed themselves as ‘fathers’ of the inexperienced new generation of youth who were not to be trusted in decision-making processes, particularly in reference to the burgeoning nation-state. Reflecting on the marginalisation of his generation at large, Melli, the 20 year-old musician from Galaxy band introduced at the beginning of this chapter, draws an analogy between the label ‘Supermi Generation’ and everyday life in Timor-Leste. In doing so, he exposes his thoughts on the marginal place of his generation in Timor-Leste and the difference between his generation and the generation of the Portuguese-speaking elite:

I really am the *Generasi Supermi!* I remember... I must have been very young... my mum used to have a *kios* (Ind. small shop) and the Indonesian soldiers would always come past to check who she was talking to as people were always stopping by and quite often there would be exchanges of clandestine information. When the soldiers would come, my mum would put me in an empty *Supermi* box at the back of the *kios* so they wouldn’t take me away! (Laughs)...

In the UN translation unit, street side food stalls, university campuses, parks and boarding houses where I listened to the stories of this varied group of young Timorese, it seemed clear that independent Timor-Leste was a place where everybody and nobody could belong. Much depended on specific temporal and spatial coordinates. Over the course of eight years (from 2000 to 2008), I continued to engage with many young Timorese in both Indonesia and Timor-Leste as they collectively wrestled with the meaning of independent nationhood and their place within it. These experiences form the basis of this thesis.
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Approach: Methods in the Field

This is a longitudinal study of young Timorese drawn from my interaction with young Timorese between the years of 2000 and 2008. In early 2000, while studying at Gadjah Mada University in Yogyakarta, I met many young Timorese at a critical point in their lives and their country’s future. They had not been able to return home to Timor-Leste, mainly for security concerns at the time, to take part in the pro-independence campaign for Timor’s referendum (in which the student movement of the clandestine front played a leading role). Instead, they remained in Indonesia and could only watch from afar the destruction and devastation carried out by the Indonesian military and its militia. During the months after the referendum when I met them, some of the students shared with me their feelings of helplessness and despair but also of their determined plans for return. These exceptional circumstances and experiences of young Timorese propelled me to learn more about how they would experience independence and be able to reintegrate into a transformed homeland.

In 2002, I moved to Los Palos, Timor-Leste (from Jakarta) to work as an electoral officer with the Independent Election Commission on the nation’s first Presidential elections. During that time, I worked with many young Timorese and made friends with my neighbors. I lived on the edge of a field in a house with large steps. At the beginning, I was a novelty to Los Palos residents, a foreign presence after so many years of isolation from the outside world. Over the first few months many people wanted to talk to me and every afternoon when I returned home I found visitors sitting on my steps. After time, some stopped coming (as the novelty of a foreigner wore off), while others began to reveal their fears and hopes for independence and slowly, I began to uncover the many interconnections between their lives in Indonesia and Los Palos.

My long-term engagement with key communities was critical to this research. All of my informants, to differing degrees, had been enculturated into patterns of secrecy through their participation in the resistance movement and, by necessity of survival, had developed a suspicious attitude towards people out of their immediate circle of friends. Through my repeated returns I was able to build the trust of my informants and made many long-term friendships as a result. One young Timorese commented that she felt I was different from the other malae (foreigners) because I kept coming back to visit them. ‘Other foreigners’ she explained, ‘are always leaving us’.

12 In 2000, I spent a semester at Gadjah Mada University, in Yogyakarta and a semester at Muhummadiyah University, Malang as a participant in the Australian Consortium for ‘In-Country’ Indonesian Studies (ACICIS) program.
13 This is a commonly expressed sentiment that harks back to World War II in which Australia fought Japan on Timorese soil. Many Australian soldiers made promises of their ‘return’ and the Australian government distributed pamphlets that stated, ‘We will not forget you’. The Australian government however, reneged on its promise when Indonesia invaded in 1975. Australia was the only government to recognise Indonesian sovereignty in Timor-Leste.
Like myself, many of my participants were born in the 1970s and this proved to be valuable for my study of youth subjectivities. The fact that I was often referred to as *Mana* (woman of equal status) and not the more senior term of *Señora* positioned me as more of an equal. Even so, people placed me within their own worlds, and I came to represent many roles to many people. As time went by, I became adept at moving between these roles. I was variously positioned as, *kak’* Angie (from *kakak*) (big sister) and, often, *alin* (little sister), *kolega* (work colleague/friend) and sometimes simply, *feen nia Jon* (Jon’s wife). While there were many differences between us, there were also many points of connection. For example, I would often discuss with many of my participants, decisions to delay having families or our experiences in Indonesia in our early twenties.

My approach to this research privileged a long-term engagement with young Timorese and I became involved in their worlds and everyday lives. From these experiences, I felt I had an obligation to the young Timorese I had come to know to mobilise my resources so others could come to understand something of the people they had become due to their experiences of war. However, this was not a simple process. My informants could choose what messages they wanted to convey to me. In turn, I nested a responsibility in constructing a narrative of their stories that did them justice. As Anthropologist Alcinda Honwana (2006: 18) states, ‘(w) e all – informants and researchers – have agency in these processes’. I understood very early on in my research that while there were constraints in every situation, my objective in this research was never to uncover a ‘hidden’ past of ‘truths’ rather, I sought to explore the public discourses and the emotive and lived elements of the often violent resistance that served to construct Timorese youth identities.

*Placing Young Timorese at the Centre: Moving Beyond the Conflict Paradigm*

Much that has been written about Timor since independence falls into, what I term, the ‘conflict paradigm’. This paradigm has a number of characteristics. First, it positions Timor only in relation to the violence Timor-Leste has endured which determines Timorese as mere victims. Second, it colours the experience of Indonesia as a wholly negative one. Third, the conflict paradigm has engendered a discourse of security-focused issues which has narrowed the lens of analysis through with which sociocultural and political transformations in Timor-Leste can be understood. The conflict paradigm and recent focus on security issues have had the effect of constructing a narrative of Timor where the complexity of history has been overlooked. As a

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14 My husband was also a student at Gadjah Mada University in Yogyakarta in 2000, and played an important role in introducing me to many young Timorese involved in the clandestine movement. We lived in Timor together during my formal fieldwork period during 2005 in Timor and I made visits to Indonesia throughout this period alone.
consequence of this, a discourse on ‘wild youth’, and youth as perpetrators of violence in the 2006 crisis has prevailed further decontextualising the cultural and historical meanings of youth.

Given the breadth of wanton destruction in Timor by the Indonesian military, police and its militia before and after the plebiscite in 1999, it is perhaps unsurprising that much of the scholarship has focused on the aftermath of these events. Although the losses, displacement and destruction cannot be underestimated, this focus on conflict has had the tendency to position Timorese as mere victims and thus undermines a more nuanced perspective of Timorese’ experiences of conflict and independent nationhood.

The second characteristic of the conflict paradigm is the way in which it had a tendency to cast relations between Indonesia and Timor-Leste. Primarily, Indonesia has been represented in a wholly negative light. This representation has a number of sources. Firstly, the Timorese national resistance movement and the independent nation-state of Timor-Leste, (necessarily) presented Indonesia as monolithically negative in a quest to differentiate Timorese from Indonesians and distance the new Timor nation-state from the horrors of the occupation. Secondly, the scholarship on Timor-Leste throughout the occupation tended to portray the relationship between Timor and Indonesia as antagonistic (see Lansell 1999; Budiarjo and Liong 1984; Cotton 2004; Dunn 2003; Fernandes 2004; Robinson 2001, 2003; Moore 2001). However, relationships between young Timorese and Indonesians were always much more nuanced than these monolithic and singular representations. Through their involvement in the clandestine movement, many young Timorese had begun to question hard-line assumptions about Indonesia as the stereotyped enemy. Young Timorese’ openness towards Indonesian people surprised me as I had initially expected there would be a higher level of animosity towards Indonesians given their accounts of torture and terror. These multifaceted engagements and considerations of Indonesia went beyond the monolithic representations of us/them binaries in the literature and the resistance movement. To understand some of these multifaceted engagements with Indonesia is my task in this thesis.

In post-independent Timor-Leste, the conflict paradigm has engendered a focus on security issues (Ball and McDonald 2000), particularly after the 2006 socio-political and security breakdown. This had the effect, like the earlier literature on Timor, of positing Timor only in relation to the conflict it has endured and Timorese as either victims or perpetrators of conflict. The focus on security issues was especially prevalent in the Australian literature on Timor (see Kingsbury 2007) which engendered a discourse of

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15 The plebiscite was conducted on 30 August, 1999, and 78.5 percent of voters chose independence from Indonesian occupation. Indonesian military and militia went on a violent rampage afterwards killing up to 1,000 people and destroying much of the country’s infrastructure. Throughout the thesis, I refer to the plebiscite, as Timorese do, as the referendum or the ballot.
Timor as a ‘failed-state’ (see Cotton 2007; Shoesmith 2007) despite the fact that this has been the focus of much criticism (Moxham 2008; Gonzalez-Devant 2008; Anderson, T. 2006; Grenfell 2008).

The conflict paradigm represented Timor only in relation to the conflict it had endured and this influenced international development practice in Timor. Inherent in this approach is a view of Timor as a ‘clean-slate’ where, from independence onwards development agencies could simply implant their (Western) ‘democratic’ development agendas (see Chopra 2002; Traub 2000; Hohe 2002). This is evident in the plethora of foreign aid reports and international media references to Timor being ‘ground zero’ (see Nevins 2002). Of course, Timor-Leste was not a clean slate. While the capital city of Dili and much of the rural infrastructure was burnt to the ground, its people’s ways of thinking about the world and its processes were not simply wiped from people’s mindscapes. The clean-slate approach inherent in development organisation’s approaches was historically-devoid. A failure to take into account the historically embedded meanings in society was repeated in a discussion of youth’s role in the 2006 crisis.

During the 2006 socio-political and security crisis, public discourses and development agency reports presented a picture of ‘wild youth’ devoid of history or gender. The term ‘youth’ became a key word in developmental discourses, supported by the international media and the Timorese government. Given the focus on security, youth were cast in the media, somewhat sensationaly, as perpetrators of violence involved in ‘gang cultures’ (ABC 2006; Foreign Correspondent 2006; Reuters 2007). International development agency reports released during this time did much to support this representation. These reports included AusAID’s, A Survey of Gangs and Youth Groups (Scambary et al. 2006) which catalogues the various youth and gang groups without providing understanding to their formation and motivations. Plan International’s report (Grove et al. 2006), Like Stepping Stones in the River gives voice to young Timorese through focus-group discussion methodologies but tends to cast young Timorese as victims. Like other reports at the time, both fail to adequately account for the complexity of Timorese youth cultures and treat ‘youth’ as a solely contemporary problem borne out of the 2006 crisis. Academics also played into the popular perception of ‘wild youth’, commenting on the ‘fact’ that ‘youth are unable to be tamed’ (see for example, Quinn 2006; Harrington 2007; Curtain 2005). Little attempt was made to contextualise the outpouring of rage among young Timorese or to explore the ways in which narrowly defined historical responses to conflict came to shape their actions. The consequences of this provided further justification to the conflict paradigm’s approach.

16 At the time of the 2006 crisis I attended a series of talks on the Timor crisis presided over by a group of (male) security experts at the ANU. To a chuckling and agreeing audience, one of the security experts declared that ‘Australia had put millions into Timor and should therefore have a say in who runs it’.

17 I discuss the 2006 crisis in detail in Chapter Six.
Another example of the construction of youth as deviants within the conflict paradigm is a World Bank report (2007), categorises youth activities as either ‘safe/or at risk’. The report lists deficient characteristics as risk factors, such as ‘lack of national identity’ and ‘lack of jobs’.

![Diagram of youth categories]

Figure 1. A World Bank (2007) representation of youth behaviour as either safe/unsafe.

It is important to be mindful of the ways in which the term, ‘youth’ has been used by sectors of the media, development agencies and academia and the sorts of effects it yielded on the development of a discourse on youth inside Timor-Leste. Firstly, the use of ‘youth’ in these reports was decontextualised and categorised as a homogenous and ahistorical mass which only exists as a contemporary ‘problem’ in reference to the 2006 crisis. The blanket use of the term worked to further obscure Timorese agency and history. While this sort of simplification and categorisation may be helpful in the formulation of donor programs, particularly in identifying ‘target’ communities to involve in program cycles, it reinforces simplistic dichotomies of behaviour that belies the ambiguity of youthful social life.

The Timorese elite also played a significant role in the construction of the discourse on youth as a homogenous and an ahistorical mass. Jose Ramos-Horta, on becoming the nation’s President in 2007, began by speaking of his plans to set up a ‘youth council’ comprised of youth representatives from the 13 districts who would converge annually at the National Parliament to address matters pertaining to ‘youth’. Although this intended to address the problem of voicing youth’s concerns, the definition of youth was a very limited one. Horta defined ‘youth’ as between 11 to 16 years of age. This narrow biological definition of age denied the cultural and historical significance of youth in Timor. Furthermore, this narrow definition of youth did not acknowledge the fact that different youth groups have different needs and concerns. Xanana Gusmão also engaged with the idea that the market would be Timorese youth’s panacea. The economic-imperative approach was manifest in Ramos-Horta’s ‘cash-for-work’ initiative (where youth were paid US$2/day for manual labour work such as fixing roads). A solely
market-driven approach may contribute to the challenges faced by youth rather than solve them.\textsuperscript{18}

This thesis traces the various strands of history in relation to the construction of a category of youth to illustrate that youth is not a ‘new’ phenomenon. My research situates Timorese youth as historically and gendered constituents within the social and political upheaval of Timor’s postcolonial redefinition. It is an attempt to see youth as agents and citizens, rather than deviants, by looking beyond the conflict paradigm that has so far dominated the emerging field of Timor-Leste studies. It seeks to understand how groups of young Timorese strive to create a sense of belonging in independent Timor-Leste.

\textit{Theoretical Underpinnings – an ‘Interconnected’ Approach to Timor}

The broad theoretical underpinnings for this thesis reside in postcolonial studies, a field that calls into question the coloniser/colonised binary by which the colonial encounter has conventionally been represented (Hall 1996). In the case of Timor-Leste, the colonial encounter between Indonesia and Timor-Leste has been represented (through the conflict paradigm) as only constituting one sort of relationship, as coloniser/colonised or oppressor/oppressed. Following postcolonial critiques that bring together interconnections of spatial scales and temporality in new and unsettling geographies (Appadurai 1996b), I look at how new identities, mobilities and marginalities are under construction in the postcolonial nation-state.

This study also raises questions about the nature of postcolonial power relations. The concept of hegemony, in Antonio Gramsci’s (1975) understanding, shows how groups resisting dominant powers may unintentionally repeat parts of the dominator’s strategies, in particular in mobilising power dynamics marked by difference. This study asks how postcolonial power relations are affecting young Timorese and their relations with each other and the state as they strive to re-integrate themselves into independent Timor-Leste.

Anthropologist Elisabeth Traube (2007) explores Timorese understandings of decolonisation, Christianity and nationalism through the Mambai ‘Mau Kiak’ story of suffering and justice. Tat Felis, from \textit{tata}, ‘grandfather, ancestor, old man’ was also known as Mau Kiak (Poor Fellow) or Mau Terns (Suffering Fellow) and the harm that had been done to him by ancestral leaders was widely regarded as a serious failure of

\textsuperscript{18} A thorough understanding of Timorese youth histories would assist in the development of appropriate programs for youth. Sara Niner (2008) helpfully argues for a much more thorough look at the psycho-social recovery of Timorese in her article on the rise of Alfredo Reinado, the rebel soldier involved in the 2006 crisis. Niner does not discuss the military style leadership (as evidenced by Xanana Gusmão) and its impacts upon the formation of psycho-social problems for youth. I discuss Xanana Gusmão in relation to youth identity in Chapter Four and Alfredo Reinado in Chapter Six.
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traditional justice. This injustice remains, according to some, 'unexpiated and is entangled with more recent crimes' (Traube 2007: 10). Suffering became associated with official nationalist discourses, while the notion of ‘purchasing’ power Traube notes, resonates with the Christian economy of salvation. Traube situates Timorese political thinking in light of the nation-state through the Mambai idiom of reciprocity; ‘whoever benefited from or caused suffering owes them payment for their fatigue or wages (selu kolen)’ (Traube 2007: 10).

A discourse on decolonisation in contemporary Timor was popularised by Xanana Gusmão throughout the resistance movement. The objective of the resistance movement was to ‘liberate the land’ (Port./Tet. libertasaun patria) which privileged the armed struggle in the fight against occupation and colonialism. This was to be followed by the liberation of the people after independence was gained, referred to as (Port./Tet. libertasaun povo). While the objective of ‘liberating the land’ became the focus for Timorese people for more than 24 years, ‘liberating the people’ from colonial structures, mind-sets and ways of being is ostensibly more difficult.

My research attempts to better understand some of the intricacies of postcolonialism and nation-statehood in Timorese society. I diverge from the conflict paradigm that has so far dominated Timor studies with its simplistic representations of Timor’s relationship with Indonesia and of Timorese being mere victims of the occupation. I assign agency to young Timorese by focusing on their historical and lived experiences, as they transgress these categories and attempt to make meaning out of their lives and create a sense of place in independent Timor.

Themes and Questions

This thesis poses questions around the evolution of the concept of youth in Timorese society. I am interested in the ways in which childhoods of political violence emerged as an ethical sphere (Feldman 2002) through being socially and culturally constructed over time and in specific contexts.

I first seek to understand what forces were instrumental in the construction of the ‘imagined community’ of youth. Anderson (1991) elucidates that the bureaucracy, print media and education play a decisive role in establishing the conditions of a new collective imagination. This ‘imagined community’ according to Anderson, is a modern construction and no longer based on religious, ethnic or any other traditional variables. The notion of the imagined community is helpful in my analysis of the construction of Timorese youth. However, my explanation goes beyond the geographical boundaries of the nation of Timor and I take into consideration the external forces that play a role in the construction of youth identity and socio-political roles. In other words, understanding Timorese youth culture requires taking all spatial scales into account.
without assuming that any one spatial scale has priority. Identities, subjectivities and localities are socially constructed and are always constituted relationally in social practice.

With this in mind, I ask questions about the structures that facilitated a growing awareness of youth as a distinct social category in Timor. What defines Timorese youth identity? What are the sorts of social expectations and responsibilities that have come along with youth throughout Timorese history? My study begins with an exploration into the ways a key group of young educated (mostly male) Timorese during Portuguese times embarked on a different life course from their parents. For the first time in Timor’s history, young Timorese were separated from their families and placed in educational institutions. Through this process, this key group of young Timorese moved from village bound life (and all the responsibility this entailed) to take on new responsibilities concerning the fate of the nation and therefore defined a socio-political role for youth. I go on to discuss the impacts of this earlier group of youth on the construction of youth identity and youth’s role in society for a later generation of youth born during the Indonesian occupation. I use Turner’s notion of liminality (1976, 1986) in order to shed light on the productivity of the inter-structural space where new rules of behaviour and modes of belonging forged the construction of youth as a liminal category both during Portuguese colonialism and Indonesian occupation. As their lives began to be dictated by events and relations outside of their immediate surrounds, both generations of youth developed a unique set of responsibilities and identities in connection with the nation.

Questions around the construction of subjectivities and how they are informed and performed through specific geographical and temporal spaces are also addressed in this thesis. I use the term transculturalism to describe these processes. The ‘trans’ of transcultural denotes both ‘moving through space or across lines, as well as changing the nature of something’ (Ong 1999: 4). In my study, ‘transcultural’ does not equate to the simple borrowing or transplanting of terms and concepts but to the process of which the meanings are transformed into particular contexts for particular purposes. My approach to transculturalism also considers citizenship rights and entitlements, as well as practices of everyday life constructed through transcultural connectivities (Bernal 2004).

Transculturalism constitutes a complex multitude of relationships and tensions that are in constant negotiation. For instance, the relationships between Indonesia and Timor, which are under examination throughout the thesis, illustrates the ways in which

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19 In a similar vein, Boellstorff (2002) has suggested using the more complex notion of transculturalism as a rejection of the global/local binary because of the lack of specificity implied in the binary. The term, ‘local’ does not pinpoint whether we mean a small suburb/rural village, a state, or a nation in its antithetical relation to the ‘global’. 
identities, subjectivities and localities are socially constructed and are always constituted relationally in social practice. The view of the trans- in young Timorese identities resembles Mbembe’s analysis of the ways in which postcolonial subjects assemble and make use of multiple, fluid identities which need to be ‘constantly revised in order to achieve maximum instrumentality and efficacy as and when required’ (Mbembe 1992: 3).

Understanding Timorese youth culture requires taking all spatial and temporal scales into account without assuming that any one has ontological priority. Anthropologists have emphasised that persons and communities are not bounded or static entities. They are not naturally rooted in continuous spaces (Gupta and Ferguson 1992; Malkki 1992), but established through processes of interconnection. On the basis of this insight, it has been argued that communities undergoing dramatic political change are particularly suitable sites to study the fragmentation and fluctuation of experiences and identities (Greenhouse et al. 2002).

The discussion of changing conceptualisations of culture in anthropology in the 1980s involved a notion of space as organised, not in distinct scales, but rather through a vast complexity of interconnections (Massey 1998). James Clifford coined the term, ‘from roots to routes’ (1997) which captures this change in focus of social research. My research on youth subjectivities necessarily involves looking at interconnections at different levels and I concur with Massey’s (1998: 124) claim that:

a so-called ‘local’ youth culture was argued to be not a closed system of social relations but a particular articulation of contacts and influences drawn from a variety of places scattered, according to power relations, fashion and habit, across many different parts of the globe.

Social spaces are best thought of in terms of complicated nets of interrelations and networks which are certainly not tidily organisable into distinct ‘scales’. This is particularly pertinent in relation to dispersed cultures and interconnections that are bound together and internally differentiated. Social relations are set within spaces and are the products of relations and interconnections. This is a view of social space that recognises its enormous complexity and refuses to categorise into neat regional/urban, local/national, traditional/modern, coloniser/colonised binaries. It is also a view that acknowledges that space is constructed by social relations. Moreover, these social relations are always imbued with power relations.

My interest in transculturalism also raises questions about the relationship between cosmopolitanism and the nation-state as experienced by a specific group of young Timorese. Many contemporary commentators agree that cosmopolitanism – as a subjective outlook, attitude or practice – is associated with a conscious opening to the world and cultural difference (Hall 2002; Hannerz 1996; Held 2002; Tomlinson 1999;
The idea of the kosmopolites, the citizen of the cosmos (Heater 1999: 37), has existed for more than two millennia. As Rabinow (1986: 258) describes it, cosmopolitanism is an ‘ethos of macro inter-dependencies, with an acute consciousness of the inescapabilities and particularities of place, characters, historical trajectories, and fates’.

Cosmopolitanism, in this study, refers to the makings of identities that are not territorialised, rather, they are indeterminate and fluid. However, the cosmopolitan potential of identity in this study is grounded within the bounds of the nation-state. I therefore deviate from Arjun Appadurai (1996a, 1996b) and other post-modernist/post-state and ‘borderless world’ theorists (Hannerz 1996). I suggest that while young Timorese subjectivities and the concept of Timorese ‘youth’ are produced in a transcultural space, this does not preclude the state’s potential in influencing the construction of these identities and shaping notions of belonging. As Appiah (1998) suggests, we cannot ‘think away’ the state.

The importance of locally grounded forms of cosmopolitanism is highlighted by Kwame Anthony Appiah (1998) who reminds us that cosmopolitanism must always be rooted in place. This argument is most applicable when discussing postcolonial issues of citizenship and cultural rights. Appiah (1998: 95) states, ‘cosmopolitans can be patriots, loving our homelands (not only the states where we were born but the states where we grow up and the states where we live); our loyalty to humankind – so vast, so abstract, a unity – does not deprive us the capacity to care for lives nearer by’. My thesis follows the approach of Appiah (1998) in questioning how it is possible for young Timorese to engage with the world beyond Timor-Leste in order to forge a place of belonging inside the nation-state.

Victor Turner’s concepts of liminality and communitas – an intense experience of community – is important in my analysis of how young Timorese made meaning out of their lived experiences in Indonesia. My research questions the plausibility of Turner’s theory of liminality which, according to him, necessarily involves a series of stages. Communitas is defined as a stage in which social rules are upturned and hierarchies cease to exist. This stage of liminality is always followed by reintegration into society. I ask to what extent were young Timorese able to re-integrate themselves into post-conflict Timor-Leste?

I privilege a perspective of ‘being-in-the-world’ (Jackson 1995) which encourages a view of the body and emotion to better understand how young Timorese create sense of belonging through cultural aesthetics (Morphy 2006). The emotions and ‘structures of feeling’ (Williams 1977) shaped during the period of liminality between childhood and adulthood are crucial to my exploration of young Timorese identities. I use visual
material to illustrate the emotional and embodied nature of identity because we comprehend the world at large through more than one medium (Merleau-Ponty 1962).

My study of people and place asks important questions about citizenship. The emotional dimensions of belonging are exposed only when one’s safe and stable connection to one’s collectivity, the homeland or the state becomes threatened. Belonging is articulated and reflected upon at the moment that individual, collective and institutional narratives of inclusion become politicised (Yuval-Davies 2004.) I have drawn on the debates of Renato Rosaldo (1999) and Aiwha Ong (1996, 1999) and their interpretations of cultural citizenship. Rosaldo viewed the notion of citizenship as dialectically determined by the state and its subjects. He defined cultural citizenship as the demand of disadvantaged subjects for full citizenship in spite of their cultural difference from mainstream society. However, Ong (1996) claims that Rosaldo attends to only one side of a set of unequal relationships and that his interpretation gives the erroneous impression that cultural citizenship can be ‘unilaterally constructed and that immigrant or minority groups can escape the cultural inscription of state power and other forms of regulation that define the different modalities of belonging’. Formulated in this manner, says Ong, Rosaldo’s concept of cultural citizenship indicates subscription to the very liberal principle of universal equality that he seeks to call into question. Aihwa Ong’s (1996, 1999) interpretation, in contrast, refers to the cultural practices and beliefs produced out of negotiating the often ambivalent and contested relations with the state and its hegemonic forms that establish the criteria of belonging within a national population and territory. Becoming a citizen depends on how one is constituted as a subject, and who exercises or submits to power relations. One must develop what Foucault (cited by Rabinow 1986: 237) calls ‘the modern attitude’ of ‘self-making’ in shifting fields of power that include the nation-state and the wider world. My understanding of cultural citizenship involves these two approaches and sees it as a type of performance and expression of national belonging. I interrogate these expressions by asking the question: in what ways have young Timorese mobilised cultural citizenship in order to forge a place of belonging in the new nation-state and what are limits to this belonging?

Establishing Myself in the Field(s)

The conceptual and methodological approaches of this research are founded upon examining the interaction and nature of local, national and international relations and how these shape and are shaped by particular localities. Anthropologist Tom Boellstorff (2002, 2004) has argued that much of the ethnographic research within the borders of the contemporary Indonesian nation-state for example, work to show how ‘local’ communities are in fact constituted through frictions with transcultural forces like the state, religion and modernity. Persons within the nation-state of Indonesia (and I extend
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during the formal period of my doctoral field research, from November 2004 to November 2005, I was based in Dili and made frequent trips to the regions of Timor, particularly, Los Palos and the Indonesian cities of Jakarta, Yogyakarta and Denpasar. However, I also draw on my in-country experience in Indonesia and Timor-Leste from 2000 when I began to engage with young Timorese in a variety of positions as a student, United Nations election officer, political analyst and election observer, translator and development consultant. I employed the classical anthropological techniques of in-depth, open-ended, semi-structured interviews and participant observation as well as conducting analyses of music, performance and poetry.

In addition to these classical anthropological approaches, I also draw on a range of secondary sources to develop a contextualised account of youth in time and place. Two English texts written by Timorese reflecting on their different generational experiences are key in this thesis. The first is the dexterously crafted account of belonging and exile written by Luís Cardoso (2002). Cardoso was a member of the Generation of ’75 and educated in Catholic seminaries. He received a scholarship to study in Lisbon just prior to the Indonesian invasion of Timor in 1975. That cataclysmic event left him unable to return for 24 years. Naldo Rei’s book, Resistance. A Childhood Fighting for East Timor (2007) sheds light on Timorese’ expressions of identity and experiences during the resistance movement. In addition, I draw on Susan Rodgers’ work, Telling Lives, Telling History. Autobiography and Historical Imagination in Modern Indonesia (1995) that tells of the experiences of two (relatively unknown) Sumatrans in discussing the ways in which a ‘revolutionary spirit’ was captured within meanings of youth in early nationalist Indonesia. I thus draw on these seminal works in the ways they represent vastly different generational experiences and personal trajectories in order to elaborate on the themes in this thesis.

Telling of the dearth of research conducted on young Timorese, many young Timorese I met in the capital of Dili in 2005 were surprised that I would want to research their lives. ‘Why research us? We have no culture!’ was a common early declaration. While this may have been a self-deprecating strategy to ward away a potentially suspicious foreigner, it was also a statement that young Timorese felt themselves to be different from the rest of society. They knew of anthropologists coming to Timor to study traditional ways of life in the mountains of Timor for example, but had not met

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researchers interested in their own lives, histories and ways of belonging that were so
different but connected to these rural-based lives.

Some of the young Timorese I had met a few years earlier in Yogyakarta and Los Palos
had established the local NGO, the Sahe Institute for Liberation (referred to as simply
‘Sahe’) in Timor.\textsuperscript{21} Sahe ensured my passage into the field in 2005 by acting as my visa
sponsor and initially in many ways, my 
\textit{raison d'être} in Dili. They shared their office
space, media studio and front porch with me and I translated, edited and narrated film
and texts on a wide range of issues from childhood labour to press releases about the
Truth and Friendship Commission.\textsuperscript{22} I participated in community meetings about issues
such as Timor’s response to the tsunami in Aceh; political decisions and actions by the
local NGO coalitions; and institutional strategies. Most beneficially for my research, the
porch and courtyard at the Sahe institute was an after hours meeting place for NGO
workers, young unemployed Timorese and, high school and tertiary students. My
discussions about the more mundane daily life pressures and challenges provided a
unique insight into the daily lives in addition to the political dimensions. Moreover, my
association with Sahe assisted me in gaining access to some of the key players within
the young generation.

I also recognised the importance of getting to know young Timorese outside of this
realm of central political activity. Throughout my fieldwork in Timor-Leste, my rented
house took on an ‘open house’ character. Many young Timorese from diverse
backgrounds would visit my house to sit on my verandah, eat, chat and listen to music
or prepare for social events we would often attend together. I traveled to and from
Timor-Leste to various Indonesian cities and within Timor itself with Timorese
students, NGO workers and relatives of students to attend ceremonies, weddings and
accompany my friends on visits to their family homes. My conversations were held
mainly in Indonesian and Tetun. The use of Tetun is increasing in the public domain but
Indonesian, particularly the languages of Indonesian youth culture, does not seem to be
fading as quickly as anticipated (see Bexley 2009).

In Indonesia, I stayed with young Timorese in their \textit{kos} (boarding house), ate with them
at food stalls, translated documents, assisted with proposals for projects, accompanied
them to the shopping malls and the markets, attended student meetings and facilitated
reading groups. A prominent memory from this fieldwork in Indonesia is the time when
I arranged to have a focus group discussion with students from Udayana University in
Denpasar about their lives in Indonesia. True to their organising and networking
abilities, my informant and the initial ‘few students’ soon turned into a pan-Timor mini-
conference with around sixty Timorese students showing up! While obviously a little
overwhelmed with how I was going to conduct the ‘focus group discussion’ it was a

\textsuperscript{21} Sahe Institute and its history are discussed in Chapter Five.
\textsuperscript{22} I discuss the politics of the Truth and Friendship Commission in Chapter Six.
very clear indication early on in my research of the interest young Timorese had in talking to me about their lives.

Visual anthropology was important to this project. Film and photos were an integral part of this research as a way to record the embodied notion of identity (see Bexley 2007b). The mediums were also used as a methodological tool to collect data and to interact and engage with the people in my study. I often printed photos and made DVDs and distributed them to the individuals and communities that I worked with. I also set up an informal file exchange of photos among some young Timorese photographers in Dili and some of their photos are included in this thesis. The transportation of media (print, photos, film) back and forth from Timor-Leste was important to them. The Timorese living in Indonesia would always greet me with, ‘what information did you bring from home?’ Interestingly, I received the same response every time I would return to Timor-Leste from Indonesia. Film is also an important component of this research and I have included one in Chapter Five and one in Chapter Six.23

My fieldwork period formally finished at the end of 2005 and by the following year I had returned to Canberra to begin what is known as the ‘write-up’ phase of my doctorate. Throughout the political, social and security crisis of 2006 in Timor, the sense of my own helplessness was overwhelming and all too reminiscent of the chaos and terror of 1999. In early 2006, I began a collaborative project involving three art and cultural collectives from Dili, Timor, Canberra, Australia and, Yogyakarta, Indonesia.24 The first project developed into a second in 2008 and a third project was completed in Dili in October 2008. Some of the works produced in these collaborations were part of a wider initiative looking at art through the lens of human rights. The works were presented at the exhibition and conferences titled Thresholds of Tolerance, held in March 2007 and Recovering Lives, held in August 2008 and jointly curated by David Williams and Caroline Turner at the School of Art Gallery, Australian National University.

As I was a member of the three print making collectives – Taring Padi based in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, Gembel based in Dili, Timor-Leste and Culture Kitchen, based in Canberra, Australia – I was uniquely positioned to act as ‘facilitator’ and translated not only languages but cultural and artistic concepts and contexts between those involved. My role in these art and cultural projects was to facilitate understanding between the artists and, in working collaboratively, to explore the socio-political and

23 The films were presented at the Australian Anthropological Society conference in Cairns (2006); the Queensland College of Art (2007); and the National Gallery of Australia (2007).
24 In 2006, I established Culture Kitchen with print artists Julian Laffan, Bernie Slater and Jon Priadi. The works produced in the three collaborations with Gembel and Taring Padi have been presented at the National Gallery of Art, The School of Art Gallery, Australian National University, Queensland College of Art and the Melbourne Human Rights Film and Art Festival as well in Dili at the APHEDA/KBH training space. I discuss the third print project in Chapter Six.
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cultural realities of each of the artists. The logistics of working on four large banners (3x3 metres) and works on paper in three countries using manual printing techniques was challenging (see Bexley 2007a) and required several trips to Indonesia and Timor-Leste.25

Throughout this period of writing time, I found it difficult – if not impossible – to disengage from the field completely. Although I had returned to Canberra and occupied my office in the Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies building everyday, my contact and relationships with young Timorese did not end with the formal conclusion of in-country fieldwork. Quite the contrary, at times I was faced with the conundrum of never-ending fieldwork! Besides the issue of conducting fieldwork in a rapidly changing field site, there were always activities such as the print project to involve myself in as well as weekly tasks such as writing articles and book reviews for Dili-based Kla’ak magazine,26 assisting Timorese colleagues with scholarship applications, preparing writings on art exhibitions, and editing writings by my informants. There was always somebody on Gmail chat ever ready to answer one more question or provide the latest update of the political situation.27 I felt my ongoing engagement with the communities and individuals in this manner was necessary and, ultimately, the most rewarding part of this project.

Towards a Field of Timor-Leste Youth Studies

Young people have been at the forefront of warfare and political conflict in many parts of the world. Children and youth have often fought in revolutions with strong ideological motivations. Stories of war and national independence often feature the heroic deeds of children of both sexes who were too young to join the armed forces or even the guerrillas. Sometimes such actions are attributed to youthful idealism. During the Chinese Cultural Revolution, Red Guards between the ages of 8 and 15 carried out some of the more violent acts. The conflict between Palestinians and the State of Israel has been, and continues to be, marked by the involvement of young people. The intifada in the Israel Occupied Territories featured young people as the primary catalysts of the strife who redefined the conflict through their actions (Punamaki 1987). Clearly, the mobilisation of young people in combat, violence and exploitation imposed upon them, holds terrible consequences for their development and for the peace and stability of generations to come. While the recruitment of young Timorese into the conflict arose

25 The first print making project was completed in Indonesia and Timor-Leste in December 2006-January 2007. The second project was completed in Canberra in May 2008 and the third in Timor-Leste in October 2008.
26 I discuss Kla’ak magazine in Chapter Six.
27 The internet is becoming increasingly accessible and affordable for young Timorese in Dili and in some of the districts, such as Baucau. The Gmail chat option allows for instant messaging providing a much more immediate style of communication.
from the social crisis of Indonesia’s invasion, its consequences are even more profound social and cultural dislocations.

In Timor-Leste, the importance of the social category of youth has served many purposes, including the recruitment of many young Timorese to the cause of Timor’s liberation struggle. This attention paid to youth was evident in the discourse of the ‘young patriots’ propagated by Xanana Gusmão, and yet this was not commensurate in the attention paid to youth and their concerns after independence. The disjuncture and disappointment expressed among youth after independence surprised very few of my interlocutors and the outpouring of rage and frustration during 2006 surprised even fewer still.

References to youth as ‘problems’ or ‘incomplete adults’ are common among Timorese political leaders and within anthropology. The early anthropological studies on youth included a traditional focus on family and kinship, such as in Margaret Mead’s (1928) pioneering *Coming of Age in Samoa* and Turner’s (1967) studies of the ritualisation of the transition from childhood to adulthood. However, these early studies viewed youth as being on their way to adulthood in the process of learning for later challenges, rather than producing something in their own right.

The study of young people as actively engaged in the production of meaning for their own social worlds has been overlooked (see Caputo 1995: 22). This perspective is useful and allows me to focus on cultures of Timorese youth, not as subcultures, seemingly fixed in their opposition to the adult world or in jeering mockery of it. Instead, my approach is somewhat akin to what Sociologist Allison James (1995: 46) has referred to as, ‘Geertzian contexts within which the generational experience of being denied access to and participation in central institutions can be thickly described’.

There are a number of examples of studies found in nearby Indonesia that provide some insight into how one can approach youth as active producers of their culture rather than passive recipients of dominating structures. I have been inspired by the work of Harriot Beazley (1999) and her work on street children in Yogyakarta; Linda Rae Bennett’s (2002) and Megan Jennaway’s (2002) work on young women’s sexual subjectivities in Lombok and Bali respectively; and Doreen Lee’s (2005, 2007) work on the Indonesian student movement. All of these studies illustrate the ways in which young men and women negotiated structures to forge their own identities.

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28 Former Prime Minister, Mari Alkatiri was known for telling young generation politicians to ‘drink their milk’ so they would ‘grow up’ and become mature politicians.
In terms of the writing on Timor-Leste, Dionisio Babo-Soares’ thesis (2003) provided a helpful place to start in terms of how young Timorese think about national identity. His thesis addresses the Timorese political community’s sense of the nation through botanical idioms connecting past and future, from *hun* ‘roots’, ‘origins’ ‘past’ ‘history’ to *rohan*, ‘future’ or, ‘end’. Nationalism is represented as the ‘trunk’ of a tree (nation). The whole tree (nation) can only stand firm if the ‘trunk’ (unity, nationalism) is strong. Nationalism is depicted as having its derivation in ‘roots’ (common sentiment), and harvesting its fruits when independence is finally achieved. My study begins where Babo-Soares left off in terms of the dilemmas facing young Timorese after independence, or, in botanical terms, what happens when the branches of the tree begin to extend in different directions. I have drawn on the literature available about Timorese nationalism (Jolliffe 1978; Hill 1978, Helen, H. 2002; Cardoso 2002) and Indonesian nationalism and youth (Anderson 1972; Foulcher 2000; Siegal 1986) to offer an alternative analysis of the workings of nationalism namely, in the ways youth has been constructed as a socio-political and gendered category.

Fiona Crockford (2007) and Amanda Wise (2002, 2003, 2004, 2006) have both provided valuable accounts of the construction of diasporic Timorese identity in Australia. Crockford (2007: 33) eloquently deals with the experience of displacement and agentic capacity of young diasporic Timorese and the ‘conflictive complexity of Timoreseness and specifies the shifting dimensions of political agency’. I follow on from Crockford’s examination of how young Timorese construct place by focusing on young Timorese and their engagements with Indonesia. Amanda Wise’s study, also about diasporic Timorese in Sydney, is helpful for its discussion of affect in the construction of a moral economy. My case study shows how the moral economy that underlies citizenship has its roots in Timor and is not merely a product of diasporic cultures. Importantly, I illustrate how the moral economy continues to operate for those who have returned to Timor and, even, for those who have never left.

My study of young Timorese differs from these previous studies on Timor-Leste discussed above in the way I transcend the conflict paradigm and contemplate how Indonesia is constituted in the life worlds of young Timorese, both during the resistance and after independence. Indeed, my main contribution to the emerging field of Timor-Leste studies is in shedding light on the little understood yet multilayered relations between Timorese and Indonesians. Through this lens, I pay particular attention to the construction of the modern, political and social self as a result of these interactions. It is my hope that this historically-situated appreciation of young Timorese experiences provides a solid foundation for further explorations of young Timorese subjectivities-in-the-making. My study also has relevance beyond the field of Timor studies to explorations of transitional societies in which young people of political violence...
experience the post-conflict period. Furthermore, it offers a lens through which to study how nation-statehood is experienced by young people. For the Asia-Pacific region, my study has relevance for studies of young people who are mobilising the arts to make connections with others in the region. Methodologically, it points to the ways researchers can engage young people by becoming involved in longitudinal and diverse projects.

Chapter Outline

This chapter has introduced the situation in Timor-Leste after independence and outlined the crisis of identity and belonging that followed. I then outlined my entrance to the various field sites over a period of time and through various positions, from student to UN translator. I discussed the academic field of Timor studies and the emphasis on what I term the conflict paradigm that has eclipsed more nuanced understandings of how Timorese have given meaning to their experiences of occupation and furthermore, nationhood, by situating them as victims or perpetrators. Since 2006, media and international development agencies have constructed a discourse of ‘wild youth’, which positions youth as perpetrators of violence, and completely decontextualises the historical and gendered dimensions of youth. The theoretical underpinnings of my own approach prioritise an understanding of Timorese youth’s motivations and identities from an historical, gendered, and transcultural perspective. Establishing myself in the field through involvement in everyday life, communities and projects was an attempt at putting an approach of interconnection into practice. The final section of this chapter locates an emerging genre of youth studies and outlines my contributions to the field, which focus on an understanding of youth identity through an historical lens and an understanding of Indonesia beyond the conflict paradigm.

Chapters Two and Three call into question the recent focus on youth since 2006 as a contemporary phenomenon devoid of historical meaning. Specifically, Chapter Two provides a basis for understanding the historical context of youth in Timorese society during the period of Portuguese colonisation through an examination of a variety of secondary sources. Education and language policies of the Portuguese colonial regime created a group of elite and educated (mainly) young men who increasingly saw themselves as responsible for the nation. The developments of this youth consciousness paralleled developments of the emergence of a national identity. This chapter goes beyond providing a nationalist account to describe how young Timorese actively contributed to the construction of a gendered youth identity defined by bodily styles. Through the specificity of historical experience, this chapter provides an understanding of the ways transcultural forces, including colonialism, impacted on the construction of a social category of youth.
Chapter Three situates Timorese youth in history as a socio-political (and liminal) category by looking at Indonesian New Order modernity, primarily, its policies and practices in relation to Timorese youth identity construction. Importantly, this chapter seeks to go beyond the conflict paradigm by looking critically at the role of Indonesia in the construction of youth identity. I look at the ways in which the Indonesian New Order state organised students for purposes of social control and how young Timorese resisted and forged their identities. In discussing Indonesia critically in this manner, I also shed light on ‘gender imaginings’ in Timor and Indonesia that served as references for Generation of ’99 gender relations and identities. Furthermore, my approach is grounded in an historical view of youth in order to add depth to the recent debates in Timor that tend to overlook the historical complexities of youth. For the younger generation of Timorese, the post-Cold War period and the New Order regime in Indonesia (and its resistance) firmly established the socio-political role and identity of Timorese youth.

Chapter Four draws on accounts and memories of a group of young Timorese both during the New Order and independence to examine the construction of their critical community. This chapter seeks to further dispel monolithic ideas about Indonesia and acknowledges the impact of the regime (including cultural policies and state violence) on the formulation of young Timorese selves, including gendered identities. I situate the lived spatial arrangements of Timorese youth as they established themselves as modern political subjects in Indonesia. After independence, the unraveling of national and young Timorese unity is illustrated through the changes to their living arrangements from the asrama (government boarding house) to individual kos (private boarding houses). This sense of disunity has also provided a space in which this group of young Timorese could reconnect with more familial identities. However, as the komunitas came under threat of disunity, power dynamics of marginalisation prevailed and the komunitas became short hand for identity politics and contestations about claims to rightful belonging in the nation-state.

Chapter Five draws on cultural expression of young Timorese musicians, poets and writers to illustrate the ways in which they attempted to create a cultural citizenship as an alternative conceptualisation of national belonging that differs from official discourses of belonging. Cultural citizenship, I argue, relied upon a sense of unity and rested on a particular structure of feeling, referred to as rasa. These structures of feeling had currency for those young diasporic Timorese as well as those who never left the country. In this chapter, I focus on the ways in which specific expressions of national belonging are drawn from transcultural influences.

Chapter Six develops an understanding of how memory was mobilised to create discourses on truth and justice in post-independence in the construction of cultural citizenship. Through the mediums of protest, film and the print press, a group of young
Timorese offered alternative ideas on belonging and their relationship with Indonesia that differed from the governing elite. Over time, young Timorese began to question their relationship with leader, Xanana Gusmão, the premise of their involvement in the clandestine movement, and the utopian ideals it represented. The second part of this chapter offers an alternative analysis of the 2006 socio-political crisis beyond the narrow frame of conflict as an expression of profound socio-cultural transformation. I focus on how the crisis demonstrated the limits of cultural citizenship as the realities of the nation-state and its preoccupation with defining belonging came to the fore. A new generation emerged during the crisis who continued to draw upon transcultural, historical, and gendered cultural references as they strive to create an identity and place of belonging on the margins.

The concluding chapter weaves together the themes of the thesis by reflecting on the contemporary situation in Timor-Leste ten years after the popular consultation in which Timor-Leste gained independence from Indonesia and provides some possible further research directions on youth-centred research.
CHAPTER TWO

Locating Youth in Colonial History:  
The Generation of ‘75

But colonialism never rests.

Abilio de Araujo (1975: 1).

One of the products of science at which I never stopped marveling was printing, especially zincography. Imagine, people can reproduce tens of thousands of copies of any photo in just one day. Pictures of landscapes, big and important people, new machines, American skyscrapers, everything and from all over the world – now I could see them for myself upon these printed sheets of paper. How deprived had the generation before me been – a generation that had been satisfied with the accumulation of its own footsteps in the lanes of villages.

Minke (1982: 2) from Pramoedya Ananta Toer’s novel, This Earth of Mankind.
In Chapter One, I located the central problematic of identity politics following independence in 2002 where two generations — the youth generation of 1975 and the youth generation of 1999¹ — were defined by their different linguistic and intellectual orientations rather than their similarities. The objective of the present and following chapter is to develop a comparative perspective between generations of Timorese youth and ask whether in fact the generations are more similar than they are different. By revisiting secondary sources of cultural and historical texts, I provide an alternative account of nationalism to explain the formulation of youth identities and lay the foundational structures that gave rise to the Timorese youth resistance in the 1990s.

The period of Portuguese colonialism had a profound impact upon the emergence of a social category known as youth or juventude, in Portuguese. The generation of youth that emerged in this time is referred to as the Generation of '75 because 1975 was the year that Timor gained its brief independence for which this generation had rallied, before being invaded by Indonesia in the same year.² In this respect, the generation was defined by the Indonesian invasion rather than Timor’s independence.

The quote at the beginning of this chapter is from the character Minke in Pramoedya Anata Toer’s novel This Earth of Mankind (1982) in which he describes the extensive changes that came with modernity, the distance this served to create between Indonesian children and their parents and the profound impact this had on the articulation of a distinct generational identity. Similarly, the Timorese youth generations of both 1975 and 1999 came of age at a time marked by transformations of modernity that led young Timorese progressively away from a life marked by village borders to a life punctuated by the formation of the nation-state. Like the biographies of two Sumatran revolutionaries during the late Dutch colonial period in Indonesia (Rodgers 1995), young Timorese during the 1970s begin to ‘migrate toward’ the new imagined community of the nation. Within these wider societal transformations, an ‘imagined community’ (Anderson 1991) of youth began to emerge with a shared sense of moral duty that fed into the mythic history of youth struggle. Likewise, two generations of youth in Timor became liminal subjects: expected to reintegrate to their former roles in society. They experienced great difficulty in doing so. While this was due to conditions of war for the Generation of ’75, their liminal status was linked to political conditions at the realisation of independence in the case of the Generation of ’99.

Throughout the following two chapters, I contextualise the Timorese youth Generations of ’75 and ’99 within the experiences of Indonesia’s youth because of the influence it had on Timorese’ own construction of a category of youth as a socio-political identity

¹ Hereafter referred to as Generation of ’75 and the Generation of ’99.
² Some of whom now occupy positions of power such as Jose Ramos-Horta, Xanana Gusmão and Mari Alkatiri.
that was expressed through bodily styles and fashions. Ramos-Horta (1987: 27) recalls how the young nationalists of the Generation of ‘75 began to look, ironically, to Indonesia as a reference in their political struggle, ‘both because we were inspired by Indonesia’s earlier independence struggle against the Dutch, and because of its geographical proximity’. Like the early Timorese youth revolutionaries of the 1970s, the Indonesian youth, known as pemuda, used the coloniser’s language as a tool of resistance against Dutch colonialism from the 1920s until the 1950s. Throughout this period, youth also developed certain styles in which a new political consciousness mirrored the formation of the nation. This led to a movement, a kind of ‘imagined community’ of young people who were able to set themselves apart from their parents and already imagine themselves as part of a larger community of the nation.

The following generations and the imagined communities of pemuda (youth) continued to play an important role in Indonesian political history and assisted with the change of regimes from the Old Order to the New Order and subsequently, its overthrow in the late 1990s. The roles youth played throughout history serve to highlight the constructed nature of the social category of youth and ways in which history can be called upon for particular purposes, namely, nationalism. Foulcher (2000) reminds us that that the Indonesian Sumpah Pemuda (Youth Oath) taken in 1928 is an important illustration of the power of the ‘invention of tradition’. Of the Sumpah Pemuda, Foulcher (2000: 378) said:

The construction of the symbol and the meanings attached to it through different periods of Indonesian history, are not only a reminder of nationalism’s need for a teleological history of its own origins; they also serve to illustrate how the post colonial construction of the past is always tied to the exigencies of contemporary political visions and ideologies. A nation must have a history and its history is a part of the shaping of its present.

The history of Timor is also a history of its youth and the complex history and engagements with Indonesia are a key part of its past, and its future. The engagements with Indonesia will be explored over the following chapters.

This chapter has two main sections. The first section deals with the ways in which Portuguese colonisation brought about significant changes through attempts at modernisation. I illustrate how youth rebellions were a predominant feature of the response of indigenous groups to colonisation. Through its language and education policies, the Portuguese colonial regime inevitably created certain conditions for resistance enacted by the educated classes. This also resulted in the establishment of a privileged class of male patriots. Importantly too, the colonial policy of education also created a separation of young Timorese from their parents which provided a space where other influences, such as discourses of decolonisation in other Portuguese

3 Currently President of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste.
colonies, could take root in the formulation of a new youth consciousness. The gender
dimensions of youth were also established during this period which paralleled a
masculine national identity through the foregrounding of a masculine symbol of the
Maubere.

The second section of this chapter focuses on Indonesian nationalism especially youth
styles and masculine identities that became entrenched in the processes of nation
building. I detail Indonesian nationhood that points to the significance of Dutch
education and language policies and a separation of youth from their families that
paralleled historical colonial processes in Timor. These conditions provided the
foundations for a new critical consciousness amongst youth creating a new style and
evoking new masculine identities that were entrenched in processes of nation building.
This history lays an important foundation for the rise of Timorese youth during the
1990s.

Modernity in Timor

Processes of modernity, specifically in relation to the Portuguese colonial
administration and education systems, provided the conditions in which a generation of
young Timorese came of age. In customary practices, the phase from childhood to
adulthood was marked by, among other rites, teeth filing and the first chewing of beetle
nut in preparation for marriage among clans in order to reproduce a connection with
ancestors. Portuguese colonisation impacted on this systematic preparation of young
people for adulthood. During this time, adolescence and early adulthood was marked by
separation and spatial distance from village based life. This was referred to as lao
lemorai (Tet. to travel outside of one’s village). Rather than the narrowly defined roles
and responsibilities defined by family and village life, youth took on responsibilities of
nationhood and an awareness of their own differences and distinct cohort. The
opportunities in education and language training for a select group of (mostly male)
young Timorese created a group who rejected colonisation, although they too were
aware of the irony that they were the products of colonisation. Through modern
transformations of print media, this group of young Timorese was able to articulate their
own sense of community. The early period of Portuguese administration provided the
conditions in which young Timorese came to first represent themselves as a socio-
political force.

The Early Administration of Portuguese Timor

Colonisation in Portuguese Timor brought profound changes through modern
administration and control over the indigenous population. Matters in both Portugal and
its colonies changed dramatically with the rise of António Salazar, a former professor of
economics at Coimbra University in Portugal. In 1930, as Minister of Colonies, Salazar

imposed the New State’s (*Estado Novo*) control over the colonies, the most telling of which was to radically increase the powers of the political police. From a legal perspective, the most important decree affecting Timor was the organic charter of the Colony of Timor in 1931, which was the first attempt, at least on paper, to portray the Southeast Asian colony in the light of a modern colonial administrative organisation.\(^4\)

Despite this modernisation process, no space for political action in Timor was created under the Salazarist regime. Neighbouring Dutch Timor allowed west Timorese a limited opening for political engagement namely as a consequence of Dutch ‘ethical policies’ (before World War I) which saw the emergence of a number of socially concerned parties (Gunn 1999: 210; Fox 1977). Disenchantment with the colonial master of Portugal developed in other colonies such as Guinea by the 1920s and 1930s, and critiques emerged of Salazarism among an educated class known as the *ilustrado* (in Goa) but there was no parallel in Portuguese Timor at the time (Gunn 1999).

Critique of the Portuguese regime was tempered in part by the unique specificities of Portuguese rule and the deep ideological cultural roots of respect for its rule. Anthropologist Elizabeth Traube (1986) conducted fieldwork in Timor between 1972 and 1974, and her study considered the ways in which the Mambai in the central mountains of Timor were able to accommodate the Portuguese into their understanding of the world. The Mambai conflated outsiders with the ocean and placed these *malae* (Tet. foreigners) in the role of ‘younger brother’; the one who belongs to the world of ‘beyond’. Mambai accorded Portuguese *malae* with executive powers and accepted their appropriation of political power in matters outside their immediate worlds. Conversely, Mambai as ‘insiders’ claimed seniority in the inner ritual realm. As the original inhabitants and symbolic ‘older brothers’, they were custodians of the place of origin and presided over a cosmos of flora and fauna. Rationalising the arrival of the Portuguese invaders as the anticipated ‘return’ of an original, ancestral younger brother provided a lens through which ongoing colonial interaction and interventions was understood and enacted. Into this cosmological order, the Portuguese arrived and were ritually assimilated, although not uncritically, through the anchor lines of kinship, exchange and obligation as the seafaring siblings of the people of the interior.

*Early Rebellions*

The acceptance of the Portuguese empire however was never total and was marked by a hundred years of rebellions, despite the fact that incorporating Portuguese foreigners into their life-worlds was common among ethno-linguistic groups in Timor. Timorese overcame fractures in local political entities and allegiances caused by the Portuguese to

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\(^4\) Brazil and Africa were the first areas to become part of the Portuguese empire, followed by Asia.
Locating Youth in Colonial History: The Generation of '75

resist colonial power. There were many earlier revolts. Dom Boaventura of Manufahi led one of the most tenacious revolts (and one of the last).

The Manufahi rebellion was a specific response to the plan to increase the head tax paid to the colonial government. The initial tax law of 1909 was already onerous. It demanded payment from all native men over the age of 18 years who were able to work and widows who possessed goods sufficient to live off (Davidson 1994: 105). In 1912, there was a reported increase of people fleeing the territory with the increase of the tax and the hardship it provoked, particularly among those farmers who were unable to increase productivity in their fields (Davidson 1994: 105). A number of village leaders, including Boaventura, sought to assemble in the district capital of Suai (in Covalima district) to request a remission, but the killing of a Portuguese Lieutenant signaled the opening shots of the rebellion (Gunn 1999: 178). The killings were enacted according to the custom of war (Tet. fumu) where the collection of enemies’ heads were taken back to ancestral domains and exhibited as lulic (Tet. sacred or powerful object) (Gunn 1999: 179). This custom was also mobilised by Portuguese colonialists as a weapon of intimidation against Timorese.

Reaching a climax in 1911, the Boaventura or Manufahi rebellion as it became known, was eventually quelled by a force of 28 Europeans and more than 12,000 other troops including reinforcements from Macau (Gunn 1999: 177). Approximately 3,000 troops were killed and 4,000 troops were captured by the rebels. The leader of the rebellion, Dom Boaventura himself managed to escape unharmed but later surrendered to the Portuguese. Where the rebels were undoubtedly effective was as a mobile guerrilla force. The moradores (militia groups) continued to be recruited for the protection of Portuguese interests. The moradores of Dili, Bidau and Sico were the strongest first-line of defense for the colonial community and its outlying postos, or posts, though the administration referred to them as ‘second-line troops’ (Davidson 1994: 136) which were drawn from groups with century old alliances.

The Manufahi war is referenced as a precursor to modern nationalism in particular because it was led by a ruler with a nationalist vision of the injustices enacted by foreigners towards the indigenous population. The Boaventura rebellion was an important event that went on to be recorded, referenced and incorporated into the national narratives of youth as folk stories (Tet. ai-knanoik) (see Babo-Soares 2003). Xanana Gusmão as the leader of the clandestine movement throughout the 1990s, in his letters to young generation Timorese‘ referred to Boaventura as an inspiration to rally

5 There are a number of interpretations on the Manufahi rebellion including that the battle was sparked by a Portuguese soldier’s interludes with a Timorese woman, who many suspect could have been Boaventura’s wife (see Sengstock forthcoming).
6 The 1959 uprising in Viqueque with Indonesian involvement remains important in Timorese history but does not hold the same significance as Boaventura (see Gunter 2007).
7 Discussed in Chapter Three.
the nationalist spirit of young Timorese. The incorporation of this narrative is not surprising as Boaventura was the last of the large rebellions and thus best remembered. As Gunn (1999: 198) reflects:

It is not such an abstract sentiment to express that the importance of the Boaventura rebellion for ordinary Timorese is in the way that his name has been passed down through the generations as a legendary hero of resistance, the last identifiable leader of the last great rebellion against the Portuguese.

In Timor, the military oppression that marked post-Boaventura Timor, perhaps unsurprisingly, did not promote a greater unyielding allegiance to Portugal. The relationship to Portuguese colonial masters had been challenged and this prompted the colonial administration to establish a new colonial presence in Portuguese Timor, based in part, upon dividing the colony into smaller administrative units for ease of control. Within this new system, the Portuguese administration promoted a new elite closely attuned to colonial values.

Colonial Policies of Control: Social Classes

In the next phase of their rule, the Portuguese sought even more control of the indigenous population by incorporating a new Portuguese-speaking elite, known as the assimilated, or asimilados into the administration. The regime built strategic alliances with the liurai (indigenous chiefs) who acted as customary power brokers within the mountainous populations. These relationships were in turn, built upon the special privileges afforded to the liurai by the administration. The liurai were designated to become the new indigenous elite.

The intention of the asimilados policy was to produce colonial natives who spoke Portuguese, took on Portuguese names, practiced Catholicism, and could work in the administration. They carried out the task of promoting 'Portuguese' norms and values among the rest of the population. This paralleled neighbouring Dutch Indonesia which also created an elite class to carry out social control.

The early Portuguese education system in Timor produced the first Timorese letrados, the embryo of a future Timorese native elite, drawn especially from the strata of the liurai. Although the hereditary nobility, known as liurai or dato, continued to hold power locally, the new social group from traditional society, the letrados became admired and respected because they succeeded in adapting to colonial values, the

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8 de Araujo (1975) claims that the original form of liurai was liu-rai, in the Tetun, the word liu means unlimited and rai means land. Thus, literally, one who has unlimited land. Liurai was the supreme ruler in Atoni and the Portuguese appropriated the title to use in their construction of administration units throughout the half-island.
hallmark of which was their Portuguese literacy as much their embrace of faith. As Abilio de Araujo (1975: 4), one of the revolutionary youth of the 1970s, explained:

The Portuguese colonists discovered that it was necessary to support this new group which accepted the policy of propagating the Christian religion. The Portuguese perceived they would secure loyalty through the privileges provided to the natives. It was also necessary, on the one hand, to give this group a status equal to that of the lurar and dato and, on the other, to remind them of the responsibilities attached to their status – to maintain order and justice within a framework of collaboration, understanding and tolerance.

Portuguese Colonialism and its Impact on Citizenship

The impact of modernity brought by Portuguese colonial policies also influenced the legal and cultural construction of citizenship. The assimilados were never given full rights and were always treated as inferior to Portuguese citizens. However, to be an assimilado was the ultimate product of a process of ‘civilisation’ to be distinguished from the vast majority of unassimilated, indigenous Timorese. The status enabled a measure of social and economic mobility, and the practical workings of the contingent citizenship is seen from the following 1950 table, in which ‘assimilated’ are listed as ‘indigenous-civilizado’.

Table 1. Composition of Population in Portuguese Timor in 1950 (Weatherbee 1966).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>European</td>
<td>568</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mestiço (mixed blood)</td>
<td>2,022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>3,128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other non-indigenous (Goan etc.)</td>
<td>212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous – civilizado</td>
<td>1,541</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous – não civilizado</td>
<td>434,907</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>442,378</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Before World War II, não indigenous had no citizenship status; in 1950 they gained citizenship but had no right to vote. The assimilado was a contingent cultural citizenship forever marked by a colonial subjectivity. The assimilados were educated under a policy known ensino de adaptacao – ‘adaptation’ education. The aim was to inculcate in pupils a general feeling of being quasi-Portuguese while not allowing them many aspirations, or opportunities to fulfill these aspirations Luis Cardoso, who wrote the first English language account of exile and belonging in the dexterously crafted The Crossing, a Story of East Timor (Cardoso 2002), described his experiences under the Portuguese school system. Cardoso (2002: 42) recalls the teacher-student relationship marked by this colonial subjectivity and in a particularly shocking Frantz Fanon, Black Skin, White Mask-esque moment describes how:
[Master Jaime] used to clean the blackboard with his pupils’ dark faces; according to him, having their faces covered in white chalk dust brought them a little enlightenment.

The ‘modern’ administration of the Portuguese colonial regime enacted policies that also constructed notions of citizenship and privilege and Timorese were enculturated within a system of hierarchy in which they were placed at the bottom. This sort of social control inevitably led to an indigenous response.

A Limited Education

The limited Portuguese education open to natives sought to endorse the sense of cultural citizenship marked out in legal terms by privileging geo-spatial knowledge of Portugal above Timor. In the state schools, maps of Portugal hung on the walls of all classrooms. Even in the most remote villages, children were required to commit to memory the names of the rivers, railways and cities of Portugal. Some of the later textbooks depicted life in the African colonies, in addition to metropolitan Portugal, but always stressed the superiority of the Portuguese way of life. Timorese culture and traditions were never mentioned in the classroom and neighbouring Asian countries were rarely cited (Hill, H. 2002). Although there was a dearth of information about Timor in these lessons, the Timorese were active in placing the role of the Portuguese into their own social worlds. Cardoso (2002: 50) recalled this newness with delight:

Although I knew that I would never visit the Portugal shown to me in the tourist guides – our schoolbooks – I delighted in imagining its cities, mountains, rivers, its people and language. I loved knowing of the existence, the possibility, of earthly paradises and promised lands, perhaps especially since there was no chance of such a thing in my own life.

Although the church provided an opportunity for young Timorese to gain knowledge of foreign ideas, the novelty of education and the discoveries it brought to the young Timorese took place in the context of a disciplinarian schooling:

Although the school had been built in the midst of those hills, like an altar to learning, with people from different races and speaking different languages, Portuguese was compulsory in the grounds, and anyone who disobeyed would receive a sharp rap with a ruler. The cane or the ruler proved harsh but effective. During the day, the cane would be passed from one change of the linguistic guard to the next, who would sometimes lay traps in order to obtain the evidence they needed more quickly (Cardoso 2002: 45).

With the expulsion of the Jesuits from Timor in 1910 (see Gunn 1999) the role of education was left in the hands of the ‘not very capable state’ (Gunn 1999: 213), but the slate was not entirely wiped clean. The first formal Chinese school in the colony, the Clube Chum Fuk Tong Su, was founded in 1912 and offered instruction in Chinese language as well as English, Zoology and Botany (cited in Gunn 1999: 213) for ethnic Chinese children.
Despite the school system expanding slowly, knowledge transfer to the Timorese was kept to a bare minimum and the medium of teaching was Portuguese. While there is some discrepancy between the church and government figures, in the mid-1950s Timor had a population of approximately 440,000 and only 28,000 students were enrolled in the 39 primary schools across Timor, with even fewer attending secondary school (Dunn 2003). By 1974, there were 1,000 students in secondary schools across Timor (Dunn 1996). Some of these students went on to become the elite class of young (mainly male) Timorese who played a major role in the awakening of a nationalist spirit and defined youth’s socio-political role.

Modernity and the Rise of the Movimento

Timor was living through its own age of discoveries. (Cardoso 2002: 72)

Modernity brought an increased connection for Timor with the world. By the late 1960s, Timor’s isolation began to wane as the forces of globalisation filtered through. The political stirring of the Timorese roughly coincided with similar restive events in Europe. In 1968, students and workers had taken to the streets in Paris, Rome, London, and Prague. However, the Portuguese fascist regime tried to wrap their Southeast Asian colony in a cocoon and political dissidence was met with severe responses. The contradictions of colonial policies were made clear by the fact that dissident Portuguese citizens were often sent to the colony for punishment and later, dissident Timorese were sent to the ‘motherland’ for disciplinary action.

Even the most isolated young Timorese experienced connection with the outside world. Cardoso (2002: 72) noted that ‘despite being an island in the back of beyond, ignored by everyone, the outside world still entered the palm-thatched houses’. He described the beachfront Areia Branca in Dili as a site where young Timorese men dedicated themselves to flirting with Australian tourists and ‘trying the delights of the English language’. Older generation Timorese showed me photos that registered the early 1970s as a carefree time of bell-bottom flares, beads and long hair. Beach parties would rage all night at Areia Branca with the music of Jimi Hendrix and other sounds of the late 1960s and Cardoso describes Areia Branca as a ‘refuge of clandestine lovers’. Theatre was common and the plays of Portuguese writers such as Gil Vicente and Jose Regio were performed each week. Cardoso recalls that there was an evening each week dedicated to singing and poetry, ‘some daring people even declaimed in public the poems of Antero de Quental, poems that spoke of the poet’s supreme doubts about the divine, to an audience of confirmed certainties and faith’ (Cardoso 2002: 62-63).

The interconnection with the rest of the world through the Portuguese language and the increasing Portuguese oppression began to have an affect on educated young Timorese.
From World War II onwards, young Timorese started to express resentment of Portuguese colonial practices and the lack of opportunities for education and promotion. The discontent with being positioned on the last rung of the citizenship hierarchy became the driving force of Timorese nationalism during this period. Their bitterness toward Portuguese colonialists paralleled the expressions of the young Indonesian nationalist Minke in Pramoedya Ananta Toer’s (1982: 86) novel, this Earth of Mankind, when he was asked to meet with the District Head (Ind. Bupati):

And must I, an HBS student [Hoogere Burgher School, Dutch school], cringe in front of him and – at the end every one of my sentences, pay obeisance to someone I don’t even know? As I walked along the path to the pendopo [open air pavilion], already lit up by four lamps, I felt like crying; What’s the point in studying European science and learning, mixing with Europeans, if in the end one has to cringe anyway, slide along like a snail, and worship some little king who is probably illiterate to boot.

In 1964, only 10 Timorese held degrees. According to Portuguese statistics, between 1950 and 1970, primary school enrolment increased tenfold, from 3,249 to 32,937 (CAVR 2005: 11). With this rise in educated Timorese came an indigenous middle class who Cardoso (2002) remembers were beginning to develop a unique political practice and emerging political consciousness. However, By the mid-1970s, it is estimated that only 10 percent of Timor’s total population of 680,000 were literate and perhaps only 0.25 percent had received a formal Portuguese education (Cox and Carey 1995: 34).

Despite the minimal quality of education during this period, the schools fostered the rise of a collective anti-colonial sentiment, which became known as the movimento. Young and restless Timorese youths were central actors in the awakening of nationalism in Timor. The movimento consisted mostly of high-school students and office workers, and included people such as Jose Ramos-Horta, Mari Bin Alkatiri, Nikolau Lobato, Borja da Costa, and Abilio Araujo. To avoid the attention of the Portuguese security services, the group formed a musical band as a ‘cover’ for its meetings. The band was very popular at the time and had several names including, Academicos, Eclipse, and Cinco do Oriente. The group would also meet informally in a small group in the garden outside the Governor’s Palace to avoid arousing the suspicions of the DGS (Direção-Geral de Segurança, Portuguese secret police) (Ramos-Horta cited in Tribune 1974). By the time of the Portuguese Carnation Revolution in 1974, Timorese youth began to

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9 Mari Alkatiri claims to have formed the Movimento on 8 January, 1970. He left for postgraduate study a year later in 1971. He was also a guitar player in the original Cinco do Oriente band along with the prominent poet of the time, Borja da Costa (pers.com 2008). The new Cinco do Oriente band, consisting of Generation of ’99 members was established in 2002 and is one of the leading bands in contemporary Timor.

10 The Carnation Revolution was a left-leaning military coup that started on 25 April, 1974 in Lisbon, Portugal that effectively changed the Portuguese regime from an authoritarian dictatorship to a democracy. Portugal’s new regime pledged itself to ending the colonial wars and began negotiations with its colonies.
construct a new style for themselves, and had gone beyond the euphoric hippy phase, abandoning their long hair, bell-bottoms and Cuban heels. They plunged into a sea of rebellion. Cardoso (2002: 62) recalled this bodily change:

They were immaculate in well-pressed clothes and they smelled of camphor and eau de cologne ... Although the fashionable stance was one of rebellion, some of these people were excellent timekeepers – civil servants, people from established families, with children and responsibilities into the bargain.

While the Portuguese objective in educating the chosen few was to create an elite class to both further the Christianisation of Timor and to gain control over a new class of elites, these schools and seminaries also became the site of the anti-colonial movement which privileged young men. The seminary in Dare, for example, has been described as a ‘crucible of nationalist thought’ (Cardoso 2002: xii-xiii; Taylor 1991: 31).

The anti-colonial movement was gendered in its constitution and this is illustrated by the biography of key players involved in the movement. Like many other young men of his time, Xanana Gusmão aspired to better himself through education. He mastered Portuguese at the Dare seminary and he later joined the colonial public service as a ‘functionary’, the most prestigious position a Timorese could hope for. He later became disillusioned with the narrow colonial society and resigned (Niner 2007). Jose Ramos-Horta was exiled to Mozambique for his ‘anti-colonial’ activities (1970 to 1971). He remembers Mari Alkatiri, then ‘an articulate radical of Arab descent’ whose ancestors had arrived from Yemen 200 years earlier (Ramos-Horta 1987). Alkatiri left Dili in the early 1970s to study surveying in Angola, where he made contact with the rebels who were fighting the Portuguese (Hill, H. 2002; Hill 1978). Nicolau Lobato, like Gusmão, was the son of a catechist father and also attended the Dare seminary. He dreamed of studying law in Portugal but could not afford to and signed up instead for the sergeant’s course in the army (Cardoso 2002; Hill 1978). Borja da Costa was the son of the liurai of Same. He left the seminary in Dare to take up employment in the Portuguese administration. From 1968 to 1971, he did obligatory national service training with the Portuguese army. He described his military training as ‘good experience’ because he gained confidence to speak out against racial discrimination. Gusmão recounted that the stigma of being an ex-seminarian united them (Niner 2007). João Carrascalão came from a wealthy elite mestizo family whose members were notable for their ‘height and physical strength’ (Cardoso 2002: 77-78). Like Ramos-Horta’s father, Manuel Viegas Carrascalão, was an infamous Portuguese deportado. Exiled to Timor, he married a Timorese woman, established a prosperous coffee plantation, and later became the mayor of Dili (Ramos-Horta 1987). From this

and by the end of 1974 had withdrawn from Portuguese Guinea. Cape Verde, Mozambique, São Tomé, Principe, Angola and Timor-Leste all became independent in 1975.

11 The Alkatiri’s would have arrived in the early 1900s, at most 100 years, not 200 years beforehand.
privileged background João and his elder brothers, Manuel and Mário, also studied at the Liceu. João went with Alkatiri to study in Angola.

In the national dissident-youth narrative of the 1970s, women are absent although they were vitally important to the political sphere of colonial Timor and women such as Rosa Muki Bonaparte played a key role in the formation of the political movements of the time.\textsuperscript{12} The young radicals described above were often the products of legitimate marriages between Timorese women and anarchic Portuguese dissidents. The Catholic Church also impacted greatly on the construction of gender and gender relations. The Church provided women with female-only spaces and a profession that provided a legitimate alternative to marriage. However, with its education program focusing on young men, the Church continued to consolidate patriarchal and class beliefs within Timorese society. The primacy given to men in this national dissident narrative is telling of the ways in which the category of youth with its socio-political overtones was deeply gendered.

\textit{Print and Youth Consciousness}

As suggested by the character Minke at the beginning of this chapter and argued through Benedict Anderson's monumental \textit{Imagined Communities} (1991), printing as a feature of modernity had profound effects on the realisation of a distinct community of young people. This print media of the 1970s was a key arena in which young Timorese of the time could criticise the Portuguese system and through which the \textit{movimento} was realised. During this process, the social and political roles of youth became entrenched in processes of imagining the nation. Many of the young Portuguese-speaking elite wrote in two Portuguese language print-media, which they used to criticise the Portuguese system from September 1972.

The newspaper \textit{Seara} (published by the Catholic Diocese) became a forum for young Timorese to engage in discussion on issues around Timorese social and political life. Key contributors included Ramos-Horta and Mari Bin Alkatiri who wrote about the education system, housing problems, and even Christianity and Marxism. In February 1973, an article was published in \textit{Seara} by Fransisco Xavier do Amaral, titled \textit{Sera Verdade?} (Port. Is it true?). The article set out a 'list of ills' caused by Portuguese rule including poverty, hunger, and illiteracy. This was the first published article that called on the Portuguese to account for their actions and it was also the article that caused \textit{Seara}'s closure by the government in April 1973. Both de Araújo and Gusmão wrote poetry and worked together on \textit{A Voz de Timor} (The Voice of Timor).

Abílio de Araújo's modest published monograph, \textit{Timorese Elites}, (1975) was significant because of the impact it had on the 'imagined community' of youth:

\textsuperscript{12}I discuss the particularities of the construction of gender in Chapter Three.
not so much that it was the first attempt by a Timorese after 25 April [1974] to come to grips with the role of Portuguese colonialism, but that it expressed an advanced consciousness of the position of Timorese politicians as people drawn from the urban elite (Jolliffe 1978: 69).

de Araújo’s work can be seen as an attempt to redefine Timorese history by a member of a group of youth who were ‘alienated from their own culture’ (Jolliffe 1978: 69) and were most eager to search for their cultural origins. This is a significant parallel with much of the work of the younger generation after independence, from 2002 onwards.\(^1\)

de Araújo’s work gestured towards understanding Timor’s colonial history that, he claimed, was a necessary part of the decolonisation process. Similarly, he argued that ending the divisive system of the elites would create a Timorese national consciousness. His work was an analysis of colonialism and for the first time, the term ‘collaborators’ entered popular parlance. de Araújo (1975: 6) explains the workings of this:

\[\text{At this stage they exchange favours: the local group offers guarantees for the establishment of colonial rule and in return receives privileges, rights and honours not shared by others. And so the elite is created.}\]

de Araújo was well aware of the fact that he and his colleagues were products of the same colonial policies used to oppress his people. de Araújo (1975: 6) reflects that:

\[\text{This policy, like many others, can prove to be a double-edged sword. This group of responsible civil servants, promoted because of their acceptance of colonialism’s values... may be its best ally, but may also turn out to be its greatest enemy.}\]

The resistance embodied in the Movimento group was not completely immune from violence. The Movimento and student supporters occasionally confronted the Portuguese police and in 1973, clashes broke out in Dili between ‘young people and the Portuguese military’ (CAVR 2005: 77). In late 1973, the Movimento reportedly prepared Molotov cocktail bombs in anticipation of raids by the Portuguese security police, but the clashes did not eventuate.

One of the effects of modernity in Timor was the access young people gained to discourses of decolonisation elsewhere in the world through the Portuguese language. The Timorese anti-colonial movement of the 1970s was heavily influenced by African anti-colonial ideas and struggles emerging in East African colonies such as, Mozambique, Angola, Guiné Bissau, Cape Verde, and São Tomé e Príncipe. The young nationalists were also undeniably influenced by the theological pedagogy of their early educations. The old world Latino culture that shaped these leaders shared an attachment to the ‘lost world of priests and white-suited colonials with their old-world manners and foreign European language’ (Niner 2007: 114). Luís Cardoso (2002: 98) remembers

\(^1\) Discussed in detail in Chapter Five.
Nicolau Lobato, the first President of Timor, who was slain while fighting the Indonesian forces after the 1975 invasion, and who began a trend of Lusophone-inspired intellectualism:

Another was the severe introverted ex-seminarian Nicolau Lobato, who dressed almost monastically, read voraciously and wrote in a firm hand with a fountain pen. Accustomed in his earlier life to carrying around the prayer book and the Bible, he always walked through Dili with a book under his arm (doubtless philosophy or the social sciences) apparently deep in thought, as if he had found an internal oasis and had decided to stay there... Nicolau grew up with the creed on his lips and a rosary in his hand and went straight to the seminary, pre-programmed for great sacrifices and the renunciation of the temporal world. Even now I cannot understand how the church threw away such talent and religious feelings yet kept others who were mere celebrants of the liturgy.

The image of young people as agents of socio-political change was further embraced by Timorese students. Uncensored news was filtering through and one important source was from 39 Timorese students who were studying on university scholarships in Portugal (Hill 1978). Cardoso (2002: 96) describes the almost mystical allure of the students who returned to Timor from Lisbon, from the perspective of those who never left Timor:

They awaited descent from the heaven of those who had received scholarships to Lisbon and were thought of as the leaders of the future, albeit masked by distance.

Cardoso (2002: 106) goes on to explain the returned students and their embodied style that evoked a new style for indigenous youth:

They had not finished their degrees, but they came with practical experience acquired in student canteens and associations. They were the new wave, bringing with them whatever was currently in vogue. They did not look like colonial administrators and they cultivated the disheveled mien of revolutionaries.

The mobility of a certain group of young Timorese played a significant role in the construction of a new awareness. In Lisbon, the Casa dos Timorense was established in early 1973 as a hostel and meeting place for Timorese students undergoing tertiary studies in Portugal.14 Here, young people developed their radical ideas and, beginning in mid-1974, several returned to Timor to support ASDT/Fretilin.15 Borja da Costa was among the 1973 cohort and considered this student experience as the beginning of his own politicisation (Jolliffe 1978: 9). He was in Lisbon at the time of the Carnation Revolution in 1974, which had a profound impact of course not only on Timor, but the

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14 The site of the hostel and meeting place continued to play a role in the formulation of young Timorese nationalism. The asrama discussed in Chapter Four was influential in the formation of the Geração Foun subjectivity.
15 These students included António Duarte Caverino (Mau Lear), Helio Pina (Mau Kruma), Rosa Bonaparte Soares (Muki), Guilherme Araújo, Francisco Borja da Costa, Vincente dos Reis (Vincente Sahe), Hamis Bassarewan (Hata), Inacio Fonseca (Solan), Venâncio Gomes da Costa (Mau Seran), Dulce Cruz, Abílio Araújo and Roque Rodrigues (CAVR 2005).
Timorese expatriates in Portugal. The young activists of the Casa dos Timorense immediately sent a cable of solidarity to Dili on hearing about the first legal organised political expression of Timorese nationalism, the ASDT (Associação Social Democrática Timorense, later to become Fretilin) (Jolliffe 1978: 9). In doing so, they were also realising their own community and forging a new awareness that they were involved with, if not responsible for, matters of the nation.

The range of influences on the students abroad and at home in Timor served to guide young Timorese’ own political orientations. The poet Borja da Costa described that the most important of these influences on his own work (most notably his poems published in 1976) were Bertolt Brecht, Pablo Neruda, Moxim Gorky, ‘Marxist works’ and the poems of Mao Tsetung (Jolliffe 1978). Above all, the situation in Timor influenced the young Timorese actions and outlooks. Borja said that he was ‘politically oriented’ by older Timorese (Jolliffe 1978).

The most influential group on young Timorese thinkers of the time was undoubtedly ASDT/Fretilin. ASDT’s first manifesto, published on 22 May 1974, called for the fight to independence, rejection of colonialism and the immediate participation of ‘worthy Timorese elements’ in the administration and local government. In September 1974, the ASDT changed its name to Frente Revolucionária de Timor-Leste Independente (Revolutionary Front of Independent East Timor, Fretilin). The change reflected two things: a move away from a party type structure and a desire not to restrict the movement to a particular political philosophy of labour-oriented social democracy (Jolliffe 1978: 64).

The young Timorese students returning from Portugal became the agents of Fretilin’s ‘rejection of colonialism and to counter against neo-colonialism’ (cited in Dunn 1996: 56). Fretilin regarded colonialism as a ‘darkness’ (Tet. nakukan laran) and set itself the task to ‘modify, transform and revolutionise the old structures which were inherited from five hundred years of colonialism’ (Fretilin 1974). Specifically, Fretilin’s transitional development programme called for:

a) Profound and quick transformation of the old colonialist structure, implementing new forms of democracy.
b) Cultural development [inspired by] a new process and concept of the culture which is to be from the people, with the people and for the people.
c) Active movement against corruption and exploitation of the people.

Education and cultural policies called for an ‘extensive program’ to eliminate illiteracy and ignorance, the replacement of the colonialist education system with one promoting Timorese culture and freedom of religion for all people, with the state ‘guaranteeing
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protection of native religious houses, churches, mosques and temples' (cited in Jolliffe 1978: 75). While the program intended to retain Portuguese language as the official language, it also called for:

A program of research and study... in the Tetun language, as well as other local languages. A further aim is the fostering of literature and art of the various ethnic groups through cultural exchanges for the enrichment not only of Timorese culture as a whole, but also as a contribution to universal culture (cited in Jolliffe 1978: 76).

Fretilin maintained the idea of a 'front' throughout 1975. In an interview with journalists two weeks before the Indonesian assault on Dili, Nicolau Lobato was interviewed. His views were undoubtedly influential in shaping the thinking of his generation:

Interviewer: Fretilin embraces people of any ideology who defend independence. Does it include Communists?
NL: I do not know of any Communists here, but I cannot read minds. We have a discipline of the Front, so everybody respects the programme of Fretilin which was drawn up according to social realities.
Interviewer: How would you describe the programme? As populist? Socialist?
NL: We don't know such names. We study our own circumstances. As you know, we have lived under a colonial government (cited in Jolliffe 1978: 107).

Consistent with the local conditions on Timor at the time, to which Lobato alludes, many of the young Fretilin members focused their work in the countryside in their study of anti-colonialism. Vincente Sahe and his sister, Terezinha Reis (Noi-te) returned to their village of Bucoli, in the district of Baucau to work on one of the most influential programmes of the Fretilin project, tackling widespread illiteracy which affected 93 percent of those born before 1974 (Taylor 1991).

During 1974, young members of Fretilin traveled widely (Tet. lao lemorai) collecting material for a literacy handbook in Tetun. Focusing on words in common use, the handbook was titled, Timor is our Country (Tet. Rai Timor Rai Ita Nian).

While being grounded in the everyday realities of decolonisation in Timor, the movement was inevitably influenced by the Indonesian decolonisation process. Ramos-Horta (1987) recalled how the young nationalists began to look to the Indonesian anti-colonial nationalist struggle as a reference in their political struggle. The educated elites in Indonesia and Timor were able to unite the masses and establish a common identity in the struggle for independence. In Indonesia, Sukarno used the term Marhaen. In Timor, the young nationalists used the term Maubere. Despite the similarities between Sukarno's Marhaen and the Timorese Maubere figure representing the poor and ignorant, they are not analogous. Maubere has a more political origin emerging first as

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16 Bucoli is also a significant site for the current work of some of the Generation of '99 who are involved in the Sahe Institute for Liberation.

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the Portuguese characterisation of the labourer, or auxiliary, *auxiliar*, or *asuliar* (Kammen 2003). This origin sets the Maubere apart from Marhaen: while both were constructed to represent the common peasant, Maubere was appropriated and imbued with a sense of exploitation of all Timorese.

The potent symbolism of nationalism in the character of Maubere was mobilised during the early 1970s to provide a national identity. Ramos-Horta (1987) claims he was the first to take up the Mambai term. Ramos-Horta (1987: 37) explains the political impact of the use of the indigenous term during this critical phase of colonialism:

I began therefore to concoct our own version of social democracy by coining the word 'Maubereism' – from Maubere – a common name among the Mambai people that had become a derogatory expression [used by the Portuguese] for the poor and ignorant in the face of the Portuguese colonialist presence.

Ramos-Horta explained that ‘within weeks’ the Maubere became a symbol of a cultural identity and provided a sense of belonging out of the humiliation they had suffered at the hands of the Portuguese colonisers. Buibere17 was the female version but it was the male Maubere that became entrenched in the national imagination and among young Timorese men who were regarded, and also fashioned themselves, as the ‘heroes’ of the nation.

It is worth mentioning here that the Maubere embodied the symbolism of purposeful virility for this generation of young Timorese. Since the birth of the nation-state as a political entity in modern history, American feminist scholar Cynthia Enloe (1989: 44) highlights, masculine toughness has been ‘mustered, both as a political strategy and social response, to bolster a mother country’s or fatherland’s unity, especially at moments when national integrity needs to be asserted or reclaimed’ which invariably involves the nation’s young. Enloe shows how manifestations of nationalism have typically arisen from ‘masculine’ memory and sensibilities of ‘hubris and honour’ (1989: 44). The potent figure of the Maubere is just one example of the ways in which young Timorese were active in their own construction of the socio-political and gendered dimensions of the youth.

In conclusion to this section, during the later period Portuguese colonialism, youth came to represent a significant liminal period between childhood and adulthood marked by a period of irresponsibility on the one hand, and on the other, a profound sense of morality and responsibility for the nation. I have argued that Portuguese colonisation brought about significant changes. The new phase of colonialism and its associated structural transformations of modernity triggered a more intensely inter-connected world experienced by children in the separation from their village-based lives,

17 The impact of this symbolism on the construction of gendered identities is discussed in Chapter Three.
combined with education and fluency in languages other than their regional languages. The structural transformations during this time also brought about the establishment of a group of elite young men who had a particular orientation towards Lusophone intellectualism. However, due to the Indonesian invasion and occupation, this ‘spirit of youth’ was a limited consciousness and developed differently from Indonesia. Moreover, during the 1940s, Timor lacked a Sukarno-like leadership figure who played such a critical role in the rise of the literate and print conscious native nationalists that rose in the Dutch colony. Nonetheless, the parallel process of nationhood and the construction of youth heralded important developments for both the Generation of ’75 and the Generation of ’99 and to which I will now turn.

**Indonesia: Youth, Masculinity and Nationhood**

The most significant factor of Indonesian nationalism was the impact it had on young Timorese at the time. Ramos-Horta stated in 1974 that his generation of youth, the Generation of ’75, looked to Indonesia (known as Nederlands-Indië or the Dutch East Indies until 1945) for inspiration in their own self-styling as young Timorese revolutionaries. The notion of youth in Indonesia was also irrevocably tied to the rise of nationalism and the anti-colonial movement.

The role of language was significant in the style of the early Indonesian revolutionaries, as it was for the Timorese. In Indonesia however, the movement drew upon a distinct indigenous concept of the liminal period between childhood and adulthood. This period of youth (for men) was marked by a time of wandering in search of utopian and spiritual illumination before the responsibilities of adulthood set in. These wanderings away from home were drawn from the Sumatran concept of *merantau* (taken from the root verb *rantau*), invoking a sense of wandering away from home either as a traveler or trader in search of spiritual knowledge which eventually leads one back to home.

As Indonesia struggled for independence from Dutch colonial rule from the turn of the century until 1945, the wanderings of the youth and their marginal position outside of society was capitalised upon in the emergence of the Indonesian youth (*pemuda*) as a revolutionary force. In his groundbreaking study of Indonesian *pemuda*, Benedict Anderson (1972) observes that the central role of the younger generation (Ind. *angkatan muda*) in the outbreak of Indonesian revolution (1945) was the most striking political fact of that period.

In the early years of Indonesia’s nationalism, West Timorese students played an important role in the development of Indonesia’s nationalist movement and by doing so, assisted in the construction of the socio-political role of youth. The *Jong Java/Jong Sumatra bond* or movement (1917) consisted of young men and women of high-status families sent from their ethnic homelands to pursue education in Java. By 1933, a new
generation of political activists had begun to emerge. Several Rotinese and Savunese students in Bandung on Java formed an educational organisation, De Timorsche Jongeren, which was intended to ‘unite all of the students from the residency who were pursuing studies throughout Indonesia’ (Fox 1977: 180). This organisation became a political party with a wide constituency beyond the Timorese islands.

The resolutions of the Sumpah Pemuda youth pledge in 1928 mark a significant development in the construction of the youth as a social and political category. Young Indonesians from around the Nederlands-Indië archipelago came together to pledge themselves to the Indonesian nation, homeland, and language (Foulcher 2000). Citing Bahasa Indonesia as the ‘language of unity’, the congress took the step of establishing Indonesian as the language of the youthful nationalists. The delegates in the 1928 congress were fluent in Dutch, the language of both thought and daily interaction among educated Indonesian youth in the 1920s and therefore shared key similarities with the Timorese Generation of ‘75. Dutch, and sometimes regional languages, were the languages of the journals published by the respective youth organisations, and there was no apparent anomaly felt in the use of Dutch to discuss for example, the need for the preservation of Javanese and Sundanese languages (Foulcher 2000).

As Anderson (1972) points out, what these young people had in common was their Dutch education and exposure to Western cultural norms, including notions of political independence and nationhood. They came together perhaps to assuage feelings of loneliness and homesickness, many of them still teenagers, far from home in the big cities of Java (Foulcher 2000) and this led them on a path towards an imagined community of youth as part of a new nation.

The parallel experiences of young Indonesians coming of age with the nation is retold by Susan Rodgers in her edited book, Autobiography and Historical Imagination in Modern Indonesia (1995). The book is a compilation of translated autobiographies by two (relatively unknown) Sumatrans. The book provides an excellent account of the mood of the times and the ‘revolution of the spirit’ captured within meanings of youth. Both autobiographies were written during the Revolution and published in 1950. P. Pospos’ Aku dan Toba: Tjatatan dari Masa Kanak-Kanak (Me and Toba: Notes from Childhood Times) and Muhamad Rajab’s Semasa Kecil di Kampung (Village Childhood) both recall childhoods spent in late colonial times, from roughly 1915 through to the 1930s. While the stories are concerned with the minor emotional dramas of two village boys’ lives as they navigate successfully realms of family, religious and schoolroom experience, the authors are also writing about much bigger issues such as Indonesia’s own journey toward revolution and independence from an age of colonial subjugation. Nevertheless, as noted by Rodgers, the stories are about the very heart of Indonesia’s effort to create itself as a modern nation.
Writing of the times through their own experiences, the two writers chronicle Sumatra and the village consciousness which lead to:

mature selves who hold strikingly cosmopolitan, self-critical, and socially critically views of their village ethnic universes. By the time they are seventeen or so, the boys have almost become ethnographers of their ethnic realms and also of those Sumatran worlds' senses of time, place, language, society and person. By the end of each narrative, the stories' new almost-adults look toward the rantau (the social and moral precincts outside the Sumatran rural ethnic home regions) with a sense that these polyglot areas contain a future that will bring personal and public liberation from the shackles of "unthinking traditionalism." Modern Indonesia lies out there, the memoirists aver, in the hearts and minds of young people (Rodgers 1995: 4-5).

The concept of rantau, referred to earlier in this chapter, became very important at the time and served to mark a much larger transformation from childhood to adulthood and points to the interrelation between youth and nationhood, marked as a kind of 'spirit'. Pospos and Radjab who recorded a different life trajectory to their parents highlight this in their stories. They questioned the 'ideological givens of village life, the received truths of organised religions, and village notions of time and society. They then went on to 'migrate toward' (a major image for Sumatran writers) the new imagined community of Indonesia, as a multiethnic nation created' (Rodgers 1995: 7) through the work of young patriots drawn from the generation of the authors. The vision of 'growing up toward Indonesia and toward the rantau' and critical forms of consciousness goes 'far beyond some simple political or military resistance to Dutch oppression' (Rodgers 1995: 8). Revolution for these authors means a revolution of the spirit, an invention of modern Indonesia – and resistance to and overthrow of the Dutch colonial state is only one constituent part of this larger, deeper transformation of thought and 'revolution of eras' (Rodgers 1995: 9).

This spirit of youthfulness and its relationship to the nation became a central theme over the years of early independence. In his reign as President of the newly formed Republic of Indonesia (1945), Sukarno addressed many rallies of young people, gave attention to their role in politics, and expected them to make sacrifices for the future of independent Indonesia. 'I always say that young men and women are the most important pillar of the state', he said in 1948 (cited in McIntyre 2005: 56). Likewise, the spirit of youth became a major feature of his style of leadership. Sukarno insisted on his own his youthfulness; that he was a 'student from the Historical School of Marx... who studied the past not as an academic pursuit but as a quest to divine the future'. He tended to view youth not only as 'an image of the future' but as the natural constituency for his prophetic leadership (McIntyre 2005: 57).
The school was a key site for the transferal of the national and youth spirit in the Nederlands-Indië. ‘Whatever their inadequacies’, Siegal (1986: 139) writes, ‘there can be no doubt that schools today are the places where sentiments of nationalism are centered; when people view youth in terms of the future, as they do frequently and fervently, it is the schools they think about’. The nationalism of schooling was expressed particularly in the use of Indonesian, the national tongue, in place of regional mother tongues. Although contemporary curriculums had no trace of the revolutionary politics of the 1940s, schooling created a future looking nationalism built around the possibilities of youth.

Both in Java and Sumatra and elsewhere throughout the archipelago, the new generation of nationalists drew their rank and file from both rural and urban centers (Reid 1974). The unifying characteristic of the young men was their shared spirit of exhilaration and outlook. They looked upon the Dutch colonial rulers after Japan’s surrender in August 1945, with ‘revulsion, disdain and hate-filled eyes’ (Fusayama 1993: 29).

At the end of World War II, young Indonesians organised to express the urgency of national independence and imagined themselves responsible for the fate of the nation. While trying to communicate to the world around them their preoccupation with independence, they cultivated a distinctly new style, both social and sartorial, ‘long flowing hair, military attire and a pistol – the badge of revolutionary authority – at the waist, and a sharp decisive way of giving commands’ (Reid 1974: 54-56). Anderson (1972) wrote of the apotheosis of revolutionary youth style, Bung Sutomo’s ‘personal style and legend’ – mentioning only wearing long hair, taking vows of sexual abstinence, and the close connection of these with traditional jago (social bandit, in the sense of outlaw) culture. The important point about the style of youth at this juncture was that ‘youth’ itself crossed normal generational boundaries and seemed to have little or nothing to do with age and ‘everything to do with spirit or outlook’ (Frederick 1997: 203).

The masculine designs of the Indonesian youth (Ind. pemuda) identity was illustrated by certain bodily styles including a novel habit of speaking gruffly, ordering people around with a strident voice and in a preemptory manner. This was a calculated departure from local customs in Java and other regions that valued soft-spoken decorum and courtesy. The pemuda chose from a number of fairly typical military styles which seemed to express qualities which they wished to emphasise and which they considered appropriate to the role they sought to play: one of active, modernist leadership characterised by ‘devoted, even militant nationalism and a certain clan’ (Frederick

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18 Japanese invasion and subsequent occupation from 1942 to 1944 dealt an almost fatal blow to Dutch colonialism – which formally ended in 1945.
Frederick goes on to analyse self-portraits of *pemuda* in the 1940s and points out that while the *pemuda* style may have founded on the attachment to uniforms, and the power and potential they express, it was also both self aware and romantic. The character of this romanticism is complex as Frederick (1997: 232) explains:

...deriving in part from the psychological atmosphere of the early Revolution, in which educated youth in particular felt liberated from old social roles and free to carve new ones as ‘new Indonesians’; in part from the social atmosphere of the day, in which unity and brotherhood were extolled; and in part also from the sheer sense of danger of a bloody armed struggle for independence.

There can no be doubt that underlining the general conception of the *pemuda* style are associations of the *jago* (master) machismo and power which characterise the socially dislocated youth. However, there was also a general interest in the masses, or *rakyat*, which also marked this new category of youth. Frederick (1997: 237) describes a kind of popularism termed ‘*rakyatism*’ thus:

> [a]ttentive, sympathetic, yet in many respects a rather paternalistic view of the masses characteristic of intellectuals and educated urbanised Indonesians generally – had its roots deep in the prewar *pergerakan* [movement] and was very much part of pemuda sensibilities from the very beginning of the revolution.

Throughout the 1940s, educated youth set about creating a mystique about themselves and their role in the struggle for independence, and using appearances to do it. After playing an important role in gaining independence for Indonesia, the youth movement rose again in 1966, when students took to the streets calling for radical change in national politics. Calling themselves ‘the Generation of 1966’ in explicit dialogue with the revolutionary ‘Generation of 1945’, they organised mass demonstrations and demanded a ban on the Indonesian Communist Party, a new cabinet and a reduction in soaring prices. Working under the guidance of the army, and particularly the elite army corps that later became known as Kopassus, students played an important role in bringing an end to the reign of Indonesia’s first President, Sukarno, and the transfer of power to General Suharto. Outside of the campus’, Islamic party youth wings were mobilised in the mass killings of suspected communists in which a half million people were killed (Anderson 1995). It was against this backdrop that Indonesian students took on a potent new socio-political role in the formation of the nation to be explored in the following chapter.

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19 At that time it was known as the Army Commando Force Regiment or *Resimen Pasukan Komando Angkatan Darat* (RPKAD).
Conclusion

This chapter has illustrated the processes of modernity that came with Portuguese colonisation and the impact this had on the transformation of a distinct social category and identity of youth, who later became known as the Generation of '75. The Portuguese colonial education system encouraged a select group of young Timorese to move away from their families and their village-based lives. Although this education system was designed as a tool of social control, it also produced a small elite of (mainly men) nationalists who rejected the very principles of colonisation. Key to this transformation was a particular style exuding Lusophone-oriented intellectualism and a masculine patriotic identity was embraced. The print media became central to the articulation of Generation of '75 nationalism and their sense of community. The transcultural influences on the construction of a social category of youth was already apparent with young Timorese drawing on both Lusophone and Indonesian theories of decolonisation. The Indonesian pemuda, with its militant and masculine undercurrents, became intertwined in processes of nationhood. The awakenings and articulations of youth with an explicit socio-political role was crucial in laying the foundations of the Generation of '99 and is discussed in the following chapter when they came of age at a time of a different world order.
CHAPTER THREE

Locating Youth in New Order History:
The Generation of ‘99

After all, it is education that causes one’s eyes to see, causes one’s ears to hear, and to evaluate things that are occurring far away, outside your own country, so that you reflect upon your own situation, and discover how far it is you have advanced and just where you are situated in the state of things.

After establishing the socio-cultural conditions that gave rise to the Generation of '75, this chapter focuses on the Generation of '99. I discuss the Indonesian period of occupation in Timor from 1975 to 1999 and the changes it brought to Timor, primarily neo-colonial education, language policies and the resistance that produced a distinct generation of young Timorese. The aim is to explore the dialectical process of the formation of a Timorese youth consciousness, which differs in critical ways from the youth consciousness incubated under Portuguese colonialism but also shares critical parallels. While the Generation of '75 developed knowledge of Portugal and African countries, the Generation of '99 developed knowledge of Indonesia, its language, policies, institutions (particularly the modus operandi of its army and police force), and resistance cultures. These structures shaped constructions of self and youth identity. However, the colonial systems of both Portugal and Indonesia inadvertently assisted, through their assimilationist policies and subsequent violence and oppression, the creation of youth as a socio-political category. A masculine trope of youth identity articulated by the Indonesian and Timorese youth generations continued to guide the Generation of '99 and their ideas about gender relations.

The educational, linguistic and political experiences of the New Order occupation between 1975 and 1999 produced a particular cohort of young Timorese, now in their twenties and thirties. They had radically different upbringings from their parents because of the mass displacement in the early years of occupation, their enculturation into the clandestine resistance movement, higher levels of education and large-scale assimilationist policies of the New Order. The Indonesian-educated generation played a vital role in the attainment of Timor’s independence. The emergence of the urban-based clandestine movement, particularly in Dili, from the late 1980s until independence, was heavily dependent upon their skills, dedication, youthful energy, and patriotism. During this time, earlier ideas about the socio-political roles of youth became central to youth identities.

The exposure to the Indonesian New Order heralded two major developments for the formation of a distinct youth consciousness in the 1990s. Firstly, the associated state processes of mass education and inculcation of the national language of Indonesian paradoxically provided the tools of resistance, the means to elaborate and fulfill unique dimensions of the socio-political role of Timorese youth. Secondly, the overarching structures of Indonesian education and language policies had more in common with Portugal’s colonial policies than has previously been given credit (including by members of the younger generation who have maintained that they are different from their elders).

In this chapter, I look critically at the experience of Indonesia in the formation of social worlds for an important group of young Timorese. Here, I am primarily interested in the
structural factors of the New Order that facilitated the notion of Timorese youth, the emergence of a particular expression of gendered youth, the political category of the Geração Foun or Generation of ‘99. My discussion of Indonesia in this chapter, however, is not intended to deflect attention away from the serious nature of the human rights violations it committed in Timor-Leste (see Nevins 2005; McDonald 2002; Robinson 2003). Nor is it to support the Indonesian New Order ‘development’ discourse that focused on the infrastructure and development brought by the New Order while downplaying the serious human rights violations at the time. However, as outlined at the beginning of this thesis, one of my aims is to go beyond the conflict paradigm that has so far dominated Timor studies to look at the ways young Timorese have made meaning out of their histories of conflict.

In my discussion of the Indonesian New Order’s impact on the formation of a Timorese youth identity, I begin by describing its education policies and the effect of increasing the numbers of Timorese tertiary students in Indonesia. Like during the Portuguese regime, education led to a critical community of young Timorese who rejected the tenets of colonial oppression. However, the Indonesian regime educated many more young Timorese than the Portuguese regime in its attempt to control them. The New Order’s depoliticisation policies however, inevitably led to mutual co-operation between young Timorese and Indonesian students. I then consider the role of the underground media and its impact upon the articulation of Indonesian and Timorese struggles and their shared community of socio-political subjects. Following this, I discuss the images of youth and resistance by both Indonesian and Timorese state agendas. The Indonesian state supported the representation of youth as ‘auxiliaries’ of the state through the establishment of state-sponsored Timorese groups. The Indonesian state’s insistence that young Timorese become members of an official organisation backfired when young Timorese used it to further their own nationalist agendas. The urban-based clandestine movement and recruitment of young Timorese became crucial to the sustaining the national resistance movement, as did Catholicism. Lastly, I discuss gender imaginings and regulating discourses of suffering that emerged during the occupation which became key to the articulation of gendered youth identity throughout the resistance and following independence.

**An Indonesian New Order Education**

Through mass education, the Indonesian New Order regime offered young Timorese an increased exposure to the world compared to the period of Portuguese colonisation. This resulted in ‘ending for good’ the Salazarist-imposed isolation or ‘fado-style tragedy’ (Port. fateful), as Jose Ramos-Horta put it (cited in Carey 2003: 61) of the insular Portuguese-style rule. Despite the relative exposure offered by the New Order, the education systems of both Indonesia and Portugal shared key similarities. Both were designed as systems of social control and to produce an educated class of
administrators. Political activity and dissident thought was met with severe punishment. However, both systems produced resistant subjects who ultimately played a fundamental role in the independence of the Timor nation.\(^1\) However, the two systems differed greatly in regard to the investment in education.

The New Order’s policy on universal primary school education had three fundamental impacts upon Timor and the constitution of its society. Firstly, the Indonesian focus on mass education meant that the mould of Portuguese-speaking elites was broken. Secondly, Portugal’s geo-cultural scape and language was erased in the minds of young Timorese. Significantly, at the beginning of the Indonesian occupation, the number of pupils enrolled in primary school was 50 times higher than in the Portuguese era and illiteracy was reduced from 90 percent in 1972 to 42 percent in 1990 (Anderson 1998a). Thirdly, and most significantly, this experience fundamentally changed a generation of young Timorese’ outlook on life. As Geoffrey Gunn (2000: 218), succinctly notes ‘for a generation of East Timorese, Jakarta, not Lisbon is at the apex of their language fluency and, therefore their worldviews, attitudes and outlooks’. The influence of the Indonesian education system meant that ‘within a decade or so Indonesia had fundamentally altered not only the mental horizons of a subject of people but also the spatial hierarchy of the education system’ (Gunn 2000: 218).

The Indonesian regime made a significant investment in the schooling system within Timor-Leste and provided thousands of tertiary scholarships for Timorese to study at Indonesian universities, although this was largely a tool of control. Mário Carrascalão, who served as the Governor of East Timor under Suharto’s New Order from 1982 to 1992, was responsible for forging the path for Timorese students to study in Indonesia. In an interview post-independence, he reflected (cited in Anderson et al. 2003) on his ‘inclusive approach’ during the resistance. While the Indonesian military was wanting to ‘shut-off’ Timor from the rest of the world in order to quell the resistance, Carrascalão saw an opportunity to ‘win the hearts and minds’ of the Timorese through non-violent means. He said, ‘Most of them [the students] became anti-Indonesian after they left East Timor [to study on Java and Bali]. That’s why [the military] wanted to close East Timor off. I said open East Timor’ (cited in Anderson et al. 2003: 21). This was no easy task for Carrascalão (cited in Anderson et al. 2003: 21), as he reflected:

> At one time I had eight hundred million rupiah for scholarships. So we wanted to send new university students outside of East Timor. Because I fought with them [the military authorities, in original], they wanted to nix anyone who wasn’t from an Apodeti [pro-Indonesia] family. They tried to win by working through the Ministry of Internal Affairs. So I went to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Minister Supardjo Rustam had cut eight hundred million rupiah from the [provincial] budget. I said to Supardjo, ‘Pak, if that

\(^1\) Timor-Leste declared independence on 28 November, 1974 and Indonesia invaded on 7 December, 1975. Timor remained the 27th province of Indonesia for 24 years until the plebiscite on 30 August, 1999. It gained full independence on 22 May, 2002.
money isn’t returned, if you cross that money out of the budget, you can also cross out my name as governor’. He immediately ordered the Directors to return the eight hundred million rupiah. They only wanted one group to become cadres in East Timor. Their short-term plan was to develop cadres.

While the Indonesian New Order regime may have educated far more Timorese than the Portuguese colonial government (and thus provided more exposure to and knowledge of the outside world), the province was largely shut off from the outside world. It was to Carrascalão’s credit that Timor was ‘opened’ to the world in the late 1980s, an event marked by the visit of Pope John Paul II to Timor on October 12, 1989. Carrascalão remarked that this was the beginning of the ‘opening up of Timor and signaled new beginnings’ (Anderson et al. 2003: 11). These new beginnings were most hopefully represented by the formal change of administration from military to civilian affairs and opened to Indonesians and foreigners. It also represented the ‘beginning of non-violent actions in the cities and the villages’ (Pinto and Jardine 1997: 34) in which students were crucial participants, although students changed tack after the Santa Cruz massacre in 1991.²

While Carrascalão managed to increase the number of university student scholarships over a number of years, the opportunity came at a political cost. Scholarships were available to any student provided they swore an oath of allegiance to the New Order Pancasila ideology³ but even then discrimination remained. He explains (cited in Anderson et al. 2003: 21):

> With the scholarships, if they [the military authorities] knew [that someone was from a Fretilin family], they would come and say I couldn’t give the person a scholarship, this and that. But everyone from Apodeti was allowed scholarships. But I never agreed when they said that someone couldn’t go because he or she was the child of a GPK [security disturbance group, Gerakan Pengacau Keamanan]... Including Xanana’s son Nico [sic. Nito] ... [H]e wasn’t allowed to go to Java because he was Xanana’s kid. So I called [the military authorities]. ‘Why can’t Nico go?’ They said: ‘Oh that’s Xanana’s son. Xanana’s in the forest. This kid is still...’ I asked them to give me proof that Nico was anti-Indonesian.

Indonesian education brought about significant linguistic changes in Timor-Leste which was also intended as a tool of New Order social control. Rough estimates indicate that over 15,000 Timorese received tertiary education during the period of occupation where they became fluent in Indonesian. However, primary and secondary education also played a significant role in developing fluency in the Indonesian language. In the 15 to 19 age cohort, 85 percent of males and 77.4 percent of females were able to speak

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² The approaches of the student movement are discussed in Chapter Four.

³ Pancasila was the five (panca) principles (sila) of the Indonesian state and included, The One Almighty God; just and civilised humanity; Indonesian unity; popular participation guided by inner wisdom through consensus/representation; and social justice for the Indonesian people.

⁴ Nito Gusmão went with his sister, Zenilda, and mother to live in Melbourne, Australia. They made a visit to their father, Xanana Gusmão, when he was in Cipinang jail in 1995.
Indonesian in the 1990s (Jones 2000). The increase in fluency in the Indonesian language was further promoted by banning all Portuguese and Chinese texts under the New Order regime (Gunn and Lee 1994). In the words of Anderson (1998b: 118), ‘[i]t was hoped that this would instill Indonesian, the New Order state ideology and loyalty to Jakarta’. In other words, the Indonesian education system could be described as an ‘act of colonisation’ (Hill, H. 2002) designed to create an apolitical ‘Indonesian citizen’.

The New Order project in Timor was bound to fail and its undoing was essentially of its own making. As Benedict Anderson notes (1995: 145), the Indonesian government mimicked its own colonial master, the Netherlands:

What the government did not understand was that its policies were astonishingly similar to those of the former Netherlands-Indies colonial regime and were bound, in the long run, to have parallel consequences. In the decades between 1900-1920, the Dutch educated far more natives than they had done in the three previous centuries of their presence in the archipelago; they systematically invested large sums in ‘development’, especially in communications, transport, and infrastructure and they created an elaborate police apparatus for surveillance and repression. Precisely out of the nexus between these transformations was born an Indonesian nationalism that ended Dutch rule in 1949.

A pattern begins to emerge of how the ‘nexus’ worked in the context of Timor. As the Dutch had done in Indonesia, the Portuguese educated the natives, albeit not very many of them, who in turn became agitators for decolonisation. The Indonesian New Order regime followed this same pattern by providing education to an even larger group of young Timorese (than the Portuguese), who then became dissidents against its oppression.

Language acquisition and education was critical to the emergence of a new generation of young Timorese who, in very important ways, were different from the Portuguese-speaking generation. Former youth leader and current President of Parliament, Fernando de Araujo (2000: 108) expresses a widely held understanding of the Geração Foun, which:

refers to those that were not part of the 1975 leadership [who are] now in their fifties and above and who do not have the same long-standing factionalisms and party conflicts as the older generation. Among other things, intellectual formation under Indonesian colonialism and language facility are also different.

The intellectual formation under Indonesian colonialism to which de Araujo refers was significantly different chiefly because the young educated Timorese came not only from the elites, as many had during Portuguese times, but from ordinary Timorese families as well. The developments in civil society in Indonesia, most notably the student movement, were also critical in this intellectual formation as was fluency in the Indonesian language.
Indonesia’s strategy to reach the Timorese succeeded but the plan to integrate them more deeply to make them into Pancasila-abiding citizens through education failed. Instead, these New Order strategies of education actually facilitated and sustained the Timorese student movement. Like previous generations of youth, acquisition of the dominant language of Indonesian was critical in enabling their resistance. For the Generation of ’99, Indonesian proved invaluable in the resistance and coordination between the Indonesian pro-democracy front and the urban clandestine resistance. Indonesian educational institutions were instrumental in fostering the Timorese urban resistance movement primarily because of the space they provided for schoolmates and university friends to discuss their situation with each other and consolidate their political understanding. Secondly, exposure to the Indonesian education system created opportunities for the Timorese students to become well versed and comfortable in the resistance discourses and strategies of the Indonesian pro-democracy movement that was gaining ground support in Indonesia as I will go on to discuss in the following chapters.

The Beginnings of the New Order Indonesian Student Movement: Depoliticisation and Politicisation

A pattern began to emerge very early on in the New Order reign in which an attempt to depoliticise youth actually fostered their political activity. Until this point, youthful nationalism had been a core constituent of youth activities. However, the New Order regime attempted to remove the political content of youthful nationalism through a package of policies known collectively as NKK/BKK (Normalisation of Campus Life/Bodies for the Coordination of Student Affairs).

The NKK/BKK policies were introduced following the 1977 to 1978 campus repression in the wake of a major student protest about the parliamentary elections held in May that year when scores of Indonesian students were arrested and tried. These policies extended the reach of depoliticisation and corporatist policies to universities. Student councils were permanently ‘frozen’ and replaced by new bodies whose members were appointed by campus administrators and were made subject to their veto (Aspinall 2005). The government banned or suspended many student publications and permanently banned campus political activity. Meetings of more than five people were banned by the Command for the Restoration of Internal Security (KOPKAMTIB). The government encouraged the view that the ultimate purpose of education was to contribute to national development by joining the ‘technostructure’ after they graduated. In the words of education and culture minister, Daoed Joesoef (cited in Aspinall 2005: 120), the aim was to ensure that the students used their time wisely: ‘Fill up with reading, writing, conducting research; don’t waste it in the streets’.
The 1978 ‘normalisation’ of campus policies and accompanying repression marginalised student activism further. It became increasingly difficult to organise anti-government activities on campus. The most radical students reworked their organisations through a number of alternative political vehicles. From around 1982 to 1983, Indonesian students formed study groups in university towns across Java. These groups varied greatly in size, as well as in political outlook. Mostly they were loosely structured, involving small groups of students who met regularly near campus to discuss local social problems, social and political theory, and recent political developments. Their search led some study group participants toward radical literature, including the works by Paolo Freire and Frantz Fanon, Islamic radicals like Ali Shariati, the Frankfurt School, classical Marxism, liberation theology, and publications of radical groups in South Korea and the Philippines (Aspinall 2005).

From 1985 to 1986, networking activities began among some of the study groups and campus media activists from different cities in Java. The year of 1988 marked the beginning of a new and protracted wave of student protests. Throughout 1989 and 1990, as the issue of ‘openness’ increasingly dominated national political debate, student protests repeatedly grabbed media attention (Lane 1991; Aspinall 2005).

The constitution of the organisations themselves also started to change. Islamic student groups played a crucial role in the beginnings of the pro-democracy front and were reacting to the same depoliticisation as the other groups. The students involved in these groups were some of the first to protest against the Suharto regime and managed to bring together some of the largest and most moderate demonstrations that led to the downfall of Suharto (Madrid 1999). In addition, tertiary education had ceased to be the exclusive domain of the elite (many of whom now sent their children overseas for study). Max Lane (1991) argues that the lower-middle-class origins of many activists contributed to the radical approaches of student activism in the late 1980s. However, Aspinall (2005) points out that the more radical activists also included the children of upper-middle-class professionals. Budiman Sudjatkmiko, for example, went on to lead the most radical student-based organisation, the People’s Democratic Union later, the party, known as Partai Rakyat Demokrat – PRD. Sudjatkmiko was the son of a manager from a Goodyear plant in West Java. Many others were the children of the Armed Forces (ABRI) officers. Their student demonstration activities and often longhaired and tattooed appearance caused many family splits and some Indonesian students only resumed contact with their families after the fall of Suharto.

The Indonesian invasion and occupation of Timor-Leste emerged as a target of protest for Indonesian middle-class protesters. The Indonesian student movement, who used to engage in ‘practical politics’ – for example, rallying against certain policies, began to

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5 Angkatan Bersenjata Republik Indonesia.
engage in ‘awareness raising’ among the masses, and they saw Timor as an issue of key concern. A young Timorese student at the time, Virgilio Guterres, described this critical point of understanding, which shaped the engagement of the two movements in the 1990s in an interview in late 2002:

After the Santa Cruz massacre [in 1991], real support began. Many Indonesian students were trying to find out what was happening in Timor-Leste and the only way they could was through us Timorese students. As a matter of fact, it was only really in 1995/1996 we started to come to an understanding that fighting for democracy in Indonesia and fighting for independence in Timor-Leste were two sides of the same coin. It was not an issue of splitting or seceding from Indonesia, because Timor-Leste was never a part of Indonesia. We started to say there will be no independence for Timor-Leste if there was no democracy for Indonesia. And democracy in Indonesia was really useless if we didn’t recognise the right of the Timorese people to independence.

The attempts by the New Order regime to remove the political activity within the university setting meant that Indonesian students became marginalised. With that, came an awakening and organisational attempt by young Indonesians to move off campus. This inevitably led to marginalised groups meeting and developing their own collective critique of the New Order regime. One of the important tools of this resistance was the underground media.

*Media, Language and Resistance: Youth in Opposition*

In an environment where formal political activity and expression was seriously inhibited, the Indonesian language underground media offered an avenue through which power relations and systems of governance in Timor-Leste could be scrutinised. The Indonesian underground press signaled a new channel to convey aspirations because of the blocked formal political avenue and thus, the underground media became a powerful and transformative force, as noted by Heryanto (1990: 297):

The mass media, especially the press... have been the most important area of maintenance and reproduction of the New Order’s legitimation. Conversely, they have been the most resourceful forms of mediation for resisting the regime.

The student press became an important vehicle for activism. In the 1980s, some previously suspended publications were revived and many more were established. Aspinall (2005: 121) notes that many were published under the aegis of official bodies, like faculty senates, and they often attracted the most critically minded students on campus. Some of these early publications included *Politika* (The National University, Jakarta), *Ganesha* (Institute of Technology, Bandung), *Arena* (State Institute for Islamic Studies, Yogyakarta), some of which still exist today.

Off-campus media was also crucial as resistance strategies against the New Order. Journalists advocated freedom of the press, democracy, human rights, and various other
issues of public concern. Such journalist activism became more prominent after the banning of three leading magazines, *Tempo*, *Detik* and *Monitor* in 1994. After this, a group of journalists launched open challenges to the regime, organising rallies and forming an independent union, the Independent Journalists Alliance (*Aliansi Jurnalis Independen*, AJI).

Some of the activist-journalists published alternative or underground media, such as *Kabar dari Pijar*, which was produced by the News from the Information Centre and Action Network for Reform involving pro-democracy activists and journalists. The lexicon of these publications incorporated resistance language in opposition to the New Order. *Kabar dari Pijar* carried pro-democracy and human rights statements and can be characterised by the (Indonesian language) keywords of the time, such as *demokrasi* (democracy), *pembebasan* (freedom), *hegemoni* (hegemony), *perjuangan* (struggle), *penguasa* (power-holders).

The subject most cited in the resistance language of these early pro-democracy publications was the *rakyat* (Ind. little people). The terms *perjuangan*, *penguasa* and the *rakyat* were central to the political discourses of anti-colonial nationalists during the Sukarno era from 1945 to 1965 (see Hooker 1993). The term, *rakyat* in particular, was afforded a meaning of empowerment and solidarity denied in the meaning appropriated by the New Order regime as the object of its paternalistic determination (Liddle 1996). The New Order regime constructed *rakyat* as subjects worthy of paternalistic intervention. They were portrayed as being *masih bodoh* (Ind. still ignorant) and in need of *bimbingan* (Ind. guidance) from the father of the nation, Suharto. They became the ‘floating masses’ (Ind. *massa menggambang*) and political organisation was banned at the village level throughout the archipelago. In the Indonesian oppositional discourse, the *rakyat* came to represent an affectionate depiction of sovereign figures that often suffered from injustice perpetrated by those in power. The *penguasa* refers to the military or state apparatus.

The Indonesian underground media was different from the mainstream media because of its intentions to refuse the New Order version of events that positioned Timorese as troublemakers. Underground media such as *Kabar dari Pijar* (both print and internet versions) was unable to be evaluated using the classic journalism criteria of objectivity since it was inherently political and designed with the intention of ‘fighting against repression’ (see Menayang et al. 2002: 141). Many Indonesian activists explained that the distribution of the printed *Kabar dari Pijar* and other texts was difficult under such

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6 Suharto vented his anger over stories covered in the magazines on 9 June, 1994, declaiming the journalist’s actions as divisive and disrupting stability. *Tempo* was banned primarily for running a story on the then Research and Technology Minister B.J Habibie’s purchase of 39 East German naval ships for the ‘bargain price’ of SA17.4 million each (Romano 1996: 3).

7 Michael van Langenberg (1990) used a ‘keywords’ approach to establish a framework for the study of the contemporary Indonesian state.
repressive conditions. It was common for the activist-journalists to distribute the pamphlets on the empty seats of public buses throughout Yogyakarta and other cities. The very public nature of the distribution paradoxically assisted in the distributors maintaining their anonymity.  

The mediums of underground press were multiple and proved vital for the Timorese cause. The internet and mobile phones were used by activists working in Indonesia as a tool of demonstration against the New Order regime (see Hill 2002). Following the Santa Cruz massacre in Dili in 1991, accounts were disseminated around the world via newsgroups such as ‘reg.easttimor’ and mailing lists such as John McDougall’s apakabar list. Xanana Gusmão maintained contact with clandestine members through his mobile phone and his later wife, Kirsty Sword-Gusmão was key in disseminating email posts about critical information to the struggle (Sword-Gusmão 2003). Select key members of the resistance were given intensive training in the use of computer-mediated communication technologies overseas from an expert who had been involved in setting up the ‘minihub’ network. With these skills, clandestine members could send encrypted messages to their overseas counterparts (Hill 2002).

For young Indonesian students, underground media and fiction writing became a method through which to create a connection with Timorese students. Through this contact, the students also constructed their own role as socio-political youth involved in the perjuangan (Ind. struggle) of Timor-Leste which they saw as vital for demokrasi (Ind. democracy) in Indonesia. Young Indonesian writers and pro-democracy activists, such as Linda Christianity were heavily influenced by the personal relationships they made with young Timorese activists. Christianity (2007) based a short fictional story titled, Joao (written in Indonesian) on her brief encounters with young Timorese resistance activist, Naldo Rei, in the mid-1990s. The story begins in a garage where the character, Joao is being kept in hiding (in Indonesia). Christianity (2007) writes (my translation):

Now the garage has changed functions from being a storehouse to becoming an emergency patient room. We moved a mattress, chamber pot and cold water bottles inside. On the second day that I peered in on him, somebody had wrapped his feverish body with a piece of batik, and had taken a small towel to wipe down his feverish brow. He was nailed to the mattress with his eyes fully closed. His white lips contradicted his dark skin, like frosty lines of sugar on top of a doughnut...

Joao returned to health on the tenth day. He began to speak in short sentences that I did not understand. Nuno translated to my language. However, after time, Joao and I began to understand each other. It was only I who would meet him every day. I was the post

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8 Distributing material on the human rights abuses committed by the Indonesian military for instance would be considered an offence against the state. It is not my intention here to discuss the reach and impact of pro-independence underground media. The objective of this discussion is to highlight the relationship between young Timorese and Indonesians through the production of the media.
commander. I taught him a few simple sentences in my language. Within two months, he had recounted his life story.

The life story recounted in Joao shares parallels with the testimony Naldo Rei provided at the CAVR⁹ hearing as well as Rei’s autobiography, Resistance, a Childhood Fighting for East Timor (2007). In Christianity’s version, fiction blends with fact to recount the shocking stories of Joao’s father being shot by the military, and being taken from his cell in a truck to the seaside, pushed into the ocean and almost shot but for some reason, a Colonel ordered the soldiers not to shoot. Christianity’s story, Joao ends as abruptly as their brief encounter in real life. The story concludes in the setting of the garage:

‘He will be taken to another place’ somebody said.
‘Nuno will take him’, somebody else added.
‘But their leader asked that we take care of him’, I rebutted.
‘This is an emergency. He must be moved tonight’, replied Malik.

Joao appeared at the garage door, carried by Nuno. His thin body cloaked in an oversized coat like a ghost. He did not in the slightest look to where I was standing on the verandah. He just looked straight ahead and walked through the door. He left the post. Whereas I am not going anywhere. Because I am the post commander. I remember his name. Joao. A simple name. He was 14 years old.

The intercultural exchanges between Timorese and Indonesian youth during the 1990s, and mediated by the writings of people such as Christianity, were key in the growing recognition that both Timorese and Indonesians were connected through their struggle. The underground press, the Indonesian language and the keywords democracy (Ind. demokrasi), the people (Ind. rakyat) and the power-holders (Ind. penguasa), were ways in which young Indonesians both understood Timor and themselves. The underground press provided a space in which young Indonesians and Timorese could develop their own language of resistance, disseminated through underground media, which was mutually constitutive with their efforts of reproducing the socio-political role of youth.

*Creating Images of Resistance and Youth*

At the same time that the underground press was attempting to create an alternative version of events, and in doing so, created a socio-political identity for youth, the Indonesian New Order persisted with images of resistance and youth for its own purposes. Melodramatic fiction produced by the New Order served the purpose of legitimising the New Order’s occupation of the province by downplaying resistance through its representation of protesting Timorese as ‘trouble-making mobs’ (Gerakan Pengacau Keamanan – GPK) and highlighting the military’s role in ‘maintaining stability and order’; words that effectively became the New Order mantra for the next

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⁹ The Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation in East Timor (CAVR) (discussed in Chapter Six) was mandated to undertake truth seeking for the period of 1974 to 1999. It included a number of public hearings and Naldo Rei was involved in the hearing about children in the resistance.
30 years. As outlined in the previous section, almost all media produced within Indonesia during this time had to keep the security and national stability concept at the forefront of media production.

Films were used by the New Order to support the official myth of General Suharto’s rise to power. The ‘Treacherous 30 September Movement’ (*Pengkhianatan G30S*) (1984) was the first film made in support of the regime. Suharto became successor to the disgraced Sukarno with overt support from the US and its allies following the failed coup on 1 October 1965 and a subsequent bloodbath under the guise of ridding the nation of communism. The film, written by Suharto’s favourite military historian and Minister for Education, Nugroho Notosusanto, was played in schools and on television annually up until 1998 to invoke the nation’s fear of trouble-making mobs and renew their belief in the military for ‘maintaining stability’. The archetypal film of the New Order, whatever its genre, style or theme, contained the same basic narrative structure which moved from order through disorder to a restoration of order (Sen 1994).

The film, *Langit Kembali Biru* (The Sky Returns Blue) is illustrative of how the New Order regime created Timor-Leste in the popular national imaginary during its 24 years of occupation within this disorder/order format. The film stars Sonia Carrascalão, daughter of then Governor of Timor-Leste, Mario Carrascalão. It tells the story of a family feud (between members of rival political parties Fretilin and UDT) that split up young lovers. The film paints a simplistic dichotomous picture of the Fretilin soldiers as bad and the Indonesian soldiers as good. *Langit Kembali Biru* was nominated for the year’s best film at the 1991 Indonesian Film Festival, and was awarded a Citra (short of an Oscar in Indonesia) in the ‘history’ section. Sonia Carrascalão was also nominated for best actress in a leading role, and the film was nominated for photography and art directing. It screened widely throughout Jakarta (Sen 1994: 6). The production and screening of *Langit Kembali Biru* resonates with Indonesia’s justification for the invasion of the tiny island and the perpetuation of the ‘maintenance-of-stability’ myth.10

To counter the Indonesian state-controlled view, independent documentaries made by foreigners produced outside of Indonesia’s borders played a vital role in alerting the world community to the atrocities committed by the Indonesian military under the guise of maintaining stability and order and the failure of its ‘development’ strategies in Timor. The plight of Timor-Leste was brought to international attention in 1991 with the release of Max Stahl’s smuggled footage of the Santa Cruz Massacre in the documentary *In Cold Blood: The Massacre of Timor* (1992). Footage revealed the systematic encircling of the cemetery before the massacre. The scenes of the Indonesian military opening fire on the Timorese shocked international viewers who had been unaware of the nature of Indonesia’s domination. Other films produced during this

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10 The Santa Cruz massacre occurred two weeks before the release of the film.
period, include the informative documentary of John Pilger, *The Death of a Nation: The Timor Conspiracy* (1994). Pilger first went to Timor-Leste in 1993 and was concerned about the complicity of Western governments in the crimes Indonesia committed. These two documentaries typified the ways in which Timor-Leste was represented within the conflict paradigm and how its subjects were constructed by foreign film producers – most notably as victims – which sat comfortably with an international discourse on human rights.

Both the Indonesian New Order state and the Timorese resistance front used images of youth as self-sacrificing and patriotic subjects in similar ways. While the New Order constructed Indonesian youth as patriots, the Timorese resistance also constructed its youth as patriots in opposition to the assimilationist policies of the New Order. This had two main effects. One was to erase diversity amongst youth and to circumscribe their relevance only in terms of nationalism. The other was to reinforce the idea that youth only deserved recognition within the nation at times of socio-political upheaval. This very narrow lens for viewing youth further influenced the construction of young Timorese and Indonesians own self-images of youth.

An image of youth as idealistic actors, expressed in the notion of the ‘youth struggle’ (Ind. *perjuangan pemuda*), had long been fostered in New Order narratives. The New Order was able to manipulate the image of the students to suit its purposes by erasing them from public records – and thus, public memory. As Strassler (2005) suggests, while photographs of (and sometimes by) anti-communist students and journalists survived to bear witness to history, those by student photographers on the wrong side of the political fence never entered the public archive. Djoko Pekik, a prominent Indonesian painter from the socialist-realist Lekra movement, was a student photographer in the early 1960s. In 1966, when he was arrested, he lost everything – his cameras and film, along with all of his papers and belongings. Strassler (2005) notes that the eradication of photographs like Djoko Pekik’s helped pave the way for the New Order use of images of youth demonstrators. Images of the ‘student struggle’ were co-opted into signs of support for the New Order regime in the media, ‘erasing the complexity and internal divisions within the history of student activism’ (Strassler 2005: 294) in Indonesia.

The student movement did not end with Suharto’s resignation, and major student protests occurred sporadically well into 1999. However, with Suharto gone the students no longer had a common goal behind which to unite (see Strassler 2005: Aspinall 2005). As politics became the centerpiece rather than moral outrage, students were reluctant to join the fray. Significantly, during the 1990s, the students and the general public often framed the student movement as a moral movement rather than a political movement. Their aversion to the ‘dirty business’ of politics was a product, at least in part, of
longstanding New Order efforts to ‘normalise’ (depolitise) university campuses noted earlier.

One effect of the depoliticisation of the campuses from the 1970s onwards was that it allowed other forms of national Indonesian youth culture to emerge. ‘Nature loving’ through involvement in campus run nature lover groups (Ind. Pencinta Alam) mirrored the theme of radical youth politics by assuming ‘an enthusiastic nationalism: yet it avoided politics’ (Tsing 2005: 129). Indonesian academic, Arief Budiman’s brother, Soe Hok-Gie helped establish the first Pencinta Alam group at the Indonesian University in Jakarta (UI) which then spread in university campuses across Indonesia. His life became the inspiration for the film, Gie (2005), directed by R. Riza, which provides a popular historical account of the period in which youth cemented their role in the founding of the nation. In her book, Friction (2005), Anna Tsing describes in great detail the construction of ‘nature’ and its reliance on youth as a category through which young Indonesians approached identity formation. Tsing (2005: 65) reminds us that youth is often a time for ‘forging new modes of agency and desire’. By turning the legacy of youth politics on its head, nature loving helped formulate what a youthful and cosmopolitan nationalism might mean outside of the contentious political struggles of the 1940s through the 1970s.

The activities of the earlier Pencinta Alam nature loving groups influenced the student activism that emerged in the 1990s in not only a particular morality but also a bodily style that evoked a certain militancy. Bodies were disciplined through regular drills of marching in training for mountain hikes. A sort of (male) student uniform became apparent which included long hair and sandals (Ind. sandal jepit), a bandana worn around the head and a bag strapped around the thigh. In addition, their activities when not climbing mountain, included marching for long distances in the hot sun. It has been noted (Strassler 2005) that young students were as much concerned with defining themselves as they were committed to effecting change. This sort of bodily style of the students projected an image of students as adventurous and engaged in masculine and militant activities while also giving an appearance of proximity to the people (Ind. rakyat). One Indonesian student once told me he how he felt ‘close to the people’ by wearing sandals. 11 The masculine undertones of youth identity reinforced by the membership make-up of the Pencinta Alam groups in that most women gave up the activities after marriage; it was seen as inappropriate for married women to continue (Tsing 2005).

Images of youth have been used for the purposes of nationalism in Indonesia and young Indonesians themselves have played their part in constructing a certain image of youth and youthfulness. The Indonesian New Order regime created an image of Timor-Leste

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11 I expand on issues of style and place in the following chapter.
and its youth as trouble-making mobs through the medium of film. The counter-image to this by international filmmakers meant that Timor and its youth were constructed as victims. Young Indonesians were also categorised as patriots by the New Order regime erasing the complexity within. With the suppression also came the emergence of other forms of national youth culture and representations. Most importantly, this privileged a representation of youth as adventurous, militant and masculine.

A Tool of Control: New Order State Sponsored Timorese Youth Groups

This section continues with a discussion of the role of students in nationalism and describes the narrowing relationship between youth and the Indonesian state. During the course of the New Order, the category of youth became depoliticised and increasingly linked to the state through incorporation into the military command structure. In the late 1970s and 1980s, the Indonesian police fostered an expansion of the Indonesian scout movement (Ind. pramuka) to instill national discipline both among young Indonesians and young Timorese (CAVR 2005: 27). By May 1978 in Timor, there were 10,000 pramuka members and by 1981 there were 22,455 members (CAVR 2005: 27). The military also played a part in these national discipline activities and it sponsored martial arts groups, such as pencak silat. In these groups young Timorese became intensely militarised subjects. Both of these organisations demanded training such as marching, drilling and wearing uniforms mimicking Indonesian soldiers. This militarised activity has survived in Timor and is seen in the proliferation of gang activity in contemporary Timor. Ahmad Alkatiri, the brother of former Prime Minister, Mari Alkatiri, was the head of Pemuda Pancasila during the Indonesian occupation.

The rise of the group Pemuda Pancasila is an example of the way in which both Indonesian and Timorese youth increasingly came to play the role of Indonesian state auxiliaries, par excellence. It brought together two evocative tropes of Indonesian nationalism: pemuda, literally, the youth, who had become the driving force of Indonesian nationalism; Pancasila, the five ideological pillars of the state which was first mobilised by Sukarno and became an inviolable mantra under Suharto. Since being accused of transgressing or intending to undermine Pancasila was enough to convict anyone of subversion, the group’s name already implied a certain extra-judicial authority. As the group expanded into a powerful national organisation from its more humble local roots in Northern Sumatra beginning in the early 1980s, it secured a presence in nearly every village throughout Indonesia (see Ryter 2002).

In addition to being targeted by state ideology, Timorese tertiary students were also targeted by the Indonesian armed forces. By 1990, Timor had one university and one polytechnic college, and a student regiment (known in Indonesian as Resimen.

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12 The issue of gangs and militant youth groups is a rich field of analysis that falls outside of the boundaries of this thesis. There is scope for much more work to be done on this.
Mahasiswa, or by its acronym as, MENWA) was established on these campuses. Similar to student regiments in Indonesia, this was an additional avenue for The Armed Forces (ABRI) to indoctrinate students. In Timor, ABRI used the regiment to infiltrate student organisations and clandestine groups on campus. Timorese students in Java and Bali were obliged to join the official student organisation, The East Timorese Student and Youth Association (Ikatan Mahasiswa, Pemuda dan Pelajar Timor Timur – IMPPETTU).

Although the organisation was intended as a tool of control, students worked within the bounds of IMPPETTU to meet their own objectives. One of the main benefits cited in my conversations with Timorese was administration purposes, such as signing forms in order to ask for leave or scholarships. This process was simplified if a letter was supplied by IMPPETTU. In these bureaucratic experiences, many students met with difficulty and discrimination because of their ethnicity but also because they did not belong to a representative organisation to process administration needs. The second most cited benefit for joining IMPPETTU was to socialise with other students. It was unusual for students arriving from Timor to have established networks of connection with other Timorese students, so the organisation provided a good opportunity to meet other Timorese.

In its attempts to control the constitution and orientation of social organisations, ABRI attempted to establish a sort of patron-client relationship. ABRI would provide IMPPETTU with assistance such as money for protection. I was told a story that exemplifies these relations. A fight broke out between Timorese students and some local youths in a pool parlor in Malang, East Java. When the military arrived to intervene, they sided with the Timorese students. Some of the Timorese, the storyteller recounted, developed a daunting reputation and other students were scared of them. The line between working for the resistance and working for the Indonesian military became blurred; both operations made use of clandestine activities evoking violence as the case of the Indonesian military operations assistant, in Indonesian known as, Tenaga Bantuan Operasi (TBO), illustrates. Many young TBO affiliates launched careers in low-level thuggery and became auxiliaries of the New Order state.

As part of ABRI’s efforts to control the growing urban resistance in Dili and Baucau (Timor’s second largest city), it fostered the growth of criminal gangs. In the early 1990s in Timor, a new style of paramilitary force known as Ninja gangs emerged. The gangs operated at night dressed in black, their faces covered with balaclavas. As the Commission for Truth, Reconciliation and Reception in East Timor (CAVR) report points out, these groups were effectively death squads and were feared for their role in the growing number of disappearances. Some of the young men involved in such operations were moved to Jakarta (often by Indonesian military officers, such as
and received protection from Suharto’s son-in-law and KOPASSUS chief, Prabowo in the 1980s.

A well-known *preman*, or gangster named Hercules, epitomises the New Order regime’s focus on criminality and involvement with young Timorese. In Indonesia, where he lives, he is known as Hercules Rozario Marcal, and in Timor, the birthplace he dreams of returning to, he is always referred to as just Hercules – ‘the king of the gangsters’. Conforming to a *preman* stereotype with his glass eye and one prosthetic hand, he lives in the suburb of Tanah Abang, Jakarta, with his gang *Pemuda Panca Marga*. He has become something of a celebrity whose exploits are the regular subjects of tabloid press exposes and TV talk shows. He was, for example, invited on the popular interview show, *Kick Andy*. He started out his *preman* career when he was a boy acting as military personnel, known by the acronym, TBO in Timor. Later during the 1990s, Hercules became known in Jakarta for his involvement in protection rackets, extortion, gambling and prostitution.

The notorious militia leader, Eurico Guterres was a typical product of New Order nurturing and subsequent disillusion. He is the only top-level militia member to serve a jail term post-independence but he did not serve the full term of his 10 year jail sentence. In the film footage collected by the CAVR (and shown in the film *Rock ‘n’ Roll with Jakarta*) from 1999 in Dili, Guterres is seen addressing a crowd of his Aitarak militia members, in the presence of Indonesian senior officials. Prior to this event and just after the referendum was announced, his militia went on a rampage around Dili, attacking the home of Mario Carrasçalão and killing 12 people (CAVR 2005: 209).

Interestingly, like many other Timorese, Hercules and Guterres straddled a blurry divide between pro-independence and pro-Indonesia. Some young Timorese, active participants in the pro-independence camp, told me how they would also often visit Hercules in Tanah Abang and run small errands as payment for having their university school fees paid by him. Hercules is linked to Suharto’s son-in-law, Prabowo, and other top military leaders but has become, like other militia/gang leaders embittered and has

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13 See van Klinken (2008) for more on child transfers out of Indonesia.
14 In March, 2008, Mario Carrasçalão, a member of the ruling party alliance in Timor made a call for the inquiry into the shootings and attempted shootings of the President, José Ramos-Horta and Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão. Hercules had gone to Dili with high-powered Indonesian businessmen and is reported to have met with Alfredo Reinado but Indonesian gang specialist, Ian Wilson, doubts this claim (pers.com.). However, Hercules is involved in a colourful array of business initiatives in Dili including the new theme park, ‘Taman Mini’ opposite Hotel Timor in Dili.
15 According to a Serious Crimes indictment, Guterres, along with Matteus de Carvalho, were responsible for killing nine people and the forced disappearance of six others during an attack on the Dili Diocese September, 1999.
16 Discussed in Chapter Six.
little loyalty to the Indonesian government or military as a result (pers. comm. Ian Wilson 30/07/08).  

The Indonesian state has played an important role in the de-politicisation and politicisation of its young citizens. There is a long history of youth involvement in gangs which began with the moradores during Portuguese times. The militarised Indonesian state merely picked up on this in the establishment of the militias which were used for its own purposes. Robinson (2001) provides an account of the ways in which these strands of histories came to play in the militia gangs in Timor during the referendum in 1999. Of particular note was the method used in battles such as headhunting and display of these heads but also the frenzied 'amuck' style of attack employed with such frightening effect seen in the 1999 violence enacted by Indonesian military and Timorese militia.  

In the 1990s, young Timorese and Indonesians became auxiliaries to the Indonesian state, however, other groups of young students used the state for their own organising and nationalist purposes. At times, the relationships between the two groups became blurred.  

*Timorese Student Movement Groups in Indonesia: Weapons to Shoot Them*  

The New Order applied a strategy of social control by bringing all community organisations, including student organisations, under the umbrella of the government. From the mid-1980s, a radical wave of new groups emerged to challenge the established NGOs, demanding that they adopt a more political stance (see Eldridge 1995). This, in turn, encouraged other community groups to take a more critical approach while working within the system.  

IMPPETTU, the association for Timorese students in Indonesia discussed above, was one such organisation that came under government control. However, by the mid-1990s the students mobilised the organisation as a site of recruitment into the clandestine resistance. This process of politicising a government sanctioned organisation was described by former student leader, Mariano Sabino Lopes as 'using weapons and ammunition given by the Indonesian government to shoot them' (Nicholson 2001: 29). The students recruiting other young Timorese into the urban front were organised through RENETIL (Resistencia Nacional dos Estudiantes de Timor-Leste – National Resistance of Timorese students) whose networks included Timorese students in Indonesia as well as Indonesian activists, journalists, intellectuals and human rights

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17 Ian Wilson's book on the Jakarta gangs will be published in 2009.  
18 Discussed in Chapter One.  
19 See Robinson (2006) for an historic account on the ritual significance of guns and armoury.
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advocates. The clandestine front, of which RENETIL became a central pillar, took on a more meaningful role along side the diplomatic and armed Falintil front within the independence struggle; particularly as it became more clear that the struggle would not be won through armed combat. \(^{20}\) The principal strategies they used included demonstrations and occupation of foreign embassies known as ‘jumping the fence’ (Ind. lompat pagar). RENETIL was formed in Bali in 1989 and continued organising students until the popular consultation in 1999.\(^ {21}\)

RENETIL members were strongly encouraged to run for IMPPETTU elections, and by 1995, nearly all IMPPETTU chapters were led, or at least dominated, by RENETIL militants. Based on this strategy, RENETIL, which at the time only had around 1,300 members, also had access to the 5,000 students in Indonesia who were all required by the Indonesian authorities to join IMPPETTU chapters. This gave the political organisation of RENETIL access to a larger support network. The two organisations, RENETIL and IMPPETTU overlapped to some extent, since the Chair of IMPPETTU’s national board, Mariano Sabino Lopes, was also the deputy secretary of RENETIL.\(^ {22}\)

The experience of Fernando de Araujo exemplified that of young students in Indonesia. de Araujo was a student in Arts at Udayana University in Bali and co-founded the student organisation RENETIL, serving as its President from 1988 to 1991. He was imprisoned in 1992 with a nine year sentence, accused of master-minding the demonstrations held in front of the UN building in Jakarta as well as the Japanese and Australian embassies following the Santa Cruz massacre in 1991. He was released in March, 1998. During the trial, de Araujo and others declined to apply for Presidential clemency after the Supreme Court turned down their appeals against the lower court. Part of the clemency agreement was to accept Indonesian citizenship, which they refused. The students were charged with subversion which, at the time, carried a penalty of death. Joao Freitas da Camera, a student who was imprisoned with Lasama (Fernando de Araujo’s nom de guerre) interestingly insisted he was a Portuguese citizen. He cited the 1976 UN Resolution Number 3537 which recognised Portugal as the administering power of Timor at the time. He spoke of how the Indonesian authorities in Timor had sent him to Jakarta to study despite previous detentions. Underlining the constant security threat at the time, he said that, ‘I was glad that I was chosen to be sent to Jakarta, I might have disappeared at any time if I stayed in East

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\(^ {20}\) By 1979, 79 percent of the Supreme Command had been killed including the Fretilin Vice President Nicolau Lobato and 80 percent of the 4,000 Falintil troops had been lost, their support bases destroyed and internal and external lines of communication severed (Taylor 1991: 6-7).

\(^ {21}\) Other youth organisations included Frente da Liberatação Estudantil Cladestina de Timor-Leste (FECLETIL); Liga dos Estudantes Patriotas (LEP); Organização da Juventude Católica de Timor-Leste (OJECTIL), which later changed its name to Organização dos Jovens e Estudantes de Timor-Leste (OJETIL).

\(^ {22}\) Mariano Sabino Lopes was one of the founders of the Timorese political party, Democrat Party (PD). He had previously led the IMPPETTU Chapter in Malang, East Java whilst studying for his agronomy degree. He was appointed the Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries under the AMP government.
Timor’ (Jakarta Post 1992). There is a certain ambiguity expressed here. On the one hand, de Araujo, like other young Timorese would evoke the citizenship argument as a basis for denying Indonesian colonisation. At the same time, being sent to Indonesia meant he could escape possible death and receive an education in radicalism.

Like their Portuguese-speaking forefathers, there is a strong relationship between processes of colonisation, through education and language, and the ways in which Generation of ‘99 youth were able to organise themselves. This had a significant impact on the ways in which young Timorese came to think about the socio-political functions of youth.

Recruitment into the Urban-Based Clandestine Movement in Timor

The recruitment into the clandestine movement (sometimes referred to as the intifada by young Timorese) proved a turning point for the ways in which young Timorese came to fulfill a socio-political role. As already indicated, by the late 1980s, young Timorese in Timor-Leste had become an important element of the clandestine urban resistance after the obliteration of the civil administration units by the Indonesian military. These civil administration units were replaced by smaller cells known in Portuguese as, zonas libertadas, which became military in character and were based on guerilla operations. The two-way radio communication system was replaced by a human courier system (Port. ligações) which drew heavily on the human resources of young Timorese.

By 1981, Xanana Gusmão was the leader of the resistance, as the National Council of Revolutionary Resistance (CRRN) had replaced Fretilin as the highest body in the national struggle. With the change in focus prompted by Gusmão’s ascendancy, the resistance movement restructured Timorese society into operating cells of the resistance. The youth were organised into student groups and cells, known in Portuguese as caixas (boxes). All of my informants, in some way, took part in clandestine operations, as couriers of messages, food and supplies, as assistants, demonstrators and people mobilisers. Recruitment into the resistance was equally as varied as the tasks they were set. Schools, universities, and youth organisations (including military and state youth organisations) became important sites of cultural resistance and the development of political awareness.

What is missing from this picture is the personal experience of recruitment from the perspective of young Timorese. As an example of these personal accounts, Naldo Rei (2007: 31) reflects in his biography on his experiences during primary school, his

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23 The CAVR report (2005: 29) mentions that the term, ligações, was replaced by vias de canais, and from 1986, the role became better known as estafeta.

24 National Council of Revolutionary Resistance, which later became CNRM (National Council of Maubere Resistance) which formed in 1988 and CNRT (National Council of Timorese Resistance) in the lead up to the referendum in 1998.
incorporation into the clandestine network through his older brother and the levels of secrecy this involved, which for many became a way of life:

One day he [Naldo’s brother] took me to a friend’s house in Dili and introduced me to the young people there who were from different regions of East Timor. From then on, my brother would ask me to take a letter or others things to them and my courier work began. I did not ask what was inside the letters but I suspected what was going. He had started to link people together in one of the clandestine networks in Dili as part of the struggle... My brother Alarico became very withdrawn and never divulged where he was going which worried me a lot and, although I did ask him about these people, he only told me that they were good.

Young Timorese found themselves involved in the war on both sides. While Naldo’s narrative is a common one, an equally common experience, although discussed less, is young Timorese’ involvement in Indonesian military operations. Civilians were forcibly recruited to act as military operational support personnel (Ind. Tenaga Bantuan Operasi – TBO). Officially, ABRI recruited civilian males aged between 12 and 35 years. However, in reality boys much younger and men much older were involved, as well as women. Groups of these people were attached to a particular military unit for the operation. The total number of civilians involved was very large. A 1982 military document states that the operation included ‘60,000 civilians in addition to the WANRA and RATIH (CAVR 2005: 91). Other sources indicate even more were involved, mentioning eight battalions and 120,000 guided militia (Ind. milisi binaan) moving east to west (CAVR 2005: 91). In mid-1981, the TBOs were recruited into an operation known as Operasi Kikis (Operation Eliminate). They formed a human fence to encircle Falintil on Mount Matebian from Tutuala and Viqueque but did not succeed in capturing any significant figures (CAVR 2005: 91).

The Timorese resistance and the Indonesian military shared key tactics in using young Timorese. This deeply saddening reality resulted in the loss of childhood. Indeed, this is one of the main points of Naldo Rei’s autobiography. Reflecting (2007: 278) on the legacies of his resistance childhood, he says: ‘I feel I missed out on childhood and can never get it back’. The effects of their liminal position was also expressed by Ninio, a young Timorese in his thirties from Los Palos who explains how children played roles on both sides of the war:

Yeah, I worked for Falintil. We had to. But most kids from my village were also an Operations Assistant [Tenaga Bantuan Operasi – TBO]. We didn’t really have a choice. It didn’t mean that you were pro-Indonesia. It was just another way the military could oppress us. If we didn’t we would be killed... although some did it for the money, we were young and they forced us [to do it] (Ind. memaks kami).

25 WANRA, perlawanan rakyat (people’s resistance) and RATIH, rakyat terlatih (trained people) were two of the four main auxiliaries used by the military. The other two were HANSIP (people’s defence) and KAMRA (people’s security).
The challenges of growing up in these difficult conditions were evident in the narratives of young Timorese, of which Ninio is but one example. However, these incredibly intense experiences also created a sense of succor, often in place of familial love. It is an important point that many young Timorese who became involved in the clandestine movement, were recruited not through family, but through friends. A young man, Zito, from Los Palos related his experience of separation from family and growing intensity of community among his peers:

From when I was about 11 years old I would hardly ever meet with my own family. There were a few of us kids. Some still went to school and others were like me, had dropped out in primary school. We lived wherever we could — in the mountains, under bridges, in houses. I would be given a command, for example, to take a message to somebody in Aileu. I would catch a bus there and deliver the message. Sometimes I would stay in the person’s house — the receiver of the message — sometimes for up to a month. Sometimes with my friends, sometimes by myself. Yeah, I guess it was a sort of pressure or force (Ind. pemaksaan). We had to do it. Of course, I also wanted us to be free. Free from the oppression of Indonesia. But if I didn’t take the message or food, or whatever, then Falintil would have killed me. But we had some good times too. We were free from our parents and we could do what we wanted — we were street kids (Ind. anak jalanan).

Implicit in these narratives is the sort of complexity young Timorese had to contend with in making sense of their lives. The narratives of being forced to be foot soldiers for either the resistance movement or Indonesian occupiers are common. The sub-heading of Naldo Rei’s autobiography, *A Childhood Fighting for East Timor*, alludes to the ‘child soldier’ sentiment that encapsulates young Timorese experiences, although the child soldier discourse has not been used within Timor to date.

The dramatic shift of social roles and responsibilities of children brought about by war is intrinsically linked to the breakdown of societal structures and long-standing moral matrices in contexts of extreme social crisis. Children’s involvement in war defies established and generally accepted norms and values with regard to the fundamental categories of childhood and adulthood, as well as the international conventions of modern warfare. In contemporary understandings, childhood is usually associated with innocence, weakness and dependence upon adult guidance and nurturance. Soldiers, in contrast, are associated with strength, aggression and the responsible maturity of adulthood. Children should be protected and defended; a soldier’s duty is to protect and defend. Honwana (2006: 3) points to the paradoxical combination of *child* and *soldier*. Children at war find themselves in an unsanctioned position between childhood and adulthood. They are still children, but they are no longer innocent; they perform adult tasks, but they are not yet adults. The possession of guns and a license to kill removes them from childhood. But child soldiers are still physically and psychologically immature; they are not full adults who are responsible for themselves.
Feldman (2002) acknowledges that so-called 'children of violence' are rarely perceived in their own terms or the serious cultural contradictions of the adult world. To this end, Feldman referred to children of violence in South Africa as ‘x-children’. He says (2002: 286):

I will assert that to talk about a politics of childhood means to speak of the x-child who has become an adult under certain historical conditions. Furthermore, the signifier ‘x’ is appropriate, for... the child is essentially an unknown entity in social theory, particularly the child of violence and the child of colonial and postcolonial society.

In thinking about the meanings of childhood in such circumstances, Bhabha (1994) suggests that such adult/child interstices provide the terrain for the emergence of new strategies of selfhood and identity. The agency of young Timorese can not, and should not, be denied in these instances. At the same time that the paradoxes and deeply saddening experience of childhood are evident within the experiences of many young Timorese, they also express a common narrative of the freedom they experienced away from family during the resistance. These narratives of freedom during the Indonesian occupation do not map onto the narratives of the resistance which placed a premium on notions of sacrifice. While there is an ambivalence in the experiences of Indonesia, it is also suggestive of the young Timorese’ ability to form their own community and with it, their own rules. This also reveals something of the ambivalence of the struggle through the lens of childhood memories. This sort of romantic notion of living away from family as a street kid (Ind. anak jalanan) is found in street children’s narratives across Indonesia and can be seen as a coping mechanism for dealing with the harsh realities of living in such an environment (Beazley 1999).

For many young Timorese, the Santa Cruz massacre became the catalyst for their involvement in the clandestine movement. On 12 November 1991, thousands of young Timorese met in Dili to mourn the death of Sebastião Gomes Rangel, killed inside the Motael Church two weeks earlier by the Indonesian military. By the time the procession reached the cemetery, the crowd had swelled to 4-5,000, including uniformed children from a nearby school. About 1,000 mainly young Timorese remained in front of the cemetery entrance and others, including the Gomes’ family, entered the cemetery to pray and lay flowers. As truckloads of Indonesian military carrying automatic weapons surrounded them, the funeral procession of respect turned into an arena of violence and death. Without any warning, the military opened fire on the crowd who fled over tombstones and high walls. Some 200 young Timorese were killed. Naldo Rei (2007: 51) describes the harrowing experience:

There was total chaos. With automatic gunfire all around me, I became very afraid. In front of my eyes there were bodies falling everywhere, sprawled at all angles and smeared with blood. People began running towards the gates to escape, but this was right into the line of fire. Most were not killed outright so soldiers quickly ran between the graves.
bayoneting people to death. I witnessed this as I dodged this way and that, to find an
escape route the opposite way. I jumped over the brick wall, the only one without soldiers
of the houses on the other side, normally far to high to be scaled by my small, skinny,
sixteen-year-old self. But fear gave me wings and I was able to escape from the slaughter
yard.

The Santa Cruz massacre, as the incident became known, most acutely through the
video footage of journalist Max Stahl, and stills taken by British photographer Steve
Cox, caught the attention of the international community. The images of martyred youth
most notably marked the imaginations of young Timorese and acted as a catalyst for the
resistance struggle to be seen as a youth struggle.

As the resistance took shape in Timor, both young Timorese men and women were
drawn into the clandestine network. A culture of secrecy and underground activity
began to structure their lives as Naldo Rei (2007: 31) reflects that ‘in the clandestine
network, we never asked someone what they did and, because of my experiences in
Iralafai, I naturally followed this discreet way myself.’

As Rei’s book illustrates, young Timorese developed new ideas of youth and ideas
about leadership from their own experiences that differed greatly from their parents.
Young men were in awe of the leaders whom some were tasked to protect. Gusmão also
imbued a special meaning to his relationship with young men such as Naldo Rei by
bestowing them with code names: ‘At that time he gave me my code name, Puto, Oan
Kiak Funu (young son, orphan of war) or Puto for short’ (2007: 38). This renaming
practice invoked a familial, even nurturing, discourse with the young Timorese which
contributed to the establishment of the clandestine network as a sort of ‘brotherhood’
and also an exclusionary practice to invoke loyalty. Not all young men became this
close to Gusmão however he retained a God-like figure to a generation of young
Timorese. Luís Cardoso (2002: 58) catches an important moment in the mystic
construction of the leadership figure of Xanana Gusmão:

People told me that he was brave and the possessor of a maram-elé, a charm that allowed
him to change into different animals in order to elude the military: José Alexandre, the
long-haired Académica goalkeeper, writer of sonnets and one-time seminarian at Dare.
He was also Xanana Gusmão, the leader of the guerrilla war, firing the hearts of those in
the mountains and the souls of the young people in the streets.

It was in the spirit of ‘firing the hearts’ that Gusmão also placed a deeper significance
on lulué (Tet. sacred, magical) powers which have been variously described as being
dangerous and sacred (McWilliam 2001, 2003). Young Timorese men would make a
wound on their upper arm and insert magic dust leaving a tattoo like mark. The practice
was known as isin knanek (Tet. magic dust). This isin knanek was meant to act as a sort
of immunity against bullets and harm and a distinguishing identity marker of belonging
to clandestine cells in the resistance movement. Many young Timorese (men) belonged
to groups such as 5-5 or 7-7 cell (Port. Seti-Seti), or Sagrada Familia and Santo Antonio. These groups existed only in order for young (mainly) men to acquire magical potency so they could carry out their tasks within the clandestine resistance. The groups did not themselves have a clear role in the formal resistance structure. The kinds of activities they undertook for example through tattooing their bodies imbued a sense of discipline which the resistance demanded.

During the resistance, young Fatalukans drew upon existing beliefs about their connection to the land and *lulic* beliefs, such as the power of the invisible, in the creation of their own distinct rituals in the formulation of a militarised youth culture, as Naldo Rei (2007: 17) makes explicit in his autobiography:

> I crouched down carefully in the undergrowth and, focusing my energy and will, called upon my ancestors, the land and rocks to protect me... The land, the rocks and the spirits of my ancestors responded. The enemy walked all around me. My heart was beating fast and I held my breath but stayed focused on the power of the land. I could see the soldiers’ boots and the tips of their guns, but they could not see me.

Rituals were matched with bodily fashioning. Young Timorese fashioned themselves on the military style of Gusmão with camouflaged army khakis. Gusmão’s image in turn was modeled on Che Guevara and Gusmão’s effervescent militarised personality exuberated a kind of father figure. Many young Timorese have pictures of themselves dressed as Falintil soldiers squatting in the forest. They keep these pictures in their bedroom drawers and in their wallets to the present day, which is also a manifestation of the militarised designs of Timorese youth culture.

During the period of Timorese resistance against Indonesian occupation, Timorese youth identity developed in a web of militarism, secrecy, and complexity. Youth as a ‘spirit of resistance’ became entrenched in national and youth discourses during this time which begets an understanding of youth as a transition period that encompasses a specifically political outlook, an identity that is not limited by actual chronological age.

*Xanana Gusmão: The Construction of Young Maubere Patriots Discourse*

The discourse on young Timorese as patriotic and political ‘Maubere’ youth was indisputably established by the Falintil commander during the resistance, Xanana Gusmão. Through this discourse, youth came to be synonymous with a patriotic, heroic, and masculinised identity. The gendered ascription of the symbol of Maubere, and specifically, the Maubere warrior (Tet. *Maubere aswain*) was a key and strategic part of this construction. Scholarly analyses of why young people were, and continue to be,
involved in armed conflicts are based on the assumption that children make good soldiers because they are especially susceptible to ideological conditioning. Young people are easier to manipulate and control; they are readily programmed to feel little fear or remorse; and they can simply be made to think of war and only war (see Honwana 2006). Xanana Gusmão realised this potential in his recruitment of young Timorese into the clandestine movement (Tet. klandestina).

In the mid-1980s, Xanana Gusmão began writing to the Timorese youth individually and collectively in order to foster a sense of unity and community. These communiqués involved commands to organise demonstrations and deliver messages to other leaders, particularly throughout the 1990s. Most of all, these letters inspired notions of self-sacrifice and patriotism within young Timorese which became key markers of youth identity. A by-product of this was the way in which Xanana Gusmão was able to establish himself as a father figure and elicit a child-like obedience from the youth. It is significant that the only youth groups that were permitted to operate under the resistance struggle were those which Xanana Gusmão had authorised (Rodriguez 2009). Naida Rei (2007: 37-38) reflects in his autobiography how young Timorese were in awe of their leader:

To me, at sixteen, Xanana seemed a kind of God. He was so warm, interested in each person in the struggle, smiled frequently and all his body language indicated that he was relaxed. He had twinkling eyes, pale skin and was taller than most of us which added to his mystique.

Young Timorese were greatly impressed by their leader and were prepared to do anything he asked of them. A letter written to Naldo Rei, a young man at the time, demonstrates the profound authority of Gusmão in an order to risk his life to organise a demonstration at the Dutch embassy in 1995. Gusmão’s letter (cited in Rei 2007: 148) reads:28

That’s why now I’m ordering you all! Have the spirit of responsibility and sacrifice. You must stand mosquitoes, stand being hungry, thirsty, stand the coldness, stand dirty clothes and smelling bad, and stand repression from the embassy. Putu [the code name given to Naldo Rei by Gusmão’s] must tell our friends that the guerrilla movement has endured this for the last twenty years and their sacrifice is why the struggle still continues.

The primacy of the ‘foot soldier’ role that young Timorese played throughout the resistance has been noted by many members of the clandestine movement (see de Araujo 2000; Mok 1996; Crockford 2007). Rei (2007: 149) reflects on the gravitas of being issued such a responsibility:

28 Many letters to individuals were burnt, deliberately ‘lost’ or hidden by activists in Indonesia. The defence speech of one of the imprisoned students, Virgilio Guteres (imprisoned with Fernando Lasama) remains in an unknown location in Indonesia. He had given it to an Indonesian activist friend to hide as he went into jail. Many historic documents such as these letters and artefacts remain to be uncovered and analysed.
But in my heart I was questioning why I had been chosen as the leader, and why I had to take part in the action at all. Previously Xanana had forbidden me to take part in embassy actions because it was too public; my job was underground, as in East Timor. I was only twenty, young to be a leader, and most of my comrades were older than me... I knew it was an important action or Xanana would not have asked to change my role and, I reminded myself, a good freedom fighter does not ask too many questions and works hard. It was this that pushed me to accept his order.

This is but one example of the ways in which Xanana Gusmão established the father role and the parent-child obedience that was expected of young Timorese in the clandestine movement. In one of the more public letters from Xanana Gusmão (written in Portuguese and Tetun and photocopied, passed around and read out at public gatherings), he clearly highlighted the importance of the youth in the interests of the nation. The rhetoric in his public letters demonstrated the powerful and emotive pull of the construction of youth as (masculine and militarised) heroes and their constructed agency of being involved in the national struggle. One such letter (cited Gusmão and Niner 2000) read:

On behalf of the CRRN [Council of National Resistance] and the glorious Falintil, as well as on my own behalf, I express our profound esteem and congratulations to you on your energetic and courageous stance at this historic time of vital importance to our thousand-times heroic and beloved Maubere people! I address myself today especially to you, Beloved youth and Maubere Patriots, for you are the vigorous blood of our people and the promise of the future of our beloved Homeland, East Timor. In this bloody journey of our people your participation in the struggle for national liberation is a moral duty and, above all, it is a political and historical obligation.

Benedict Anderson (1991) claims print media was important in the construction of the idea of the nation because it was able to reach a wide audience of citizens who did not necessarily know each other. Xanana Gusmão’s communiqués, as infrequent and underground as they were, managed to provide young Timorese with a uniquely Timorese identity through the mobilising rhetoric of martyrdom and sacrifice:

Beloved youth and Maubere Patriots, the youth is the promising force of our people; the youth is the hope of constructing our Homeland; the youth is the guarantee of the future of our nation. You are this force; you are this hope; you are the guarantee. Our people’s eyes rest on you; our elders, our fathers, are giving you the duty to continue this struggle. Many young people have already given their lives for this struggle. Very many of our companheiros, young like you, have fallen beside our parents... Children of two, three, four and five years of age are already working for the resistance of our people – many of them have suffered imprisonment, torture, banishment and threats! Many of them bear these atrocities with heroism, and are not fooled by the sweets which the criminal occupiers offer them to buy information about their parents, their relatives and colleagues! They are living examples of courage, living examples of the struggle, living examples of a conscience that is transmitted from parents to children – from the massacred parents to orphans who survive this conscience runs in the Maubere blood in

29 As described in Chapter Two in relation to the realisation of Generation of '75 youth identity.
our veins, impregnates our flesh and penetrates our bones and our innermost being!
(Gusmão and Niner 2000: 107).

The words of first Indonesian President, Sukarno, in his rallying calls to the youth on the eve of independence in Indonesia, offer pertinent similarities to the above construction of youth as socio-political subjects. Importantly, the allure of danger and courage was at the forefront of this construction. As a compelling orator, Sukarno went to great lengths to promote youth and youthful attributes – in particular, activism, dynamism and reckless courage. These symbols were evoked in order to create and maintain certain attitudes and states of mind (see Feith 1963). The politics of these political manifestations have been termed ‘the politics of rejuvenation’ (McIntyre 2005: 64). Throughout his presidency, he advocated the youthful attribute of reckless courage. Misquoting Nietzsche, Sukarno (cited in McIntyre 2005: 66) cast it in an imperative tone:


Living dangerously was particularly appealing for young Timorese. Xanana Gusmão points out that many Timorese as young children were already living dangerously. Through his carefully placed language, Xanana Gusmão weaves their disjointed and painful lives into a narrative focused on heroism and unity. He connects their disjointed lives with that of their families, whom many did not meet for years, and positions the clandestine movement as a surrogate family and himself as the surrogate father. But the idea of youth at the forefront of the new nation was far from reality when independence finally came in 2002.

Gusmão, like Sukarno, was a ‘symbol ‘wielder’ (Feith 1963) and invoked youth as courageous, patriotic and danger seekers, masculine and militarised. At the same time, he constructed himself as father figure and youth as obedient ‘children’ who had a very circumscribed agency. As Sukarno did in the close of his reign in the 1960s, Gusmão used the symbols of youthfulness as a strategy to mobilise young Timorese in the struggle and in doing so, created a surrogate family in which he remained a father-figure.

Catholicism Among Timorese

The Catholic Church in Timor-Leste played an important role in the moral discourse of the Generation of ‘99 and their constructions of self as a sacrificial patriots. The

30 As described in Chapter Two.
31 Nietzsche coined the term, ‘live dangerously!’. He said, ‘The secret of the greatest fruitfulness and the greatest enjoyment of existence is: to live dangerously! Build your cities under Vesuvius!’ (Kauffman 1976: 97).
influence of the Church much more significant during the occupation than it was during Portuguese times. Despite almost half a millennium of Portuguese colonialism and Catholic ministry in East Timor, the majority of East Timorese resisted Christianity’s embrace. Those who did convert were mostly of the elite and their faith was expressed as a syncretic mix of Catholicism and customary beliefs and practices, which the Church was obliged to accommodate. Prior to the Indonesian invasion, barely a third of the Timorese population identified as Catholic. Post-invasion figures suggest a substantial increase in the identification with Catholicism; between 1975 and 1998 membership rose by 50 percent (Smythe 2004). The outspoken Monsignor da Costa Lopes, Apostolic Administrator of the Dili diocese (cited in Smythe 2004: 56) who answered directly to the Pope, addressed the US Bishop’s Committee for Social Development and World Peace in 1983, drawing attention to the Church’s pivotal role as protector of the East Timorese people:

In the face of the cultural and psychological genocide that the Indonesian army has imposed on us the Catholic Church has emerged as the only organisation that the East Timorese people trust...Everything the people know they tell to the priests. The East Timorese Church has listened intently for nearly nine years since the Indonesian invasion.

Just as the East Timorese resistance movement had done, the Church had learnt to speak in the vernacular and connect with the Timorese people. Importantly, it had evolved a more explicitly indigenous character. In 1981, the country’s lingua franca, Tetun, was made an official language of the Catholic liturgy in East Timor, instead of Indonesian. Many of my informants explained that it was through the Church and under the teaching of certain priests (Bishop Belo being one of them) that they came to understand the situation more broadly in Timor as an illegal occupation. This had a profoundly mobilising effect upon young Timorese during the resistance.

The Church had a practical social purpose of facilitating networking among clandestine members. Since 2002 however, the Church and the roles it once played have become less relevant. Young Timorese have begun to question the Church’s role in post-independent Timor, as expressed in Melli’s poem, *Bibles for Land* (2006) that he wrote specifically in reference to alleged Church land-grabs in his town of origin, Los Palos, in the country’s east:

What could be wrong in my home town
Of corn and cassava
Before colonialism taught us to eat bullets
Sweetened killing tongue to tongue

Before religion destroyed my culture
Pursued me, spruiking heaven
Thieves, absolved with the water of Rome
Read the bible/ give me your land
A leader that had once ruled and flew away
Comes back today, strong, revived
Long awaited by the people
Raising a party
Raising his own brothers
Like shutting a frog’s mouth
So that rain will not fall
Let us breathe a little of that liberation
Rather than the pollution of the city
Run to the eroded mountains
Go down to the beaches when the tsunami comes
Leave me to smell the wind of liberation
So I can leave behind the smell of corpses
Leave us to work together
To stomp the land, hand in hand
Do not make stupid public notices
Do not kick the legs from under us!

Seen from a historical perspective, the Catholic Church in Timor-Leste has played an important role in the construction of the socio-political functions of youth. Many of the Generation of ‘75 were educated in seminaries but they had very little to do with them after they dropped out. The Generation of ‘99 on the other hand, were involved in Church life as it acted as a protector from the New Order state. After independence however, many young Timorese suggested that they felt the Church no longer played an instrumental part in their lives.

Gender Imaginings

The New Order provided the structures of education and language, which played a role in the development of a different intellectual formation and morality among young Timorese. These structures facilitated youth’s role as being responsible for the nation. I have described how a masculine youth culture was established through the New Order policies of language and education as well as the Timorese resistance struggle. In this section, I describe how control of female behaviour was equated with general social control under the New Order. I will follow with some experiences of young Timorese women throughout the history of the resistance, where a relationship between social control and femininity continued and Timor was conversely established as a feminine sacred place.

The beginnings of Indonesia’s New Order gender ideology was developed against the fictive background of aggressive female behaviour by the communist movement, defeated enemies of the current regime. The members of the Gerwani, women’s wing of the communist party, allegedly killed and cut off the penises of six army generals and
even more horrifyingly, so the narrative goes, they danced witch-like around the mutilated corpses (Wieringa 2003; Drakely 2000).\textsuperscript{32} The site of the killings, named Crocodile Hole (Lubang Buaya), was made into a national memorial and school children were taken there every year during the New Order to listen to the same narrative about the wicked women and evil communists. The supposed lewd femininity of the politicised Gerwani women contrasts with the state-sanctioned symbol of the male founders of the nation, the pemuda (Ind. literally youth), a romantic symbol of the young male guerrilla in the anti-colonial struggle (see Anderson 2006),\textsuperscript{33} and the idea of the Bapak, or benevolent patriarch who provided guidance and protection from his position of power (Robinson 2009). Barbara Hatley (1997: 101) describes the effects of this time:

\begin{quote}
[
\text{The association of control of female behaviour with general social control, and conversely, the linkage of female autonomy and assertiveness with political threat, has arguably continued on through the New Order period. With female assertiveness connoting both loose sexual morality and proscribed radical politics, conservative standards of modest, constrained feminine behaviour are not difficult to maintain.}
\end{quote}

This founding myth was used to justify the normative femininity imposed by the regime, through legal instruments such as the 1975 marriage law which legislated that men were household heads and women the homemakers, the latter designated as kanca winking or ‘companion from behind’.\textsuperscript{34} The Broad Outlines of State Policy, drafted every five years, provided the philosophical basis of state interventions (Robinson 1994). Here, women’s citizenship was valorised as a derivative of their biological destiny or kodrat, as wives and mothers, but unlike the language of the marriage law, masculinity remained the ‘unmarked category’ and was not normatively defined (Robinson 2009).

As Cynthia Enloe (1989) also describes, the association of military institutions with conservative, repressive constructions of women is well-documented (Joshi 2005; Enloe 1983). This approach is not unique to the New Order. Throughout the resistance in Timor-Leste, images of females were tightly controlled by both the structures of resistance and the Church. There was little room for expression of female assertiveness outside the rubric of the resistance, either as anti-colonialism or as anti-Indonesianism. The domination of men in public life, and the promotion of male authority through state ideology in Indonesia and the resistance in Timor, ensured patriarchal dividend, which

\textsuperscript{32} The case of Angelita Pires, the mistress of renegade soldier Alfredo Reinado, offers pertinent similarities to constructions of women as dangerous in Indonesia particularly the discourse on her involvement in the supposed coup against the AMP government in February 2007, and which resulted in the killing of Reinado and the near-fatal shooting of President, Jose Ramos-Horta.

\textsuperscript{33} Several writers have noted the erasure of the active role of women in the anti-colonial struggle in official histories and myth-making (see for example Taylor 1997).

\textsuperscript{34} The well-described state organisation of civil servants wives, Dharma Wanita, expressed this gender philosophy in its organisational structure, where women occupied positions in the Dharma Wanita hierarchy according to the positions of their husbands in the state bureaucracy (see Robinson 1994).
is defined as, ‘the advantage to men as a group from maintaining an unequal gender order’ (Connell 2002:142).

Regulating Discourses of Sacrifice

Long periods of colonialism and conflict had a great impact upon women’s roles outside the home. Before the resistance, women had seldom played a public role. The struggle against colonialism and then resistance against Indonesia shaped the organisational abilities of women. So too were their notions of femininity. Many women’s emancipation movements in the developing world acted against a backdrop of nationalist struggles aimed at achieving independence, asserting a national identity and modernising society (see Jayawardena 1986). Sukarno’s nationalist Indonesia viewed the women’s movement as an integral, if not ‘younger sister’ of the broader nationalist movement. Timor-Leste followed suit. During the revolutionary 1970s, the mostly male leadership of Fretilin (only three of the senior leadership were women) was devising a strategy to make Timor independent. Women were involved as the so-called ‘revolutionary brigades’ who were sent to the countryside to organise villagers for the liberation struggle. There were two pilot centres, one in Aileu and one in Bucoli, Baucau. Rosa Muki Bonaparte, a returned student from Portugal, worked in the centre in Aileu. They conducted a cultural campaign, reviving traditional music and dance; held literary classes and training sessions on basic hygiene; and provided information about agricultural cooperatives and crop-diversification. These activities went on for two and a half months until the coup against Fretilin on 11 August 1975 by the União Democrática Timorense (Timorese Democratic Union – UDT) which put an end to the efforts toward civil society.

In the aftermath of the civil war, the women’s front of Fretilin created the Organização Popular da Mulher Timorense (the Popular Organisation of Timorese Women – OPMT) on 28 August, 1975. At this stage, OPMT was seen as a political entity, designed to educate Timorese women and children on the anti-colonial struggle and the principles of socialism. As such, Rosa Muki Bonaparte was appointed as the secretary of OPMT. Bonaparte (cited in Fretilin 1974: 7) described OPMT as:

[A] mass organisation of the Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor, which enables women to participate in the revolution... The creation of OPMT has a double objective: firstly, to participate directly in the struggle against colonialism, and second, to fight in every way the violent discrimination that Timorese women have suffered in colonial society.

The women were tasked with organising the active and conscious women and to awaken those who were ‘passive and submissive under the exploitation which they suffer’ (Bonaparte cited in Fretilin 1974: 7). The Fretilin leadership relied heavily on

35 As described in Chapter Two.
OPMT to mobilise women under the rubric of ‘breaking free of feudal and colonial’ structures. In this sense, OPMT was a crucial agent for political change both in the direct service and philosophy of reformist education. The women set up crèches tasked with not only the children’s material welfare, but also their education as ‘good revolutionaries’.

The 1970s anti-colonial nationalist struggle against the Portuguese provided little space in the public realm for women’s issues outside the rubric of anti-colonialism. As a wing of Fretilin, the OPMT followed its ideology and Olandina Caeiro, founder of East Timorese Movement Against Violence Towards Women and Children (ET-Wave) (in Cristalis and Scott 2005), points out that it was the party that was radical, not the women’s movement. However, many of the women who took part in the independence movement identified the struggle as a way to defend their interests as women. This inclusion transformed women’s role in the public sphere even though it was within the bounds circumscribed by the movement.

The Indonesian invasion caused a significant shift in OPMT’s mandate. Faced with fulfilling the humanitarian needs of the population, Fretilin delegated responsibility to OPMT. From a political entity, it became a support unit of the armed resistance movement. With the onset of civil war, OPMT’s mandate of ‘women’s issues’ quickly gave way to assisting the casualties. The Indonesian invasion dealt a further blow to the organisation. OPMT’s founding member Isabel Lobato and wife of Fretilin leader, Nicolau Lobato, was murdered on 7 December 1975. The next day Rosa Bonaparte’s body appeared on the shoreline near Dili.

At its core, OPMT was framed within the masculinist designs of the resistance movement where a women’s role was to support what was essentially a male struggle. OPMT’s primary role between August and December 1975 was to care for orphaned children and those whose parents were fighting in the jungle. Women also bore arms alongside men, provided logistical support, and carried out clandestine and armed resistance activities. In fact, from the 1980s and onwards, women and children were essentially the backbone of the clandestine front since they could more easily pass through Indonesian military check-points without being suspected of liaison with the guerrilla movement. However, there were no women in the Falintil command structure (Cristalis and Scott 2005: 27-29).

The background figure that women played throughout the independence struggle came to be symbolised in icons of the resistance. The regulatory discourses of popular nationalism invoked a heroic and masculinised Maubere warrior. The female counterpart, the Buibere, was a shadow figure in this discursive gender construction, representing suffering and sacrifice, as seen as in Xanana Gusmão’s elegy to Timor Woman:
Manacled by your misery
Timor woman
Your Spirit bound in servitude
Timor woman
Forced to bear invader’s children
Timor woman
Raped, abandoned in the camp
Timor woman
Your feeble honesty your strength
Your bloodless voice a weapon of war
Your fragile chant the hymn of freedom
Timor woman
Companheira, imprisoned
Your song a cry for justice
Your soul anticipating death
Timor woman
You weep warm tears of blood
Your blood, our blood
Your face the record of our struggle
Your determination the story of our resistance

The (female) imagery of the Buibere is of a weak character. While both the Buibere and Maubere images are valorised in their suffering and oppression, the male Maubere warrior is assigned the protective role of defending the inner core of the endangered Buibere. The success of this symbolism is perhaps due, in part, to the parallels with ritual Timor knowledge of the periphery and the centre. In the southern Tetun area of Wehali, women belong to the inner part of the dwelling while men belong to the outer part (Therik 2004). Using the imagery of a nut, Wehali is the husk (Tet. *knua*) while the periphery is the kernel/seed (Tet. *isin*). It is implied that Wehali becomes poor and the periphery becomes rich, Wehali becomes weak and the periphery strong. Hicks (1984) confirms the prominence of the feminine in rituals and masculine/feminine dualism and polarities. Tetun Terik people in Viqueque hold that the universe is divided into an underworld seen as feminine, maternal and sacred, and an upper world seen as masculine, paternal and secular. However, the nature of binarisms suggests that this is an ongoing and fluid process (see Fox 1989).

In Timorese resistance discourse, women were portrayed as insiders, mothers, and keepers of the moral code of familial virtue who paid the ultimate sacrifice of giving their children up for the war. This is narrated as their duty to the nation. The female characters (indeed the only substantial female characters) in the memoir of younger generation member, Naldo Rei (2007), represent the female sanctuary space of Timor (see Crockford 2007). The end of Naldo’s (2007) odyssey brings together his three ‘mothers’ who have helped him through difficult times. There is Julia, his birth mother; Ines, his war mother and; Chris, his Australian mother who encouraged him to seek treatment and also to document his story. The Timorese women in the story endure incredible suffering and pay the ultimate sacrifice as described by his aunt, Felicidade:
‘our pain and sorrow is over but we save all the tragedy in our hearts. To be a mother is not easy. We had to let our children die for this land’ (Rei 2007: 234). The self-abnegation inherent in Felicidade’s comment about sacrificing children for the homeland serves to reinforce the notion of women as ‘mothers of the nation’: an image which places their reproductive capacities as one of their primary services to the nation (Hall 1993). The relationship between nation, woman and suffering is seen in Xanana Gusmão’s eulogy to Angola titled Peace, ‘Ngloa!’, in which the imagery of women and reproduction is insistent. The second stanza reads:36

Black woman, woman
Why haven’t your eyes a colour?
Did your country in flames
Make your body love waaaaaar?
Don’t you fear to give birth to the future?
You will not want in your womb
To bear another man for waaaaaar!

While the motherland is imagined as female, Xanana Gusmão remained the father of the nation. The values of heterosexual reproduction are implicit in this imagery through being a part of the ‘family of the nation’ and through making families for the nation (see Jolly and Ram 2001). As Yuval-Davies and Anthias stress in an influential volume Woman, Nation, State (1989), women are not just the signs in the language of nationalism but themselves subjects in these discourses (see also Yuval-Davies 2004). They discern five major ways in which women are envisioned in nationalist discourse. Women not only signify the nation but embody it as subjects, as authors narrating the nation; as participants and leaders in nationalist struggles; and as those who bear and nurture children for the nation-state. The symbolic figure of the ‘abused, angry woman’ has been used repeatedly to enact the symbolic and tragic trajectory of the nation, as the Indonesian author and priest, Y. B. Mangunwijaya, in his novel Durga Uma-yi (1991) illustrates. The history of modern Indonesia is inscribed in the life and experiences of the one single female character, Sulinda Pertitiwi Nusamusbida, as a victim of oppression (see Bodden 1996).

Kandiyoti (1991) suggests that women are particularly caught in the tensions between the contradictory projects of nationalism in postcolonial states – expressions of cultural difference and affirmations of national identity often entail control over women that compromise their rights as enfranchised citizens or promises of their ‘emancipation’. Kandiyoti (1991: 431) stresses the enduring Janus-faced character of nationalism that ‘presents itself both as a modern project that melts and transforms traditional attachments in favour of new identities and as a reaffirmation of authentic cultural values culled from the depths of a presumed communal past’.

36 Written by Xanana Gusmão in Cipinang 31 October, 1994.
The testimonies about sexual exploitation of Timorese women under Indonesian occupation clearly illustrate that women were used as ‘instruments of war’, and power over the population was expressed in a naked fashion through male sexual violence (see CAVR report 2005, particularly the statement by Galuh S. Wulan). This conclusion was endorsed by the UN Rapporteur on Violence against Women following a visit to East Timor and Indonesia in 1998 (Coomaraswamy 1999). The testimonies about sexual exploitation of Timorese women under Indonesian occupation clearly illustrate that women were used as ‘instruments of war’, and power over the population was expressed in a naked fashion through male sexual violence (see CAVR report 2005, particularly the statement by Galuh S. Wulan). This conclusion was endorsed by the UN Rapporteur on Violence against Women following a visit to East Timor and Indonesia in 1998 (Coomaraswamy 1999). 37 Women’s sexuality and reproductive bodies were mobilised in the process of creating the borders of the nation state.

The sanctuary space represented by women in the Timorese resistance was also an ambivalent space. Women were required to be self-sacrificing mothers, at once the pinnacle of the nationalist imagination but not overshadowing the masculine Maubere warrior of the resistance front. Women were expected to stay in the shadows and not talk too much. The spread of Roman Catholicism also shaped the symbolism of women and the nation. The Church emphasised a woman’s role as a mother and homemaker who had put her own needs behind those of husband and family. Most commonly this is seen in the home as part of hospitality rituals whereby women only eat after the men and guests have been served. These are expectations that relegate women to the background of public life.

However, women’s silence is by no way an indication of their absence (see Siapno 2000). Women in Timor also played vital roles in the struggle and often found themselves in a difficult position when faced with the overarching nationalist discourse of women as silent shadow figures to the dominating Maubere. Ivette de Oliveira was active in the student resistance in Indonesia throughout the 1990s. The prescribed behaviour by her male colleagues (and the resistance) Ivette relates here signifies a shift from the earlier anti-colonial movement. Where once women’s issues were packaged under the rubric of the struggle to ‘shed colonial shackles’, during the Indonesian occupation new perimeters were set which further limited the possibility of dialogue on power inequality. Ivette explained:

But it [living in Indonesia] was also a difficult time for me personally, because to talk of the women’s struggle within the resistance was seen as betraying (Ind. menkhianati) the national [Timorese independence] struggle. I was very active in the resistance movement then. I was flying from Yogyakarta to Jakarta and elsewhere and even overseas a couple of times to talk about the resistance movement and the plight of women. I remember this one time I spoke at Gadjah Mada University [state university in Yogyakarta] with Romo Mangun [a priest and human rights activist]. The theme for the discussion was

37 See the report of the UN Special Rapporteur on Violence (Coomaraswamy 1999) (especially the General Findings in paragraphs 43 and 44).

38 Romo Mangun adopted a stance against the grave injustice of the occupation, though in a veiled way, in his novel Ikan-Ikan Hiu, Ido, Homa (1983). Here he drew an allegorical parallel between the bloody massacres of the inhabitants of Banda Island by the seventeenth century Dutch VOC and the Indonesian occupation of East Timor in 1975.
liberation, in Timor and Indonesia. I chose to not only talk about the movement, but also patriarchal cultures within East Timor. When I went up onto the stage and began to speak, I got a big shock. But... (pause) I guess, actually... I wasn’t really shocked. The guys stood up and spoke to me in quite an offensive (Ind. ofensif) manner while I was still up on the stage. Now, these weren’t pro-autonomi [pro-Indonesia] supporters, these were activists claiming to be struggling for Timor on the frontline, in RENETIL and IMPPETTU. I spoke about domestic violence and there were Indonesians and Timorese women who were so proud that I got up on the stage and was brave enough to speak. If I had spoken about military violence, then the guys would have conceded. But, as soon as the issue of patriarchal cultures, domestic violence experienced by women, and internally within the movement, emerged, they became really quite offensive [towards me]. There was no support among the ranks of Timorese men. They said we had to focus, we had to look at who our enemy was. They said, what comes first? They said it was the military and the occupation. They said it was Indonesia, but that’s not how I experienced it fully... (pause) but I never stopped fighting.

Ivette reflects on the lack of support in the resistance for critically looking at gender issues beyond the military occupation of Timor. Women’s place and roles within the resistance movement, as they were in the anti-colonial movement, were framed within masculinist designs where the central concern of all Timorese should be the fight against the military occupation of Timor. The dominant historical narrative of the struggle was also a male domain. There was little room for the expression of women’s concerns or indeed identity, outside of the domestic realm. Although Ivette criticises the structural marginality of women within the resistance movement, the construction of her identity as a young Timorese also cannot escape the masculine and militarised designs of the movement illustrated by her statement that she ‘never stopped fighting’.

**Conclusion**

The Indonesian New Order education and language policies illustrates important parallels with the Portuguese colonial system and which both inadvertently cultivated a socio-political function for youth. Despite the similarities, young Timorese who came of age under the New Order had very specific experiences which led to them becoming quite different subjects than the previous Portuguese-educated generation because Indonesia, and not Portugal, became the ‘apex’ through which they framed their worlds. Most important of these changes is that Indonesia broke the mould of the Portuguese-speaking elite by educating many more Timorese than Portugal. This exposure to the outside world led to young Timorese becoming deeply involved with Indonesian activists. This in turn led the Indonesian pro-democracy front taking up the mantle of Indonesia’s illegal occupation of Timor-Leste. Young Timorese saw their struggle against the authoritarian New Order government as ‘two sides of the same coin’. Both the New Order state and the Timorese resistance movement mobilised images of youth for their own benefits. For example, in reaction to the New Order occupation, Xanana Gusmão recruited the youth into the ‘epic struggle’ and developed a discourse on youth that highlighted their role as heroic patriots and produced a morality surrounding the youth as (heroic) foot soldiers in periods of socio-political upheaval. This had two main
effects. One was to erase diversity amongst youth and to circumscribe their relevance only in terms of nationalism. The other was to reinforce the idea that youth only deserved recognition within the nation at times of socio-political upheaval. This very narrow lens for viewing youth further influenced the construction of young Timorese' and Indonesian’s identities.

The New Order influenced the ways in which young Timorese came to think about gender. The ‘youthful patriot’ was also a gendered category in which a masculine and militarised identity became privileged. Women were represented as weak characters and while the motherland was imagined as female, Xanana Gusmão, Commander in chief of the armed wing Falintil and leader of the resistance movement, remained firmly at the helm of the nation. The ways in which these structures and discourses came to shape young Timorese’ lived experience is the subject of the following chapter.
CHAPTER FOUR

Geographies of Belonging:
The Geracão Foun Komunitas

At that time, amongst us students in Yogya, there was just one condition and that was how to make a komunitas.

Ivette de Oliveira, a Timorese student, talking about her life as a student in Yogyakarta throughout the 1990s.
In this chapter, I introduce the concept of the *komunitas* – an Indonesian word used by young Timorese (both by those living in Indonesia and Timor-Leste) during the resistance and independence to refer to their community – in order to establish how they produced and sustained a critical community during the national struggle for Timor’s independence. The realisation of the *komunitas* contributed strongly to the construction of youth as a modern, socio-political and gendered subjectivity; a process whereby people underwent bodily and experiential transformations and a subsequent shift in identities. In Part One of this chapter, I draw upon the experiences and memories of Timorese students during the occupation to explore the places in Indonesia where they lived and ate, the streets where they marched, and the malls they frequented. In addition, I explore the violence they endured and sometimes enacted and which constituted the experiences of the *komunitas* and produced modern and gendered subjects. Part Two is dedicated to exploring the situation after independence as the need for a critical community declined and young Timorese in Indonesia were faced with new security concerns. Here, I focus on the narratives of young Timorese students in Indonesia both before and after independence. As the sense of community began to disintegrate, this opened the opportunity for many young Timorese to express and reactivate other identities and ties.

This chapter illustrates how the *komunitas* was situated within deliberate practices of performance, action, and representation (Appadurai 1995). I argue that the *komunitas* established by young Timorese shares some similarities with Turner’s concept of communitas (1986) with its defining feature of an intense experience of community arising from a period of liminality of being betwixt and between youth and adulthood; colonialism and independence; Indonesia and Timor-Leste. This period of liminality exhibits characteristics of anti-structure in which separation from family meant some rules of behaviour were overturned and others were implemented. As Ivette’s quote at the beginning of the chapter illustrates, the work of creating the *komunitas* was all consuming for Timorese living in Indonesia before 1999. They put their lives, relationships, and futures on hold and dedicated themselves to the clandestine resistance movement. The political conflict kept young people in a liminal state and the violence of the period was associated with the development of new constructs of masculinity that also drew on the militarised masculinity of Indonesia.

The second feature of communitas as defined by Turner (1986: 84) is that it can ‘never quite be realised’ and will inevitably experience a ‘rise and fall’. According to Turner, this will be followed by a period of reintegration. However, as Part Two demonstrates, the internal contestations about rightful belonging that occurred after independence gave way to the fragmentation of the *komunitas* and an inability to be reintegrated back into the ‘structure’ of society due to the power relations of marginality that continued to be played out within their own community. Among young Timorese whom I came to
know, attempts to recreate a sense of belonging on these margins were illustrated by their reconnections with Fataluku identities.

This chapter is structured around a number of key geographical locations in Indonesia. The city, street, campus, the asrama (government boarding house), and the kos (private boarding house) are explored in sequence to illustrate the ways in which each site was critical in the construction of the komunitas and fostered a masculine and modern sense of belonging. In the second section, I draw on the experiences of the spatial relocation of young Timorese to kos (boarding houses) around the city of Yogyakarta (central Java, Indonesia) and out of the milieu of the resistance movement to illustrate how the komunitas underwent fragmentation. I discuss differential experiences between the young Timorese who studied in Indonesia before independence, those who have continued to study there through both periods, and those who arrived after independence in my discussion of how claims on youth identity and belonging were contested.

In developing a theoretical understanding of the komunitas, I have found it useful to draw on certain sociological and phenomenological approaches. Appadurai’s (1995) dimensional perspective of locality is helpful in understanding the construction of localities. The depth and complexity with which young Timorese construct meaningful relationships with their surroundings is most helpfully understood as a product of interrelations between certain places and people (Massey 1993, 1994; Beazley 2003). I draw on Appadurai’s (1995) understanding of locality as a phenomenological property of social life based on people’s narratives of their experiences of certain places. The concept of ‘embodied space’ underscores the lived experience and the body as a centre of agency, a location for speaking and acting in the world. In the process, I illustrate how young Timorese used their bodies and places as sites of resistance to Indonesian colonialism, at the same time as being profoundly shaped by this experience.

Part One: Locating the Komunitas in Indonesia

The komunitas refers to the critical community of young Timorese and was articulated by those I came to know and who lived in Indonesia throughout the 1990s. Timorese students were sent to Indonesia from the late 1980s as part of the Indonesian government scholarship program. In this chapter, I focus on Yogyakarta as a key site that critically shaped the komunitas. Yogyakarta, or Yogy as it is less formally known, is situated in central Java, Indonesia in the ‘Special District of Yogyakarta’ (Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta – DIY) and is unique as a symbol of youth resistance history. There are few large industries in the city and it is most famous as a student town. It is also the ‘undisputed traditional cultural capital’ of Indonesia (Smithies 1987) and the ancient capital of Java, the seat of the powerful Mataram dynasty and the focal point of the 1945 to 1949 revolution against the Dutch (Ricklefs 1993: 220). To the north of the city and in direct line with the main urban thoroughfare of Jl. Malioboro, is the volcano
Merapi. The Sultan’s walled palace, known as the *kraton* (where the reigning Sultan still resides), lies to the south of Malioboro. In Javanese mythology, JI. Malioboro is considered to be the most visible connection between the Sultan and the ordinary people. It is seen as a cosmic location as it lies between two of Java’s most powerful mystical symbols: the still active volcano, Mount Merapi, and the Indian Ocean (home of *Nyai Loro Kidul* or ‘Queen of the South Sea’) 45 kilometres to the south (Smithies 1987).

Throughout the Indonesian New Order, Yogyakarta remained a centre for youth resistance. In 1998, Indonesian students conducted spectacular demonstrations and played a critical role in the downfall of President Suharto. As a centre of resistance, Yogyakarta influenced the styles of Timorese student protests through the 1990s. While the key Timorese student organisation of RENETIL was established in Denpasar, Yogyakarta provided substantial experiences upon which membership to the *komunitas* and the encompassing political subjectivity was established. The Timorese student movement was radicalised through the incorporation of artistic and provocative styles of protest in the events before and after the fall of Suharto. Yogyakarta was differentiated from the Indonesian capital, Jakarta in the narratives of young Timorese. They saw Jakarta as a site of protest in a formal sense of NGO discussion groups and lobbying of embassies, whereas Yogyakarta was seen in light of its radical protest history, as the site for the ‘doing’ of radical (Ind. *radikal*) protest. While Jakarta and Yogyakarta were each defined as the places attracting ‘intellectuals’ studying the arts and humanities, the cities of Surabaya and Denpasar attracted students pursuing technical or agricultural fields of study. Ultimately, many young Timorese students across cities in Indonesia (and Timor) prioritised the struggle for independence rather than their studies.

The Indonesian New Order government did not keep records of Timorese students in tertiary institutions. This negation of identity was in the interests of national cohesion, a critical factor for the New Order. From the students’ own records and accounts, numbers in Yogyakarta peaked in the mid 1990s at 5,000 students. From 2005 onwards, the number of Timorese students living in Yogyakarta was roughly 500, making it the preferred city to study outside Dili (see Bexley 2009). The Timorese in the city of Yogyakarta originated from each of the 13 districts in Timor and I developed close friendships with a number of Fataluku students (from the eastern district of Lautem in Timor-Leste).

As I will illustrate in the following discussion, young Timorese contested the urban space of the New Order regime in Yogyakarta. Certain sites, such as the campus, the street, the *asrama*, and the mall became ‘politicised’ and even ‘aestheticised’ (Kusno 1997), for example, through the use of violence, in the production of the *komunitas*. The *kos* became a site of contestation for authenticity and belonging within the *komunitas*. Leisure sites around Indonesia, particularly on Java and Bali seeped into meanings of
what defined the liminal status of the *komunitas* and the ‘modern outlook’ of youth identity. The city of Yogyakarta during the period of Timorese resistance had a particular aesthetic (Grosz 1998) represented by student experiences and imaginaries described in terms of intimacy and pleasure, violence and conflict, freedom and restriction, solidarity and fragmentation which were all key constituents of the *komunitas*.

**The Street**

*Jalan Malioboro*, or Malioboro Street, is the main tourist attraction in Yogyakarta and the geographical centre of the city where formal and informal activities mix. Malioboro is filled with craft markets, *lesehan* (street stall), peddlers, hawkers, street children, musicians, department stores and malls and domestic and foreign tourists: it is where ‘contrasting identities are visible’ (Arantes 1996: 82) and where diverse elements of the city are brought together in close and regular contact.

The laid back attitude in Yogyakarta expressed in the local lexicon as *santai aja* (take it easy), encourages a different use of space. The city is relatively affordable, making it popular with students. Many students remain in the city long after completing their studies. Hundreds of travelers and international students are drawn to the city by an interest in the many sub-cultures it fosters. As well as being characterised by a polite ‘high’ Javanese culture, the region also has a reputation for ethnic, class, and religious tolerance. Exemplary of this is the site of the food stall (Ind. *angkringan*) where professionals, white-collar workers, labourers (Ind. *buruh*) students, buskers, and traffic wardens from all regions of the archipelago socialise.

The busy (Ind. *ramai*) atmosphere of *Jl. Malioboro*, despite its tolerant reputation, sometimes gives way to pronounced tensions on the street. The physical layout of *Jl. Malioboro* means that movement of pedestrians is severely hampered, forcing many to take the side plane of the road only to then experience the repeated near misses by bicycles, *becak* (Ind. rickshaw), and horse-carts, particularly those traveling northbound against the legal flow of traffic instead of taking the impractical route via *Jl. Joyonegaran* or through residential areas. From the early 1980s, resentment was generated when the then Sultan gave away Malioboro pavement areas to petty-traders. Yogyakartans, for the most part being irresolute in business matters, did not take up the offer; however, other groups did, in particular in-migrants (Ind. *pendatang*) from Madura. Recently, so the story goes, these same groups were selling the spaces back to long-term residents at exorbitant prices, causing tensions and arguments over trading rights. Resentment on *Jl. Malioboro* towards *Malioboro Mall* (discussed later) was also a feature of the street. Militant groups such as *Laskar Jihad* and the *Ka’bah Youth Movement* (*Gerakan Pemuda Ka’bah* – GPK) became known for their ‘sweeping’ actions that involved the often violent removal of people from the street who were
considered to not be conducting themselves properly during the Ramadan fasting season. Such ‘indecent acts’ include eating or women and men sitting together during fasting hours of sunrise to sunset. In the heavily congested JI. Malioboro, the calm, friendly and tranquil interweave with the exclusivist, politically loaded and occasionally violent.

The command of public spaces in Indonesia under the New Order regime was achieved and sustained through ideology and violence. In the streets of Indonesia, claims of power were made and practices of power became inscribed. This was principally targeted at the bodies of citizens. With a control of space, also came a control of bodies.1 As discussed in Chapter Three, the New Order regime came to reign in an environment of intense violence. In the wake of the supposed failed Communist coup, there was a violent backlash against Communists, carefully orchestrated by Suharto. Mobs were engaged in large-scale killings, most notably in East Java and Bali. The 1965 Communist killings was the bloodiest event in postwar Asia until the Khmer Rouge established its regime in Cambodia almost a decade later.

The New Order continued operations against ‘criminals’ (Ind. preman) in initiatives such as the ‘Hoodlum Cleanup Operation’ (Ind. Operasi Bersih Preman)2 as a means to ‘discipline and educate’ street social life, and as the New Order put it, to ‘eradicate street hooliganism and restore the public’s sense of security’ in major cities. The euphemism ‘Operation Cleansing’ (Ind. Operasi Kebersihan) was used for another state operation which was an effort to rid the streets of petty criminals. In his 1989 autobiography, Suharto alluded to this as ‘shock therapy’ to justify the ‘mysterious’ killings (Ind. penembakan misterius – PETRUS) conducted from 1983 to 1985. More than 5,000 suspected criminals, mostly youth bearing the markers of tattoos, dubbed ‘GALI’ (‘Gangs of Wild Children’), were killed by ‘mysterious gunmen’ and their bodies dumped in the street, in an effort to eradicate ‘crime’ as defined by the New Order (see Bourchier 1990; Beazley 1999).

The use of public space and bodies in Indonesia during this time pointed to an interplay between control and agency of Timorese subjects. While bodies became key sites of social control, young Timorese used their bodies as sites to forge their identities in demonstrating against the New Order regime. The streets were the key arenas of the Timorese student’s struggle and where they mobilised the weapons of their bodies to resist the spatial disciplining of the state. Once the zenith of Indonesian colonisation, young Timorese had been sent to Indonesian universities to ‘assimilate’ and become ‘good (Indonesian) citizens’. However, the streets of Indonesian cities became a site in which the struggle against Indonesian colonisation took place, where young Timorese

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1 As Feldman notes (1991) in his study in Northern Ireland, the formation of the political subject takes place within a continuum of spaces consisting of the body, the state and the imagined community of the nation.
2 Bersih, or kebersihan referenced the communist killings of 1965.
actively participated in building a vibrant culture of student resistance. As Scott (1990: 45) asserts, ‘relations of domination are, at the same time, relations of resistance’. The Timorese students contested the streets of Yogyakarta as spatial domination by Indonesia. In doing so, the students never produced what de Certeau (1984) calls ‘proper places’ meaning the ways in which authorities intended for the places to be used. The students were always ‘using and manipulating these places’ by imparting their own meanings and thereby creating a sense of ownership and place to dislodge the New Order’s intention.

Walking in the street became an important dimension of Timorese youth identity and where they forged a place of belonging. When Timorese activists joined in demonstrations, whatever the distance they actually traversed, any significant amount of walking was called a Long March. The allusion to Mao’s historic march is deliberate, assigning a sense of achievement and struggle to the student movement. The Long March has a physical destination (also symbolic), and declares its revolutionary intent; it designs to overthrow the existing order. Long Marches in Yogyakarta during the 1990s would often circumnavigate the city and either begin or end at the roundabout outside the University of Gadjah Mada (UGM) campus, at the northern end of the city. This was a main thoroughfare for workers and students traveling from the north to the south of the city. Over time, the marches became increasingly colourful and would take longer routes through the city inevitably going down the main street of Jl. Malioboro to the Provincial Legislative Assembly (DPR-D) or the Military Regional Command (KORED). This practice was not limited to Yogyakarta alone. As Lee (2005) notes, in Jakarta the objective of the Long March for Indonesian student activists was to reach the symbolic sites of power such as the presidential palace (Ind. istana presiden) or the parliament building (MPR/DPR).

Along with walking in the street, group actions to write graffiti in public places was an important element of Timorese reclamation of space. Such actions would take place at night, safe from the watchful eyes of the police and because the police buildings were often targeted, very late night excursions became routine. The duration of the exposure of the graffiti would depend upon its ‘sensitivity’ with some messages being cleaned off almost immediately. Even so, the Timorese activists writing the graffiti felt it would lend a more permanent sense to their temporal ability to remain on the street. The graffiti would broadcast the political message of the demonstrations to spectators and inhabitants of the city. The graffiti became increasingly bold, calling for the abolition of the dual role of the military (dwifungsi ABRI) and agitating for a referendum for Timor. These actions were quick and spontaneous, unlike the post-1998 graffiti which involved a more elaborate and artistic style.3

3 For instance, the underpass at Jl. Lempuyangan intersection and those near it was spray-painted with illustrations of urbanisation and the pollution caused by the city’s heavy traffic.
The street provided a conflicting sense of displacement, discomfort and home for young Timorese. Young Timorese reclaimed a space in the streets and forged an identity in the margins. Students remarked that it was a place they shared with the masses (Ind. *rakyat*) who had also suffered the effects of living under the military regime and who might offer support to their cause. However, the street also retained a sense of alienation for Timorese students. Many young Timorese explained how they felt out-of-place, they did not belong among the Indonesian citizens, they were *not*, they exclaimed, Indonesian citizens. They had different colonial histories, cultures and traditions. Despite the differences, young Timorese explained how they would often modify their accents by inflecting a more Javanese accent to not appear Timorese. Others would seek out friends from eastern Indonesia, or Papua and Aceh, with whom they felt more of a connection, than with Javanese, for instance. Young Timorese were all too aware of the ethno-nationalist discourses of the New Order in which people from eastern islands were marked out as different. When they were together with people from other eastern islands, they explained, they did not feel as if they stood out so much.

**Violence, Militarism and Masculinity**

The *komunitas* was formed in a crucible of violence. Young Timorese men, and sometimes young women, would regale me (and each other) not only with stories of the violence and violations they feared, witnessed and suffered on the streets of Yogyakarta, but also committed. While no doubt some stories were exaggerated for my benefit, the story-telling experience itself served a purpose in confirming the existence of the *komunitas*. The Timorese student’s own violent actions were presented as reasonable and logical action, as retaliation in the face of the sundering of their people, culture and communities. The colonial encounter produced uneven divisions of power, privilege, and differently evoked loyalties played out through a logic of violence and counter violence (Said 2000; Fanon 1963).

The account provided by Manuel, one of the student leaders in Yogyakarta in the 1990s, explains how violence was often used in their demonstrations:

At these demonstrations, we were always asked to provide security (Ind. *sekuriti*). Our friends would say we [Timorese students] were crazy! (Ind. *gila*) That’s because we were used to standing up to the military, we were no longer afraid to die.

Angie: What did *sekuriti* entail?

Manuel: We would circulate among the crowd to find out who was working for *Intel* (agents of the state providing intelligence to the police or military). We would make contact with people also on the inside to find out when they were planning a raid.

Angie: How would you know if they were *intel*?

Manuel: (a half smile comes to his lips) Usually the *intel* were easy to spot. They always had a certain style (Ind. *gaya tertentu*).

Angie: Like what? (Ind. *gaya apa*)

Manuel: They would be wearing leather jackets and dark sunglasses. But sometimes they would be (Ind. *rakyat*) everyday people, street vendors.
Angie: And what would you do when you found out who they were? 
Manuel: ... (pause) not always but we would often employ the same techniques as the military did to us. One time, we took him back to the tent or detained him in a room. Gave him electric shock. They terrorised us; we terrorised them (Ind. mereka menteror kami, kami menteror mereka).

References to violent acts and low-level thuggery (Ind. premanisme) (see Ryter 2002) are commonly construed as heroic acts in the narratives of young Timorese. Violence became an everyday reality of the young Timorese lives and the merciless statement of revenge: ‘they terrorised us; we terrorised them’ became a mantra for the more radical Timorese students. The stories mirrored those also told back in Timor. Desto, a young Timorese schooled in Dili, told of how he and his friends would often terrorise the children of Indonesian officials in his class. Desto explained he and his friends would frequently punch and blackmail the Indonesian students in due payment for ‘not belonging in Timor’ and the atrocities committed by the Indonesian military state. To avoid such intimidation, the Indonesian students would provide the Timorese anything from cigarettes to food and music cassettes from Indonesia.

Minor criminal acts by young Timorese in Indonesia intended to ‘insult the symbols of the state’ contest the popular Australian representations of the Timorese student front as a non-violent movement where they were predominately victims. The face of the smiling, morally superior and non-violent Timorese was used repeatedly in protest material circulating among the Australian public and support groups at the time (the Socialist democratic party’s media, Green Left Weekly and Action in Solidarity with Indonesia and East Timor – ASIET, are but two examples). While essentialism in political movements can be a powerful force in creating change in specific historical moments (Spivak 1987), this is usually temporary. The frequent essentialised representations of Timorese as non-violent in the face of Indonesian violence became a discourse in the foreign support media for the Timor struggle. While these representations served a purpose during the resistance, the representations were not totally representative among the young Timorese I came to know who described to me, and to each other, how violence became a key resistance strategy in the clandestine movement and how they based their identities on militant resistance figures and youth warriors, known in Tetun as klosan funu nain.

The New Order state’s terrorising tactics and use of public space was mimicked by Timorese militia groups. Robinson (2003: 65; see also McDonald et al. 2002) explains that the methods used by the militia in Timor were ‘drawn from a repertoire developed by the TNI [Indonesian military] and other forces in counter-insurgency and anti-crime operations conducted elsewhere in Indonesia over more than thirty years’. The Indonesian military and militia reportedly left the bodies of victims of violence or severed heads of victims in public in order to act as a ‘deterrent’ to those who may have posed a similar threat to the ruse of ‘national stability and order’. These repertoires of
counter-insurgency violence were mimicked in the demonstrations held by pro-independence Timorese described above.

The mimicry of Indonesian security forces enacted by Timorese students raises questions about the perverting force of violence in the relationship between the coloniser and the colonised (see Taussig 1987). Violence has a tendency to pervert normal governing behavior leading to an erasure of social boundaries. The limited agency of young Timorese (particularly men) meant that their only recourse to power was through mimicking the violence of the state (see Bexley and Crockford 2008). Fernando, a student in Yogyakarta throughout the 1990s, explains the mimicry that involved incredible symbolic acts of violence:

> We would often take a chicken, sometimes a dog, and drain its blood. With the blood, carcass, or the head, we would drive by past the military or police traffic posts very early in the morning. While one of us would remain on the bike the other would take it and place it on the doorstep, or throw it from the bike.

Angie: And you never got caught?

Fernando: No. We would often scope the posts out during the day to see which ones were busiest and return when it was dark.

Tales of martyrdom as expressed by Manual in discussing counter-intelligence, in references such as ‘we were no longer afraid to die’, illuminate a view of youth’s own sacrificial role in the struggle for independence, thus providing a sense of continuity with the historical heroic role of youth. The creation of a community of common substance is based upon an idiom of sacrifice. Elisabeth Traube (2007) has illustrated the ways in which the Mambai themes of suffering became a national trope. In Timorese youth culture, these tropes of suffering are intimately woven with experiences of violence. Writing about issues of violence in the Sri Lankan conflict during the 1980s, Jonathon Spencer (1997) draws on Das’ et al. (1998) models of the link between violence and community. Through feuds or vendettas, violence creates a community based upon the reciprocal exchange of harmful actions illustrated by Desto’s story of retaliation and revenge in the school playgrounds in Timor and Fernando’s animal sacrifice. In the context of discourses of violence under the Indonesian occupation, young Timorese were trapped in a present of permanent, necessary violence. An imagined community of sacrifice and martyrdom in which, paradoxically, responsibility for violence was displaced onto the victims of this violence – these ‘bad’ Indonesians who could be said to be paying the price for their government’s actions. Violence enacted by young Timorese was constructed as an act of righteousness.

The willingness to die can be seen as pursuing the politics of certainty where violence (often leading to death) is the mysterious but unambiguous point of reference upon which to build moral worlds and a sense of community. While Benedict Anderson’s

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4 Discussed in Chapter Two and Three.
claim that the willingness to die for the nation is the central problem posed by nationalism, perhaps more importantly it is what nationalism says about death: ‘martyrdom stories signal an effort to force a social alignment, to force a decision about social truth’ (Kelly 1995: 489). Social truths become a moment of social clarity, ‘it is always very difficult to argue against death stories’ (Kelly 1995: 489) and because of this, the narrative of death maintained its currency in the establishment of the komunitas.

The structures of feeling inherent in the komunitas in Yogyakarta of bravery and heroism, embodied within the martyr, privileged a construction of Timorese youth identity as masculine. The extreme cases of patriotism performed by the Skinheads of the 1960s and 1970s in working class Britain, used violence as a way of constituting a community on the margins of society (see Clarke 1996: 99). Importantly too, in these spaces, very specific formulations of masculinity were produced and sustained. In the Timorese case, masculine identities emphasised an ‘unbreakable’ physical toughness, and an unwillingness to back down in the face of ‘trouble’. The violence they experienced shaped their life-worlds and militarism became a guiding principle in the construction of their gendered youth identities. As Naldo Rei (2007: 36-48) illustrates:

I was fourteen and relishing the opportunity to have a more active part in the struggle for freedom. I continued studying in junior high school and carried out my courier work at night and on the weekend. I began to cultivate the hair style of the guerrilla fighters, long hair being a symbol of resistance because it was the opposite to the army crewcut, until the embarrassing day when the Indonesian principal pulled me out to the front of the assembled students and cut it off.

…it was important for special couriers to be unbreakable, as tough, as we say, as besi asu (toughened iron).

For young Timorese who lived through the liminality of the resistance period, where their young lives were essentially put on hold, it is clear that a relationship between militarism and masculinity became a very expression of Timorese youth culture. To prove one’s manhood is imagined to be to proof (to oneself and to other men and women) that one is not a ‘woman’. As the quotes from Naldo Rei illustrate, for those young Timorese who did not get to experience combat directly, they clearly emulated the bodily styles and values of the Timorese guerilla combatant; the most important being an ‘unbreakable’ personality.

Cynthia Enloe (1989) has shown how the military plays a special role in the ideological structure of patriarchy because of the centrality of the notion of ‘combat’ in constructing concepts of ‘manhood’ and the superiority of maleness in the social order. In reality of course, Enloe notes, to be a soldier of the state means to be subservient, obedient and almost totally dependent. But that mundane reality is hidden behind a potent myth: to be a soldier means possibly to experience ‘combat’, and only in combat lies the ultimate test of a man’s masculinity. Enloe highlights further a common belief that a man is
unproven in his manhood until he has engaged in collective, violent, physical, struggle against someone categorised as ‘the enemy’ – that is through physical combat. For men, to experience combat is supposed to be the chance to assert their control, their capacity for domination, conquest, even to gain immortality. Consequently, experiencing military combat and identifying with that institution totally committed to the conduct of combat is, for those men trying to fulfill society’s expectations, part and parcel of displaying and proving their male identity and thus qualifying for the privileges it bestows.

The transition from youth to adult manhood through militaristic experience is not limited to Timor-Leste. The age of conscription in many countries is 18 years, and international law specifies that youths under the age of 15 should not be recruited or drafted into armies. In Western societies that lack rituals marking adolescence, military service often functions as an initiation ritual for young men. The transition from civilian to soldier constitutes a carefully designed process of reconfiguring identities (Cock cited in Honwana 2006: 53). This passage is all the more dramatic in situations of armed combat, when boys move from being protected to risking their own lives for others as so often young Timorese men did. Dominance is encouraged, says Honwana (2006: 53) in her discussion of child soldiers in Africa, ‘but only over the enemy; obedience to superiors is inculcated’.

Military regimes and institutions are a locus for the creation of a specific form of masculinity. Working in the African context, Jacklyn Cock (1992) posits a direct connection between masculinity and militarism: ‘[T]he army is an institutional sphere for the cultivation of masculinity; war provides the social space for its validation’ (Cock cited in Honwana 2006: 78). The prevailing notions of masculinity provided a powerful tool in the recruitment of young Timorese into the clandestine movement. The streets of Indonesia and the violence that occurred there was a key site in which the komunitas was formed and where masculine identities became entrenched in youth identities.

The Campus and the Body

Just as moving in the streets of Yogyakarta was an important part in the constitution of the komunitas, so too was the campus which offered a counter sense of immobility. As already suggested, the site of the body was key to control and resistance in the colonising mission of the New Order regime. All around the world, the body has been mobilised in protest. The ascetic dimensions of bodily protest lend moral high ground to the protesters demands. Talal Asad’s (2002) description of the relation between the ascetic technologies of the body developed by medieval monastics offers an historical parallel to the structural role of asceticism among the Timorese students. Asad traces the origins of juridical torture in these same ascetic disciplines of the body. The privileged relation of technologies of the body to the production of ‘truth’ unites the hunger strike,
state interrogation, and terrorist violence. As an informant tells Feldman (1991: 231) in his study of the Nationalists in Northern Ireland, the power of the hunger strike is that ‘nobody knows where it’s going to end... no matter what they [British captors] would do we would win the moral victory’.

Feldman’s study (1991) offers a key analogy to young Timorese demonstration practices in how specialised techniques of the body were used by demonstrators. The Northern Ireland Nationalists drew upon the culture of ‘monastic retreat’:

...both presupposed and demonstrated the same technologies of the body that had been forged through years of resistance, institutional violence and survival...The conversion of the social consciousness was, as in other matters, founded on the conversion of the body and the self through ascetic disciplines (Feldman 1991: 226).

The relationship between ascetic disciplines and in particular, the discomfort endured in long periods of sitting in demonstrations, was a practice that cemented the social consciousness and became a symbol of young Timorese’ commitment to radical politics. This discomfort was epitomised in the bodily knowledge of the hunger strike (Ind. mogok makan). Fernando, a Timorese student during the mid-1990s, who I had met briefly in Dili recalled his own memories of a mogok makan enacted by Timorese along with Indonesian students in Yogyakarta. I met Fernando on the Merpati flight from Dili to Denpasar. He was traveling to Yogyakarta to undertake training with his Timorese NGO in 2005. Our conversation on student life picked up where it had left off and he offered his memories of one particular mogok makan (hunger strike).

It wasn’t until some way through 1997, when we began to work with the Indonesian students, that we started talking of diversifying our demonstrations (Ind. demonstrasi). Until then we just commemorated dates like Santa Cruz or we travelled to Jakarta to take part in demonstrations at embassies. Some of our comrades at UGM started to become close with PRD [Partai Rakyat Demokratik- People’s Democratic Party] activists and also art students (anak ISI) [Institute Seni Indonesia – Indonesian Institute of the Arts – ISI]. The campus itself became important and we were safer there as well. The military and police weren’t allowed on to the campus, although they often did come, especially after 1997. Around the middle of the year [1997], we met with other students and decided we would take part in the mogok makan, we stayed at the tent that was put up at the Philosophy Faculty and different groups had different tasks. Some of the students didn’t eat for a month.

The outcome of this particular hunger strike was the hospitalisation of a number of young Timorese. As far as I know, none died from the hunger strike itself. Throughout the occupation, Timorese students in Indonesia and elsewhere conducted a number of hunger strikes. Xanana Gusmão and the students who were incarcerated in Cipinang jail undertook a hunger strike to demand Gusmão’s release in September 1998. Their suffering was held up as a potent affective symbolic act in which their commitment to the struggle was successfully performed and their identity as young patriots was forged. Hunger striking is a dramatic and eloquent form of political expression. Feldman’s
description of the hunger strike in Northern Ireland by Republican prisoners, referred to as the Blanketmen, in 1980 demonstrates the strong political intentions. For them, the hunger strike was a modality of insurrectionary violence in which they deployed their bodies as weapons. In a similar way to the Blanketmen’s political and ideological intentions, the hunger strike for young Timorese was grounded in a conscious ideological decision of bodily armoury and a transcendent impulse similar to the bodily deprivation of the ascetics. The performance of the Timorese hunger strike is a poignant reminder of the bodily violence inherent in their situation and how it was mobilised in the creation of the critical community, the komunitas.

The Campus, Performance, and the Komunitas

During 1997, the komunitas began to take on increasingly transcultural dimensions as Indonesian and Timorese student groups began to work together and appeared more frequently in public demonstrations as a united force. In 1997, Indonesian students from People’s Struggle Committee for Change (KPRP), Institute of the Arts (ISI) and other student groups were involved in the production of a five metre tall effigy of President Suharto made from straw and hay and carried on bamboo planks around the campus with performers circulating around the ‘artwork’. Although the UGM authorities were aware that this street art event was going to take place, they were not aware of what would follow. Walking barefoot (one Indonesian student said of his own barefoot practice, ‘the peasant has no sandal’) from the Philosophy Faculty and stopping at the Balairung (open air building used for performances), at the northern end of the campus, the students gathered around the effigy. The Timorese students acted as ‘security’ and sat in the inner circle of the effigy. The effigy was lit and as it burned crumbling pieces of ‘Suharto’ fell into the crowd. This was the first time the quintessential ‘symbol of the state’ was so publicly and vehemently attacked in the lead up to the fall of Suharto, an act of subversion punishable by a lengthy jail sentence.

That night the military imposed a curfew (Ind. jam malam) and the usually busy campus was empty. The Indonesian and Timorese students sought refuge in churches and seminaries around the city. This incident marked the beginning of two new phases of demonstration practice. After this demonstration, the police and military began to enter the campus with weapons, disrupting the previously defined sanctuary space of the campus grounds, and it prompted the ongoing use of artistic practice in public demonstrations.

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5 Art in Indonesia has long been used as a tool of demonstration. The objective of community art-based groups such as Taring Padi during the late 1990s was to use art to disseminate political messages. The medium went largely undetected by authorities, dismissed as being ‘harmless folk art’ (as it probably was by some of the people watching on the street) while other bystanders were probably more well versed in reading between the lines for political messages in line with the wayang tradition of providing subtle messages in traditional tales.
In contrast to the Timorese public masculine cast of protest often involving violent acts, other young Timorese were involved in artistic performances which drew upon an essentialised version of Timoreseness in efforts to establish the komunitas. The essentialising efforts were also common among diasporas elsewhere where the construction of Timorese nationalism necessarily withheld articulations of difference (Crockford 2007). This was as much a performance of authenticity to each other as it was to Indonesian viewers. Many young women (and men) were involved in Le Ziafal, a Timorese youth theatre group established in Yogyakarta in 1997/1998. The name, Le Ziafal is a Fataluku term describing a traditional house originating in Los Palos and is telling of the focus of Le Ziafal’s work in cultural production. Their approach differed from the masculine and violent protests detailed above and yet also contributed to the production of the komunitas. Le Ziafal also differed from the Timorese student group RENETIL, for example, in a number of ways. Firstly, the membership of Le Ziafal consisted of those whose families were openly pro-integration as well as those who were pro-independence. For the purposes of this chapter, it is important to understand that the resistance caused a fundamental shift in family relations. Membership in the Geracação Foun komunitas became, for many, a primary source of belonging alongside, or replacing, familial ties. Secondly, perhaps because of this varied membership base, the focus of Le Ziafal’s performances was on presenting Timor's struggle for independence as a cultural right; Timor was culturally different with a different colonial history and had never been a part of Indonesia rather than violent military confrontations of the more radical students. Ivette de Oliveira, one of the Le Ziafal co-founders, explained the group’s beginnings in 1998:

We formed a theatre group, Le Ziafal, in 1997/8 to promote our identity. What was important to us was how to use our art and to make known our aspirations. We didn’t have any funding or anything. We just stood on our own two feet (Ind. berdiri di atas kaki sendiri). Initially there were about seven of us but we grew and grew. We were interested in how we could use art for social control in order for Indonesia to know about what was happening to us. We performed Timorese dances and songs. Nationalist songs. We also created new performances (Ind. kreasi baru).

Our membership was varied. It was different from IMPPETTU and RENETIL. All students had to be members of IMPPETTU. RENETIL was more underground. Le Ziafal was made up of people with varying backgrounds. They didn’t necessarily come from pro-independence families. Pro-integration students were welcome. The kids of pro-integration families did not react when we sang Maubere so although they were from pro-integration families, they were treated the same here [in Le Ziafal]. We performed and played together.

For young Timorese in Le Ziafal, the objective of their struggle was to refuse ‘Indonesianisation’ of the New Order by celebrating the difference of their own ‘culture’ through dance and song. Their target audience was the general Indonesian public and their key message was that Timor deserved independence because they had

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6 A famous Sukarno quote in reference to his Old Order Amanat in Bandung 1955.
different cultures, dances, music and colonial experiences. The students referred to this strategy as ‘social control’, a term also used by the Indonesian authorities often to refer to the blueprint for stamping out activities it considered subversive. In doing this, the performers from Le Ziafal attempted to subvert state control through enactments of ‘authentic’ Timorese-ness.

In images 3 and 4 inserted in the middle of this thesis, Le Ziafal perform ‘Walking on Blood’ which re-interprets the story of pre-invasion Timor portrayed with simplistic notions of traditional life and conforming to discourses of gender identities developed during the resistance. The walls of the room are covered in shreds of dried bamboo. The men and women, clad in tais, grind maize in large wooden tumpukan (Ind. wooden pounding bowls) and ceramic bowls. Other women sit around the corners of the room and sift through rice in their baskets. All is harmonious until the arrival of the Indonesian military which is symbolised by the floor being flooded with red paint. The women, one at a time, fall onto the symbolic blood and scream in anguish and grief for those lost to the struggle. Some other women walk through the blood and sprinkle rice on the blood symbolising the re-growth of the ‘seeds of the struggle’. The closing moment of the performance sees the performers regroup into two lines along the two walls. In the middle stands a lone (male) patriot holding the Falintil flag. As he raises the flag, the people (povo) stand in silence with their right arm to their chests. Young Timorese repeated this narrative of the young patriotic youth standing firm against the evil Indonesian forces in many public performances. However, Indonesia, at the same time as being a violent oppressor, also gave the space to young Timorese to express a specific cultural identity through performances such as ‘Walking on Blood’ which were only possible in sites such as Yogyakarta. In addition, the role of the young heroic patriot is reserved for the young man while the women are seen to carry our caring and background roles. This performance would not have been possible in Timor itself due to military surveillance. On this particular occasion, Le Ziafal performed at the French Cultural Institute in Yogyakarta. On many other occasions, they performed on the street or in other semi-public buildings. Through these performances, young Timorese in Indonesia enacted an essentialised version of youth as the young heroic patriot. By involving students from all sides of the political spectrum, they created a palpable sense of komunitas.

The bodies of young Timorese students in Indonesia were subject to forms of social control, yet through embodied and performative forms of resistance, they sought to subvert such intense forms of scrutiny. Their everyday movements in and around the streets and campuses, and their encounters with Indonesian student activists, shaped and diversified their demonstration styles which privileged a masculine cast performing in often spectacular displays of violence against Indonesians. However, this was not a totalising practice and young Timorese students in Indonesia throughout the occupation.
also took part in an essentialising project of authenticity and in doing so publicly expressed the *komunitas*.

**The Asrama**

At the *asrama*, we would hold parties (Ind. *pesta*) for birthdays and prayer ceremonies (Ind. *acara berdoa*) if somebody we knew had passed away in Timor. We would all share the costs, put in whatever Rupiah we had. After these parties we would all be so tired, we would all collapse on the floor and sleep side by side. We came to live as one.

Mary, a Timorese student in Yogyakarta commenting on her experiences at the *asrama*, the Indonesian government sponsored student lodging throughout the 1990s.

The Indonesian state extended its surveillance and control into the everyday lives of the Timorese in Yogyakarta by providing living quarters for Indonesian scholarship holders. The living quarters were known as the *asrama* on Gang Timor Timur, located off Jl. Kaliurang in the north of the city (see map 3). It was intended to be a site of social control, however, young Timorese used this space as a site to build their *komunitas* in which notions of unity and political subjectivities were fostered.

The *asrama* as a site of control is illustrated by its physical dimensions. The *asrama* building housed 12 rooms in total with 6 bunk beds and stood alone in front of the military cadets *asrama* and next to it was the seminary for trainee Catholic priests. The Timorese students told me that they would often use the military football field and play a game of soccer against the military cadets. Located on both sides all the way up the Gang Timor Timur were many Padang and Javanese *warung* road-side stalls. The *warung* owners were sympathetic toward the Timorese students who were often cash strapped due to either late Indonesian government scholarship payments or money from their parents. Many students told me that they ran up debts with the *warung* owners who they did not get a chance to repay as they returned to Timor in a hurry in time for the referendum in 1999.

Upon arrival to Yogyakarta, the *asrama* would often be the first point of call for many young Timorese. Mainly young men resided at the *asrama* long-term while the women lived in female-only boarding houses or convents in other parts of the city. Women were frequent visitors to the *asrama* and there was a special room that the students referred to as the ‘VIP room’ with air-conditioning (AC) to accommodate these visitors. It was the site where many would sleep their first nights in the new city and where a sense of *Geração Foun komunitas* came into being.

Miguel’s story illustrates the importance of the role of the *asrama* in establishing a sense of place and belonging. Originally from Maubara, to the west of Dili, he gained his high school education in Dili. His parents were low-level bureaucrats during the Indonesian occupation and had worked hard to send him to school. He always did well
at school and was liked by his teachers for his impish behaviour. His parents always thought Timor would prosper by remaining a part of Indonesia, rather than seeking independence. Throughout his schooling, Miguel came to think otherwise. His last year in Dili was marked by the massacre of approximately 200 people at the funeral of Sebastião Gomes Rangel on 12 November 1991 in the Santa Cruz cemetery. He received a local government scholarship the following year to Indonesia and decided the best way to protest the New Order atrocities was to seek an education – a decision which his parents also supported as they considered an education the best way to progress. Miguel received a scholarship to study in Yogyakarta at the end of 1991 and he enrolled in the Faculty of Economics at the University of Janabadra. He moved into the asrama. Miguel recalled his first impressions:

Miguel: I already knew a couple of people at the asrama and everybody said it’s the place you should go when you first arrive in Yogya. I didn’t know the city at all. So I went there. As recipients of the Indonesian scholarship, we didn’t have to pay board. And I stayed for one and a half years! It was always busy, there was always somebody who had just arrived bringing things from home.

Angie: What sort of things?
Miguel: Food mainly. I really missed the dried beef (Tet. dendeng) from home. If we didn’t have any money, we would take it from each other’s pockets for some noodles (Ind. mie). We would cook simple things at the asrama like rice and vegetables. We would eat out of the same bowl. But mainly we would eat at food stalls (Ind. warung) or mobile food stalls (Ind. angkringan). There were always a couple of angkringan at the end of our street and we would head there in the early hours of the night when we were craving some meatball soup (Ind. soto) or just some nasi kucing [literally. Cat rice. A small parcel with yellow rice with soybean tempe or meat] while discussing the situation back home.

From Miguel’s narrative, we get a sense of the co-constitutive relationship in the construction of the Geração Foun komunitas and the bodily practices of place. The asrama represented a site that connected the past with the present through the embodied acts of eating and sharing. The connection with the homeland was maintained by the frequency of the visitors bringing Timorese specialties (Ind. makanan khas) such as dendeng. The dried beef/deer (dendeng) was a specialty often prepared for the Falintil fighters who would travel long distances and therefore required durable foods. It contained within it a special mystical association magnified for the young Timorese in Yogyakarta. It would often be eaten in conjunction with drinking tuak mutin (Tet. palm wine). Meanwhile, young Timorese ate on the street around the asrama on an everyday basis. It is here in Yogyakarta, that the ‘I’ personal narrative morphs into the ‘we’ collective narrative and the komunitas is produced. In the asrama, personal private space was restricted and was replaced by an inter-communal zone where bodies and experiences blended into one another into the Geração Foun komunitas.

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7 As described in Chapter Three.
The site of the _asrama_ is also important for its role in facilitating the politicisation of young Timorese. I met Nina, a returned Timorese student from Indonesia, in downtown Dili at the Balinese bakery after independence. She later told me that she missed Indonesian food and enjoyed the sweet Indonesian pastries on offer at the bakery. Originally from Los Palos, Nina speaks Indonesian, Tetun, Fataluku and Makassae. She went to primary school in the town of Los Palos before being sent to Dili to attend high school and live with relatives. Nina’s parents were involved in the Falintil armed movement through the 1970s and 1980s and her memories of childhood are marked by the infrequent encounters with her father, a Falintil fighter, who would come from the bush for short periods of time. He was killed by the Indonesian army. Her mother continued to work with the Popular Organisation of East Timorese Women (Organização da Popular da Mulher Timorense – OPMT) of the resistance. In Dili, Nina lived with relatives who worked in the civil service and, like many children living with extended family, had to ‘pay her own way’ by working around the house, washing clothes and cooking for her extended family in exchange for assistance with school fees, supplies and uniforms. Although she was grateful to her extended family for looking after her, Nina explained that she jumped at the chance to go to Indonesia:

At the time, I was studying in Dili at high school. There wasn’t much work for those who had finished school. Some of my friends were going to return to Los Palos but I knew that would be too hard on my mother who was starting to get sick from all of her years in the forest when she didn’t have much food. I couldn’t really stay on at my relatives’ house in Dili. And, besides, I was tired of doing all of the cleaning! I had an uncle who lived in Kupang who said he’d help me get to Yogyakarta and support me. I left Dili in 1994. When I arrived in Yogyakarta, I went straight to the _asrama_ on JI. Kaliurang because others had told me to go there. It was through people I met there that I found my own lodgings at a mixed kosher with other Timorese. That _asrama_ changed my life! In Dili I had been involved in some rallies but didn’t think of myself as a political person (Ind. orang politik) or an activist (Ind. aktivis). But in Yogyakarta, we didn’t have a choice. We saw what we were doing in Timor as a human right.

Nina’s last two comments are insightful. When Nina says that ‘we didn’t have a choice’ she refers to the selective agency of young Timorese’ actions. They did, of course, have a choice, in whether to take part in demonstrations and other clandestine activity, but the range of choices young Timorese could chose from at this time, in Yogyakarta, was very limited in terms of identity politics. To be authentically Timorese and find a sense of belonging within the _komunitas_, a certain political performativity was necessary. When Nina describes her demonstration practice as a human right (using the English term) she points to her cosmopolitan understandings of justice which imbue the _Gerar;ão Foun komunitas_ with global notions of justice and human rights. That the young Timorese’ consciously invoked the de-territorialised notions of human rights and

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8 A significant number of the country’s education institutions are located in the east. There are three senior high schools in Los Palos and two of the oldest seminaries are located in the east, in Manatuto and Baucau.

9 See Chapters Five and Six.
justice was a conscious strategy with a clear purpose. By reproducing these discourses they were able to evade the ‘Indonesian-isation’ and nationalistic gaze of the Indonesian state that told them they were Indonesian citizens. Through this strategy of cosmopolitanism, Timorese were able to place themselves within the bounds of the Timorese nation, as unquestioned patriots. This complex relationship of cosmopolitanism and the nation was initially expressed in Xanana Gusmão’s defence speech:

Today all theories on colonialism or the fundamental reasons for an emergence of new nations must be seen in the light of universal principles and international law enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations (Gusmão 1996: 21).

By shifting the Timorese struggle for independence to the level of internationalism, Xanana Gusmão paved a way for young Timorese to take up the rallying cosmopolitan discourses of ‘human rights’. Through these internationalist discourses, Timorese were able to situate themselves as non-Indonesian citizens and molded an identity for themselves outside of the bounds of Indonesian nationalism as Timorese. A space for Timorese to express themselves as cosmopatriots was emerging.

The relationship Timorese had with Indonesia was not as straightforward as the resistance movement presented. As Nina’s life history suggests, Indonesia also represented a space in which she, and other Timorese students, could enjoy a relative freedom, distanced from the constraints of family obligations and military oppression, even though Indonesia itself was not free of police and military surveillance. The complexity of Geração Foun spatiality, in the way young Timorese created and made meaning out of space, is founded upon the fact that it was influenced by the social, cultural, and geographical setting of Indonesia.

While the asrama (government boarding house) was where many young Timorese such as Nina experienced a political awakening, for others the kos (private boarding house), with a mixture of students from all over the archipelago, was also the site where they could foster a political subjectivity. A Timorese student, Miguel, offers his experiences of an interesting interplay between the asrama and the kos:

Although the asrama was relatively autonomous, we were still subject to surveillance from time to time. You couldn’t leave documents or anything lying around. I had a kos with some [Timorese] friends where we kept our documents. We would only really meet at the asrama to organise public demonstrations, but we would have meetings at kos around the city. The other reason to meet at the kos was because not everybody would be interested in talking or debating politics. There were always people main judi (playing cards for money), or planning some sort of pesta (party). It was just too busy for me to learn.

For Miguel, the kos (that he shared with other Timorese), as well as the asrama, were significant in realising his membership to the Geração Foun komunitas as a political
subject. He developed other related interests as a writer of underground publications circulating at the time. He said, ‘I could learn a lot there. I set up a small library. It was where I learnt to develop my writing styles.’ Importantly, he points out that the asrama was important because it was where he could perform the subjectivity of ‘activist’ (Ind. aktivis), publicly demonstrating in the face of Indonesian occupation of Timor. Interestingly too, he points to the heterogeneity within the category of Timorese youth. While there was an overwhelming public performance of the heroic patriotic youth, in reality, Timorese youth were involved in the reproduction of this identity to different degrees. As he points out, some young Timorese were not as interested in taking part in the demonstrations or discussions as much as others.

**Leisure and Modernity**

Despite Indonesia being experienced by young Timorese as repressive and violent, it also provided a space in which young Timorese experienced a modern subjectivity critical to the establishment of the komunitas. In 2005, many of my afternoons in Yogyakarta were spent with my Timorese friends in the Malioboro mall. This shopping centre spans four levels complete with supermarket (Hero) on the bottom floor and food court on the top floor. On most afternoons, the mall is filled with middle-class Indonesians – to make their purchases and others to socialise, enjoy the free air conditioning and watch the spectacle of shopping. Rita, a student at a teachers college in Yogyakarta, summed up young Timorese mall practice when she said:

> When I’m feeling stressed [pusing dan stres] I go to the mall. It makes me feel lighter (Ind. lebih ringen). I just walk around. I can’t afford anything anyway. I don’t think about anything. It gives me an opportunity to cuci mata (Ind. literally, to clean one’s eyes) and ‘refreshing’ (from the Eng. to be refreshed).

Rita’s mall and leisure seeking practice was a form of escapism which I suggest is an experiences that positions these young generation Timorese as explicitly modern subjects. Nicolaas Warouw (2004) suggests that the consumption practices of young factory workers in McDonalds and Kentucky Fried Chicken in Tangerang, West Java, compensate for the structural subjugation in which workers are treated as mere objects, rather than subjects in production relations. Consumerism and leisure-seeking, in this light, are not an ‘appropriation’ of power from authority, but resembles a process Foucault (1982) described as ‘subjectification’ allowing the self to have control over a private domain.

The subjectification processes that occurred in Indonesia allowed young Timorese to gain control over their personal lives and in doing so, made themselves into modern subjects. Primarily, the distance from family obligation and the daily challenges of

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10 See Chapters Five and Six for a discussion of the underground Indonesian and Timorese press.
independent Timor offered a different sense of leisure punctuated by an abundance of
time that would otherwise be taken up with household and family responsibilities. This
was particularly pertinent for Timorese students in Indonesia after independence. My
discussion with my friend Izzy, a medical student in Bali in 2005, illustrates this point:

Excerpt from fieldnotes October 2005

At 11.05 o’clock last night, I received a call from Izzy, a medical student at Udayana
University in Denpasar. He apologized for calling so late and explained that the price of
calls dropped after 11 o’clock and, as a student, he had to watch his budget. We spoke
about his hometown of Baucau and I asked him how his studies were going. He told me
that he had settled into life in Denpasar. He commented, ‘I really like being able to get on
a bike and go to the tourist spots to look at the tourists, we don’t have to buy
anything…even though we have to work hard [studying medicine], it feels like I’m on
holiday all the time here which I didn’t feel back in Timor. This has become my place
now (Ind. ini sudah jadi tempat ku)’.

Izzy constructs Indonesia as a site of leisure, differentiated from the lack of leisure in
Timor. In our conversation, Izzy went on to compare what his life was like in Timor
during the resistance. He was just a child then but he remembers the fear and suffering.
Post-independence, his life in Timor is marked by family obligation, where he says he
never gets a chance to experience leisure like he does in Indonesia. He has an ample
amount of leisure in Indonesia to do what he wishes. To wile away the hours at the
beach, temple, or the mall illustrates how young Timorese constructed themselves as
modern subjects. These consumption practices are illuminated by the insight from
Foucault (1979: 60), that power is never on ‘one side’ and thus inherent within every
body. The metropolitan body and the places it moves points to a multitude of
subjectivities within the komunitas. Walking in the mall and visiting tourist spots
represents young Timorese’ quest for a modern selfhood, paradoxically encapsulated in
the experience of Indonesia.

**Gendered Geographies**

Physical distance from family in Timor also offered an opportunity for freedom of
constraints of gender norms. In this way, the city of Yogyakarta becomes a ‘geography
of resistance’ (Pile and Keith 1997) as a response to the ideological construction of
femininity of the resistance and the New Order that together have restricted women’s
movement and sexuality. Sinta’s story is representative of the ways in which other
young Timorese women whom I came to know used the space of Indonesia to challenge
dominant ideas about gender relations and within this marginal space, made attempts at
constructing new gendered identities and gender relations.

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11 As described in Chapter Three.
I would visit Sinta, a Timorese student in her mid-twenties, at her kos (boarding house) off Jl. Gejayan in the North of Yogyakarta. During these visits, male and female Timorese would gather in the guest room located at the front room of the boarding house. The guest rooms in majority Muslim Yogyakarta had an 'open-door' policy. It was important for the guests to be visible, particularly if the guests were both female and male, in order to preserve a visual sense of modesty. We crowded on the woven straw mats in the guest room while Sinta and her kos mates served us tea in long glasses with sugar taking up a full third of the glass – Java style.

On occasions like these, our conversations would often turn to relationships in a joking and jovial manner but would also reveal the nature of Timorese gender relations. Some of the older Timorese expressed that, during the resistance, they never had the time or interest in romantic relationships. Many Timorese commented that the experience of the clandestine movement had thwarted plans for normal married life. Such emotional distance and depersonalisation of the self was common among the narratives of young Timorese involved in the clandestine movement. The sense of sacrifice to the nation defines members of the young generation as political subjects as well as gendered subjects.

Despite the overarching sense of personal deprivation inherent in the nationalist struggle discourse, young Timorese did manage to conduct romantic engagements with one another. In fact, some young Timorese explained that one of the tactics of the underground movement to recruit members and pass on information was actually through these romantic attachments. Most young Timorese spoke about their partner as their jodoh (Ind.). The standard dictionary translation of ‘jodoh’ is ‘1. marriage partner, mate; 2. match, be a match, be a mate’ (Echols and Shadily 1989). Jodoh emerges as the term for the partner to whom a person is destined (Ind. nasib). In the kos with Sinta, she shared her understanding of the concept of jodoh, its relationship to the resistance struggle and how this mapped onto lived social practice:

Yeah, I have a jodoh. I think it was our shared destiny (Ind. nasib kita bersama) that brought us together. We were both in the clandestine movement. But we have lived apart for four years since independence.

Jodoh is thought of in a framework of destiny, but this destiny can also be crossed or thwarted (Jennaway 2002). Sinta, in the narrative about her jodoh, provides the picture of a loyal girlfriend to her partner living away from her. I comment that she must be deeply committed to have a four-year long distance relationship via SMS (short-messaging service- also known as ‘texting’). Sinta surprised me with her answer:

Well, how do I say? (Ind. oh ya, gimana ya?). My jodoh, Ade, was imprisoned during Indonesian occupation and then returned to Timor. So...umm... yeah, I have a boyfriend
(Ind. *pacar*) here. It’s like, when I’m here I need warmth! [a metaphor for sexual activity] (Ind. *perlu hangat*).

In Timor, we have a very strong patriarchy (Ind. *patriaki*). Everybody thinks that once you’re together (Ind. *pacaran*) then the girl is supposed to be loyal and just sacrifice herself for men. I can’t be seen alone with anybody else, I mean somebody who I don’t already know, or..., people would start to talk. Also, he [the surrogate boyfriend] is from Java. It’s easier for the boys... I mean, it’s OK for them to have more than one girlfriend.

Here, Sinta is relating the strategies in negotiating the prescribed role of a young Timorese woman within a given framework of power relations during the resistance and the early years of independence. Discourses circulated about gender norms; how women were expected to act by not being too forthright with men and through the adherence to Catholic values and the importance of appearing loyal, dedicated and sacrificing partners. The notion of the chaperone (Ind. *penjaga/pengantar*) shares the symbolism of the nation as feminine and the need to protect the female as sanctuary space. The male gaze, emphasising surveillance, comes from the people around her (from men and women) as Sinta says, ‘I can’t be seen alone with anybody else’. The expected behaviour for men and women is different. Operating discourses conjure an expectation for women to be loyal and men are expected to be philandering.

During the Indonesian New Order, female sexuality was one of the many aspects of women’s lives that was clearly restricted and thus, in this sense, the two models of Timorese and Indonesian femininity merge. According to Tiwon (1996), the Indonesian New Order distinguished between two types of women: the *model* and the *maniac*. In this classification *models* are women who can control their desires and passions, waiting to marry and become good wives and mothers. In contrast, *maniacs* are those who speak out loud and openly show sexual passion. In this way it was considered degrading for a woman to show passion for more than one man at the same time, or indeed, to show any kind of passion for a man. Women’s sexual propriety has often been seen as inseparable from being good Indonesian female citizens. In this discourse, that has been pervading Indonesia for several decades, and in situations in which an unwed woman might find herself evicted from her natal home by her brother if she was seen with a man (outside of the family) without a chaperone, female propriety is articulated around the imperative of finding a husband (see Dragojlovic 2008). In this cultural logic, spinsterhood and divorce are highly stigmatised, as is the public expression of female desire. In Timor, female mobility is a contentious issue for women and has been for some time. Luis Cardoso (2002: 68) writing about Timor-Leste in the 1970s, comments that open beach areas such as Areia Branca have negative connotations with dire consequences, as he acknowledges, ‘any woman seen coming back from there was deemed to be a fallen woman’.

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12 As described in Chapter Three.
Sinta subverts the expected gender role of loyal girlfriend although, as she suggests, subversion can be a covert operation:

I always mix in different crowds so I don’t always meet my Ocussi friends. But I have strategies (strategi)… Most of the time I will meet my friends (Ind. teman) at a place like the Circle K [supermarket] and then we go [by motorbike] riding around the town square (Ind. alun-alun). Or if we want somewhere private, we will go to Kaliurang [to the villas for sex]. But in front of my friends, I’m Ade’s girlfriend.

Sinta used secrecy as a tool to subvert the expected gendered behaviour that is encapsulated in both Timorese and Indonesian nationalist ideals about the place and role of women. Sinta’s social mobility and distance from her family made this act of (semi) open subversion possible. I remarked that the alun-alun (town-square) was an odd choice for dating as it is always very busy – being the chosen destination for many of Yogyakarta’s youth to court one another. Sinta explained that places like the alun-alun provide a sense of anonymity amongst the bustling crowds and beeping horns. In this marginal and anonymous zone, young women like Sinta were able to deploy agency in order to contest dominant ideas about gender norms.

The physical space of Yogyakarta was a key site in which many young Timorese could express their sexual selves without the fear of reprisal from family members. On Saturday nights (Ind. malam minggu), hundreds of young teens (sometimes referred to as ‘kids that have recently grown up’ – ABG – Ind. anak baru gede) and late teen couples can be seen circling the alun-alun on their motorbikes, from dusk to well into the night. Night offers further anonymity. Bike riding presents an opportunity for intimacy as the passenger must hold on to the driver’s waist, particularly on windy roads. Fortunately for young lovers, the road to Kaliurang is long and winding. Located high in the mountain below Yogyakarta’s Merapi active volcano, the sides of the road and alleyways off the main road are dotted with villas. The rooms are rented by the hour, with overnight options catering specifically to the pre-marriage relationship market of Yogyakarta. Some of the villas are double story with an indoor garage ensuring anonymity. The rooms are decorated with double beds complete with TV and DVD players. DVD’s of soft porn (Ind. film biru – literally, blue films) can also be rented from the reception. The (mostly Javanese Muslim) owners of the villas are willing to turn a blind-eye to such pre-marital (and/or extra-marital) sexual activity. Yogyakarta is constructed as an economy of pleasure in which leisure, romance, and sex are available for consumption in an anonymous setting and where restrictions of gender ideals can be negotiated.

Strategies of anonymity referred to by Sinta included meeting boyfriends at the various sites around the city, at food stalls, or the mini-supermarket, Circle K, and the town-square. As Jennaway (2002: 152) noted among girls in North Bali, a woman’s skill in negotiating adolescence ‘either as a precursor to, or simultaneous with, the courtship
phase, hinges on her ability to preserve her reputation’. In the case of young Timorese women, like young Balinese, sexual propriety is primarily about appearances and adeptness at concealing actual sexual or intimate relationships, rather than the maintenance of modest and restrained sexual behaviour. Sinta explained that young Timorese men and women do not face the same expectations of gendered behaviour, although they operated within the same frames of the resistance movement where secrecy was a structuring principle.

I asked Sinta why she did not separate from her jodoh back in her hometown of Oecussi and become open about her pacar in Yogyakarta. She explained the importance of her and Ade’s entwined destinies of sacrifice within the Timorese independence struggle and because of this history, she expects to return to Oecussi to live with him. Added to this reasoning was that she considered her jodoh to be polite (Ind. sopan) and not rude (Ind. tidak kasar) and their parents agree on the union. Studies of young women in Indonesia (Jennaway 2002; Bennett 2002) have indicated that despite their experimentation and deviation from societal constraints, parental approval of their marriage partner is still important to young women and this would also seem to be the case for many young Timorese women.

Narratives of the entwined destiny of the struggle and relationships between young Timorese men and women are also coloured with narratives about choice and modernity. Young Timorese women’s narratives cited the romantic notion of love, and accordingly, marriage has become more individualised than previously possible. Kathryn Robinson (2000: 158) notes how the trend occurred in Sulawesi:

Where marriage was once a family affair, the arrangement of marriage by two families taking account of the need to establish a harmonious and economically viable household, the young are now in the grip of desire for free choice marriage based on romantic love.

Physical distance from their parents while living in Indonesia also meant freedom from the constraints of gender ideals. Such adventurous behaviour characterised by a degree of anonymity and sense of impermanence articulated by Sinta resonates with Katie Walsh’s research with British expatriates in Dubai. Walsh found that performances of sexual freedom can be closely associated with the geographies of being ‘away from home’, because the ‘imagined distance of being away from home increases the confidence of being able to take sexual risks’ (Walsh 2007: 507). Paradoxically, young Timorese found this space in Indonesia both under the New Order and during Timor’s independence. During the resistance, the subjective experiences of the asrama, the campus and the street were all key sites for the production of the Geração Foun komunitas. After independence, however, the Geração Foun komunitas experienced some fragmentation that also mirrored what was happening within Timor-Leste at the time. The following section will look at experiences and geographies of the kos and how
this mapped onto the disjunctures and continuing marginalisation experienced by young Timorese.

**Part Two: Independence: A Critical Disjuncture**

After independence, when the need to subdue difference subsided, contestations over authenticity and claims to the *Geração Foun komunitas* emerged. It became clear that the *komunitas* was neither stable nor homogeneous. The following narratives point to the contested category of the *komunitas* from the perspective of some of the older students – referred to as pre-independence Timorese.

Inter-generational divisions were acutely felt by young Timorese during the first five years after Timor’s formal independence in 2002. Indonesian language and culture, in the eyes of Timorese Portuguese-speaking elite, was a definite marker of an inauthentic Timorese. For the Lusophone-oriented Generation of ’75, to be associated with Portugal was to be refined, cultured, European (and therefore *more* Timorese). To be associated with Indonesia was to be uncouth and uncultured (for instance sitting on the floor and eating with your hands) and an ‘Asian’ was considered inferior (and therefore *less* Timorese).

Such an understanding of power relations assists in explaining how young Timorese reproduced the same power relations of marginalisation. Crockford (2007: 181) notes how dominant discourses of cultural difference also pervaded the Timorese diasporic community in Sydney during the 1990s. Young Timorese were criticised for ‘becoming foreign’ (Tet. *sira mala oan*), for ‘forgetting’ the struggle, for being apathetic, apolitical, undisciplined, too materialistic. Similar inter-generational differences were also articulated within the *komunitas* in Indonesia. Discourses on who stayed and who left during the occupation evoked competing claims about the legitimacy of belonging to both the *komunitas* in Indonesia and the larger entity of the Timorese nation-state.

Power dynamics of difference were repeated after independence. The Generation of ’75 marginalised the Generation of ’99 because of their affiliation with Indonesia. In turn, the older members of the Generation of ’99 – also referred to as pre-independence youth – reinvoked the same power dynamics of difference to marginalise younger members of the same Generation of ’99 – referred to as post-independence youth.

I begin with a discussion on the *kos* and the impact it had on the unity of young Timorese. I then move to a discussion on how the *kos* served as an instrument of articulating difference between two generations of youth which gave rise to a familiar cycle of power relations of marginalisation. The final section discusses the ways in which the disjunctures that occurred after independence also opened a space in which other more familial localised identities could be rediscovered and articulated.
In her study of Jakarta kampung life, Lee (2007) explains how the gang (alleyway) is a space that is subject to the rhythms of its residents. Jakarta’s jalan raya (main roads) intersect the city like so many arteries, disappearing in the spidery veins of side streets and alleys. Lee (2007: 9) explains that the gang and the jalan raya are necessarily connected, but the gang emerges as a safety zone, ‘the in between spaces of the kampungs provide a different scalar perspective of the city, one where white-collar workers from the high-rises live, eat, and mingle with the urban poor’. Situated along these gangs are the kos, the boarding houses of young Timorese and Indonesians alike.

In the case of young Timorese, the kos reflected the changing living patterns that occurred in the post-independence period. During the resistance, the students either lived in the asrama, a rented house (Ind. kontrakkan) or together with other Timorese students in a kos. After independence, the Timorese sought accommodation in kos with students from other parts of the archipelago, and not necessarily with Timorese, for reasons I will discuss below. The typical kos is a private run dormitory-style lodging with between 5 and 40 single rooms centered around a shared kitchen space.

Independence brought about significant structural changes for young Timorese students. Indonesian government scholarships for Timorese students were discontinued when Timor gained independence in September 1999. The asrama on Jl. Kaliurang was repopulated by pro-Indonesia/integration (known by the Indonesian acronym as Pro-In) Timorese students. Many students began to find their own kos, separate from other Timorese students. Merry, a pre-independence youth who had been studying in Yogyakarta since the mid 1990s, explained the change in living arrangements primarily due to safety concerns arising from intimidation of Timorese students. She said:

*We prefer to live on our own now. It’s weird (Ind. aneh) but we feel safer if we are not all in one kos. It would be harder for them [the militia] to track us down. I think the Indonesian government doesn’t have a problem with Timor anymore. But we still feel scared that the violence could happen here again in Yogya... so, we prefer to live by ourselves.*

Following independence, the fear of military state surveillance and violence during the occupation was replaced by the fear of pro-Indonesian Timorese supporters – some of whom were recruited as militia and frequently terrorised the Timorese students for wanting to remain in Indonesia despite having obtained independence. Dr Faustino, the

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13 Gang was also the name of an Indonesian-Australian arts festival I was involved in Sydney in 2007 and 2008 as a performer, organiser and translator for the visiting Indonesian artists. The festival website (www.gang.org) states that gang ‘straddles a dual reference to small roads and particular social groupings; it refers to the space betwixt and between more permanent and conventional roads and roles. In Indonesian communities, ‘gang’, forms a critical artery in Kampung culture, where local trade and communities thrive in close proximity to one another. Gang also evokes images of ‘crevices, margins, and a rich density of peripheral culture’.
co-ordinator of the Timorese students organisation, AETIL – Associação dos Estudantes Timor-Leste, explained the security threats he experienced personally in the aftermath of the ballot in Yogyakarta, which gives credence to Merry’s experiences described above:

From around early August [1999], I began receiving nightly visits from the pro-Indonesian [Timorese] militia who would threaten to burn my kos. They [the militia] were always dressed in military fatigues. The most worrying thing for me, though, at that time, was my books. At the time, I was in my final year [of his undergraduate degree at university], my books were all important. I ended up contacting some priests I knew there and rented a room to store them. I rented a becak (rickshaw) to take my books there [in north Yogyakarta], I went back and forth in the middle of the night... back and forth... back and forth... The militia didn’t burn my house but I evacuated anyway. I knew some foreign academics that I would see sometimes. I became close to Herb Feith and stayed with him in Bulaksumur.

In December 2001, I was even attacked in the church. I was invited to be the witness at a wedding. They arrived on the church grounds and shouted, ‘You pricks! We’ll cut off your heads!’ They bashed a number of those present. I fled through the back of the church.

A lot of Timorese were saying that these Pro-In (pro-integration/Indonesia) members were actually former Indonesian police. But many were just students. The thugs that came to the church that day were led by Octavio Soares, a recently graduated doctor, who is the nephew of the last Indonesian governor of East Timor, Abilio Osorio Soares, who was on trial in Jakarta for crimes against humanity at the time. We felt like we had to do something for the students being threatened by these groups. Many public servants were also under pressure from the Pro-In groups. Now it became a problem with the militia and associated groups – not with the government.

As Dr. Faustino explained, the vertical conflict from the state had been replaced by horizontal conflict coming from the organised Timorese militias. This was an important turning point for the komunitas. In Victor Turner’s (1967) schema, the period of liminality is followed by a process of reintegration. Rather than being re-integrated into independence, young Timorese remained in the liminal period without clear boundaries about who belonged and who did not. This led to feelings of profound disorientation among Timorese students in Indonesia. The young Timorese lamented the clear distinction of Indonesia as the enemy found in episodes of vertical (Indonesian state) conflict, ‘At least you knew who the enemy was’ they told me. Within this phase of liminality, not only did they have new fears but the nature and unity of the komunitas was beginning to unravel as familiar power relations of marginalisation were redeployed as an assertion of defining inclusion and exclusion.

14 Herb Feith (1930-2001) pioneered Australia-Indonesia student exchanges in 1951. After becoming Professor of Politics at Monash University, he was involved in the Graduate School of Peace and Conflict Resolution, Gadjah Mada University, Yogyakarta where he also taught Political Science. See Inside Indonesia 2002 (71) edition for Dr. Faustino’s article ‘East Timorese Students in Yogyakarta Suffer Intimidation’ that also describes this event.
Kos and the Changes Within: Pre-Independence and Post-Independence Youth

The changes that came with independence caused an experiential dislocation among Timorese students in Yogyakarta. Nina and other students lamented after independence that now ‘things had changed’. The personal and collective were no longer engaged in the ways in which the struggle had cultivated. Once the struggle was over, the sense of *kamunitas* forged under the occupation began to diminish. The sense of solidarity and place fostered in the embodied acts of sharing of meals, money and clothing, and sleeping in communal quarters dissipated as students moved beyond the *asrama* and the *kos* with other Timorese into other lodgings with Indonesians. Accompanying a change in living arrangements was a pervading sense that the unity of the *kamunitas* was beginning to decline as the need to define boundaries of belonging became evident, as Nina commented:

> It was much harder for us back then [pre-1999] because we were living with fear, but at least we had each other. But I think the kids (Tet. oan sira) studying in Yogya now have it easier, even if they don’t live together.

Nina is making a temporal classification and defining the associative relationship between occupation and the *kamunitas* and independence and the disintegration of community and rise of individualism, even hedonism among the younger pre-independence youth. This highlights an important generational shift from those pre-independence youth to post-independence youth as they struggle to express a united front in the flux of independence. Nina articulates a difference between older and younger students; those who arrived in Indonesia before and after independence. She says while it is easier for the Timorese students who came to Indonesia after independence, they do not have the same *kamunitas* to foster a place of belonging and togetherness. They ‘have it easier’ because they do not have to contend with the violence and oppression of the New Order. However, as Dr Faustino made clear in the previous section, after the referendum young Timorese living in Yogyakarta (and other Indonesian cities), had to contend with the fear of pro-Indonesia militia.

Zito, another pre-independence student in Yogyakarta, conveyed a commonly expressed inter-generational differentiation, hinted at by Nina, that revealed the contestations of membership in the *Geração Foun*. I asked Zito, who then was the *Geração Foun*?

> We’re all members of the *Geração Foun*. We’re all the young generation. We all speak Indonesian but we felt the struggle.

Angie: Who are the ‘we’? (Ind. kita siapa?)

Zito: We, who came to study here during the New Order. We had a more difficult time than those who came here [to study] after the ballot.

This is an important clarification made by Zito. While he maintained that they all shared a broad young generation identity, membership claims to the *kamunitas* were contingent...
upon life experiences of the struggle for independence. The students share a linguistic capacity and they are young Timorese, but they are not a homogenous group – they did not experience the struggle, or Indonesia, in the same ways. The younger students did not interact with the city of Yogyakarta in the same way as the students who were living in Yogyakarta in the 1990s. They do not regard the Philosophy Faculty and the UGM roundabout as sites of significance, like the older students. The older students said that the younger students did not understand the struggle – their struggle during the resistance because they did not feel it in the same ways.

While young Timorese express the shared commonalities of linguistic capacity among the komunitas, the narratives of the struggle and bodily suffering appeared repeatedly as the older pre-independence Timorese differentiated themselves from younger post-independent Timorese. Members of the Generation of ‘99 marginalised a group of post-independence youth from their claims on the komunitas and therefore a legitimate identity. In doing so, members of the Generation of ‘99 redeployed the same power dynamics of marginality that the Generation of ‘75 had mobilised in defining inclusion and exclusion after independence.

Kos and a Rediscovery of Connection

While the private boarding house (the kos) in the lives of many young Timorese was symbolic of the disjuncture in their komunitas, it was also significant for the ways in which many young Timorese experienced a re-connection with their places of origin and more familial identities. Part One of this chapter documented the ways in which key sites in Indonesia facilitated the establishment of a komunitas and how the relationships between young Timorese came to replace family succor that conditions of war created. Post-independence, as the komunitas declined, young Timorese began to re-establish a connection with family and express a more localised ethnic identity.

Elvis’s experiences are common to other students in Yogyakarta post-independence. Elvis was among the students to receive a scholarship to return to Indonesia after the ballot to complete his studies. He had been living in Yogyakarta since the early 1990s. He moved there after the Santa Cruz massacre in 1991 in which he took part and will readily reveal the scars on his torso from stab-wounds – oleh-oleh (Ind. souvenirs) from the Indonesian military as evidence of his part in the suffering. He returned briefly to Timor for the popular consultation in 1999 (the students refer to this as the referendum, or ballot). He then returned to Yogyakarta in 2001 to complete his degree in Psychology with a scholarship from the Portuguese government.

15 This ‘non-recognition’ may be specific to the Indonesian case. Other diasporic communities are still actively supported by solidarity groups in their remembrance and commemorations.
The cramped quarters of the kos is illustrative of how many young Timorese (and Indonesians) live their student existence. Elvis lives in a three by three meter room with a single mattress on the floor with only a pillow and one sheet. There is a freestanding bookshelf, a plastic zipped detached wardrobe and a water-cooling dispenser with a white (homemade) lace covering. His kos is situated 500 metres away from his university campus in a kos in the area of Babarsari, West Yogyakarta (see map 3). Many Timorese live around this area. The kos is made up of about ten rooms, although I frequented kos accommodating more students. The rooms are set around a courtyard with the rooms looking inwards, facing each other. There is a well in the middle and buckets of clothes, mid-wash, are scattered about the courtyard. Towards the back of the kos is the communal kitchen and colourful plastic plates are ready to be put to use for the next dinner of instant noodles, mie – a staple food for students.

The markers of modernity are illustrative of Elvis’s own construction of modern selfhood. Elvis is an avid soccer fan and there is a poster of the Portuguese soccer team pinned to the wall. Various markers of Elvis’s Los Palos identity are deployed, a statue of the traditional house, called Le Ziafal adorn the shelf and a Los Palos tais with the woven text, ‘Ponta Leste’ (Port.) (Ponta, the eastern point – his hometown of Los Palos) is proudly placed over his front door. Despite these markers of place and locality, the room itself suggests a sense of impermanence, even though he has lived in the same kos for the last five years, since returning from Timor in 2001. The intention of returning home is ever present in his narratives. For Elvis, the Le Ziafal miniature statue of the traditional house and the tais are expressions of his place of origin and Fataluku ethnic identity.

With the disjuncture that came with independence, the kos also represented a private space in which one was able to express the multi-layered imaginings of belonging. During the occupation, imaginings of home and ethnicity were withheld for the sake of the independence struggle and creation of a national ‘Timorese’ identity. After independence, an identification with ethnicity became radically re-defined in young Timorese’ imaginings of home because of the need to find some sense of belonging that was not afforded to them by the nation-state and the splintering of their own youth identity.

For Elvis, there is no separation between his Fataluku identity and what may be termed his ‘modern’ sensibilities of watching soccer and studying in Indonesia. It is the sum of one whole of his identity as a young Timorese. But in fact, there is a relationship between Indonesia and Timorese ethnic cultural expressions. The physical location of the kos, in Indonesia, became a site in which ethnic identity was able to be expressed. It is also significant that this became possible only after independence. Independence has sparked a reorientation for many young Timorese who are actively searching to emplace
themselves within accepted modes of belonging within the Timor nation-state and being outside Timor, in Indonesia, is one way that Elvis is able to do this.

This multiple positionality of young Timorese as modern inter-connected subjects is commonly expressed. Melli, a young Fataluku musician,\textsuperscript{16} speaks of this positionality:

\begin{quote}
When I come home to Los Palos, we [the young] have to fulfil what it is to be Fataluku (Ind. \textit{isi apa itu jadi Fataluku}), it is a way of life here and it is a way of my life. We have to take part (Ind. \textit{ikut}) in the Mecci (Tet. seaworm) festival and other rituals. The last time I was back in Los Palos, my uncle had died. We performed the rituals in the \textit{uma lulik} [Tet. sacred house]. We are all together again in times like this. It [family relations] is still strong back in Los Palos. When I go back to Yogya, I also have a family (laughs). I have friends from everywhere there...
\end{quote}

Similarly, Naldo Rei (2007: 17) recounts how, after nine years, he was able to reconnect with his family and return to his village. After his tumultuous journey through the resistance movement in which he suffered physically, emotionally and mentally, he and others returned to their villages and reconnected with local articulations of life and land, the rocks and the spirits that provided a sense of belonging.

\textit{Conclusion}

In this chapter, I have discussed the Indonesian occupation of Timor-Leste that led to an intensified mobility of young Timorese and which disrupted the relationship between identity and place.\textsuperscript{17} Young Timorese in Indonesia established a community that was produced in a transcultural sphere, drawing upon references from within the Timorese nationalist movement and in Indonesia itself. Importantly, mobility meant that this group of young Timorese was now outside the family domains of power where they developed another ‘home away from home’, expressed in their terms as the \textit{komunitas}. During this time, the growing intensity of community was experienced through everyday engagement of space in Indonesia. Indonesia was also the locale of subjectification processes in which young Timorese entered an experiential domain of changes. They used their bodies as sites of resistance and to gain control of their situation. Their bodies were also sites of reconfigured gendered identities: militant forms of masculinities and new expressions of femininity that defied presumptions of domesticity.

The construction of the \textit{komunitas} occurred in Indonesia which led to this community, like many diasporas around the world, experiencing a disjuncture between imagined spaces of belonging and lived geographies (Hannerz 1992; Basch et al. 1994; Friedman

\textsuperscript{16}I discuss Melli’s background in depth in Chapter Five.

\textsuperscript{17}In addition, it has been noted (Ward 2003: 80) that the intensified mobility of people has disrupted the ‘pre-existing anthropological assumptions about culture, ethnicity and territory, in particular the notion of a stable relationship between people and place’.
With this uneasiness between people and place in mind, I have examined the production of the *Geração Foun komunitas* as an identity, formed and elaborated within a specific liminal time in Indonesia. This chapter signaled the ‘multiplicity of attachments that people form to places through living in, remembering and imagining them’ (Malkki 1992: 38).

The *Geração Foun komunitas* was constructed, articulated and enacted through everyday experiences in Indonesia. I have shown that through their embodied interaction as Timorese subjects living in Indonesia, young Timorese were able to contest the totalising space of the Indonesian state and construct for themselves a *komunitas* and youth identity marked by intense experiences together. The relationship young Timorese had with Indonesia calls into question the assumed antagonism between Timor and Indonesia and the singular meaning of Indonesia as portrayed through the conflict paradigm.

As Turner suggests (1986), the communitas can ‘never quite [be] realised’ because it is supposed to be a temporary period which reaches a threshold followed by reintegration into the ‘structure’. The story of Timor illustrates that the changes that occurred during the liminal period were so profound for a generation of young Timorese that reintegration into society is not always possible because of the power relations that continue to operate to marginalise young Timorese from a place of rightful belonging. In this way, they remain in between childhood and adulthood; colonialism and independence; Indonesia and Timor-Leste.

Independence was experienced as a profound dislocation marked by new fears which paralleled the geographical separation of the students as they moved out of the cultural milieu of the *asrama* and into separate *kos* with Indonesians. This process triggered a fracturing of the *komunitas* and power relations that sought to marginalise young Timorese after independence were redeployed. However, within this disorientation and new living arrangements in the *kos*, opportunities presented themselves to express modern subjectivities and multiple articulations of familial belonging and ethnic identities emerged. The following chapter explores the structures of feeling expressed by young Timorese after independence and how these fed into a youthful identity based around sacrifice, suffering and justice.
IMAGE 1 and 2. Young Timorese mix with young Indonesians at trendy cafes in Jakarta, 2005.
IMAGE 5. Galaxy's former residence on the main street in Los Palos. Source, Chris Parkinson.

IMAGE 6. The canteen in Farol, Dili, next to local NGOs Sahe Institute for Liberation, Yayasan Hak and Lao Hamutuk, 2008.

‘The Brutality of The Indonesian Forces’

‘The People Ask for Food, AMP Ask for Luxury’

‘The Government Criminalising Demonstrations?’

‘Students Keep Fighting Until Victory’

IMAGE 10. 'War is Not a Solution'. A wood cut print by Bayu Widodo produced in the print workshop in Dili, 2008.

IMAGE 12 and 13. Sections of the 'Recovering Lives' lino print. 'Recovering Lives' was a collaboration between Culture Kitchen and Osme Gonsalves in Canberra and was exhibited in Timor-Leste, Melbourne and Canberra, Australia, 2008.

IMAGE 17. Erman, a member of the Gembel collective, Dili, 2005.

IMAGE 19. Young Timorese competing in a version of pencak silat, a form of Indonesian military inspired martial arts, Dili, 2008. Source: Carlito Caminha.

IMAGE 22. Supermi noodles – an Indonesian brand of instant noodles – and the term used by the Timorese elite to refer to young Timorese educated under Indonesia.
IMAGE 23. ‘Gembel, Xacana and Viva Major Alfredo’ graffiti in Dili, 2008. Xacana, a word play on Xanana, is a name of a youth gang.

IMAGE 25 and 26. Graffiti in support of Major Alfredo Reinado reads 'Alfredo's Legacy Generation' (top) and 'We always with Major Alfredo' (bottom). Dili, 2008. Source, Titi Irawati.
IMAGE 27 and 28. Young Timorese taking part in the anti-government protests that led to the downfall of Prime Minister, Mari Alkatiri, in 2006. Source, Carlito Caminha.
CHAPTER FIVE

The Rasa of Belonging among Young Timorese:
Seeing, Hearing and Feeling
In this chapter, I locate young Timorese' attempts at cultural citizenship through the emotional and embodied aspects of *rasa*.\(^1\) I argue that *rasa* is produced through various cultural practices that are transcultural in nature. I explore the music, poetry, and stories of a group of young Timorese who could be considered post-independence youth, in that most of them came of age after independence and live in Timor-Leste and Indonesia. These cultural expressions are considered articulations of affective belonging that highlight particular 'structures of feeling' (Williams 1977) of collective youthful patriotism, loyalty, suffering, and sacrifice in their quest for cultural citizenship in the nation-state.

Chapter Four outlined the ways in which young Timorese established and sustained a critical community throughout the resistance period in Indonesia. After independence, the community fractured with the decline of national unity. As power dynamics of the postcolonial state took hold, young Timorese were marginalised. Within this process, they struggled to re-position themselves as legitimate members of the nation through strategies of cultural citizenship. I discuss here the performative aspects of these strategies by looking at the relationship between language, feeling, and the body. I engage with the visual elements of this relationship through a short film supplied at the back of the thesis titled Film One: Osme. I go on to look at how certain masculinities are reproduced through cultural production. The music of young Timorese draws on a broad range of influences and is mobilised in an effort to create personal and shared structures of feeling which serves to position them within the bounds of cultural citizenship. In this way, young Timorese can be considered cosmopatriots. The following section focuses on power dynamics in which the politics of belonging are located. The final section focuses on recent efforts by young Timorese in the genre of fiction where a sense of cultural citizenship was constructed.

This chapter is conceptually informed by the work of Aihwa Ong (1996: 738) who defines cultural citizenship as 'cultural practices and beliefs produced out of citizens often contested negotiations with the state and its hegemonic forms that establish the structural criteria of belonging within a nation-state'. Becoming a citizen, Ong argues, depends on how one is constituted in a matrix of shifting power relations. Cultural citizenship is a dual process of self-making-and-being, made within webs of power linked to the nation-state and civil society. Renato Rosaldo’s (1999) analysis of cultural citizenship is also useful for thinking about the ways in which these marginalised citizens make claims on the nation. It is about the everyday vernaculars, aspirations, and activities as a citizen. Thus, Rosaldo (1999) explained that citizenship is often spoken

\(^1\) Sections of this chapter and the following chapter were first published in The Asia Pacific Journal of Anthropology (2007b) and Review of Indonesia and Malay Affairs (2007c).
about by people in marginalised positions as being second-class citizens and an overwhelming feeling of not belonging.

I also take phenomenological accounts of *rasa* (Geertz 1973) as a conceptual starting point. *Rasa* derives from the Sanskrit, meaning to taste or to feel, and offers an understanding of a sensorial or bodily experience to denote ‘structures of feeling’ (Williams 1977) which, in this case, form the basis of cultural citizenship and youth identity. These particular structures of feeling are informed by cultural references, discourses, and experiences of the resistance struggle and New Order Indonesia.

In addition to these approaches, I develop Amanda Wise’s (2003) approach of trauma-related aspects of identity to illustrate the power that it wields in identity creation. Wise has borrowed Ghassan Hage’s (2002) approach of ‘strategies of intensification’, which are performative gestures that function as a means of bodily engagement with the moral community of the homeland. Hage argues that migrants (and people in general) actively engage strategies of affective intensification. Focusing on Lebanese migrants and their news reading practices, Hage deploys two notions as analytical tools for measuring a person’s affective and symbolic distance from the Lebanese news. Intensity, as Hage conceptualises it, has to do with the extent to which a reality is involving and affecting, but is also an intense relation where the person’s engagement in a reality contributes to the intensity of that reality. This important point about the intensity of reality frames his analysis of Lebanese migrants where he pays particular attention to the bodily movements and responses of the reader to the news (such as reading the Lebanese news and slapping the newspaper or spitting on the floor in anger at what they have read). These utterances, interactions, and bodily movements are termed strategies of intensification. The employment of such strategies is aimed at ‘narrowing the physical and symbolic gap between news and reader and in the process, augmenting the intensity of this reality for the reader’ (Hage 2002: 193-4). The body and emotions are responsible for the affective engagement of belonging.

Wise (2002, 2003, 2006) applies this ‘strategies of intensification’ approach by focusing on the performance, religious ritual and witnessing techniques that were central to the production of a moral community and diasporic Timorese identity. Of particular interest are the sorts of Timorese performance rituals that offered a sensorial experience and which created a kind of affective identification with each other throughout the resistance period. Wise sees this as a process unique to the diasporic experience and discounts the ways in which these discourses and actions have their own histories within Timor itself. The moral economy that Wise speaks of is in fact deeply entrenched in power dynamics that originate in the homeland and operate for both diaspora and non-diaspora Timorese in defining belonging. In this chapter, I focus on how affective belonging is constructed and reproduced through the performance strategies of young Timorese. Secondly, I focus on the ways in which these expressed identities are related to a sense of national
belonging through cultural citizenship. By affect, I mean the bodily emotion associated with an idea. The body is central to this relationship because emotions are experienced in bodily habitus; it is the site of feeling, of affect. I focus on the music, stories, and poetry of young Timorese as articulations of belonging that highlight the feelings and moral codes of youthful patriotism.

My discussion leads to the cultural production that underlines these powerful structures of feeling, but I will first look at the emotion, or rasa, of belonging. This is no better illustrated than in the story of Osme Gonsalves.

The Rasa of Belonging: Osme

The film clip (Film One: Osme) accompanying this section features Osme Gonsalves, a musician, performer, and sculptor born in 1978 at the eastern tip of Timor, Los Palos, into the ethno-linguistic group of the Fataluku. Unlike many other young Fataluku I engaged with, he did not travel to Indonesia for secondary or tertiary education. In fact, he only finished grade three of primary school. Although he received limited schooling, he exhibited an amazing aptitude for Indonesian children’s songs while our Indonesian friends had long forgotten them. He displayed further adroitness in turning these songs into catchy rap beats in Indonesian and Fataluku. It was this experience and musical knowledge that first led him to write his own songs and articulate his sense of rasa.

Osme worked in the clandestine movement as a courier and served as an Operations Assistant (Tenaga Bantuan Operasi – TBO) for the Indonesian military. Throughout this time, he roamed from one village to another surviving on the aid of independence sympathisers. I met Osme when I worked in Los Palos in 2002 as a field officer during the first Presidential Election. Every afternoon as I walked home past a house in the centre of town and he and his friends would often be sitting at the front, playing guitar, singing and taunting passersby (see image 5). A year later, Osme moved to Dili and joined the performance troupe, Bibi Bulak (Tet. Crazy Goat). He lived in Australia for three years (from the end of 2005 to the beginning of 2009) with his Australian wife and two children before returning alone to live permanently in Timor. The accompanying film was made in 2006 but the cultural production I explore here was produced pre-

2 The film clip that accompanies this section is found on the DVD inserted at the back of the thesis with the title, ‘Osme’.

3 This seemed a sort of overcompensation on behalf of the colonised which is a common symptom/facet of post colonialism. Knowing the coloniser’s culture is important in overcoming it. At the same time, young Indonesians, also products of the New Order’s ethno-nationalism have very little knowledge of Timor, let alone any Timorese songs. Jane Ferguson (2008) described a similar phenomena of overcompensation among the marginal Shan who know Burmese and Thai songs off by heart which she said, indicates the extent to which Burma and Thailand constitute a critical part of the self.

4 As discussed in Chapter Three and Four.

5 Bibi Bulak, established in 2000, is a music and drama troupe that shares facilities with the Arte Moris Free Arts school in Comoro, Dili.
2006 when Osme was still living in Timor and communicated common sentiments expressed by other young generation Timorese.

The registers of Osme’s belonging are not limited to a flag, passport or an address. The ways he feels and communicates his unique and multi-layered sense of belonging are embodied: through vision, voice, sound, and touch. The creative practices of singing and performance are not merely representations of a past world. Instead, practices, especially kinesthetic practices involving music, rhythm, and powerful narratives can keep the relationships to other worlds, without disappearing into a distant memory. As noted by Ram (2000, 2005), embodied performances can evoke certain structures of feeling and certain styles of intimate and primary relationships, providing a sense of continuity for those involved.

Language and Feeling

Many Indonesian-educated Timorese use between three or more languages to make meaning of their lives in independent Timor, although Portuguese rarely features as one of them. In a discussion where there are different monolingual participants, young Timorese will shift casually between languages to communicate with all involved. Language is also closely related to identity formation processes. In the film clip that accompanies this chapter, Osme uses Fataluku and Indonesian. He communicates what he views as his emotional attachment to the Timorese nation, via his native tongue, Fataluku. Osme continued to explain to me, in Indonesian, that Fataluku culture is not just his place of origin in the geographical sense but the foci of his embodied sense of self. At the same time, he is worried about his fluency in Indonesian, as he jokingly suggests at the end of the clip: ‘Is...is my Indonesian right?!’ When he feels certain emotions, he chooses to express this in Fataluku and through his music. Fataluku, as Osme says, is an incredibly resourceful language in conveying felt sentiment as the discussion between us (captured on the film) reveals:

Osme: About the use of Fataluku in my songs... I can feel it (Ind. bisa merasa). I can really feel it. Actually, if Fataluku is translated into Indonesian, the feeling isn’t there (Ind. rasanya tidak ada)... Translated into Tetun, the feeling isn’t there. Fataluku is great, so why not just use Fataluku? So, up until now, I’ll be truthful, I haven’t written any songs in Tetun yet. I just take... I make songs in Fataluku...
Angie: And your poetry?
Osme: Yeah, I take my poetry... I take it from Fataluku. And then I translate it to Tetun ... And I can feel it... Even though it’s not good Tetun ... I can touch it...

Osme uses the Indonesian word ambil (to take) when he discusses the language of his ballads. Rather than saying, ‘I write’ (Ind. menulis) or ‘I use’ (Ind. memakai), he says, ‘I take it’ from Fataluku, implying that the concepts of what he wishes to convey is held

6 Many young Timorese would often comment that they thought that my Indonesian was better than theirs. I think it was more a case of me having a more Javanese-inflected accent.
within the language itself. He needs only to ‘take it’ and put it into sung word so he can
‘touch it’. Language is particularly important when Osme is talking about ‘feelings’.
Osme chooses the Indonesian word, *rasa* to describe a sense of embodied belonging. He
regards these homely feelings towards Timor-Leste as ‘refined feelings’ (Ind. *perasaan
halus*).

The word ‘*rasa*’ is richly tactile. According to a phenomenological account such as that
offered by Geertz (1973), *rasa* incorporates three different senses: taste on the tongue,
touch on the body and emotional ‘feeling within the heart.’ Rangacharya (1996: 65) explains further that, ‘meaning which touches the heart creates *rasa*: the entire body feels the *rasa* like fire consuming a dry stick’. Here, I understand *rasa* as the essence of emotions, feeling and meaning, fundamental to the embodied state of being in the
world. *Rasa* bridges both bodily and conceptual domains and highlights the everydayness embedded within its meaning and uses. Osme uses *rasa* to convey not so
much one particular emotion but a primarily lived experience of being a young
Indonesian-educated Timorese.

Paul Stange (1984) offered a more cognitive approach to *rasa*. He suggests, through his
example of Java, that the logic of *rasa* is not only applied to sensory experiences,
implying a particular aesthetic, but is also a cognitive organ, used actively within
mystical powers. Stange takes the case of Sumarah, a movement founded in the mid-
1930s in the city of Yogyakarta. Sumarah is a type of meditation and *rasa* is the key
entry into Sumarah meditation. *Rasa* is given the values in the Indonesian sense of
‘feeling’ in the emotional and physical sense and also ‘intuitive feeling’. Stange (1984:
119) explains that the sense of *rasa* that concerns Sumarah is that of the ‘organ’ or
‘agent’ of perception, or... the function, of intuition. Within Sumarah, *rasa* is
considered an organ or constituent of our psychology in the same sense as ‘thought’ and
is a necessary tool in order to apprehend our ‘inner realities’. *Rasa* is awareness through
feeling, as Stange (1984: 119) explains further:

...‘feeling’ in its turn may in the first instance mean awareness of physical sensation
within the body, but that gross-level *rasa* becomes progressively more subtle – it shares
through inner physical sensation and awareness of the emotions and ultimately into *rasa
sefati*, the absolute or true feeling which is itself mystical awareness of the fundamental
vibration or energy within all life.

While I am not implying that the Javanese concept of *rasa* can be directly applied to
Osme’s understandings, the mysticism and ‘spirit’ of belonging implied within these
understandings has obviously influenced his own formulation of *rasa*. It is intangible at
the same time as it is an affective element of youth identity and belonging.
Osme walks into my house. He is transfixed at the sight of the tais hanging on my wall. The tais was a gift from a family I had known in Los Palos – Osme’s hometown. He walks over and takes the tais down from the wall and wraps it around the top half of his body. He seems transformed by this simple bodily act of being enveloped in the cloth. His body moves differently now – it moves with purpose.

This understanding of rasa builds on theories of embodiment that begin with the premise that bodies are not passive objects ‘inscribed’ with meaning but are sources of meaning themselves (Csordas 1994: 7). Osme points out his own understanding of belonging begins as an intensely bodily experience, he says:

My yearning for Timor is expressed through my feelings... Refined feelings (Ind. *perasaan halus*) and I have to express this through song... Yeah, songs that I can feel myself... Actually, my songs aren’t for anybody else, but so I can feel’.

The emotion held within the song is a personal experience linked to the collective reiterated by the fact that he uses Fataluku to connect with the nation-state, and not Tetun (the national language) or Portuguese (the official language). From this intensely personal and bodily experience comes Osme’s connection with Timor. As Ahmed (2004) suggests, emotions play a crucial role in the ‘surfacing’ of individual and collective bodies through affective experiences. Through rasa, a refined feeling of the heart, Osme is able to establish a continuum between the inner self and the outside – of the community of belonging.

The body is a source not just of individual but also of cultural memory. Osme explains that the Fataluku lyrics in his recreation of an origin song, along with complex rhythms within the body recreate his own sense of belonging and cultural aesthetics (Morphy 2006) which incite a particular ‘spirit’ of young Timorese youth. Osme says:

Osme: When I write songs, first I have to feel and first I have to remember what I experienced in Timor.
Angie: So, you haven’t written any songs about your experiences in Australia?
Osme: No, not yet. My songs are about my life in Timor. Even though I’m writing them here, they’re about my experiences in Timor.

The origin song and the touch of the tais fabric trigger memories of Osme’s life in East Timor, in particular as a young Timorese. He begins singing mid-afternoon and then as the sun drops, Osme begins to speak about his life in Timor and Australia – some of this narrative is caught on the film. The act of wrapping the tais around his body links the emotion and his body to a wider entity of the nation of Timor, in which the memory of bodily suffering is intrinsically bound.
Osme’s bodily connection with Timor is intensified because of the interaction with certain objects, chiefly the tais. He often uses tais in his public performances. The sensuous nature of the cloth elicits an affective response from those connected to them. As Seremetakis (1996: 7) argues:

The involuntary circuit of the senses reveals that embodied performance is in part constructed out of the cross-communication of senses and things... the sensory landscape and its meaning-endowed objects bear within them emotional and historical sedimentation and can provoke and ignite gestures, discourses and acts.

The use of the tais and bodily engagement is what is important. Individual objects are not merely signifiers in a semiotic sense. As Seremetakis (1996) suggests, objects carry the sediment of their own history; the use of an object in a new context can arouse an affective reaction for those involved while maintaining a connection to the context in which the object originates. In the case of the Timorese diaspora, as noted by Wise (2002) the suffering of the women who have painstakingly woven the tais in a simple back strap loom ignites a connection to the homeland. In the case of Osme, what is ignited is much more than the knowledge of the women painstakingly weaving the tais but it is the symbol of these women, as ‘ordinary people’ who suffered during the struggle that elicits a kind of loyalty from Osme. By associating himself with those who suffered, he too, is implicit in the suffering. At the same time, this bodily engagement with the tais is evoking an affective response; it is personal and felt experience for Osme that serves to realise a sense of cultural citizenship.

The notion of suffering is important in the constitution of rasa for young Timorese and its relationship to belonging to the nation. This is underscored in the following poem of sadness and loss, written by Osme. This loss is felt by Osme on a number of scales; his sacrificed childhood for the good of the independence cause, loss of belonging in Timor after the resistance, and his departure from Timor to Australia. His multiple positioned diasporic and Timorese youth subjectivity is made explicit in the poem that relates loss to affect and which is a crucial element in his construction of self:

*Materestu (Leftovers)* [translated by Holly Shauble]

I leave my home, but I don’t say goodbye  
I think about the nest ... I want to go back  
My heart’s depressed... Crying tears from my eyes  
The road to the nest, is very very far

My hands embrace my legs, I squeeze my chest  
My head is heavy on my knee and my eyes are restless  
My hearts depressed and trembling and I’m scared  
I’m afraid of bad dreams, coming to wake me up

My body is slack, as if I have no bones

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The Rasa of Belonging among Young Timorese
The relationship between feeling and the body dispels a dichotomy between mind/body and an understanding of the socialised and socially situated body. This relationship is imbued in the Tetun word for describing emotions, *isin laran*, which translates to ‘the body’s insides’. Emotions are not simply signs to be ‘read’, but are organised and mediated through systems of signs which enable a translation between meaning and feeling (Leavitt 1996).

The relationship between meaning and feeling and the body also offers an understanding of the agency of the body. As Lyon (1995: 256) suggests, ‘an understanding of the agency of the body in society comes through its intercommunicative and active functions’. Through an examination of how Osme’s articulation of music, visual forms and sense of belonging are related, we witness how bodily space is aligned with social space. We begin to understand how sensory elements or the affective experiences of being in the world are at once bodily and communicative social performances. As Wise (2003, 2006) found in her study of Sydney-based Timorese diaspora, the discursive character of the religious, performative and theatrical dimensions of protest played a key role in the formation of an exile identity. She says the hyper-performative and bodily nature of many of the core independence activities – drama, singing, dance and the use of religious icons, religious space, commemorative strategies, torture images and stories of trauma – provided a compelling bodily milieu into which experiences of trauma could be rendered meaningful in a very embodied way. The ability of such activities to create a sense of belonging to the Timorese community is illustrated by one of her research participants, Xavier (cited in Wise 2003: 157):

> You know the struggle was important. But now, it is slipping away from our everyday life. There is a lot of story – not only in 1975, but in 1945 – a lot of Timorese died. So in theatre, we can try to live, to live again these stories. Not just read about, but to live again these stories – it is important for young people, because they don’t know... and it is good for me... I can feel myself integrated into Timorese society.

Wise (2002: 127) commented that, ‘[t]hese bodily modes of protest intersect with the social and psychological symptoms of trauma and displacement creating a moral pull towards the homeland... they serve as a means of bodily connection through which diaspora can share in and have a moral and affective relationship to East Timor’. The relationship between movement and attachment is instructive. What moves us makes us feel, and is also that which holds us in place or gives us a ‘dwelling place’ (Ahmed
The Rasa of Belonging among Young Timorese (2000, 2004). Seen in this light, *rasa* and the ‘spirit’ of youth is a lived reality more than a mere symbolic construct and in which belonging is in fact felt, embodied and expressed.

**Film and Rasa**

The images of Osme wrapped in the *tais*, the sound of him singing and speaking of his melancholy, acquaint the audience with his embodied notions of belonging. Humans can relate to these forms of belonging just as we comprehend the world at large through more than one medium (Merleau-Ponty 1962). Through multimedia representation, the audience can acknowledge the existential immediacy of culture and the limitations of language (Thomas and Ahmed 2004). Sound and image become ambient as well as textual. The sound in the film clip of Osme singing an origin song in his native tongue of Fataluku draws the viewer into a shared space. While Osme says, ‘I can feel it, I can touch it’, we too are involved in an experience of embodied spectatorship. The audience experiences first hand the powerful sounds, rhythms and silences that are not only having an affect on Osme’s body, but on our own bodies, kinaesthetically as viewers. This ‘haptic visuality’ (Marks 2000) allows viewers to experience in a variety of ways, Osme’s sense of belonging through not only what is seen, but what is heard and felt. By watching Osme sing, viewers can see and hear the sense of sadness in his voice. The shadows that fall across his face as the sun fades compound the complexities of Osme’s situation and the displacement he feels is magnified by his surroundings, the starkness of a Canberra spring sky and the suburban realities that are so obviously not Timor. Through both language and visuals we gain a fuller understanding of Osme’s attempts to recreate the aesthetics of belonging.

The use of text, images and sound presented in this section can be thought of as a constant movement between evocation and representation. The camera can provide a context and sense of ‘being in the world’ (Jackson 1995) for recording the embodied registers of individuals because of its focus on cultural immediacy. This effect is intensified in this film-clip with the use of a hand-held camera (not on a tripod) and the recording of a discussion taking place between Osme and myself, rather than a recorded fixed narrative. I view the strength of using an integrated sound-image-text construction mutually complementary and reinforcing in my quest to convey the sensory and emotional registers of Osme’s sense of cultural citizenship.

**Boys, Bands and Belonging**

In this section, I continue with Osme’s story and introduce his circle of friends to illustrate the personal and the social nature of music as a strategy of belonging and the transcultural influences on the music of many young Timorese in which they reproduce.
modes of masculinity. Here I pay close attention to the role of music as a social experience as well as being a closely personal experience. Of central relevance to my discussion of Osme and musical production, is the role of music in social life. Martin Stokes’ argues (1994: 5) from home CD collections to social dances, ‘music is socially meaningful... largely because it provides a means by which people recognise identities and places, and the boundaries which separate them’.

The types of musical involvement of young Timorese serve to situate the social meanings afforded to youth social organisation and identity. When he lived in Los Palos, Osme formed a band named ‘Galaxy Lost Boys’ in 2002. The other band members consisted of young Fataluku speakers and rock enthusiasts, including Melchior Dias Fernandes (Melli), Etson Caminha, Ajito Cavalho, Leo Marcal, Lely Barreto. Melli replaced Osme as the lead singer while he was in Australia. Melli wears multi-coloured socks with sandals and his hair in dreadlocks. He was born in Los Palos some time during the year of 1980 – he does not know exactly when as he lost his KTP (Indonesian identity card – Kartu Tanda Penduduk) long before Timor gained independence. He explained that deliberately displacing all forms of identification was a common strategy for many young people to evade the authorities; if identity was unknown, then it was more difficult to be incarcerated legally by the authorities, although this itself was a regular occurrence. It is an example of the sort of acts of everyday resistance (against the oppressive Indonesian state) that simultaneously adhered to the masculine identity fostered throughout the resistance movement of being subversive, often referred to as being ‘a bad boy’ (discussed below).

The group afforded meanings to the band name which situates them as marginal subjects. The meaning of ‘Galaxy’ in the band name ‘Galaxy Lost Boys’, Osme explained, was taken from a film he and the others watched at the bioskop (Ind. cinema) in Los Palos in the late 1980s. The film was set in outer space and having never been beyond the borders of the far-eastern district of Lautem, this was how they thought about the world, a space of complete Otherness. Osme explained that the boys had no idea how the world beyond Lautem was different, they just knew it was different.

Naming themselves the ‘Lost Boys’ is illustrative of their gendered youth identity. Melli described the formulation of the band’s namesake in a different light to Osme’s exploration of the world beyond. In his self-published zine titled, *Dog Meat* (2006) Melli wrote:

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7 For an overview of musical worlds in Yogyakarta, see Richter (2004).
8 The band has since gone on to play at international music festivals in Darwin. In mid-2006 they recorded another album, *Laran Beik* in Bandung, West Java, Indonesia.
9 The cinema was burned to the ground by militia in 1999.
10 Melli presented the zine at the 2006 Sydney Writers Festival which I also attended to translate for Melli and another young Timorese, Vonia Vieira (who I discuss in detail in Chapter Six). The zine was translated by University of Technology Student, Cipi Kat Morgan.
So. When we’d just become a group, not yet having the name, ‘Galaxy Lost Boys’ we had this house. It really belonged to two kids whose family lived far away. It was hard for them to get food, so we used to hang about there and help them out. We started to form a group. We trusted each other. We knew what the other was capable of doing. And we knew we weren’t quite normal. We could keep secrets. We knew we would steal. We knew we were bad.

Many of my older informants commented that the clandestine movement recruitment targeted young men who were known for being ‘unruly’ (Ind. nakal). As I have noted earlier, the resistance offered young men a potent sense of belonging, which at times, replaced the family structure. At the same time, this sense of belonging involved an element of manipulation of the young men to comply with the needs of the resistance movement. Bravery and heroism were fostered in this larger ‘family structure’ of the struggle. The clandestine structure both normalised and fostered masculine and militant behaviour exemplified in Melli’s quote. They exhibited a high level of trust (and suspicion), they were secretive, they would often steal and they were indeed, bad.

A type of anti-structure marked the period of liminality of the resistance movement in that young men were often separated from their families that gave rise to other rules of engagement. The dog-eating rituals performed by Melli and his friends were acts in which masculine subjectivities were fostered. I was also told that eating dog was a common pastime for Indonesian soldiers, with not dissimilar objectives to the young Timorese: it was a way to strengthen solidarity and produce a high. Melli describes, in a story sharing the same title as his zine, Dog Meat, how each of the boys would have to catch a dog (in this particular story, the dog, named ‘Boy’ belonged to my neighbour in Los Palos at the time). They would lure the dog into a box and keep the doors of their house shut tight in case one of the neighbours smelled the dog cooking or heard the chopping of dog bones. If the boys were found out, there were dire consequences, or as Osme confirmed, then ‘you were in deep shit’. These rituals cemented membership to the group, and stories such as this were commonly heard tales among young Timorese in the post-independence period.

Galaxy band is an articulation of youth identity in the post-independence period and their practices of belonging produce a sense of rasa and togetherness. Importantly too, a masculine identity defined by a sense of toughness, subversion and separation from their families mark their sense of belonging.

11 See Chapter Three and Four for a discussion on the emotive undercurrents of the resistance.
12 In addition, dog meat is sometimes served at Timorese funerals, usually with tuak, palm wine.
13 Melli recounted the dog-eating tale to an audience of shocked Sydney writer festival-participants (a large number of whom were middle-upper class women over 50 years old).
Musical Styles and Influences

Bands such as Galaxy serve to illustrate the range of transcultural influences on the constitution of youth identity. The styles and influences on Galaxy’s music also illustrate the ways in which rasa is informed and articulated.

Like increasing numbers of young Timorese, Galaxy band members have become fluent in the language of the internet and Galaxy’s MySpace profile cites an electrifying mix of internationalist rock and roll culture contextualised within their life experiences of the resistance and as young Fatalukans. The site states:

Adored by the masses of youth, these tattooed, deadlocked young men are often feared and misunderstood by the church leaders and elites. Galaxy exemplifies rock’n’roll in its essence as the wild energy and raw emotion of youth, all the more powerful and genuine due to the real-life revolutionary context from which they come. With their unique blend of rap, funk, acoustic and hard rock meeting the traditional rhythms of the Fataluku people of the east of Timor and the resistance songs of the independence movement, Galaxy is truly a leader in contemporary Timorese music.14

Galaxy lists the influences on their style of music on their MySpace site and include Indonesian bands such as JAMRUD and Dendang Kampungan. JAMRUD, a Jakarta-based metal-pop-rock band has played in Dili on a number of occasions. Dendang Kampungan is less well known. The folk group is just one of the musical constellations of Taring Padi, an art collective in Yogyakarta. A number of Taring Padi members (discussed in Chapter Six) moved to Timor in 2002 to work in the arts. They took their cassettes and CDs and distributed them among the art and music communities in Timor. Another Indonesian band not listed on the site but equally influential and, one that can be found in many young Timorese’ cassette and CD collection is, Slank. Slank was formed in 1983 on a small street called Gang Potlot in Jakarta and their pop/rock music has a wide and long lasting appeal in Indonesia. The influence Slank had on Timor’s youth culture is clearly visible. Dili boasts its own Gang Potlot located off the Comoro Road (see image 8).

Followers of the cult status group, Slank are referred to as Slankers and tee-shirts with their symbol are a common site in both Timor and Indonesia. Like many rock bands in the other places, Slankers adhere to the recklessness and rebellion promoted by the band. Although in recent years, as many band members have struggled with heroin (Ind. putaw, low-grade heroin) addiction, the themes of the songs have turned to love and less damaging hedonistic pursuits.15

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14 The band collectively wrote this summary of themselves.
15 In August 2007, Slank joined an anti-narcotics government campaign.
Many young Timorese listened to the protest songs of Iwan Fals and his band, Kantata Samsara which also serves to guide the political orientation of Galaxy’s own music. Fals and members of Kantata Samsara have been beloved rock stars in Indonesia since the mid-1970s. Many of their songs during this time promoted social criticism and Fals consequently attracted the attention of the authorities during the New Order on a number of occasions – no doubt adding to his allure to young Indonesians and Timorese alike. While many of his songs are protest songs, drawing on the guitar-based material from artists such as Bob Dylan, he has also written and performed many songs about love and romance. His older socially critical songs are much more popular than his newer material. Fals is held in high regard along with other public figures, (Ind. tokoh) such as poet Charil Anwar and novelist Pramoedya Ananta Toer who championed the ‘voices of the people’ under the New Order regime. Iwan Fals speaks a national language of marginality, belonging nowhere but on the streets, (Ind. jalan). The themes in his songs are clearly anti-establishment and anti-elite as illustrated in the lyrics of his most popular ballad, Bento. The song targets the corruption, collusion and nepotism culture (known by its Indonesian acronym, KKN – korupsi, kolusi and nepotisme) of which the son of Suharto, Tommy Suharto become such an ambassador, as the first verse shows:

_Bento_ [my translation]

Kid, listen up to your Dad talkin’
Those with full tummies will live easy
My name is Bento real estate
I have lots of cars, my wealth abounds
People call me the executive boss
Billboards tower above everything... Great!

Nak dengarlah bicara bapakmu
Yang kenyang akan hidup terang
Namaku Bento rumah real estate
Mobiliku banyak harta berlimpah
Orang memanggilku bos eksekutive
Tokoh papan atas atas s’galanya... Asyik!

International struggles of resistance further inform the work of Galaxy. French born singer Manu Chao’s appeal to young Timorese is partly linguistic; Chao sings in English, Arabic, Spanish and Portuguese among a number of other languages which he often mixes in the same song. The songs also carry social messages about living in ghettos, immigration issues and are openly critical of the Bush administration in the United States of America. Chao is reportedly close to the Zapatista movement in Mexico and its public spokesman, Subcomandante Marcos. The Zapatista movement is an armed revolutionary group based in Chiapas, one of the poorest states in Mexico fighting for control of their resources, particularly land. Manu Chao’s commitment to a
struggle of an indigenous people fighting for their rights is noteworthy in the eyes many young Timorese.

The musical preference for Rasta style also forms an important world-view for young Timorese. The Galaxy site lists the Rasta influences of the Reggae Papa Rasta, Marapu (an Indonesian Rasta band), and global icons of Bob Marley and Steven and the Coconut Treez. Reggae cultivates trans-regional identities of struggle while allowing an emphasis on local experiences, places, and histories. Reggae is a lucid example of the ways in which youth culture has globalised (Amit-Talai and Wulff 1995; Hebdidge 1990; Alvarez 2008). But this is never an unreflective borrowing from western models. It is significant that many of these styles of Rasta arrived in Timor via Indonesia pointing to the fluid flow of youth cultural products. In the late 1990s, reggae could be found on the shelves of small shops in the commercial centre of Colmera (Crockford 2007). And on the streets then, as now, Bob Marley himself is popularly celebrated as a symbol of youth resistance, his image graffitied on walls and reproduced on Tee-shirts. During the New Order, being caught in the act of either spraying graffiti or wearing such images inevitably provoked a negative response from the authorities.16

Welcome to My Paradise is a well-known song by Steven and the Coconut Treez, an Indonesian band from Java, and is a good example of the ways in which Rasta has served as a transcultural phenomenon. The themes and rhythms of the song hail from an internationalist Rasta culture of solidarity and struggle but had very specific local coordinates. As Alvarez (2008: 576) notes in his discussion of reggae music elsewhere:

The consumption and production of reggae by indigenous groups ultimately reveals that their shared 'indigenous' identity often rests on intersecting desires for dignity, justice, and autonomy as much as, or even more than, it does on any racial determinism.

The fact that this song is written by an Indonesian band in both Indonesian and English adds further complexity to this sense of a transcultural youth identity. Alvarez (2008) considers this complexity a ‘reggae diaspora’ that speaks to a set of shared desires. Young Timorese were able to draw upon Welcome to My Paradise in their formulation of Timor as their paradise throughout the struggle (see Crockford 2007). Within this, is also a recognition of the popular culture that young Timorese and Indonesians shared at this time. They were both living under the repressive New Order and expressed a hope for a future outside of these structures. The pain and suffering of being involved in the struggle was animated by the promise of a ‘utopic future’ (Crockford 2007: 87) found in many Rastafari teachings and given a place in young Timorese popular imagination as ‘paradise’.

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16 As described in Chapter Four in reference to PETRUS.
The example of *Welcome to My Paradise* is a lucid example of the effect of transculturalism in Timor. Transculturalism does not imply an effortless hybridity but a conscious bridging of meanings brought to bear on local contexts, which are themselves products of other geo-political relationships. While there may be echoes of the original, a translation can never be an exact original. There is a moment of transgression, of slippage, where the original is subsumed into a local context while meshing with the original meanings. This echoes the notion of ‘dubbing culture’ used by Tom Boellstorff (2003) to explain lip-synching which he uses as a metaphor for a translation of gay/lesbian (Ind. gay and lesbian) subjectivities in Indonesia. Boellstorff explains (2003: 238) that:

Dubbing, far more than a subtitle, is a caption fused to the thing being described. It comes from the mouth of imagic characters, yet is never quite in synch. The moving lips never match the speech; the moment of fusion is always deferred, as dubbed voice, translation-never-quite-complete, bridges two sets of representations. Gay and lesbi Indonesians dub culture as they live a subjectivity linked to people and places far away.

In the same way that gay and lesbi subjectivities are formed in this international/local context, young Timorese’ sense of self and belonging is produced through a myriad of transcultural forces. While it is possible at times to trace the origins of certain influence, such as Indonesian and Rasta musical influences, this is not always possible or desired. The important point here is the way in which transculturalism works in constituting structures of feeling within cultural citizenship.

Timorese music itself is transcultural. The final grouping of musical influences listed on the Galaxy MySpace site is ‘Timorese music’ including bands such as Cinco De Oriente, Rai Nain and Gembel. Cinco De Oriente takes its namesake from an earlier group of returned students from Portugal in the revolutionary 1970s. Their songs, as well as the sonnets of 1970s poets such as Francisco Borja da Costa aimed to reach and politicise a largely illiterate rural population with a rich oral tradition, and were a fusion of traditional folkloric and modern nationalist themes (see da Costa 1976). Using a language and imaginary that would resonate with people whose lives were shaped by poverty and oppression, the songs valorised the Maubere, the spirit of the struggle for freedom. The Maubere hero-warrior theme is reproduced by the (new) Cinco De Oriente after independence as illustrated in this excerpt from one of their popular songs, in Tetun Terik language, titled *Funu Nain* (Tet. *Warriors*) [my translation]:

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Our sons who went off to fight and never returned
Our teardrops flow onto our bodies

Oan mane sai funu sai la fila
Seler O Seler maran wen sulin no isin liron
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17 As discussed in Chapter Two.
The Rasa of Belonging among Young Timorese

The lyrics refer to a moral sense of the mourning and sadness of parents in their actions of sacrificing their children by sending them off to war for the common good of the national struggle for independence. It is a lament. The sacrifice of young Timorese imbued in the song also points to the primacy of the ‘foot soldier’ role of youth, re-articulated by the CNRT leadership leading up to the referendum in 1999, as pião avançado (Port. frontline pawns) whose chief responsibility was to ‘shield the ranks’ of the older generation leadership (Crockford 2007: 86). The subtext of this metaphor also suggests a space of vulnerability and expendability reinforced by such ai-knanoik (Tet. folk stories) placing war at the forefront of people’s lives. These narratives of struggle and sacrifice include the story of the young Fataluku men who formed a human shield around Xanana Gusmão when he was under attack from the Indonesian army on the outskirts of Los Palos in the late 1980s. Gusmão was able to escape, so the legend goes, due to the courage and sacrifice of the youth. These sorts of narratives serve to strengthen the gendered aspects of Timorese youth identity that have manifested in contemporary cultural production.

The musical influences I have listed here are in no way an exhaustive list but are indicative of the styles of music which young Timorese draw on in the construction of youth identity and the musical and performative expression of rasa. The cosmopolitan influences of Rasta are reconfigured in the Timor nation-state context to make meaning for its young producers and consumers. As such, Timorese youth cultures are a product of interaction which results in neither a closed, localised cultural form, nor an undifferentiatedly global one (Massey and Jess 1995: 122). In this way then, young Timorese can be considered cosmopatriots. Exposure to discourses and cultural products circulating from Indonesia and elsewhere nuance cultural expressions of rasa among young Timorese as they strive to create a place of belonging within the nation-state.

The Rasa of Suffering

Although Galaxy band members are scattered over three countries, they still refer to themselves as a band. Osme moved to Melbourne and Melli left Timor in late 2005 for Yogyakarta where he tried his luck in applying to the Indonesian Institute of Art (ISI), while the others stayed in Dili. Melli settled into student life in Yogyakarta and became very musically productive. The themes in his music, like Osme’s, emphasise the suffering of the Timorese people during the resistance. Lately, the concerns of his work focus on post-independence events. His latest work is concerned with justice.

Justice for the people (Ind. rakyat, Tet. ema kiik) became a key theme and part of the lexicon of the Indonesian pro-democracy front and Timorese urban clandestine front. The term rakyat was adopted by middle class opposition in Indonesia and was
appropriated within the Timorese setting. The term came about within the
dichotomous hierarchy of the New Order. The rakyat were represented as innocent,
morally superior, economically underprivileged, but politically sovereign figures who
often suffered from injustice perpetrated by those in power. Those holding positions of
power, the power-holders (Ind. pengusahaan/Tet. ema boot) were either the military or state
apparatus and were portrayed in a negative light. These popular dichotomies, as
Heryanto (2001: 162) says, were ‘at once, neither truthful or accurately represented nor
totally wrong, innocently fabricated or aimlessly produced’. The notion of the little
people has had a lasting influence on the themes of Melli’s lyrics.

The narratives of the little people were embedded within discourses of ‘hierarchies of
suffering’ which was first used by Crockford (2007) as a necessary condition of exile in
her discussion of Timorese in Sydney. Suffering as a key notion of diaspora community
was building on Wise’s (2004) discussion on the efficacy of martyrdom in the
reproduction of a diasporic community in Sydney. While both of these studies deepen
our understanding of the diasporic condition, they both fail to adequately acknowledge
that the ‘hierarchies of suffering’ are rooted in local context of power relations within
Timor itself.

The ‘hierarchy of suffering’ implies a fundamentally embodied and spatial notion. The
Timorese military combatants, Falintil and ordinary people (involved in the clandestine
movement) and the suffering they endured earned them the top rung on this hierarchy of
belonging. Those who lived outside of the nation presumably endured less suffering and
are therefore less able to claim a position at the top-end of the hierarchy. Comments by
leaders such as the Timorese military commander, David Alex, during the resistance
established the ‘hierarchy of suffering’ and its fundamentally embodied nature:

We in the mountains sometimes say to our leaders abroad [the diplomatic front] whether
the war finishes today or tomorrow, it’s all the same for them... because they don’t suffer.
They don’t feel the war... in their flesh like we do... Like a thorn sticking into us
(Interview with David Alex in Blockade documentary film 1997).

I see the ‘hierarchy of suffering’ as a key constituent in the formulation of cultural
citizenship in independent Timor-Leste. While an official state discourse of belonging
discounts the role of many in the struggle, the ‘hierarchy of suffering’ works outside of
this official discourse to implicate young Timorese in the constant negotiation and
contestation of what constitutes the ‘hierarchy of suffering’.

As Timorese military commander, David Alex, implies in the statement about suffering,
those Timorese who were outside the country did not feel, and did not suffer in the same
ways, and by extension, do not have the same claim on cultural citizenship as those

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18 The keywords are discussed in Chapter Three.
Timorese living inside Timor-Leste during the resistance. According to this logic then, young Timorese should be positioned below the combatants. Young Timorese were facing the same challenge in their quest to belong. In discourses of official nationhood, they did not qualify as legitimate because of their association with Indonesia. In the construction of cultural citizenship inside Timor-Leste, they also did not gain legitimacy because many had lived outside of Timor. However, it is through a fundamentally embodied notion through the concept of rasa which draws on notions of social justice and youthful patriotism that they find they are able to negotiate their way back into the ‘hierarchy of suffering’ to gain a sense of cultural citizenship and by doing so, contest the official notion of citizenship.

The students occupied an ambiguous position because they were out of the country. As many as 15,000 Timorese students received scholarships to study in Indonesia during the resistance and many continue to go there for their secondary and tertiary education (see Bexley 2009). Therefore, according to the logic of this spatial hierarchy, they should be positioned below the combatants but the cultural construction of the students as brave, heroic and self-sacrificing ‘youth’ served as cultural capital which they could muster to position themselves near the top end of the hierarchy. In the case of Osmo and many others like him, who did not leave Timor throughout the occupation, they too, have been repositioned in Timor’s postcolonial definition by the state and discourses of cultural citizenship. The idea of the ‘hierarchy of suffering’ was cultural and symbolic work that must be constantly negotiated and re-worked in order to yield its effects.

The rasa of social justice and youthful patriotism is made explicit in Melli’s poem written at his Yogyakarta boarding house titled Warriors (Tet. Aswain) [my translation]. The first two lines of the poem read:

The warriors have lost their dignity
The warriors are thirsty for justice

Aswain lakon dignidade
Aswain hamrok ba justisa

The warriors to whom Melli is referring hold their ground within the morally superior discursive and representational category of the little people (Ind. rakyat/Tet. ema kiik). The Indonesian and Tetun words share a similarity in that they are both placed in opposition to the elite, Ind. elit/Tet. ema bo’ot. This hierarchy draws legitimacy in the centrality of master/slave narratives in the national discourse after independence. The nation’s colonial history, according to popular national narrative, is generally conceived in terms of the classical metaphor of masters and slaves. The Portuguese ‘masters’ colonised and exploited Timorese ‘slaves’, and these ‘slaves’ responded by

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19 This popular national narrative is also constructed for a purpose. The realities of war and the complicity, collusion, and negotiation is temporarily suspended in these narratives.
struggling for freedom with the objective of becoming ‘masters’ of their own destiny (Kammen 2003: 69). This is invoked through the ability of young Timorese to readily identify the descendents of chiefs and slaves alike. A similar dichotomy of little person/slave/nationalist/morally superior versus big person/master/traitor/morally inferior was invoked in artistic expression during the early 1970s. Francisco Borja da Costa and Abilio de Araujo (see da Costa 1976) co-wrote a song called *Foho Ramelau*, and the second stanza reads:

> Why, Timor, is your head always bowed?  
> Why, Timor, are your children enslaved?  
> Why, Timor, are your children asleep like slaves?

In another poem titled, *The Maubere People Will No Longer Be Anybody’s Slave*, Borja da Costa wrote:

> We will shout with the greatest effort  
> For the people of Timor  
> For the Maubere people  
> So they will no longer become anyone’s slave  
> No more  
> No more  
> No longer become anyone’s slave

There is a continuum of the master/slave dichotomy from the poetry of Francisco Borja da Costa to the lyrics written by Melli. The invocation of the warrior/peasant in Melli’s lyrics represents a common Timorese style of political thinking where the ‘little people’, (Tet. *ema ki’ik*) including the Maubere warriors, maintain their position at the top of the moral hierarchy of Timorese cultural citizenship. By inserting themselves within this hierarchy, young Timorese are also contesting notions of authenticity. They fulfill their role as ‘authentic’ youth and therefore lay claim to their status as legitimate national citizens. The expression and persistence of this hierarchy had the effect of reproducing other articulations of the same power relations. Kammen (2003) also found the permutation of the master/slave dichotomy in the metaphor of ‘opportunists and oppressed’ (Ind. *opportunis dan kaum tertindas*). He recounts the heated debate among students in his class at the National University in Dili in 2002 to 2003. One student explained that opportunists are ‘people who didn’t participate in the struggle [for independence] but immediately enjoy independence. He was quickly shouted down by a flurry of voices. ‘No!’ one student exclaimed, ‘people who participated in the struggle are also opportunists – after winning [independence] they have received positions and want to force their will on others’ (Kammen 2003: 84). This statement was reportedly greeted by widespread approval in the classroom. Melli’s lyrics in a song about a supermarket provide further testament to this dichotomy between the *opportunis*, who are represented as being invariably less authentic Timorese and the noble Maubere warrior who is associated with the pure and inviolable territory of the interior:
The Rasa of Belonging among Young Timorese

**Opportunist** [my translation]

singing from the darkness  
carrying a candle to light my heart  
with the spirits of nature I cry  
Come to bury me, that’s not right  
in and out of the supermarket  
what for?

religion also talks of war  
opportunist?  
all of this, you accuse, who is the opportunist?

its better if you go up Pai-cão  
with its high peak and cliffs

**Fiction Writing in Timor**

Melli Fernandes is one of the few young Timorese writers to delve into fiction writing which deals with the *rasa* of social suffering in order to construct a sense of cultural citizenship. In the development of young Timorese’s style are undercurrents of Indonesians fiction writers who came to prominence during the New Order regime. Indonesian writer Seno Gumira Ajidarma in his story titled, *Ears (Telinga)* reveals the atrocities of the Indonesian military and its devastating operations. Yet, there is an ambivalent sense of repulsiveness mixed with intimacy. In the story *Telinga*, a soldier in the battlefield (the site of Timor is inferred but not revealed) sends his girlfriend, Dewi, a severed human ear as a souvenir: ‘big, beautiful and still wet with blood’ (Ajidarma 1995: 13). Dewi immediately hangs the severed ear in her front parlour, later to be accompanied by many more. ‘Sometimes when Dewi was missing her boyfriend, she would look at the ear when she was all alone at night’ (Ajidarma 1995: 13). This ambivalent relationship between repulsiveness, curiosity and intimacy presented by Seno in this work of *Telinga* is reflected in Melli’s fiction writing. 20

Melli’s story, *The Hand*, in his self-published zine (2006) illustrates the interweaving of the themes of intimacy and revulsion through memory. The story begins with Melli’s plane trip to Yogyakarta where he was going to study. A soldier sitting next to him on the plane triggers his memories as a young child who comes across his guerilla fighter uncle in the cornfields. I recount sections of the story:

“Do you guys still eat corn out that way?” said the man sitting next to me, on a plane to Bali. He was what we always called a *Bapak*. He was returning to Yogyakarta from

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20 Much of the artwork produced in Arte Morris (Free Art School and Gallery) in Dili also reflects a surreal approach.
service in West Papua. His uniform reminded me of soldiers in East Timor several years ago, when his country had colonised mine.

“Of course” I smiled, passing him a can of lemonade from the aeroplane cart. He received with a hand that wobbled as the plane moved through the sky...

I was walking in the field with my grandfather after school. It was a rainy afternoon but grandfather had agreed to take me, to roast corn in the field. When we arrived, he waited as I entered the tall cornrows.

I had not gone far into the crop when I saw someone standing amongst the corn. With long hair ... and tattered mismatched clothes, clothes like those of the Bapaks but the way he was wearing them was so odd. Layer upon layer, and extra garments tied around his neck and waist, and a bag on his back. A lunatic, I thought, a mad devil, complete with a big black gun, like the Bapaks carried. I called out, “Hey thief! What are you doing! Get out of our field!” I hoped grandfather would hear my voice, full of courage...

His bag was sitting on the floor, leaning against the wall. Flies were gathering on its lid. He reached for the bag, his back almost blocking the knapsack from my vision. Grandfather’s spindly hands reached to cover my eyes. But I could see clearly the horrible thing that came out of the bag. It was a Bapak’s hand. I could tell from its smoothness. It was unlike the hands of people from my village, which are rough and stained with work. The Bapak’s hand is fine, long fingered with large round knuckles like marbles under the skin.

He reached out for me, smiling, his coarse hand trembled in the rain as it tried to land on my hair. I looked away, and in a penitent voice he muttered, “War. It brings us to this…” He shook his noodle-like hair and sighed. “A nephew not knowing his own uncle. I’m your dad’s big brother, and you don’t know me”...

I never told anyone about meeting my uncle, or about the hand. For one, I didn’t think anyone would believe the story. Secondly, my grandmother taught me about secrets. Children’s business is ok, you can tell anyone what you’ve been up to in the playground. But grow-ups’ business, especially about life and death in war, one must keep to oneself.

Melli’s story contrasts revolt at the disheveled appearance of his uncle and the chopped off hand – presumably belonging to an Indonesian soldier – as well as a childlike curiosity of it. Melli’s literary use of contrasting bodily difference is a metaphor for the class differences between the mostly Javanese generals and the Timorese farmers/people/Maubere/peasantry. The Bapak’s halus (Ind. refined) hands, even in death, remain untouched from the kasar (Ind. rough) hard physical work of the Timorese farmers. By highlighting this difference, Melli evokes a familiar dichotomy between the coloniser and its subjects; the exploitative Indonesian colonists and the hardworking and downtrodden Timorese, the Maubere. This is an act of social positioning that seeks to put a claim on cultural citizenship. By referring to the suffering of the people, the Maubere, Melli is reconnecting to the rasa of youth and constructing a sense of cultural citizenship that positions him as a legitimate member of the nation-state.
Conclusion

As young Timorese have been denied acknowledgement or recognition from the nation-state after independence they struggled to forge a sense of legitimate belonging. In this chapter, I have argued that young Timorese have attempted to rectify this deficient sense of belonging through conceptualising a cultural citizenship, which is embodied through the concept of *rasa*. I described through text and the use of visual material, the ways in which Osme maintains his connection to place through the touch of *tais* and the sound of his Fataluku music, however his sentiments in discussing his feelings of being Timorese is expressed through the Indonesian word, *rasa*. Although this is borrowed from the Indonesian, the concept itself is a uniquely Timorese one. It encapsulates the multi-faceted ways in which Indonesia impacted on how young Timorese have come to think, feel, speak, and inhabit or be-in-the world. The transcultural workings of *rasa* was evident in the musical life of young Timorese who borrowed cultural references from afar to emplace themselves within realms of belonging through cultural citizenship. In this way, young Timorese can also be considered as cosmopatriots. The subversive undertones of *rasa* highlight the masculine features of Timorese youth identity.

An official discourse of belonging discounts the roles many Timorese played in the struggle and young Timorese are markedly discounted for their association with Indonesia. The ‘hierarchy of suffering’ is an alternative conceptualisation of cultural citizenship which works outside of this official discourse to implicate young Timorese (inside and outside of the country) in belonging in the nation-state. It is through a fundamentally embodied notion of *rasa* which draws on notions of social justice, youthful patriotism and suffering that they are able to negotiate their way back into the ‘hierarchy of suffering’ in order to qualify for cultural citizenship. The emerging genre of fiction writing served as a strategy in which young Timorese attempted to create an affective sense of belonging in order to claim cultural citizenship. By doing so, they contested official notions of belonging. The following chapter will elaborate on the notion of cultural citizenship as a form of legitimate belonging, and its limits, within the nation-state.
CHAPTER SIX

Re-membering a New Nation:
Discourses of Truth, Justice and Belonging

The past is never dead, it is not even past.

William Faulkner (1953: 1).
Memory and Representation

Social memory is a practice of both remembering and forgetting selectively chosen memories, which are then transformed into coherent narratives. Such narratives are an integral part of the nation-building project in which the notion of membership and belonging are forged. On a more personal basis, these narratives are part of the formative processes of the subject, which further shapes intersubjective relationships. They revolve around the role of memories in the public sphere and in the quest for belonging in the nation-state. This speaks to the politics of cultural representation which is not a ‘second order mirror held up to reflect what really exists. Instead, cultural representation is able to constitute us as new kinds of subjects’ (Hall 1990: 222).

I relate what Hall calls cultural representation to the explicit use of memory (I refer to Timorese memories of Indonesia) as an active process in reconstituting legitimate membership to the nation-state. As I have shown in the previous chapters, many young Timorese expressed disappointment with the independence process because they were not acknowledged as legitimate members by the nation-state or involved in its processes. This sense of disenfranchisement propelled them to constitute themselves as new subjects of belonging within the frame of cultural citizenship. Drawing on the social memory literature for the purposes of this chapter, I am particularly interested in how people formulate their own understanding of (colonial) pasts, which is often at odds with official versions. To demonstrate this, I focus on issues of truth and justice and how Timorese mobilise these issues in order to re-member themselves as legitimate citizens.

There has been some effort made by scholars on Timor to locate the importance of memory for Timorese. Both Crockford (2007) and Wise (2002, 2004, 2006) see memory as a healing mechanism. Crockford (2007: 30) notes that for the Timorese living in exile in Sydney, ‘the invocation of memory under such circumstances helped to heal the extreme rupture of violent experience...’ I agree that memory is important for healing, however, my focus in this chapter is to explore the relationship between memory and power relations in contemporary post-independent Timor. Leach (2008) made an important contribution to the discussion on memory and Timor by focusing on the Timorese nationalist conservation of cultural heritage namely, jails, interrogation centres, massacre sites and recent monuments to the armed resistance movement, Falintil. He notes that with limited resources, Timor has had notable success in the conservation of key sites and memories of the liberation struggle at both national and

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1 Ann Stoler and Karen Strassler’s (2002) work on colonial memory Indonesia have been influential in my approach in this chapter by focusing on representations of colonial memory in the postcolony. In addition, Mary Zurbuchen’s edited volume, Beginning to Remember: The Past in the Indonesian Present (2005) pays particular attention to the ways in which Indonesians are understanding their own history and share a common belief that the historical record which was distorted by the New Order needs to be ‘set straight’. 

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local levels. Nonetheless, Leach argues that the cultural heritage landscape reflects a major ‘fault-line’ in post-independence politics in that the contribution of younger Timorese nationalists remains relatively neglected. While Leach acknowledges the power dynamics invested in matters of memory, he does not make any attempt to recover the ways in which young Timorese are constructing their own memories of the past for the purposes of national belonging.

This chapter is divided into two parts. Part One provides an overview of the truth and reconciliation measures enacted by the Timor nation-state and follows with the ways in which young Timorese from the eastern district of Lautem and Dili have responded to these measures through cultural production. I examine two case studies, the film Rock ‘n’ Roll with Jakarta and the print media of Talitakum and Klâ‘ak. Both of these expressions of cultural production engage with Indonesia in order to bring to light a continuity of discourse on truth and justice that is vital in the construction of cultural citizenship and youth identity. It is evident that in contemporary Timor-Leste, the past continues to pervade the present. This is expressed in the Timorese saying that they are mate restu, leftovers from the dead.

Part Two explores the 2006 socio-political crisis and offers an analysis of the crisis as symptomatic of profound socio-political transformation. I shed light on the limits of cultural citizenship primarily because of the inability to sustain a unitary category of belonging, so is necessary for its continuity, due to the outbreak of violence that wreaked havoc on urban Dili. The socio-political breakdown of 2006 illustrates the effect of the nation-state’s preoccupation in defining belonging which propels citizens to continue to define inclusion and exclusion. I first describe the confusion and chaos that reigned throughout 2006 and the impact this had on young generation unity. I then offer an analysis of the crisis in which a new generation of youth emerged. I discuss the case study of youth group Gembe I as they draw on a range of historical, transcultural and gendered references in fashioning themselves and their ideas about the world in a time of flux and uncertainty.

**Part One: Truth, Justice and a Breakdown in Faith of the Leadership**

The speeches and writings of Xanana Gusmão during the resistance served as a guiding structure for Timorese in their own formulations of justice including a sense of retributive justice. The speeches often underscored the injustices done to the Timorese people under Indonesian occupation and Gusmão’s personal quest to right these injustices after Timor’s independence by taking the people responsible to court. This appealed to most people’s sense of retribution for the suffering they and their families had endured.²

² In Chapters Three and Five, I looked at the emotive undercurrent evident in the discourse of the struggle as articulated by Xanana Gusmão.
After independence however, Xanana Gusmão’s speeches began to signal a changing orientation of his own concept of ‘justice’. In his public addresses from 2002 onwards, Xanana Gusmão made clear that he preferred to prioritise reconciliation that privileged diplomatic ties with Indonesia. In a speech to the national parliament in October 2002, Gusmão (2005: 98) draws on the indigenous concept of *badame*, a Tetun word for ‘making peace’ or ‘reconciliation’. He outlines reconciliation as the key foundation in his own formulation of justice which invokes a Gandhi-inspired notion of forgiveness:

Reconciliation...! We might define reconciliation as a process of ‘overcoming what has happened and a process of forgiving each other [sic] mutually’. When we say mutually, we are referring to two aspects: the spiritual willingness and the willingness in behaviour and practice of two parties that have misunderstood each other for some reason or another.

Many young Timorese expressed a sense of betrayal by Xanana Gusmão and his emphasis on reconciliation. They said Gusmão had reneged on his promise to seek retributive justice. This was most commonly expressed as the need for an international tribunal to take the Indonesian generals to court because of the overwhelming evidence collected by a number of international bodies, including the Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation in the atrocities in Timor-Leste during the occupation. 3 The debates surrounding retributive justice versus reconciliation aside, what was clear was that Gusmão failed to fulfill the expectations of many Timorese and particularly the Generation of ‘99. Young Timorese expressed a sense of ‘being tricked’ by Gusmão’s emotive speeches of retribution during the resistance. Many said that these speeches were a motivating factor in their continuing involvement in the clandestine movement.

The final report published by the CAVR at the end of 2005 provided evidence of the involvement of Indonesian military in the human rights abuses that occurred in Timor-Leste throughout the Indonesian occupation and around the time of the plebiscite in 1999. The report details credible and extensive evidence of planning for and knowledge about the post-referendum scorched earth campaign that extended into high levels of the Indonesian military. 4 Most shockingly, the report estimated that conflict-related deaths ranged between 102,800 and 200,000 during Indonesia’s brutal occupation between 1975 and 1999. By comparison, there were ‘approximately 18,600 unlawful killings and enforced disappearances of East Timorese non-combatants perpetrated between 1974

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3 The commission is better known by its acronym, CAVR.
4 The CAVR initial two-year mandate was extended by six months and involved interviews and testimonies with more than 8,000 Timorese. Importantly, the CAVR was an independent statutory authority and was mandated with investigating all human rights abuses between 1974-1999. The Commission has been discussed widely in terms of its legality (Burgess 2005), its community-based reconciliation efforts (Ximenes 2004; Pigou 2004; Zifcak 2005) and its capacity to heal rifts in the community (Silcove et al. 2006).
and 1999’. Most people died from ‘hunger and illness in excess of the peacetime baseline for these causes of death’ (CAVR 2005: 28).

Long before the CAVR had released its final report, international human rights supporters of Timor voiced concerns about pursuing justice and holding perpetrators accountable. This was expressed in light of the systematic infringement of human rights under Indonesian rule and especially the brutal denouement unleashed by Indonesian-backed militia groups. In October 1999, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1272, demanding that ‘those responsible for such violence be brought to justice’. Moreover, the Security Council insisted that, ‘the persons committing such violations bear individual responsibility’. The UN’s International Commission of Inquiry on Timor-Leste and three UN Special Rapporteurs in late 1999 clearly documented the ‘systematic and widespread intimidation and terror, destruction of property, violence against women, forced displacement and attempts to destroy evidence’ (cited in JSMP 2006).

International efforts providing evidence of the human rights abuses have not resulted in the Timorese government pursuing retributive justice avenues. Instead, the Government’s efforts have focused on a South African inspired model of reintegration in line with Xanana Gusmão’s vision of reconciliation. The CAVR implemented a community reconciliation process which drew on the concept of nahe biti (Tet. stretching or rolling out the mat) and was intended to resolve minor crimes that were not dealt with by the under-resourced legal system. The process involved the perpetrators, or deponents, as they are known in CAVR terminology, giving a confessional statement in front of the community and a selected panel (consisting of elders, traditional leaders, a priest, government officials and a women’s representative). It was also thought that the community reconciliation process would operate in a complementary manner with the United Nation’s Serious Crimes Unit, known by its acronym, SCU. The division’s responsibility for ‘serious crimes’, principally murder (under the responsibility of the SCU), and ‘minor crimes’ (under the responsibility of the CAVR) seemed a balanced and coordinated approach to meeting the challenge of justice and reconciliation. However, not all Timorese involved in the process were satisfied with this idea of justice, nor did they feel reconciled.

Ideas of justice became clear in the responses to the community reconciliation process through a common narrative of ‘the people’ (Tet. povo) and the manifestation of the big people/little people (Tet. ema boot/ema kiik) discourse. Narrators situated themselves as the ‘little people’ who were, once again, being asked to ‘pay’ for the misdeeds of the ‘big people’ and this was unsatisfactory in the eyes of many community participants. Lia Kent (2005: 62) recalls the responses throughout the community reconciliation process:
Despite the positive change in their own circumstances, deponents [victims] commonly referred to the reconciliation process as ‘incomplete’. Many perceived themselves as the ‘little people’, often describing themselves as ‘poor farmers’, or as the ‘branches of the trees rather than the roots’. While they were grateful for the change in their own lives, they found it confusing or unjust that only the ‘little people’ should be held to account for their actions, while the ‘big people’, those who orchestrated that violence in 1999, continued to live with impunity… there was a sense that these leaders continued to ‘laugh at them’ behind their backs. Without ‘justice’ for the perpetrators and ringleaders, many deponents stressed they would continue to feel humiliated and made scapegoats for the crimes of the leaders.

Similarly, the community reconciliation process did not always yield intended results. In fact, the views expressed by victims suggested that many of those who participated in the hearings often did so with complex and ambiguous motivations and expectations that did not involve the desire for reconciliation. Again, Kent (2005: 62) recalls:

In other words, CRP [community reconciliation process hearings] were often not about reconciliation at all, but were perceived [by the participants] as ‘truth-telling opportunities’ for gathering evidence and establishing the facts about the death of loved ones that may one day be useful in a court of law.

Before the CAVR report was declared in the Timorese parliament, the Presidents of Indonesia and Timor-Leste proposed a bi-national Commission of Truth and Friendship (CTF) in late 2004. Later in March 2005, bishops and civil society organisations in both Indonesia and Timor-Leste voiced their concerns about the CTF’s establishment. The Commission’s mandate, which consisted of equal numbers of commissioners from both countries, was to establish a ‘shared historical record’ of human rights violations and thus the ‘conclusive truth’ before and after Timor-Leste’s independence ballot in 1999. It was precluded from recommending further prosecutions but had the express power to recommend amnesties while not prioritising the interests of victims. The terms of reference angered human rights groups and led to poor relations between the Commission for Truth and Friendship and civil society from the outset (see Hirst 2008).

The CTF initially attracted a lot of criticism from civil society organisations as it did not fulfill certain ideals about justice. This is illustrated by the fact that the CTF became better known among civil society organisations in Timor by the Indonesian acronym TFC or ‘Timor Fried Chicken’, a pun on the fast-food chain, Kentucky Fried Chicken, and alluding to Timor’s (as the chicken’s) lack of bargaining power. In May 2007, a global coalition of human rights organisations, led by groups from Indonesia and Timor-Leste, urged the presidents of Indonesia and Timor-Leste to close the Commission for Truth and Friendship. The groups stated ‘it is obvious from its mandate and performance that the Commission for Truth and Friendship is not a credible mechanism to seek justice or even truth regarding events in Timor-Leste in 1999, let alone from 1975 to 1999.’ Furthermore, they stated the Commission for Truth
and Friendship ‘does not reflect the principles of justice for the Timor-Leste people’ (cited on ETAN 2008).

Protests about the CTF also come from beyond Timor. The independent United Nations report titled the Commission of Experts (CoE), found that the CTF’s terms of reference contradicted international and domestic laws and offered no mechanisms for addressing serious crimes. The CoE report recommended that the governments revise the terms of reference as a precondition to receiving international support. Indonesia’s Constitutional Court cast further doubt on the CTF’s legal basis. The CTF was supposed to operate under the principles of Indonesia’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission, but the Court declared the Indonesian Commission unconstitutional, citing provisions allowing for amnesty for serious crimes and conditioning reparations for victims.5

The (CTF) also met with a negative public response not only from civil society organisations in Dili and the international community but also from rural-based Timorese. Before the public announcement of the CTF in the latter half of 2005, I traveled to Los Palos, at the eastern tip of the country to visit some Timorese friends. They asked me to film the public meeting between the residents of Los Palos and President, Xanana Gusmão. This was to be the only public discussion of the Commission for Truth and Friendship in Timor-Leste. The meeting was held in the same former market place in the centre of Los Palos town as the Presidential Elections in 2002 – when I had worked as electoral officer. The public response to Gusmão and the CTF meeting was underwhelming when compared to the openly enthusiastic reception he had received just a few years beforehand when campaigning for President. At the CTF meeting, men and women sat in the far corners of the marketplace and were hesitant to come any closer.

While older generations of Los Palos residents showed their reticence about the CTF through silence, younger Los Palos residents were far more willing to publicly question the CTF and their leader. I walked over the football field near the middle of town to visit the group that had invited me to film the event. Helio, Manual and Philippe, told me how they were planning to stage a demonstration as Gusmão arrived to protest the establishment of the Commission for Truth and Friendship. They said they felt the CTF was undermining justice. They expressed strongly the opinion that, in order for Timor as a nation to move forward, the leaders had to ‘stand firm’ with their promise of seeking justice for the people expressed during the occupation by asking the international community to support its bid for an international tribunal. The group wanted to express their protest with a banner that denounced the TFC as a traitorous act

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5 UN refused to allow former officials to testify before the commission, stating that it, ‘cannot endorse or condone amnesties for genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes or gross violations of human rights, nor should it do anything that might foster them’ (UNMISET 2007).
on behalf of the state but the police arrived at the house and asked the group not to take the banner as it ‘might upset the boss’ [Xanana Gusmão].

I went along with the group to the public talk and Helio, being the most vocal of the group, asked the President a number of questions about the possibility for an international tribunal. The President motioned towards the group and, in an almost threatening tone, reprimanded the young men for proposing such an idea before proceeding to discuss his own involvement in the resistance. He reminded them of the immense responsibility he carried as leader: ‘And let us not forget, I had the whole resistance on my shoulders and I was in jail’ (public seminar 30 August, 2005).

Afterwards, I walked back to the group’s residence across the football field. The group expressed their disappointment with the proceedings, in particular how the plan to carry the banner had been foiled. It was a reflection of a growing disappointment with the leadership and Gusmão in particular evoking a sort of nostalgia for the New Order and clear definitions of the enemy. Helio said:

We are starting to feel different towards Xanana now. He is no longer our leader, he said that when we [Timorese] were independent he would fight for justice and now look; he doesn’t even want anybody to disagree with him. We were better off under the [Indonesian] military. Now they call it a democracy and we can’t even hold up a banner!

At this point Manuel offered his thoughts,

What we need is justice, Xanana just spoke to the people, the povo as he calls them, but we are not ignorant (Tet. beik). We know what justice is and what reconciliation is, we have received lower ranking militia back into our villages. But this is not enough, we want Wiranto and the rest in jail. We know that this Commission for Truth and Friendship is just stymieing (Ind. menghambat) our right to justice.

The group of young men in Los Palos articulated understandings of justice in terms of retributive justice. This was at odds with the approach favoured by the leadership, in particular by Xanana Gusmão. In this way, the resistance to the CTF acted as an avenue through which young Timorese could express their disappointment and changing attitudes toward the leadership. It illustrates a breakdown in the faith in Xanana Gusmão and the ways in which the leadership was unable to fulfill the ideals of the resistance and the promise of a ‘utopic future’ where retributive justice becomes reality.

Despite protests at the village-level, national civil society and from the UN, the CTF went ahead and produced a report with findings that surprised many of these observers. In July 2008, the 300-page Commission for Truth and Friendship report was received by the President of Indonesia, President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and President of Timor, Jose Ramos-Horta in Bali. However, while the Indonesian President

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6 The original Tetun was: !mi keta haluha, hau lori rasik resistensia tomak iha hau nia kabas. Nine’e mos hau iha komaraka.
Acknowledged that his country had carried out gross human rights abuses during 1999, he stopped short of offering an apology for murder, torture and other crimes that were well documented in the CAVR report. He expressed ‘our deep regret over what happened,’ after signing a joint statement accepting the commission’s findings and expressing ‘remorse’. The report states that the Indonesian security and civilian forces played a major role in systematic, widespread ‘gross human rights violations,’ while a small number of Timor’s pro-independence groups also played minor parts in the violence. These violations included murder, rape and other forms of sexual violence, torture and illegal detention (CTF report 2008).

While the findings of the report were unexpected, it did not mean that the Timorese elite was in a position to investigate further retributive action. Although the CTF report acknowledged past violations and left room for the findings to be legally pursued in the future, it did so without having to act upon them immediately. While it may have fulfilled its diplomatic duty for ‘friendship’ with Indonesia and formulated a certain ‘truth’ in which both Timor and Indonesia committed crimes, the Timorese government failed to fulfill Timorese people’s expectations for justice. The truth and justice issue was the epitome of how young Timorese lost faith in the leadership of Xanana Gusmão and the diminishing utopian ideals of the resistance in which ‘justice would be served’. Throughout 2005, young Timorese based in Dili engaged with cultural production in which discourses of the past, truth and justice became crucial and acted to further strengthen their own sense of cultural citizenship.

**Rock ‘n’ Roll with Jakarta**

I have met with the President of the Republic of Timor-Leste, Xanana Gusmão and our governments will work together in looking at ways we can forget past events.

Former President of RI, Megawati Sukarnoputri in an excerpt from Rock ‘N’ Roll with Jakarta (SAMEP 2006).

The act of collecting and expressing victim’s voices is actually an act of reclaiming historical memory. And if you, or I do that, as a private practice, [it] will become that of collective memory. And, if these memories of a dark past become collective memories, I think this will become a powerful tool against the alliances and false promises made by the political elite of both my country, Indonesia and yours, of Timor-Leste.

Indonesian poet, Hesri Setiawan in an excerpt from Rock ‘n’ Roll with Jakarta (SAMEP 2006). 8

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7 If there was any ambiguity surrounding the CTF report and the suggestion that it could be used to further attempts for retributive justice, this was clarified on August 30, 2009, when Timor-Leste’s President, Jose Ramos-Horta in his public address forcefully stated that there would be no international tribunal.

8 Sahe Media Popular, media unit of the Sahe Research Institute for Liberation, Dili produced the film. The research institute is now known as the Popular Education Institute (Institut Edukasaun Popular). I was involved in the production of the film as a translator (from Indonesian to English).
The film, *Rock ‘n’ Roll with Jakarta* deals with truth and justice from the perspective of a group of young generation Timorese. The film is also a lucid example of young Timorese’ attempts at constructing cultural citizenship through memory. The film gives meaning to the Indonesian past through relating ideas about truth and justice. They felt that the Timorese elite, in its efforts to deal with the traumatic past, was attempting to ‘disown’ the Indonesian past, a past in which they also belonged. Many young Timorese rejected this meta-narrative of Indonesia and through cultural production began to explore their own multi-faceted engagement with, and understandings of, Indonesia.

The film contests the notion of ‘truth’ and ‘friendship’ and argues relentlessly that friendship must be based on (retributive) justice. The film is a rejection of President Xanana Gusmão’s assertion that independence and reconciliation is the reward for the Timorese independence struggle and colours the Truth and Friendship commission as an act of impunity. Importantly, *Rock ‘n’ Roll with Jakarta* is the first film production in Timor that has engaged with issues of the past.

Films produced outside of Timor have dealt with Indonesia’s role in Timor and serve to highlight the politics of representation. As already indicated, Xanana Gusmão’s approach to the past and Indonesia is conciliatory in nature. It is in this light that the film about Gusmão titled, *A Hero’s Journey* (2006) (Directed by Grace Phan) was allowed to screen at the 2006 Jakarta Film Festival while the film *Passabe* (2006) (Co-directed by James Leong and Lyn Lee) about village perspectives on justice was banned at both the 2005 and 2006 Jakarta Film Festival. The bans were not enforced by the government but by the festival’s organisers. This is illustrative of the continuing self-censorship operating in certain genres of Indonesian arts. Maintaining stability remains a priority at the cost of discussing a potentially flammable past in the Indonesian public. In response to this, co-director of *Passabe*, James Leong, suggested the film’s viewing could have a cathartic effect upon Indonesian audiences in developing an understanding of the scale of violence enacted by Indonesian authorities in Timor-Leste during the occupation.

Shot in digital, *Rock ‘n’ Roll with Jakarta* (2005) (58 mins) offers a unique insight into the representation of the past and Indonesia by a group of young Timorese. The film constitutes a series of interviews with Timorese and Indonesian politicians, intellectuals and survivors of New Order violence in Indonesia and Timor-Leste. The opening scenes introduce the main antagonists. Mockingly slowed to 14 shots per minute and to the crooning of Elvis Presley’s song, *Don’t be Cruel* is the dancing Timorese elite, Xanana Gusmão (the then President) and Jose Ramos-Horta (the then Prime Minister) along with Indonesian allies, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and former foreign minister, Ali Alatas. Last but not least, Eurico Gutteres, the infamous militia leader, is also seen swaying to the beats.
While the focus of the film is the construction of Timor's past and its relationship with Indonesia, the film has an equally productive role in the construction of the sociopolitical identity of youth. After the introductory scenes, the film then focuses on the protagonists; young Timorese and Indonesians from film footage shot throughout the 1990s. Male student activists are at the forefront of demonstrations campaigning for Timor-Leste's right to independence and the scenes show them on podiums with megaphones. Here they are representing themselves as contemporary youth warriors (Tet. *klosan funu nain*) and true youth patriots as they go into 'battle' with the Indonesian forces on the streets of Jakarta; on JI. Thamrin, outside the United Nations office, and the Indonesian Parliament.

As I have demonstrated in previous chapters, Timorese youth is a specifically gendered identity, which draws on specific forms of performativity. Young Timorese in this film clip sing the nationalist song *Maubere*. The chanting of the lyrics: *Our insides are Maubere. We are Maubere* while dancing the tebe-tebe dance (performed in a circle with interlaced arms and a stepping in and out motion) is a bodily and collective reaffirmation of their authentic and essentialised (and therefore legitimate) youth identity.

The film, *Rock 'n' Roll with Jakarta*, is an example of the transcultural forces that serve to facilitate cultural expression by young Timorese. Timor-Leste's independence has provided fertile conditions for the birth of (independent) indigenous film production. To date, there is no censorship board. This, combined with a large injection of international aid money, has assisted in the establishment of two independent audio-visual units. The Centro Audio Visual Max Stahl Timor-Leste Film and Sound Archive (CAMS) was established by the filmmaker Max Stahl.† The film unit has two main functions: to gather and preserve Timor-Leste's history and culture in audio-visual form, and to record music, culture and the nation-building process in Timor-Leste. The second, the 'Sahe Media Popular' Film Unit (SAMEP), has a different focus of not only recording events but actively directing and producing documentaries about contemporary issues in Timor-Leste.

The history of the film production unit SAMEP demonstrates the work of transculturalism. SAMEP is a part of the NGO, Sahe Institute of Liberation, originally named, the 'Sahe Study Club' which was formed by Timorese students and Indonesian pro-democracy activists in Jakarta in the mid-1990s to promote discussion regarding the implications of independence and what their role would be in a post-independent Timor-Leste. Despite disagreements with the older Portuguese-speaking elite, members of the younger generation view the anti-colonial movement of the 1970s as relevant to their own struggle against Indonesian occupation and in contemporary Timor, the struggle to

† Other archives such as the CAVR archive offer audio-visual catalogues.
belong. The influence of the Generation of '75 on the Generation of '99 is evident in the name of the NGO. The name ‘Sahe Institute for Liberation’ was taken from Vincente Sahe, a Portuguese educated Timorese intellectual who formed the cultural wing of the anti-colonial movement and was killed shortly after the Indonesian invasion. Furthermore, the reference to 'popular media’ is influenced by South American approaches to education and the activism which is supported by transnational engagement with countries such as Brazil.

In the film, Rock 'n' Roll with Jakarta, Indonesia is represented through visual sequences of riot police and violence in Jakarta, however, the arena in which this representation is produced is complex and multifaceted. The transnational engagement with contemporary Indonesia is seen on the levels of production and distribution of film production. The films by SAMEP were produced collectively and the Indonesian and Timorese staff shared the tasks of scripting, shooting and editing. SAMEP audiences are urban and rural, young and old Timorese, as well as from the NGO and international community. It is significant that Rock 'n' Roll with Jakarta was launched at ‘Kinoki’, one of the café/cinemas that emerged in the post-reformasi freedom in Yogyakarta. It was then launched in Timor-Leste where it toured as part of a traveling cinema (Ind. bioskop keliling) around the 13 districts of Timor-Leste. The Sahe Institute for Liberation received donor funding from the Finnish and Canadian governments for the establishment and maintenance of SAMEP.

Transculturalism is at the heart of the film’s production. SAMEP is clearly influenced by the documentary expose styles of British filmmakers, John Pilger and Max Stahl and independent Indonesian filmmakers such as Lexy Rambadeta. Rambadeta was involved in the pro-democracy student movement during the 1990s and filmed many important events such as the violence against Indonesians of Chinese descent in the lead up to the fall of Suharto. He also filmed the few remaining Falintil fighters in the Timorese hinterlands in early 1998. In 2001, Rambadeta and several Indonesian multimedia artists established Offstream Production House in Jakarta, they continue to make films that prioritise social justice issues and work in collaboration with community groups. As an example, Offstream produced Mass Grave (2001), which investigates memories of 1965 from the perspectives and experiences of villagers in Central Java.

The film Rock 'n' Roll with Jakarta is a celluloid example of a group of young Timorese’ attempts at constructing a legitimate place of national belonging through

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10 The anti-colonial movement of the 1970s is discussed in Chapter Two.
11 Budi Irawanto, a lecturer on film studies at Gadjah Mada University, is currently researching Independent Filmmaking communities in Yogyakarta. Yogyakarta based, LBK Taring Padi art collective has worked with Sahe Institute and two of its members were based in Timor with the Sahe Institute from 2002 to 2006.
12 I discuss John Pilger’s films Chapter Three.
memory. Representation of memories and engagement with Indonesia provide a multifaceted understanding of their neighbour which goes beyond maintaining the diplomatic relationship of high level government at any cost. Indonesia remains a critical constituent in Timorese youth discourses of truth and justice.

**The Timorese Press**

Despite the diminishing faith in the leadership and the ongoing and complex divisions in post-independent Timor, young generation Timorese tried to carve a place of belonging. Their engagement with Indonesia remains crucial in these efforts, particularly in print media. Yet, the role of independent print media in Timor-Leste remains misunderstood and misrepresented. While a number of officials have criticised journalists for poor performance, bias and lack of professionalism, there has also been a lack of willingness to allow media freedom as well as confusion around issues of defamation. Thus, reportage perceived as overtly critical of the Government has at times, been condemned as ‘anti-government’ (Steele 2007: 278). A discussion of Talitakum and Kla’ak magazine illustrates the contributions of young Timorese journalists to the development of a sense of cultural citizenship for the Generation of ‘99.
Journeys of the Timorese Media: From Talitakum to Kla’ak

So, I had an idea. Well, why don’t I start writing their [the people’s] stories? So I can also feel (Ind. bisa merasanya)... although I wasn’t there, I can still feel their suffering through my writing. So I can understand the pain they’ve felt all this time.

(Vonia Vieira, 2003, Talitakum contributor)

My role, as a young Timorese, is to tell the truth to my people.

(Vonia Vieira, 2008, current Editor-in-Chief of Kla’ak)

The young writers involved in the publication of the magazine Talitakum – established in Indonesia in 1998 – and Kla’ak Semanal – established in Dili in 2006 – shared a history of involvement in the resistance struggle and reproduced discourses of truth and justice. The publications and their objectives were born out of a period where print media itself was undergoing rapid transformation.

Talitakum magazine is an example of the cultural strategies employed by both younger and older youth to situate themselves within the new nation-state of Timor-Leste (Bexley 2007c). Like the film unit SAMEP, the magazine was a transcultural product that grew out of the relations between Timor and Indonesia throughout the student movement in Indonesia, and as a result, it was an all-Indonesian language publication. Talitakum was established in October 1998 in West Java as the publication of the student organisation, RENETIL. Talitakum is a Hebrew word that means ‘to rise up’. A senior editor explained that the reference to the Hebrew word was significant in the context of Timor’s independence struggle: rising up and against the shackles of military oppression in Timor. I conducted fieldwork with the publication’s staff in 2002 for my Honours thesis. At that time the group consisted of 14 full-time writers and activists-turned-journalists. The magazine went bankrupt in 2004 due to management inexperience and was subsequently disbanded.

During its early years, the magazine Talitakum was not only a textual product of a group of young generation Timorese but a cultural icon for the Geracing Foum. During the resistance, Talitakum became well-known for advocating on behalf of Timor’s resistance. During the early years of independence, it continues this advocacy role in highlighting the concerns for young generation Timorese. The local NGO community based in Farol provided an important source of authorship. These NGOs consisted of many young Timorese who were active during the resistance as students in Indonesia. The readership extended to the public servant community but with the fluid circulation of many cultural products, copies of Talitakum were often found in the districts, in the homes of relatives, at food stalls and community gathering places.

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13 Titles include Independencia, Edition 41, 2002 and Clandestina, edition 38, 2002. Both are dedicated to exploring the role of the youth during the clandestine.
Despite the voluminous accounts about media in Timor-Leste, little attention has been paid to Timorese student media. The focus the attention on media has largely been about the international media throughout the Indonesian occupation, in particular how Australian media fell silent on the issue of Timor after the invasion (Tiffen 2001; Nevins 2005). More recently, a number of memoirs by international journalists point to the bravery of their Timorese interlocutors and counterparts in 1999 revealing the horrors of the brutality of the Indonesian military and its militias (Cristalis and Scott 2005; Greenlees and Garran 2002). Despite this attention, Steele (2007) rightly points out that attention to Timor press during the resistance has been under-researched in academia and from 2002, discredited by the country’s own government. Steele herself only fleetingly refers to the Timorese student media, of which Talitakum is a key constituent.

*Talitakum* magazine’s historical links with Indonesia make it a good example of the inter-connections and influences on Timorese cultural production during the New Order. Taking advantage of the increased freedoms of the press and the impending demise of the Suharto regime in 1998, the Timorese students involved in RENETIL made a decision to bring all the regional publication throughout Java and Bali (such as Malang-based, *U&R* and Jember-based, *TUBA*) under one umbrella publication. During the last week of April 1998, the students were involved in a training program facilitated by the Indonesian Journalists Association (*Asosiasi Journalis Indonesia* – AJI) consisting of pro-democracy journalists such as Goenawan Mohamad and Titi Irawati14 in Ciloto, West Java. As a result of this unification, national and international distribution of *Talitakum* was increased.

The *Talitakum* journalists came from a variety of backgrounds but the shared experience as a pro-independence supporter serves as a motivating factor. Vonia Vieira’s life history is common of other *Talitakum* journalist’s backgrounds. Vonia was born in Los Palos and is the second youngest of eleven children. She was schooled in Los Palos and in 1998 went to Yogyakarta for a year of schooling as her family in Timor was preparing to evacuate from Los Palos. Her family is split along political lines. While her father and the two eldest siblings supported integration with Indonesia and have since gone to live in Kupang, West Timor, the other siblings supported independence and were heavily involved in the clandestine student movement throughout the 1990s. Her mother died when she was still a child. Since finishing high school, Vonia has developed her interests in writing and initially worked as a junior journalist for *Talitakum*. Since the formation of *Kla’ak*, Vonia has worked as its editor-in-chief.

A similar pro-independence background was also paired with journalist training for the *Talitakum* and *Kla’ak* journalists. The Indonesian journalist education greatly

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14 An interview with Titi Irawati talking about her engagement with Timor-Leste appeared in *Inside Indonesia* (see Brogan 2002)
influenced the formation of Timorese journalistic style. Most of the Talitakum journalists were Timorese students in Java during the New Order and many had received training at the Doctor Soetomo Press Institute and The Institute for the Free Flow of Information (Institute Arus Informasi - ISAI). Since independence, many journalists have received further training abroad in Australia and Europe; however, Indonesia remains the main training centre for many Timorese journalists. USA-based media development organisation Internews was established in Timor in 1999 and provided some training to journalists. In 2005, the management of journalist training became the task of Timor-Leste Media Development Centre.

After independence, the Timorese journalists organised themselves into two main organisations in Timor-Leste. The President, Virgilio Guterres, and Vice President, Hugo Fernandes of the Timor Loro Sae Journalists Association (TLJA) were also senior editors of Talitakum. The TLJA held its first congress on 11 to 14 January, 2001, and was founded on the basis that although journalists had experienced two years of unprecedented press freedom, ideas about journalist’s rights and responsibilities had yet to be socialised within the wider Timorese society. The TLJA took a leading role in lobbying for press protection in the Timor-Leste Constitution. The Association was recognised internationally as a representative for all of Timor’s journalists. Representations of unity abroad however, were not always a true reflection of the internal dynamics of the journalist profession.

The journalists who did not sign up for membership with the TLJA formed the Journalists Syndicate. Its members consisted largely of the journalists involved in the newspaper, Voice of Timor-Leste, Suara Timor-Leste (STL), formerly known as The Voice of East Timor, Suara Timor Timur (STT). It returned to publication under its new name upon invitation of the then President, Xanana Gusmao in 2002. This was lauded as the first step to reconciliation with Timorese who had supported Timor’s integration with Indonesia at the time. The paper is owned by Salvador J. Ximenes, the former secretary general of the 1999 pro-autonomy party the East Timor Integrationist Front (Barisan Rakyat Timor Timur) (from 1999) and served earlier as a member of the Indonesian legislative council. First published on 1 February 1993, the paper’s launch coincided with the trial of Xanana Gusmao in Jakarta. It was the first Timorese owned newspaper to be printed in Timor since the 1970s and was generally regarded as being the mouthpiece of the New Order government. As Douglas Kammen has discussed (2003: 83), the terms pro-autonomy and pro-independence came to replace earlier dichotomies of master/slave, opportunist/oppressed and traitor/nationalist (and I would add here, the big people/little people) as a central frame of Timorese political discourse after Indonesian president, B.J Habibie offered Timorese the option of ‘broad autonomy’:
For East Timorese today, “pro-autonomy” and “pro-independence” parallel the master-slave metaphor. Pro-autonomy does not simply connote a political preference, but also an inferior relationship to a foreign master. And the term is not restricted to high-level collaborators and militia members. People in East Timor now often refer to the “pro-autonomy clinic” and the “pro-autonomy newspaper”!

The past is ever present in Timor-Leste and former actions and positions continue to frame notions of cultural citizenship. Salvador’s background goes some way to explain why he was cast in the pro-autonomy frame. Salvador’s family was ‘always Apodeti’, that is, supporters of the political party favouring integration with Indonesia. His first break in the media was his time in Kupang as a translator for the Indonesian broadcaster, Radio Republik Indonesia. After returning to Timor after the invasion in 1978 he found a job with Radio Republik Indonesia in Dili. Later he joined the Department of Information. A few years later he applied to Suara Karya, the newspaper of the political organisation, Golkar and became the first Timorese correspondent of an Indonesian newspaper (Steele 2007: 265). Steele rightly observed that while Salvador was not a pro-independence supporter, he was at least consistent in his support for Indonesia. Steele (2007: 265) quotes Sydney Jones, the current Director for International Crisis Watch:

[Salvador] was neither the pro-Indonesia activist, working for the underground at the same time he hobnobbed with the Jakarta elite, nor was he ever the stooge of the Indonesian military. He genuinely believed that East Timor’s future lay with Indonesia, and that independence would be disastrous, but he seized every opportunity to work for a negotiated end to the conflict. Even if not everyone agreed with him, everyone respected him and knew that he represented and articulated a point of view that had to be heard.

Steele refers to the ‘moral economy’ as an operating structure for journalists in Timor at the time. The New Order’s understanding of a free and fair press was based on the notion that the press should serve the development of the nation. Newspapers were encouraged to showcase economic and social development and were discouraged from reporting on anything that would undermine this optimistic view. News that touched on ethnic, religious, racial or class conflict (known by the Indonesian acronym, SARA), were considered to be especially dangerous (Romano 1996). This signified a heightened vigilance on behalf of the reporters in conflict areas such as Timor. The Timorese reporters involved in STT had to walk a fine line while serving the ‘development nation’ and providing a fact-based story.

Like their Indonesian counterparts, the Timorese journalists used a number of strategies in dealing with reporting in a military operation zone that could be termed ‘everyday acts of resistance’ (Scott 1985). These strategies included ‘borrowing the mouth’ of those willing to contradict the government and invoking the journalistic norm of ‘covering both sides’ (Steele 2007). The paper would frequently present a package of stories. Metha Guteres (in Steele 2007), the STT managing editor explained the ordering
of these stories. The first story appearing on the top was always the official version. The second story was the ‘view from the field’ drawing on observations from a field reporter. The third story, often came from a university professor, the church or human rights activist often undermined the official view, albeit in a subtle way.

While Steele makes an important point about the ambiguity of the resistance struggle, I suggest there is another moral economy that the Timorese press was operating under other than the New Order authority referred to by Steele. Through my examples of Talitakum and Kla’ak, I illustrate the ways in which a moral economy was established in the press and the ways in which young Timorese used the press to construct themselves as truth-finders and truth-tellers. This became increasingly important after independence as young Timorese found themselves on the margins of national belonging. As a result perhaps, many began to reflect on resistance movement. Many young Timorese felt that Gusmão’s transformation of the resistance movement into a military defensive through which they claimed meant that the anti-colonial essence of the 1970s was lost. Tome, a young generation Timorese in his late 30s reflected on the two movements of the 1970s anti-colonial movement, which he refers to as ‘the social movement’ and the clandestine resistance of the 1980s and 1990s:

The people’s movement began as a broad-based social movement focused on genuine emancipation and justice. This focus was then re-channelled when it became a Commander system with Xanana at the top. The understanding of ‘freedom’ became very narrow during the resistance; all we had to do was to get rid of Indonesia. We were not allowed to discuss what we would do after independence.

Discourses on truth and the feeling that they have been ‘tricked’ by the resistance movement, prompted many young Timorese to retell Timor’s history and in doing so, construct themselves as truth-tellers an important characteristic of cultural citizenship.

The mythologising aspect of journalists as truth-tellers has a long history in Timor. The name, The Balibo Five was given to the five journalists who were murdered on the Indonesian border when the Indonesian military invaded Timor in 1975. Throughout the New Order regime took an iron-fist approach to reporting and journalists. Those who resisted were dealt harsh sentences. Tempo, Detik and Editor magazines were all shutdown. Again, foreign journalists became targets of repression in 1999. The Indonesian state and armed forces viewed the journalists as politically biased in support of Timor’s independence and as symbols of western government’s pressure of Indonesia concerning the human rights abuses. There were two fatal attacks on western journalists (Williams and Rich 2000) during the plebiscite. The role these journalists played in ‘uncovering the truth’ has been mythologised in the worlds of Timorese journalists.15

15 See Chapter Three.
16 In July, 2008, Dili hosted Timor’s first journalist awards night. It was titled the ‘Balibo Awards’. Hollywood actor, Anthony LaPaglia awarded the prizes to the Timorese journalists. He stars as Roger
Indonesian writers such as Seno Gumira Ajidarma, were hugely influential in the styles of writing found in *Talitakum*, particularly in the representation of journalists as truth-tellers. Seno was one of the many Indonesian cultural workers and literary spokespersons who believed that ‘the truth’ about the tragedy of Timor must be exposed to a wider public. The ‘truth’ here related to the overt military oppression and the falsity of the claims made by the New Order that Timor’s incorporation was unhindered by resistance.

The Indonesian media that rallied against the oppressive New Order regime influenced *Talitakum* journalists. When I asked one of the senior editors of *Talitakum* in 2002 what sort of a vision he had for *Talitakum*, he remarked that ‘I have hopes that we will, one day, become a media vehicle, at the least... not *Tempo*, but head along the same path as *Tempo*’. The format of *Talitakum* drew upon *Tempo* in style and format. The final page of comment was always written by senior editor, Virgilio Guterres with his picture framed in the top left hand corner emanating Goenawan Mohammad in *Tempo*. Within the editors ruminations about following in the footsteps of *Tempo* lies the possibility of sustaining a ‘voice of resistance’.

A few years after *Talitakum* finished another publication involving many of the same journalists emerged. *Kia’ak Semanal*, a 12-page spread, is the only all-Tetun weekly publication in Dili (as of July 2009). For the journalists, the language issue has become central to their role as journalists, as Virgilio Guterres explained in an interview:

It was different with *Talitakum*. As journalists, we had been working in Indonesian [language] since we started publishing. In Indonesia, we wanted Indonesian people, as well as Timorese, to understand our writings; to understand the history of Indonesian occupation. At independence, we felt it was important to keep writing about issues and also to have a broad audience so we kept the Indonesian language. For us as young people, it [Indonesian] was our language of publishing. Also at the time, Tetun was still underdeveloped. We were unable to write in Tetun and be widely understood. But with *Kia’ak*, it is one of our objectives, to standardise the Tetun language.

*Kia’ak* (Tet. spark) has taken the task of standardising the language of Tetun seriously. In its weekly editions, it features word lists and translations of new Tetun words. With a more experienced management team, the publication has found a readership beyond the

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East in *Balibo*, a film about the five Australian journalists who were killed in Balibo at the time of the Indonesian invasion. Osme, discussed in the first section of this chapter also stars in the film as the driver for the journalists.

17 I discussed the influences of Seno on Timorese fiction writing in Chapter Five.

18 Since independence, there has been sustained interest in Timor by Indonesians. An edition of the popular English language ‘Inside Indonesia’ magazine published an entire edition on Timor in 2002 including more than eight articles were written by Indonesians.
Dili suburb of Farol suburb where it still resides and has an online presence.\textsuperscript{19} Kia’ak has also managed to broaden its authorship and features regular reports from the districts, as well as Jakarta, Bali and Australia.\textsuperscript{20} The illustrations in the magazine are drawn by Gembel art collective (discussed in Part Two of this chapter). The building now used for its operations is that of the Institute of Popular Education (formerly known as Sahe Research Institute) that produced the film Rock ’n’ with Jakarta.

In 2006, I interviewed Vonia about Kia’ak and she stated that her role was ‘to tell the truth’ thereby revealing Kia’ak’s objective in having a popular orientation and scope for social and political issues. Recent issues of Kia’ak have dealt with the shootings of the President Jose Ramos-Horta, the commemoration of the Indonesian invasion and corruption in the AMP government. The political struggles in faraway places highlighting injustice and oppression retain their relevance for young Timorese journalists in the context of independent Timor. A recent edition of Kia’ak was titled, ‘Students. Keep Fighting Until Victory’ (Tet. Estudante. Hasta la Victoria Siempre) (Edition 19, June, 2008). The reference to Ernesto Che Guevara is not accidental. Hasta la victoria siempre was the signoff used by Che in the last letter he wrote to Fidel Castro.\textsuperscript{21} This was a reference to Cuba’s continued resistance to America as well as the battle for liberation in Bolivia, in which Che was a central figure.

The popular orientation of the newspaper also focuses on government accountability. Kia’ak Edition 19 discusses the procurement of 65 luxury cars for ministers at a time when food insecurity in Timor is at a high.\textsuperscript{22} The original budget allocation was for 26 cars to be distributed to the parliamentary commission. Later, the number of cars was increased to 65, for each Minister of Parliament. The Parliamentary Majority Alliance (AMP) government met with parliament a number of times before it became an issue of public interest. Students from the national university, UNTL staged a protest on the campus grounds and the AMP eventually withdrew its plan to increase the budget allocation for the extra cars.

The issue of student protests is an important issue for the continuity of youth identity as socio-political as seen in the film Rock ’n’ Roll with Jakarta. The outcome of the student protests is hailed by Kia’ak as a win for the people and is a return to the calling of the rightful role of youth to question and hold the power-holders accountable for their actions. To the Kia’ak editors, it reveals a sign of hope that the youth of contemporary

\textsuperscript{19} The office of Talitakum is now occupied by Luta Hamutuk, a local NGO (and splinter organisation of Lao Hamutuk).
\textsuperscript{20} I have submitted regular monthly articles and reviews for Kia’ak since it began.
\textsuperscript{21} Shortly after writing the letter, Che was captured and executed by CIA Agent, Felix Rodriguez who cut off one of Che’s hands as a souvenir, sent a finger to Fidel Castro and took Che’s watch which Rodriguez was still wearing decades later.
\textsuperscript{22} The procurement of the cars was also discussed, in a rather verbose fashion, on the ETAN list (see ETAN archives 16 May, 2008) between foreign academics, bloggers and local NGO practitioners.
Timor have ‘found their way’ after the crisis meaning that they have returned to a socio-political role in the development of the nation-state. The image of the socio-political youth is demonstrated through the images used in this issue of Kla’ak. The cover page features a picture of a student at a microphone with a raised hand and pointing finger reflective of the images of the ‘heroic’ and ‘patriotic’ students throughout the occupation in demonstrations in Indonesia.

The style of writing found in Talitakum and later in Kla’ak claims a shared identity with the reader. The author situates himself/herself to speak to the commonality of shared experience of Timor’s youth, particularly in the socio-political role and as a ‘truth-teller’ where notions of justice are also formulated. Through cultural production, young Timorese attempted to maintain a sense of cultural citizenship. The following section describes what happened to this shared sense of commonality after 2006.

Part Two: The 2006 Crisis

Until this point in the thesis, I have described young Timorese’ attempts to belong in a nation-state which sought to marginalise them after independence. These attempts – for the most part – have required a united effort to maintain a sense of generational cohesion. This section will discuss the limits of cultural citizenship demonstrated by the unraveling of social unity in young generation Timorese. The structural criteria of belonging established by the nation-state (Ong 1996, 1999) had the effect of pushing citizens to define the inclusion and exclusion of other. The first section describes the intensity of the crisis and the pervasive reality of instability by drawing on accounts from Timor. The second section discusses the impact of the crisis on the unity of the young generation and the emergence of a new youth generation and the third and final section discusses the print-project as an example of the cultural expression of a new generational identity which nonetheless continues to draw on past cultural referents.

A Crisis of Citizenship

The societal divisions that occurred by the time of my return to Timor-Leste at the end of 2006 were both confronting and deeply saddening. The political divisions, security concerns, ethnic tensions, gang violence and loss of faith in the leadership had an impact well beyond the urban confines of Dili and the ramifications were still felt a year later. Some of the same divisions had begun to emerge in the aftermath of the 1999 referendum. Babo-Soares (2003) documented the new post-referendum political climate in 2000 which heralded a new atmosphere of political division, manifestation of public discontent toward leaders, competition for political recognition, and, most strikingly, the breakdown of unity required for the continuity of cultural citizenship. The crie of 2006 marked the zenith of these culminated frustrations. As a result, expressions of a new
youth generation who are markedly different from the Generation of '99 became evident through violence.

Excerpt from field-notes, 20 December 2006.

I took my place in the Dili-bound Merpati flight queue behind the Malaysian UNMIT police officers with oversized moustaches, international NGO workers, Christian groups and a few Timorese businessmen. Over the four years I had been taking this flight, this was not an unusual mix of people but there was a shared sense of apprehension. People murmured to each other about security concerns, the unresolved issue of the petitioners, rebel soldier Alfredo Reinado and the IDPs [Internally Displaced Peoples].

At the Dili airport, I recognised Douglas, an anthropologist who knows some of the student activists and intellectuals that I know. I asked how the situation was in Dili. ‘Bad’ came his response. ‘The fighting is every night now but this week’s been a comparatively good week – only two people were killed.’ I don’t know which is worse, the gang fights or the fact that all our old friends aren’t talking to one another anymore’. I leave Douglas and go and fetch a taxi as my usual taxi friends are unable to make it – they told me they rarely leave the house now. They live in the east of Dili and would not dare to come as far west as the airport. As we make our way out of the airport, the all too familiar UNHCR IDP tents cover the airport grounds. I repeat my intended address to the taxi driver. ‘Bebonuk?!’ he exclaims, ‘I can’t go down there, it’s not safe, I’ll drop you at the corner’. I understood that by ‘safe’, he meant safety for his taxi, not me. The apprehension I felt on the plane is well founded when the taxi swerves to miss a black dog crossing the road. As I struggle with my backpack and make my way down the road, I walk past a crowd of young teenage boys. They create quite a juxtaposition sitting about their Christmas nativity scene in their khaki camouflage. I greet them with a respectful half nod of the neck – a very Javanese gesture that I wonder if I will ever lose. It seems to work though because they nod back. I try to work out by their appearance if they belong to Setia Hati or Seti Seti martial arts/defense/thug groups. I can not. I turn down the lane way to my friend’s house and find it has a new socio-demographic. I walk past the graffiti, firaku pulang ‘easterners go home’ (pulang is the Indonesian word for ‘go home’). It seems many of the easterners have left and Westerners have moved in. They have even started to plant corn all the way down the street. Mana Rosa, the Bunaq-speaking owner of my temporary home ran towards me to take my backpack from my shoulders. We chat about the crisis (Tet. crize) as we enter the house and I ask how if there’s still trouble in Bebonuk. ‘No’ Mana Rosa says, ‘There’s no trouble here now – the Firaku (easterners) have all gone’.

The year-long climate of anxiety and uncertainty was caused by the breakdown of civil order and the failure of the security apparatus of the country in the tumultuous events of April and May 2006. The crisis is generally traced to a petition signed by 159 soldiers on 9 January 2006 alleging mismanagement and discrimination with the Timorese military (F-FDTL). ‘The Petitioners,’ as they became known, made good their threats to abandon their encampment and were eventually dismissed by the Chief of Defense Forces. In March 2006, Xanana Gusmão, then President and Supreme Commander of the Army, responded to the petition with a divisive speech criticising their dismissal and
appeared to give credence to the petitioner’s claims that the problems within F-FDTL were primarily due to discrimination by easterners toward westerners. The political standoff intensified and growing tensions between the army, the F-FDTL and the National Police Force (PNTL) came to a head in late May 2006 when members of military opened fire, leaving 9 dead and 27 wounded. From this point, the security situation in Dili deteriorated rapidly. The PNTL disintegrated and there were widespread outbreaks of violence and looting by youth gangs, some of whom aligned themselves loosely amongst political and geographical lines expressed as easterners (lorosa’e) and westerners (loromonu) (Independent Special Commission of Inquiry for Timor-Leste 2006).

The confusion and bewilderment felt by Dili residents at the time was expressed in a letter home from an Indonesian journalist activist friend who had been working in Timor with the legal aid institute, Yayasan Hak, since 1999. Mbak Ti later posted her correspondence online. An excerpt reads (my translation):

Dear Dina,

Sorry, I’m just sending you news now, almost a week after the April 28 incident. I’ll be honest, I just do not know where to start and what to say about what is happening here.

Bimo, who hardly ever contacts me, sent a message out of nowhere, “Ti, Dili is rioting ya?” Meanwhile, Rini, my younger sister who is a keen news watcher immediately sent a message, ‘Why is the Timor military rioting?’ At this, I tried sending a message to many friends to calm their fears. I had no idea what the media in Jakarta was saying. As it turned out, none of my messages would send. It was as if everybody was trying to get news by sms or calling out at the same time so the Timor Telecom network – the country’s sole telephone network – was completely blocked...

Ya, ya, Dili became chaotic (Jav. ranggan-ranggan) .... Again, I implored Nug to return home. I felt very wary with all these people panicking on the street. On the street toward Colmera, I saw cars speeding along, which was unusual. In front of the District Court we met a police car. A policeman was shouting in a megaphone asking everybody to go home ’Return to your houses immediately! The situation is not good’. I still did not understand what he meant by ‘the situation was not good’. I found out what had happened after we had returned to the office. Under the tree near the canteen, I saw friends who had started to gather there. ‘What’s going on?’ a friend asked Nug who had just come down the driveway. With a loud voice another friend announced that the Prime Minister’s office had been set on fire. Cars were also set alight, he said. We didn’t know who was in the cars. At that moment, a number of government cars sped down the road towards the Prime Minister’s house, in front of Yayasan Hak’s office. We didn’t know who was in those cars either.

25 The Independent Special Commission of Inquiry (2006) noted that the dismissal of 594 soldiers was not legally enacted. The Commission also noted that approximately 200 of the personnel dismissed were not petitioners but officers and other ranks who had been chronically absent without leave in the months and years prior to March 2006.

26 The incident refers to the 28 April riot that left two people dead and 36 wounded while a further two people were killed and 43 injured in the early hours of 29 April in sporadic clashes between rioters and security forces (ICG 2006).
The sense of ‘not-knowing’ became a pervasive reality for Dili residents throughout 2006. The breakdown in faith of authority and local media sources meant that the line between rumour and reality became blurred. In the ensuing months over 1,600 houses were destroyed leaving 150,000 people displaced to their home districts or into hastily established IDP camps in and around the city. The majority of those targeted were from the eastern districts of Baucau, Lautem and Viqueque. And among the factors that came into play in the selective waves of destruction were resentments over their success as market vendors in Dili and their appropriation of many houses abandoned by Indonesians in 1999 (Harrington 2007). An illegal issue and distribution of guns from state armouries to civilians fuelled the violent reprisals. With mounting unpopularity, Mari Alkatiri was asked to step down as Prime Minister by President Xanana Gusmão following public threats by Gusmão that he would resign if Alkatiri did not. Alkatiri made the announcement late 26 June 2006, ‘I declare, I’m ready to resign from my position of Prime Minister of the government of RDTL, so as to avoid the resignation of His Excellency the President of the Republic’ (ABC 2006).

Douglas, who I had met at the airport when I arrived in December 2006, was right. The situation was ‘bad’. I found this visit to Dili incredibly difficult. Every time I phoned a friend to organise an outing, I did not know whether to invite other friends – who had previously always joined us – to come along or not. We were witnessing a complete breakdown of the social life people had built since the chaos and terror of 1999. People were frightened to leave their houses and a familiar sense of resignation filtered through their explanations. As my friend, a young mother of two children, said to me at the time, ‘This is how the situation is now. We just stay at home. We go to the market, buy vegetables and return home. All we can do now is dream’.

Far from solving the crisis, Alkatiri’s resignation caused more confusion and even more societal divisions. The divisions among the young generation were particularly stark. Babo-Soares (2003) describes the ways in which cracks had begun to appear in the nacional unidade at independence in 2002 but for the most part, the young generation at this point were united on key issues such as the rejection of the Portuguese language as an official language. The 2006 crisis however, heralded more socio-political transformation as young Timorese struggled with reconciling their own postcolonial redefinition. The breakdown in security and society gave rise to new factions among young generation Timorese and a new youth generation emerged. The divisions went vertically from leadership down and horizontally across civil society and co-operation seemed to grind to an absolute halt. Friends who had worked together during the

27 Ramos-Horta and another minister had resigned a week earlier.
28 Alkatiri had been an unpopular leader from the beginning of his Prime Ministership for reasons including that he was a Muslim leader of a majority Catholic nation and a returned Mozambique diasporan. Demands for his resignation began as early as 2002 when his house was burned to the ground on December 3 and 4 (United Nations 2002).
resistance, either in Timor or Indonesia stopped talking to one another. 29 People were being forced to take sides. There was a stigma and fear of being ‘dubbed’ a Fretilin supporter, or being associated with one and this turned old friends against one another. This level of fear by association was reminiscent of accounts of 1965 in Indonesia at time of the communist killings. The crisis impacted on the ability of young Timorese to maintain a sense of unity that is required by cultural citizenship.

**The 2006 Crisis and a New Youth Generation**

Rather than viewing the 2006 socio-political upheavals in Timor-Leste in light of a transforming society, much of the analysis by foreign academics stemmed from the conflict paradigm approach. In an attempt to make sense of the crisis, much of the literature identified a generalised lack of ‘good governance’, including authoritarian unaccountable leadership and weak institutions as proximate causes for state failure (Kingsbury 2007; ICG 2008; COI 2006; Shoesmith 2007). Other scholarly critiques cite the failure of international aid as a destabilising factor (Anderson, T. 2006). While many of the urban-based youth groups were involved in gang violence there has been little research beyond the categorical representation of these groups (see Scambary et al. 2006).

Such analyses are helpful but fail to adequately capture and explain the complex reality of the ongoing crisis (see Moxham 2008; Gonzalez-Devant 2008). Rather than viewing the 2006 crisis consequence of ‘exotic deviance’ – an aberration on a notionally linear path to democracy, I agree with Gonzalez-Devant (2008) who argues for an understanding of the crisis as symptomatic of profound socio-political transition. Within these transitions, the possibility of articulations of new identities become evident as does the limits of cultural citizenship illustrated by the mainly urban-based outbreaks of violence in which societal divisions became palpable.

In addition, what is missing from the analysis on the 2006 crisis is an explanation of new youth identities embedded in historical and gendered articulations. The cultural strategies of contemporary youth thus reveal how old and new meanings converge and are redeployed as they struggle to find their bearings at the margins of national belonging. The urban-based youth involved in the violence represent a new generation of youth, referred to here as post-independent youth. The pre-independence youth were those who came of age during the national resistance whereas post-independence youth were those who came of age after independence. For the post-independent youth of 2006 realising a sense of belonging became increasingly complex and multifaceted as illustrated by the experiences of Gembel.

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29 The divisions in regard to the Timorese community in Indonesia are discussed in Chapter Five.
The Complexities of Cultural Citizenship: Gembel and the Print-Making Project

The case study of art and music group, Gembel, seems an apt point to finish the thesis as it demonstrates something of the complexities and the contingent nature of cultural citizenship in Timor-Leste after the crisis of 2006. Their motivations for action and identities are multifaceted as they draw on a range of gendered, historical and transcultural references. While Gembel members are obviously drawn to a military style of leadership, they are simultaneously interested in forging relations with other artists and expressing their thoughts on peace and justice and connecting to their places of origin. Their lives are defined by interconnection of a range of cultural influences rather than a single lens of conflict.

Their choice of name illustrates their own sense of marginality and liminality. Gembel is an Indonesian word that means ‘vagrant’ or ‘vagabond’. The members of Gembel articulate a profound sense of liminality; not quite being a part of the resistance movement (and thus cannot claim the ‘heroic youth status’): at the same time as they have not been fully integrated into processes of national belonging. The group took on the derogatory name to describe their activities of theatre, music and print making. Membership is diverse, ages range from 15 to 25 years. Some are finishing high school or are at university and others have dropped out and are unemployed, supported by the collective and family members. They are one of the more unusual youth groups in that its members include young people from both the eastern and western districts of Timor.

Gembel’s choice of residence also depicts their marginal position in Timorese society. They occupied the former headquarters of the Dili scouts during Indonesian occupation. The small shelter containing three rooms, a bathroom and a makeshift kitchen is situated in the Borja da Costa memorial park in the elite suburb of Farol, home to foreign embassies and international organisations. Some Gembel members have had children in the last couple of years. When I asked them what their plans are for their children, considering they themselves found it almost impossible to finish their own schooling – let alone to get a job – they shrug and laugh. Loron ohin ne’e hau moris, I live for today, they say. Their marginality in independent Timor-Leste restricts their capacity to plan beyond the present. Meanwhile the past, as it is constructed in national discourse, is not one that belongs to them. What matters is the present.

The divisions that occurred after the 2006 crisis clearly illustrate the limits of cultural citizenship and the impact of the relentless exercise in defining inclusion and exclusion. Among the confusion and chaos of the 2006 crisis, some of the older members of the...
Generation of ‘99 ridiculed Gembel for being involved in some of the anti-government protests. The older more influential members of the Generation of ‘99 expressed that their participation in the anti-government protests was the wrong kind of protest as they themselves were in favour of the Fretilin-led government at the time. Gembel members were subsequently ostracised from social activity in Farol. A certain paradox is evident in the behaviour of the Generation of ‘99 towards Gembel members. The Generation of ‘99 was marginalised by the nation-state for being associated with Indonesia. In turn, the Generation of ‘99 marginalised the new generation that emerged out of the 2006 crisis, known as the post-independent youth from their claim on cultural citizenship based on ideas of youthful patriotism and sacrifice. They were stamped as being a ‘disgrace’ to ‘youth’.

Their status as post-independent youth meant that youth involved in groups like Gembel always maintained a tenuous membership to the Generation of ‘99. This unclear status rested on a number of issues. Both the post-independence and pre-independence youth shared a fluency in Indonesian however, the difference in age underlines very different experiences as youth. The post-independence youth were just young children in the occupation. This meant the roles they played as young children did not fit the ‘heroic’ youth narrative; at the forefront of demonstrations and on the podiums beseeching Timor’s independence on the streets in Indonesia. They also had a limited knowledge of the resistance and its structure. A repetitive cycle of defining belonging through marginalisation was becoming clearer. Divisions also became evident between pre-independence and post-independent youth among Timorese students in Indonesia.

Gembel represent the complexity of youth identity and marginality. When I asked one of the Gembel members, Mahatu, why he became involved in the demonstrations, he explained that economic marginality was a major motivating factor. Mahatu recounted how a youth leader (who was aligned to one of the political party’s of the time) began paying visits to the group’s ‘headquarters’ in the Borja da Costa park in the centre of Dili around the end of March, 2006 (see image 7). He asked them to paint a banner for the anti-government protests. When I asked why the group had agreed, Mahatu explained that, ‘If somebody offers you money, you take it.’ This was reminiscent of older generation member’s responses when I asked them why they were involved with pro-autonomy leaders such as militia leader Hercules. The fluidity of association with members and mutual gain is not then, limited to post-independence youth and reveals something of the narrow choices that becomes available to those living on the margins.

31 Farol is the suburb in Dili where many of the local NGOs are located (see image 6).
32 As discussed in Chapter Four.
33 Relationships between political parties and youth groups are topics of immense interest and importance which unfortunately falls beyond the scope of this thesis.
Mahatu and the other members of Gembel were drawn to military and masculine styles of leadership. The predominant style of leadership in Timor-Leste emerged out of the struggle with Indonesian occupation. It articulates a resistance identity forged out of historical and contemporary constellations of power and the experience of marginality which fostered a culture of secrecy. Among the unambiguous markers of effective resistance and leadership during the resistance were; tenacity, unwavering resoluteness, austerity, adversarial, disciplined and autocratic style, hierarchical structure and order of command, zero tolerance of insubordination. Displays of negotiation and compromise under such conditions could be viewed as a sign of weakness. While some members of the Generation of '99 began to lose faith in the leadership, particularly in Xanana Gusmão, for post-independent Timorese, the symbolic value of the idealised military leader remained.

After the 2006 crisis, popular support for rebel leader, Major Alfredo Reinado rose among young Timorese, particularly in Dili. Gembel members were also drawn to his calls for justice. While most of them seemed to be aware that Reinado was a renegade and wanted in relation to his involvement in a military revolt which led to a number of killings, they seemed impressed with this military toughness. ‘Ya’, confirmed Bayu when we sitting around in the Borja da Costa park one day, ‘Alfredo is OK. Maybe he did some bad things but he knows how to be a leader.’ Bayu and the others had expressed their changing attitudes towards Gusmão. He no longer commanded their adoration. Reinado came to fill this leadership void and his calls to justice and ‘the truth’ was a mobilising cry that they could relate to.

Major Alfredo Reinado’s discourse on ‘justice’ was an important constituent of the ‘utopic future’ vision that he offered as an alternative to the lost promises of the resistance struggle. After his death, a Dili-based-Indonesian-language publication wrote a kind of eulogy in its editorial with the title, ‘Alfredo – an historical icon’. The piece explains, ‘Alfredo is a difficult youth icon to ignore in Timor... [he also] changed the climate of Timorese politics...Now he has gone forever but he leaves behind a history [of] fighting discrimination and evil’ (Time Timor 2008).

The ‘Reinado case’, as it became known, highlights cycles of violence that continue in postcolonial Timor and the pain and trauma that remains unaddressed and unacknowledged by the leadership (Niner 2008). It also says much about the nature of Timorese youth and the manifestation of a marginalised and militarised youth generation with narrow terms of cultural reference in constructing their identities as post-independent youth. Given the historical fetish for the military leader type in Timor-

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34 This is described in Chapter Three in reference to Xanana Gusmão’s leadership of the clandestine front.
35 Alfredo Reinado led a rebellion in the military and played a major role in the disintegration of the police and military relations which precipitated the 2006 crisis. After eluding authorities for almost two years, he was killed in gun-fire on an attack at Jose Ramos-Horta’s residence in February 2008.
Re-membering a New Nation: Discourses of Truth, Justice and Belonging

Leste, it is not difficult to understand the popular appeal of Major Alfredo Reinado, who for many ordinary Timorese citizens, came to fill the void of the exemplary resistance leadership figure. The loyalty he elicited from young people was visible in graffiti painted around Dili and the fact that youth gangs signed a pact in support of him (see images 24 and 25).

While Gembel members harboured adoration for Reinado’s ‘strong’ military style leadership, they also engaged in other activities in which other cultural references and relationships were being built. This multiple range of activities defies singular understandings of them as ‘wild youth’ as represented by the ‘conflict paradigm’ approach which tends to only view Timorese as either victims of perpetrators of violence (particularly in the literature after the 2006 crisis – see for example Harrington 2007; World Bank 2007).

The print-making workshops (see Bexley 2007a) that involved Gembel youth illustrate the ways in which young Timorese are striving to be productive and socially connected members of society despite their marginality. In 2008, after two successful collaborations in Canberra and Indonesia, the print making collective Culture Kitchen that I established with Canberra-based printmakers, Jon Priadi, Julian Laffan and Bernie Slater, decided to hold a training workshop and exhibition in Timor-Leste with the Gembel artists. I secured funding for Culture Kitchen and a member from Taring Padi,36 Bayu Widodo to travel to Timor for a month-long schedule of workshops and an exhibition.

Printmaking is a relatively new art form in Timor-Leste and the power of the communicative possibilities of print definitely struck a chord with Gembel artists. Given the lack of resources available to the members of the group, they had a natural inclination for DIY – a do-it-yourself philosophy that requires young Timorese to think creatively to meet their needs. This way of life provides a firm base for printmaking which requires manual manipulation of materials using hand-held tools. The bold, graphic nature of relief printing suited the sense of urgency that the Gembel artists had in communicating their concerns. The possibilities of multiplicity and widespread dissemination were also appealing.

During the workshops with Gembel, discourses of justice were discussed and visually represented in a series of lino-prints. The focus on justice demonstrates the continuity of youth discourses discussed in the previous section about pre-independence youth. The

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36 Taring Padi is a Yogyakarta-based art collective that established itself in the Indonesian artworld in 1998 with a call to a return to a more popular orientated arts approach (Ind. seni kerakyatan). For the last ten years, Taring Padi has worked with communities in rural and urban Java and further abroad in Asia and Australia. They work in a number of genres of visual culture and are best known for their wood-cut prints engaging with social and political issues. This wood-cut print style has been taken up by Gembel artists.
prints also illustrate young Timorese’ criticism of Timorese government priorities. The rice shortage, the purchase of the luxury four-wheel drives (also discussed in an edition of Kla’ak magazine in the previous section) and the installation of the outdoor cinema screens on the government palace building as a tokenistic attempt in curbing youth violence became key issues of debate and representation in the works.

The works produced by Gembel in collaboration with the Culture Kitchen and Taring Padi illustrate the multifaceted nature of youth in contemporary Timor. They are not easily categorised as violent and disconnected youth but must also be seen for their attempts at making meaning out of place through interconnection. The themes address the ways in which youth are applying indigenous concepts such as *ajuda malu* (Tet. helping one another). Rather than focusing on conflict, the artworks and the collaborative processes illustrate the ways in which young Timorese are immensely interconnected citizens as they relate to each other, as youth, as easterners, as westerners and as Timorese citizens prioritising people-to-people relationships with Australians and Indonesians. The visual representations in the artwork also illustrate how young Timorese are connected to both ‘traditional’ cultural knowledge and the contemporary ‘modern’ context of the nation-state and therefore defy the representations of ‘urban youth groups’ (Scambary et al. 2006). One of the four lino-prints, titled *Tebe-hare* illustrates the traditional dance, the *tebe-tebe* of crushing rice in which the dancers step in and out, encircling a mound of harvested rice. This is an important symbol for young Timorese. Bayu one of the young Gembel artists explained, ‘They still use *Tebe-hare* in my village to turn rice into food. It is also important because it reaffirms our cultural identity of self-sufficiency (Tet. *ukun rasik aam)*.

The picture Gembel present is complex in light of Timor’s postcolonial redefinition. This group is representative of a new generation of youth in Timor-Leste who are coming of age in an era radically different from the Generation of ’99 and where the mechanics of the new nation-state insist on defining parameters of inclusion and exclusion. The case study of Gembel illustrates the ways in which exclusion to the Generation of ’99 was being played out after the crisis in 2006. Older generation youth redefined the borders of belonging by excluding Gembel members from activities for their perceived ignorance and involvement in the ‘wrong type’ of demonstration activity. Although membership was temporarily denied, Gembel continued to draw on past cultural references in their attempts to construct a sense of cultural citizenship. The activities of Gembel defy representations of youth as violent and urban-bound as demonstrated by the conflict paradigm. While they are drawn to military styles of leadership, they are also interested in connecting to other artists in Indonesia in their discussions and visual representations of the issues they face. In doing so, they are also remapping the ways in which Timor engages with Indonesia. Justice remains a dominating theme in the issues of concern for this group of young Timorese. In their attempts at defining cultural citizenship, young Timorese involved in the Gembel group
draw on transcultural, historical and gendered references that articulate a socio-political youth identity.

**Conclusion**

While a notion of retributive justice was supported by Timorese leaders during the resistance, the idea of reconciliation and forgetting certain histories (particularly the multifaceted engagement with Indonesia) became privileged after independence. This was most notably endorsed by Xanana Gusmão who embraced an approach to this history of Indonesia as ‘let bygones be bygones’. Meanwhile, the ideal of retributive justice and memories of Indonesia remained important to many Timorese, in particular a group of Generation of ‘99. They expressed profound disappointment in the national leadership and their failure to deliver on the promises of the resistance. At the same time, this group began to contest notions of youth subordination that defined them during the resistance. As outlined earlier in the thesis, discourses of truth and justice are important in constituting a sense of cultural citizenship. Remembering Indonesia in certain ways plays a critical role in these discourses where, ‘particular versions of history and memories are unstable, and can be revisited, reframed and recycled for different purposes’ (Zurbuchen 2005: 6). For this group of young Timorese, the crimes committed by Indonesian generals and their militia were important because they remain unaddressed and because of they are fundamental to their identities as young patriotic, sacrificing and suffering Timorese and therefore, legitimises their claim on cultural citizenship.

In this chapter, I advanced the idea introduced earlier in this thesis that young Timorese themselves are transcultural subjects in the ways they manage to create subjectivities-in-the-making by drawing on a range of cultural influences. Young Timorese forged relationships with young Indonesian filmmakers and journalists in order to invest in a sense of cultural citizenship and belonging within the nation-state of Timor-Leste. This group of young Timorese began to remember and engage with Indonesia in a much more complex way compared to the governing Timorese elite in an active effort to construct a sense of cultural citizenship.

The 2006 socio-political crisis was symptomatic of the profound (and ongoing) socio-political transformations Timor-Leste experienced as a postcolonial new nation-state. The limits of cultural citizenship were reached as division pervaded Timorese society and had particularly dire consequences for Generation of ‘99 unity. The crisis of 2006 must also be seen as an effect of the nation-state’s preoccupation with defining belonging. By its very nature, the nation-state must define inclusion and exclusion. Power dynamics and relations marked by difference often recur and younger Timorese were marginalised and excluded from staking a claim in both the official discourses of belonging and alternative notions of cultural citizenship which relied on temporal and
contingent notions of the suffering, patriotic youth. The new youth generation in Timor-Leste does not share the same history of the resistance movement as the Generation of '99. However, in an era of uncertainty surrounding cultural citizenship and belonging, they fashion themselves by drawing upon historical and gendered cultural references of the youth generations that have gone before them.
CHAPTER SEVEN

Back to the Future:
Young Timorese in 21st Century Timor-Leste

In October 1999, when UN troops stopped the killing and restored safety, I became extremely tired. I could not concentrate, all my energy evaporating like steam into the air. The doctor in Australia thought I might have glandular fever but when I spoke to people in East Timor I found the whole population was feeling the same...

Another legacy of my resistance childhood is that I had to learn not to trust. I am naturally inquisitive but I had to try to curb this trait because I was working so closely with the leaders. In my mind I continued to ask questions but I understood the consequences if I knew too much. The situation forced me into a mould of being secretive and now that is what I am.... Friends often complain that I give no information about myself, I just listen... My life has not been an ordinary one so, although I am trying to lessen this tendency to be secretive in myself, the lessons of childhood, branded into me by violence, are difficult to change. People need to understand the context in which I was formed.

This thesis has provided a situated account of the historical, geographical and emotional context in which Naldo Rei and his generation – the Generation of '99 – were formed. Many young Timorese themselves have begun the process of reflecting on their time in the resistance and the early years of independence; Naldo Rei’s book is but one example of this process. Their young lives were abruptly interrupted by the Indonesian invasion and were subsequently enmeshed in webs of secrecy and subterfuge as they spent their teenage and early adulthood years in the clandestine resistance movement. However, they were not mere victims. In these difficult conditions, young Timorese constructed a youth community in which new outlooks, attitudes and cultural references were established. At the end of the Indonesian occupation, the community that young Timorese had established began to fall into decline when the objective of independence had been achieved. Although independence brought positives such as freedom from military oppression, it also resulted in a deep sense of loss for a critical community. Compounding this sense of disorientation was the power dynamics inherent in the nation-state that insisted on defining belonging. Young Timorese were marginalised in this process. The disunity among young Timorese during the crisis of 2006 was an expression of the nation-state’s insistence on defining the boundaries of belonging.

My research has traced the influences that shaped the ‘imagined community’ of Timorese youth which, as I have explained, is historical, gendered and transcultural in nature. The period of Portuguese colonialism and its education and language policies facilitated the emergence of a wholly new political consciousness among young Timorese. The stage was set for youth to play a socio-political role and their identities became intertwined with processes of nationalism. The Indonesian New Order, through its education and language policies, provided the conditions for the continuity of a politicised Timorese youth identity. The structures of the Portuguese and Indonesian colonisers made it possible for young Timorese to imagine their new gendered selves outside realms of traditional society. At the same time, they were able to construct their own identities as Timorese youth and this should not be underestimated.

Despite representations in the conflict paradigm of Timorese as mere victims of the Indonesian occupation, my research has uncovered the multiple ways in which young Timorese have made meaning out of the conflict they had endured, positioning them as agents, not passive recipients. Through personal and collective experiences of violence and fear, young Timorese molded their own militant and masculine identities. Absence from home and family responsibilities meant that many young Timorese students in Indonesia could explore new ways of being and create young modern, gendered selves. Most importantly, young Timorese formed a critical community in Indonesia where the peer group became absolutely fundamental to their sense of purpose and in some instances replaced the family unit. Despite the conflict paradigm’s tendency to view Indonesia as monolithically ‘evil’, it seems that the multifaceted memories of and
engagement with Indonesia remain important to young Timorese' pasts and futures. For a group of young Timorese, their representation of the past was critical to the continuity of youth discourses on truth and justice and serves as a stake in which they can claim legitimate membership in the nation-state.

A recurring theme throughout this thesis is the role of transculturalism in identity formation and belonging in the nation-state. Through this construct, I have called into question the idea of a borderless world demonstrating to the contrary that transcultural processes are integral to the many dynamics of national belonging. Young Timorese drew on ideas about nationalism from neighbouring Indonesia and African countries to construct their radical anti-colonial nationalist movement in the 1970s, which in turn, came to define a group of young Timorese of the time. Generation of '99 Timorese called upon international discourses of justice, human rights and Rastafarian sacrifice. These discourses served to position young Timorese as cosmopolitans who shared an openness towards the world and cultural difference. However, the purpose of mobilising such discourses was always to create a place of belonging within the nation-state. In this way, young Timorese can also be considered cosmopatriots.

Due to their involvement in the clandestine movement, young Timorese occupied a liminal state and were heralded as heroes in the national narrative. After independence however, the discourses surrounding their heroic role dissolved and yet their liminal status remained and they were not reintegrated back into society. Young Timorese born during the Indonesian New Order have remained in an extended liminal condition. Their experience within the resistance meant that their childhoods were foreshortened and yet, during independence, they have been denied full access to the rights of adulthood by not being acknowledged as legitimate citizens by contrary narratives of belonging within the nation-state.

The nation-state’s insistence on defining belonging revolved around power dynamics of difference. The most notable attempt by the nation-state to mark difference was to constitutionalise Portuguese as the official language. Although the intention was to shift Timor’s attention and orientation away from the recent horrors of the Indonesian occupation, the decision had the immediate effect of defining Indonesian-educated Timorese as not belonging in the new nation-state. But, as I have illustrated, this propelled a group of young Timorese to formulate a cultural citizenship for themselves through the embodied notion of rasa. Young Timorese mobilised the affective modes of music, stories and poetry to highlight a sense of collective youthful patriotism, a morality of loyalty, sacrifice and suffering in their quest to belong in the nation-state. These attempts at constructing a sense of cultural citizenship were rooted in local 'hierarchies of suffering'. They highlight the ways in which people were able to redress their rightful place of belonging in the new nation-state and redefine belonging.
There are limits to the extent to which cultural citizenship can fulfill the need to belong in Timor-Leste. The nation-state’s insistence on defining belonging meant that power dynamics and relations marked by difference repeated themselves. The 2006 socio-political crisis illustrated the disempowering sense of disunity that came to pervade the Generation of ’99 as a result of these power dynamics. These power dynamics continue to mark difference and marginalise younger Timorese from their claims on youth identity and belonging.

**Final thoughts**

Over the past seven years, I have been asked many times by people in Australia (and elsewhere, including in Timor-Leste) if young Timorese really are a ‘lost generation’. I felt that a stock standard answer was never possible given the complexity of Timor as a locale of the postcolonial. What is clear, however, is that a failure to involve and acknowledge young generation Timorese and their role in the processes of early nationhood has narrowed the opportunity for young Timorese to reintegrate themselves into society; a society itself undergoing rapid transformation.

Changes within Timor itself have brought about a rise in social and spatial mobility. More young Timorese are moving away from their families to Dili in search of employment, wealth and opportunity. With the increasing urban middle class, young Timorese are also going to Indonesia in record numbers since independence as tertiary students and increasingly, as senior high school students (see Bexley 2009). In addition, many young Timorese (and increasing numbers of young Fatalukans) are heading to Europe to work in factories.

As a site of post-conflict connection and disconnection, the presence of international agencies and the focus on economic development has had a considerable impact in defining difference and marginality. The scenes as I leave Dili on August 30 2009, to submit this thesis and exactly ten years after the vote for independence, vividly exemplify these differences. Dili is abuzz with development activity. The New York-style yellow taxis are a recent addition to the city’s continually congested roads with (locally-owned) four-wheel drives; the port is overflowing with containers; the streets are lined with billboards of various city ‘beautification’ projects; new exclusive developments dot the shoreline, all giving rise to a kind of lusotropical utopia (see Kammen 2009) that remains out of reach to the average young Timorese person.

On the eve of August 30, the city is alive with talk of Krisdayanti, an Indonesian artist who was invited by the government to perform as the lead act in the celebrations. Young Timorese expressed concern with the fact they have been, once again, left on the margins of nation-state processes by the governing elite. Although Dili abounds with
young musical talent, not one young Timorese musician was invited to play at the celebrations.

Although members of the Generation of ‘99 are becoming increasingly involved in the upper echelons of government (see McWilliam and Bexley 2007) it remains to be seen to what extent they will be able to formulate and realise their own long-held political aspirations. And, more importantly, it remains to be seen to what extent they can include the hopes and aspirations of an emerging generation of youth and avoid repeating the palpable sense of disenfranchisement that has thus far marked Timor’s transition to independent nationhood.


Blockade — see Unknown


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