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Crossover Politics

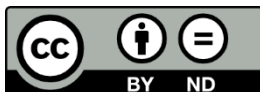
Spatiotemporal images of the nation-state and the vintage aesthetics of the margins in post-Suharto political oratory

by

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Crossover Politics
Spatiotemporal Images of the Nation-State and the Vintage Aesthetics of the Margins in
Post-Suharto Political Oratory

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Abstract

This paper draws on Bakhtin's (1981) insights on the organic interconnectedness of time and space, what he called chronotope, to explore how new styles of political oratory may produce fundamental re-articulations of the spatiotemporal representation of the nation-state in contemporary Indonesia. In the late 1990s, a global financial crisis impacted Indonesia's economy. The New Order regime led by President Suharto came to an abrupt closure after three decades of authoritarian rule and Indonesia underwent a major transition from state-led development to a decentralized system managed through neoliberal policies (Peluso et al. 2008). Drawing on audiovisual data recorded in a peripheral region of upland Sulawesi, I examine the re-articulation of the interplay between speech forms and forms of political rationality that followed this institutional shift. My analysis focuses on the emerging aesthetics of "the vintage" and "the peripheral." I discuss how the usage of regional language (Toraja) and the deployment of formulas of anticolonial rhetoric are currently used to craft novel spatiotemporal forms of collective belonging and convey enhanced oratorical agency. Indeed, besides undermining the authority of bureaucratic Indonesian, the deployment of linguistic "pastness" and the celebration of locality allow an aesthetic re-articulation of the New Order's chronotopic representation of the nation-state as a spatial entity capable of "vertically encompassing" local communities (Ferguson and Gupta 2002) and existing in the immobile synchronicity of an eternal present (Pemberton 1994). At a more general level, through framing political discourse as a site for examining the shifts in the politics of locality and temporality in our contemporary changing world, this case brings the focus on situated communicative interaction to bear on the study of the zones of cultural friction (Tsing 2005) underlying the global processes of late capitalism.

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Introduction: Global Frictions and Local Crossovers

To pop music aficionados the term “crossover” immediately evokes the blending and fusion between different genres or “sounds.” As Dyer (2004: 64) points out, “[...] a cross-over star is one who appeals to more than one musical subcultures; one who, though rooted in a particular tradition of music with a particular audience, somehow manages to appeal, and sell, beyond the confines of that audience.” Paul Roberson, who, according to Dyer (2004), was the pioneering epitome of black crossover artist, managed to combine a markedly “black” image with popularity amongst both white and black audiences. Pat Boone adapted tunes originally composed and recorded by African-American musicians and made them popular among the mainstream white public, while Elvis Presley’s success owed much to his notorious cover versions of to his notorious cover versions of blues and gospel classics. As these few examples of musical go-betweens suggest, the idea of crossover is inherently paradoxical. On the one hand, it presupposes a consistency between specific “cultures” and their expressive forms; on the other hand, it allows the possibility of crossing cultural and aesthetic boundaries. On the one hand, it assumes ideals of stylistic purism and cultural atavism; on the other hand, it celebrates syncretism².

The focus of this article is not U.S. pop music, but contemporary Indonesian political discourse. However, as we will see in the following pages, the cultural and aesthetic paradoxes of crossover music can offer interpretative guidance through the unlikely intersections between local and exogenous discursive genres, political cultures, and styles for the presentation of the self that have emerged in the Toraja highlands of Sulawesi where I have been doing intermittent long and midterm fieldwork since 1997. During the last fifteen years, the Toraja highlands (and Indonesia at large) have experienced the pervasive diffusion

² Following Briggs and Bauman’s (1992) famous analysis of intertextuality, generic purity and hybrid crossover productions should not be seen as absolute entities, but rather as dynamic outcomes within a continuum of ongoing negotiations between minimizations and maximizations of “the distance between texts and genres” (Briggs and Bauman 1992: 149).

of global political idioms and transnational ideologies, which oftentimes stood at odds with the established patterns of political practices and speechmaking (see Donzelli 2004, 2007a). How can we gain an understanding of the sociolinguistic transformations engendered by Toraja increasing involvement in transnational global processes?

Drawing on the notion of enregisterment (Agha 2003, 2005, 2007)³, an emerging literature on the sociolinguistic underpinning of the spreading of global models of democracy (see for example, Bate 2004; Cody 2009a, 2009b; Hull 2010; Jackson 2013). This literature has exposed the semiotic associations between modes of speaking and the formation of publics around bundles of political ideologies and practices, revealing the operations of the “cultural structuring of ‘voices’ associated with social groups” (Irvine 1990: 130). While this literature has been invaluable in demonstrating how fine-grained analyses of actual language use are needed to capture the local nuances taken by global processes, its focus on an analytics of diacritic oppositions⁴ may not be always suitable to interpret the zones of friction, ambiguity, and misunderstanding that according to Tsing (2005) characterize unequal cultural encounters in the global South. I argue that the fuzzy and paradoxical logics

³ The notion of ‘enregisterment’ has been key in furthering the understating of the relation between speech forms, social meanings, and linguistic features. Through processes of enregisterment, “distinct forms of speech come to be socially recognized (or enregistered) as indexical of speakers attributes by a population of language users” (Agha 2005: 38). Enregisterment entails the dissemination, solidification, normalization, and stabilization –across a group of speakers- of semiotic indexical relations connecting speech repertoires, cultural meanings, and social types.

⁴ For example, Cmiel (1991) examined the struggle that took place, towards the end of the eighteenth century, between the neoclassical tradition of American oratory and the new populist rhetoric of the “middling styles.” The former was associated with the neoclassical humanistic ideal of the “unified soul” of the cultivated gentleman (Cmiel 1991: 14), the latter was emblematic of a new ideology of professionalism based on the “compartmentalized self” of the professional expert, endowed with specific “skills” and capable of combining the refined and the vulgar, as prescribed by the new demand of mass democracy (Cmiel 1991: 13). Analyzing political speechmaking in Tamil emergent democracy, Bate (2004) described a similar, though specular, shift within the relation between oratorical genres and models of the ideal political/moral subject. He showed how, in 1940s and 1950s Tamilnadu, orators increasingly abandoned the common register (*koccaittamil*) to embrace a more refined and literary register, called *centamil*. The use of this archaized and literary language was evocative of the ancient Dravidian civilization and of the Tamil (Dravidian) nationalist struggle against “the politicians of the pan-Indian Congress Party” (Bate 2004: 340) who, in spite of their being mostly high caste Brahmins, lacked verbal dexterity in *centamil*. The cultural logic of this intriguing oratorical shift revolved around the existence of oppositional semiotic associations between verbal aesthetics and political values and subjectivities. Hull’s (2010) analysis of American technologies of speech aimed, during WWII, at implementing democratic ideologies reveals a similar cultural logic based on a binary “opposition between democracy and autocracy” (Hull 2010: 258).

of generic crossovers may provide an additional model for understanding the linguistic outcomes of political transformations, in which different registers, genres, and “fashions of speaking” (Whorf 1956: 158) overlap, producing ambiguous, contradictory, and unstable constellations of speech forms and political practices.

Following the 1998 demise of President Suharto’s New Order regime, Indonesia has become the stage of a rampant ideology of transnational neoliberal democracy. Epitomized by emphatic appeals to “transparency” and “good governance,” this new ideology emerged as the discursive leitmotiv underlying the structural implementation of a radical program of decentralization, which was warmly endorsed by transnational neoliberal agencies such as the IMF, the World Bank, and the Asian Development Bank.

While at first sight Post-Suharto public discourse seems pervaded by a hegemonic ideology of transnational neoliberal democracy that leaves little room for local interpretations, a closer look reveals a more complex picture. I engage this complexity by offering an account of crossover forms of intertextuality produced through an emerging aesthetics of “the vintage” and “the peripheral.” Drawing on audiovisual data recorded in Toraja between 2001 and 2006, this paper examines the aesthetic and discursive crossovers engendered by “global encounters across difference” (Tsing 2005: 3) resulting from the spreading of the global idioms of transnational neoliberal democracy that accompanied the end of the Suharto’s New Order regime and the beginning of the Reform Era (I: *Era Reformasi*). The focus of my analysis concerns the shifts in the spatial and temporal (i.e. chronotopic) representations of the Indonesian nation-state in the early years of the post-Suharto Reform Era.

One of the *Reformasi* hallmarks has been the structural implementation of a radical program of decentralization, commonly referred to as regional autonomy (I: *otonomi daerah* or *otoda*). When, in May 1998, pressed by the socio-economic and political turmoil triggered

by the Asian financial crisis and fuelled by the students' demonstrations and the communal conflicts that were sweeping the country, Suharto resigned, the newly appointed president Habibie took strong decentralizing measures. Indeed, the new legislation on regional autonomy (Law 22 and 25 of 1999), issued in May 1999 and implemented at the beginning of 2001, aimed at devolving most of state functions to the sub-provincial level (cities and regencies). The central government only retained a few functions such as defense, foreign relations, etc.

A widely shared representation of post-Suharto Indonesia has been centered on a narrative of increased popular participation through administrative decentralization (see for example, Aspinall and Fealy 2003; Antlöv 2003; Syaikh Usman 2002). However, far from uniquely consisting in a process of power transfer from the central government to local administrations, regional autonomy set off a new mode of political power characterized by multilateral agreements between transnational financial agencies, traditional local authorities, and sectors of governmental and non-governmental organizations. Central to this new political landscape have been moralizing appeals to transparent "good governance," the emergence of new idioms and models of political discourse, and the outsourcing of state governance functions to multi-scalar coalitions of transnational agencies and semi- or non-governmental institutions.

How have cosmopolitan political idioms and transnational moral ideologies been re-contextualized and transformed in a relatively remote area of upland Indonesia? What forms of political crossover have emerged from the frictional encounters between traditional Toraja speechmaking and global political ideologies and discourses? In what follows, I will show how aside from the spreading of a global rhetoric of neoliberal good-governance, early *Reformasi* political discourse in Toraja exhibited a novel aesthetics of "the vintage" and "the peripheral." Through concrete examples drawn from situated interactions, I will show how

this vintage aesthetics of the margins produced a discursive subversion of the hierarchized vertical space frozen in a perennial present, which characterized the consolidated templates for community imagination during the New Order.

Through this analysis, I seek to highlight the production of a number of discursive crossovers: between neoliberal transnational scripts and rhetorical elements of 1940s and 1950s anticolonial rhetoric, as well as between the New Order scalar politics of vertically nested levels of power and identity and the multiscalar and rhizomatic assemblages that have been characterizing forms of governance and group membership in post-Suharto Indonesia. By showing how larger discursive formations such as the New Order's cultural politics of Time and Space can be redefined through situated instances of communicative interaction, this paper centers on political discourse as a crucial site for examining the shifts in the politics of locality and temporality that have been developing in Indonesia since the millennium. This analysis of how discursive genres shape humans' imagination of their belonging in specific configurations of space-time may contribute to advance the understanding of globalization, an elusive notion, which I propose to imagine as a chronotope of a progressively shrinking space and ever accelerating time.

A Time Suspended Between the “No Longer” and the “Not Yet”

When, at the beginning of the new millennium, I moved to Toraja in order to conduct my doctoral fieldwork, I was confronted with the discursive epiphany of a new “Era.” A sense of this new temporality resonated in the emphatic announcements concerning the arrival of a new political paradigm, a time of democracy and transparency that marked a drastic rupture with the authoritarian times of Suharto's repressive regime.

Interestingly, the celebration of the advent of a new political phase was often coming from Toraja civil servants and politicians who were busy figuring out how to preserve their

seats, in spite of the demands for a political renewal of local administration. This apparent paradox is well illustrated by the enthusiastic proclamation made by a local politician who was well known for his strong association with *Golkar* (Suharto's political party), of which he had been a representative in the national parliament for many decades. In spite of his political allegiances, speaking during a state-sponsored meeting (I: *rapat*) that took place at the beginning of 2003, the man stressed the trope of epochal transformation⁵:

(1) Mr. D. –*Rapat Pembentukan Lembang* (I: village construction Meeting) - [Marinding Elementary School, February 4, 2003 - Tape 23]

963. dan jaman sekarang adalah jaman jaman transparansi
'and the contemporary moment is a time of transparency'

964. jaman keterbukaan, dan komunikasi yang jelas
'a time of openness and of clear communication'

At the same meeting, another member of the local political establishment celebrated the advent of a grass root form of democracy in which the major decisions would be taken by the civil society. As it was often pointed out at the time of my fieldwork in the early 2000s, the radical discontinuity with the New Order here is framed as a shift from a top-down to a bottom up form of political rationality:

(2) Mr. A.H. IV –*Rapat Pembentukan Lembang* (I: village construction Meeting) - [Marinding Elementary School, February 4, 2003 - Tape 23 /Video # 8 TC 00:11:01]

1339. karena sekarang ini aspirasi dari bawah, Pak,
'because now [it is] the aspirations from below, Sir,'

1340. bukan lagi dari atas
'[it is] not anymore from above'

1341. dengan paradigma baru sekarang ini betul-betul

⁵ In transcribing my data, I followed intonation units. Lines' numbers correspond to the integral transcription of the speech event.

‘with this new paradigm now [it is] really’

1342. aspirasi masyarakat itu diperhatikan

‘the aspirations of the civil society that are considered’

In a paradigmatic realization of the awkward, unexpected, and unstable encounters between global, national, and local forces that Tsing (2005) spoke about, the political conjunction in which I conducted my fieldwork was marked by the unprecedented interplay of people and ideological repertoires. A new emphasis on the “civil society” (Hedman 2006; Salemink 2006)—a common buzzword within international development agencies—animated seemingly paradoxical encounters among a heterogeneous assortment of political actors. Village elders, NGO activists, Jakarta-based journalists, and local members of the previous conservative political establishment engaged lively discussions about indigenous political institutions, pre-colonial administrative boundaries, and the new political rationality of “good governance” advocated by transnational financial institutions (Hadiz 2004; Robison and Hadiz 2005).

Neoliberal Good Governance and the *Era Reformasi*

In the post-Suharto political landscape, “good governance” quickly gained ground as an all-encompassing term that defined the advent of new political era and incorporated a wide array of political notions, becoming a discursive banner that condensed all that was new and good about the *Era Reformasi*: decentralization, regional autonomy, grass root democracy, transparency, fight against corruption, power to civil society, and, last but not least, the revival of cultural traditions and the revitalization of allegedly autochthonous traditional political systems.

Omnipresent in the numerous reports on governance reform that proliferated in Indonesia in the early 2000s (Partnership for Governance Reform 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005), “good governance” had been a discursive mantra in the IMF headquarters since the mid 1990s (Camdessus 1998; World Bank 1996, 2006). As Ong (2006: 3) pointed out, a centerpiece of neoliberalism is constituted by the implementation of a new “technology of government” aimed at recasting “governing activities as nonpolitical and non-ideological problems that need technical solutions.” In this light, “good governance” was particularly well suited for the neoliberal project in that it implied a departure “from a hierarchical to a network mode of governance” (Fairclough 2005:1) and a gesturing towards a form of political management based on horizontal and egalitarian relations rather than on vertical ones. Furthermore, contrary to traditional political qualifications (i.e. left, right, liberal, conservative, radical, etc.), “good governance” entailed a technocratic value free approach to politics, thus allowing a “denial of social conflict” (Hadiz 2004: 3).

This is nothing new. Since its inception, through a military counter-coup, Suharto’s authoritarian regime had been characterized by the impositions of great limitations to party politics, by the ideological attempt at erasing politics as a legitimate realm of action and discussion, and by the heightened power of bureaucratic and military technocrats in charge of promoting stability and economic growth. Political control during Suharto’s regime strongly discouraged open political discussion, corroborating a negative and suspicious attitude towards all things political. Writing in the 1990s, Webb Keane (1997a: 2) highlighted how *politik* in Indonesian was a word usually loaded with negative connotations and equated to “self-interested intrigue and factionalism” (see also Crystal 1974). A common expression I have often heard, during the 2000s, when my interlocutors intended to express their suspicions and criticism towards the real aim of someone’s argument or actions was ‘*berbau politik*’ (I: ‘it smells politics’), implying the presence of disguised self-interests.

However, while the denial of social conflict and the technocratic/managerial approach to political power had been one of the key features of the New Order (Emmerson 1983, 1987; Hill and Shiraishi 2007; MacDougall 1976; Robison and Hadiz 2005), the transformations triggered by the demise of Suharto's authoritarian rule also entailed novel forms of political rationality. This new rationality, in turn, marked a clear disjuncture with previous chronotopic materialization of the nation-state.

Chronotopes of the Nation-State

Developed in his analysis of the novel and borrowed from Einstein's relativity theory, Bakhtin's (1981:84) notion of chronotope points to the "intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships that are intrinsically expressed in literature." Derived from the Greek *χρόνος* (chronos) time and *τοπος* (topos), place, the chronotope is an organic textual union of time and space and a key device of literary production and analysis.

Such "inseparability of space and time [...] has an intrinsic generic significance [...]. It is precisely the chronotope that defines genre and generic distinctions [...]" (Bakhtin 1981: 84-85). Indeed, chronotopes shape "the logic by which events unfurl, their syntax, the rhythmic quality of plausible actions and counter-actions" (Lemon 2009: 837). For example, in the adventure-time of the Greek romance, "the action of the plot unfolds against a very broad and varied geographical background" leaving "no trace in the life of the heroes or in their personalities" (Bakhtin 1981: 87-90). The generic chronotope of the Greek romance designs a specific configuration of agency and a structure of events pivoting around the force of chance. Its plot unfolds in an "*abstract* expanse of time" (Bakhtin 1981: 99) through "turns of fate," that is, "short segments that correspond to separate adventures" generally introduced "with specific link words: 'suddenly,' 'at just that moment'" (Bakhtin 1981: 91-2).

This literary form departs from other chronotopic models. The idyllic chronotope, for example, evokes a “little spatial world” which “is limited and sufficient unto itself” and contains a potentially limitless “sequence of generations” (Bakhtin 1981: 225). In the idyllic chronotope, “the unity of place brings together and even fuses the cradle and the grave [...] childhood and old age [...], (thus uniting) the life of the various generations who had also lived in that same place, under the same conditions, and who had seen the same things. This blurring of all the temporal boundaries, made possible by a unity of place, also contributes in an essential way to the creation of the cyclic rhythmicalness of time so characteristic of the idyll.” (Bakhtin 1981: 225).

Outside the literary realm, chronotopes are key discursive devices for the production of collective forms of national subjectivities (Eisenlohr 2004; Kelly 1998; Lemon 2009). In his seminal work on nationhood, Benedict Anderson (1991[1983]) highlighted the key role of print-capitalism in producing the “particular form of temporal regimentation” (Eisenlohr 2004: 85) underlying the structures of co-feeling and collective consciousness necessary for the existence of national imagined communities. Anderson (1991[1983]) claims that print-capitalism “mediated depictions of diverse happenings across disperse territories, calibrating them into a homogeneous ‘here-and-now’” (Lemon 2009: 837). While the synchronizing practice of newspaper-reading enabled people who had never met to imagine themselves as members of the same community, the mass consumption of “new literary genres, such as the realist novel,” promoted new modes of experience based on the chronotope of “empty, homogeneous time” (Eisenlohr 2004: 84)⁶.

My argument here is that the political transformations of the *Era Reformasi* had

⁶ As Eisenlohr (2004: 84) effectively explicated, “[t]his new form of experiencing time as linearly moving forward and measurable by clock and calendar provides an abstract yardstick on which otherwise disparate and disconnected events can be conceived as linked by virtue of simultaneity relative to such an axis of time. Anderson argues that this way of conceiving time also enables modern subjects to imagine a national community as progressing forward through history, in a manner somewhat analogous to characters in a novel, whose disparate lives and actions are connected by virtue of being locatable on the same temporal measure of an unfolding plot.”

remarkable effects on the New Order's chronotopic representation of the Indonesian nation-state. Indeed, the anticipatory temporality of the new Reform Era and the new emphasis on bottom up and decentralized forms of political rationality destabilized the New Order national imagination. Specifically, it undermined New Order "chronotopic representation as a vertical spatiality capable of synchronizing diachrony and erasing the differences between past, present, and future (Pemberton 1994).

Bureaucratic Indonesian and the Discursive Production of Verticality

In their seminal paper on the need to develop an ethnographic approach to neoliberal governmentality⁷, Ferguson and Gupta (2002: 981) argued that: "discussions of the imagination of the state have not attended adequately to the ways in which states are spatialized. [...] Through what images, metaphors, and representational practices, they ask, does the state come to be understood as a concrete, overarching, spatially encompassing reality?"⁸.

In Indonesia, a crucial site for the elaboration of State imaginary "through routine bureaucratic practices" (Ferguson and Gupta 2002: 981) has been the development, during the New Order, of Indonesian formal political speech, a register that, following Goebel (2014), I will call bureaucratic Indonesian⁹. Used primarily during state sponsored-meetings (I: *rapat*), bureaucratic Indonesian is characterized by a distinctive prosody (i.e. a certain intonation pattern and a flat tone of voice), a series of morphological and syntactical aspects (such as a prominence of hypotactic constructions on paratactic ones, an expanded use of

⁷ A term that Foucault (1982) used to refer to a meta-form of political technology aimed at governing the conduct and the experience of individual human beings.

⁸ "Because state practices are co-implicated with spatial orders and metaphors, an analysis of the imaginary of the state must include not only explicit discursive representations of the state, but also implicit, unmarked, signifying practices. *These mundane practices often slip below the threshold of discursivity but profoundly alter how bodies are oriented, how lives are lived, and how subjects are formed*" (Ferguson and Gupta 2002: 984, my emphasis).

⁹ For extremely valuable linguistic anthropological analyses of bureaucratic Indonesian see Errington (1986, 1995, 1998a, 1998b, 2000) and Goebel (2007, 2014).

prefixes and suffixes in verbal and nominal morphology, an abundance of fully fledged relative/“yang” construction), a specific lexical register (made of acronyms and words referring to the bureaucratic domain), as well as stylistic features (such as formulaic ways of asking permission to speak and specific honorific opening structures).

Quite consistently throughout the archipelago, during the over three decades of Suharto’s authoritarian regime, Indonesians became accustomed to linking this linguistic variety with State officials and civil servants. Well versed in bureaucratic Indonesian, the *to ma’perenta* (T: the people from the government), as they are indiscriminately called in Toraja, were perceived as the exemplary representatives of the authority of a centralized and militaristic government and as the executors of its top-down policies. Seen from the standpoint of recent linguistic anthropological scholarship, bureaucratic Indonesian constitutes a semiotic register, that is, a bundle of indexical relations that connect repertoires of speech forms with particular social practices and stereotypical “social types” (Agha 2005: 38). Indeed, during the New Order, bureaucratic Indonesian has become “enregistered” (Agha 2003), that is, endowed with the socially recognized semiotic capacity of evoking the “state’s institutional presence” (Errington 1995: 214).

In addition to being indexical of a bundle of semiotic connections of registers, social types, cultural meanings, and social spaces, bureaucratic Indonesian partakes in the linguistic production of material icons of verticality. Indeed, the very syntax of bureaucratic Indonesian has been a key resource for the production of the spatiotemporal representation of power and polity during the New Order. Let’s see for example how, through the performance of a formulaic honorific opening, the State is spatialized through a series of decreasingly inclusive circles of authority and territorial scales.

The excerpt (3) below, which was performed at a funeral that took place in the village of Marinding in December 2002, is emblematic of the stylistic requirement according to

which, during official meetings and ritual occasions, speakers are expected to commence their speech through the performance of an honorific address in which all the authorities and the notables need to be mentioned according to a sequential order that iconically corresponds to their respective hierarchical relations. In spite of the traditional occasion, which may have required the use of Toraja ritual speech (i.e. the regional formal register used in public occasions), the grandchild of the deceased couple in whose honor the funeral was celebrated opened his speech with a typical *rapat*-style Indonesian structure:

(3) Grandchildren's speech-Ne' Kombong Funeral [Marinding, December 28, 2002 -Tape 20]

1. Selamat pagi dan salam sejahtera bagi kita sekalian.
'Good morning and prosperous peace to us/you all'
2. Yang saya hormati Bapak Kepala Desa Kandora bersama aparatnya.
'I express my honor to the village head of Kandora and his apparatus'
3. Yang saya hormati Bapak Pendeta Jemaat Buale' bersama para Majelis.
'I express my honor to Mr. the priest of the parish of Buale' along with its presbytery'
4. Yang Terhormat Bapak-bapak Tokoh Masyarakat,
'To the honored Gentlemen, the notables of the community'
5. Tokoh Agama, Tokoh Pemuda,
'(To) the religious authorities, the representatives of the youth'
6. Bapak-bapak Ibu dan hadirin sekalian
'(to) all the Gentlemen and the Ladies who are present'

The sequential order through which the different individual and collective subjectivities are honorifically addressed in excerpt (3) configures the audience as a hierarchically regimented and functionally organized social entity. The different groups of the civil society and the local religious leadership are vertically encompassed within the secular authority of the village chief. Furthermore, the structuring of the audience presented in this excerpt resonates with the model of society underlying Suharto's *Golkar* party. According to the *Golkar* model, a

compound abbreviation of the terms *golongan karya* (I: functional groups), the Indonesian society was divided into populist and political groupings (the youth, the women, the religious leaders, etc.) that played “a large part of organizational life during the New Order” (Hadiz 2011: 3).

Moving from the ritual context of a funeral ceremony to the more secular setting of a state sponsored meeting we can gain a clearer insight into the manufacturing of what Ferguson and Gupta (2002) called “vertical encompassment.” In excerpt (4), we can see how similar but even more sophisticated architecture in the opening performed by an executive official of the local municipality (Asisten I Tata Praja) at a village meeting I attended in February 2003. Here we may see again how the register’s addressing conventions are being deployed to produce an icon of the State’s mode of power. The top-down order of the honorific formulas used to address the audience iconizes the operations of the centralist state apparatus, producing “an imagined topography of stacked, vertical levels [...] of power” (Ferguson and Gupta 2002: 983):

(4) Mr. A. I T. P. –*Rapat Pembentukan Lembang* (I: village construction Meeting) - [Marinding Elementary School, February 4, 2003 - Tape 23]

455. Yang kami hormati
‘[to the one] that we respect’
456. bapak anggota dewan perwakilan rakyat daerah, Tana Toraja
‘Mr. Member of the Regency legislative council [Highest ranking official at Regency legislative level] of Tana Toraja’
457. yang kami hormati bapak Camat Mengkendek
‘[to the one] that we respect Mr. District Head, together with his apparatus [District chief at the sub-Regency level]’
458. bersama aparatnya,
‘and his staff’
459. eh saudara Asisten Hukum
‘Eh fellow Legal Assistant [Executive official at the Regency level]’
460. saudara kepala Inforkom

- ‘Fellow Head of the Information and Communication Agency’
461. selaku tim pemantau kabupaten
‘[operating] in the capacity of the Regency monitoring team’
462. di kecamatan Mengkendek ini yang saya cintai dan saya hormati,
here in the district of Mengkendek that I cherish and respect
463. bapak-bapak eh
‘Gentlemen of eh...’
464. kalangan dan tokoh adat
‘the group of traditional leaders [Distinguished members of the civil society]’
465. bapak-bapak, ibu-ibu partai politik
‘Ladies and gentlemen of the political parties’
466. para tokoh wanita
‘To the women representatives’
467. tokoh pemuda
‘The youth representatives’
468. eh... tokoh profesi...
‘The representatives of the professional groups...’
469. bahkan seluruh segenap pemuka masyarakat
‘and moreover [to] the whole community of leaders of the civil society’
470. yang saya banggakan dan saya hormati
‘For whom I feel pride and respect’

Like a diagrammatic¹⁰ icon of a nested structure of vertical hierarchical relations, this formulaic opening effectively conveys a material topography of progressively decreasing scales of authority and territoriality. The syntactic order of the words is at the same time symptomatic and generative of the state-sponsored authority underlying the hierarchical relations between the participants.

Such discursive construction of a centralist political imaginary was paralleled by the New Order’s bureaucratic and administrative structure, which revolved around a highly vertical and scalar mode of power. For example, the paperwork procedure that foreign researchers needed to undergo during the New Order in order to apply for a research permit

¹⁰ According to Peirce (1974[1931]: 2.277) diagrammatic icons are “those which represent the relations [...] of the parts of one thing by analogous relations in their own parts”.

(I: *ijin penelitian*) from the Indonesia Institute of Science¹¹ (I: *Lembaga Ilmu Pengetahuan Indonesia*, shortened as LIPI) clearly reflected a mode of spatializing the State that combined a very centralist structure with a capillary network of control at every sub-level of local authority. Obtaining a research permit required a long bureaucratic pilgrimage on behalf of the researcher, which started in the Jakarta administrative headquarters and proceeded through a series of visits to progressively lower level offices where the researcher had to report (I: *melapor*) and turn in the paperwork s/he had been provided with in the previous office. The spiral of letters was always issued in an organized progression from center to periphery. The central office within the National Department of Home Affairs would, for instance, issue a letter to its corresponding branch at the Provincial level, the National Police Headquarters in Jakarta would provide a letter to be delivered to the Provincial Police station, and so forth downwards through the hierarchical ladder of authority.

Thus, the vertical encompassment underlying the New Order mode of power was characterized by a high degree of congruency between forms of governmentality and administrative structures. These were organized through a funnel-like structure of progressively decreasing levels of power and inclusion¹² with the central state (I: *negara*) at the top, followed by the province (I: *propinsi*), and by the lower levels of the regency (I: *kabupaten*) or, in urban areas, the municipality (I: *kotamadya*)¹³, the district (I: *kecamatan*), the rural (I: *desa* or conglomeration of few villages), or urban (I: *kelurahan*), zonal conglomeration, the village (I: *kampong*), and the village section (I: *dusun*).

¹¹ This procedure had been established by the decree of the President of Indonesia no. 100/1993.

¹² This administrative structure derives from the colonial system of Netherlands Indies: *Reglement op het Beleid der Regering van Nederlandsch Indie* (Stb 1855/2) whose decreasing levels of hierarchical inclusion comprised: *Gewest* (later renamed *Residentie*), *Afdeling*, *Onderafdeling*, *District* and *Onderdistrict* (see Kaho 1988: 21).

¹³ It should be noted that in Indonesia the difference between ‘rural’ and ‘urban’ areas is conceptualized and materially reflected in two different administrative systems. Urban areas are thus organized in municipalities (*kotamadya*), which are administrated by a mayor (*walikota*). Whereas, rural areas are divided into *kabupaten* (regencies) and are administrated by a *bupati* (who thus corresponds to the function played by the mayor in urban places) (cf. ICG 2003; Crystal 1971: 124).

Chronotopes of Verticalized Space and Synchronized Time

We saw how in the New Order's markedly autocratic framework, the State had been represented as hierarchically encompassing "its localities" through its being situated practically and metaphorically *above* society (Ferguson and Gupta 2002: 981). Such a model provided a strong sense of vertical space, but what about time?

Discussing a type of literary work that appeared towards the end of the Middle Ages, Bakhtin (1981: 156) pointed out the "strong influence of the medieval, otherworldly, vertical axis." In these works, of which Dante's *Divine Comedy* is emblematic, Bakhtin (1981: 156) saw the production of a "vertical world" whose "temporal logic" consisted in "the sheer simultaneity of all that occurs." In this "Dantesque vertical chronotope," Bakhtin (1981: 157-8) saw the attempt "to deny temporal divisions" and "synchronize diachrony." In such a world, "structured according to a pure verticality" temporal divisions are erased so that "[e]verything that on earth is divided by time, here, in this verticality, coalesces into eternity, into pure simultaneous coexistence" (Bakhtin 1981: 157)¹⁴.

This combination of extreme spatial depth and erasure of temporal divisions resonates with Pemberton's (1994: 155) assertion that the New Order was founded on a "peculiar sense of temporality," that is, a way of imagining national time as anchored in a temporal aesthetics of present-ness created through the conflation between past and future. Centered on an idea of "cultural inheritance" (Pemberton 1994: 154), the temporal aesthetics of the New Order revealed the attempt at erasing "the difference between past, present, and future, and thus flatten [...] time—[...] and the extraordinary violence of the New Order's own origins—*into a continuously presented present*" (Pemberton 1994: 155, my emphasis).

¹⁴ As Bakhtin (1981: 157) further explains, temporal divisions "have no substance here; they must be ignored in order to understand this vertical world; everything must be perceived as being within a single time, that is, in the synchrony of a single moment; one must see this entire world as simultaneous".

According to Pemberton (1994), this aesthetic structure of temporality is epitomized in the cultural theme park constructed in the early 1970s by Suharto's wife, Ibu Tien: *Taman Mini Indonesia Indah* (I: The Beautiful Indonesia in Miniature Park). Inspired by a visit to Disneyland, the cultural theme park wanted by Ibu Tien Suharto contained, among other things, a miniature representation of the archipelago, smaller replicas of Indonesia's famous religious buildings and ancient monuments, an outdoor performance arena, a revolving theatre, and 26 pavilions devoted to representing the traditional architectural styles of each of Indonesia's provinces.

Taman Mini monuments departed from the temporal logic that commonly animates the monuments' memorializing function. Indeed, rather than operating as material signs pointing to past events that, through the monument's durability, could be commemorated for by future "posterity", Taman Mini monuments expressed the "obsession with connecting the past and the future in the form of a present" (Pemberton 1994: 155-6). This politics of temporality was, according to Pemberton (1994), operationalized through the specific type of indexical-iconic regimentation in which the relationship between replica and original was conflated, or, better said, reversed. The replicas of the customary houses (*rumah adat*) of each of Indonesia's provinces and the miniature replicas of ancient monuments were meant to exceed their sources, thus allowing the visitor to gain a better grasp of the entirety of the original.

Through a semiotic and aesthetic reversal, the reproductions of material artifacts emblematic of temporal depth and geographic distance operated a scalar reduction of the nation-state spatiotemporal magnitude. In this sense, Taman Mini presented a peculiar re-articulation of semiotic relationship of iconic reproducibility: its miniaturized version of the Borobudur was not an icon standing for the great Buddhist temple of central Java, presumably dating back to the ninth century—that is, it was not a sign of "another place" and

“another time” (Pemberton 1994: 157). In fact, Taman Mini’s Borobodur miniaturized replica aimed at exceeding its original by allowing the visitor to gain a better grasp of the entirety of the original temple, which, due to its gigantic scale, may not be fully experienced. In a similar manner, the replicas of traditional houses were meant to exceed their original counterparts, presenting a stylized and a-temporal representation of “temporarily inhabitable customary spaces” (Pemberton 1994: 159). The aim of Taman Mini houses was to allow each visitor to experience a virtual encounter with her regional place of origin, and at the same time, a partial forgetting of the original homeland.

In a way similar to the diagrammatic icons of vertical encompassment realized through the honorific openings described above, the miniaturized space of Taman Mini afforded a perception of the Indonesian nation-state through the illusion of a “pure simultaneity” (Bakhtin 1981: 157)¹⁵.

Chronotopic Reformation and the Vintage Aesthetics of the Margins

In the early 2000s, the modes of discourse that had shaped the political practice and imagination during the over three decades spent in the frozen present-ness of the Suharto’s regime were suddenly shaken by the advent of the *Reformasi*.

In spite of what turned out to be major continuities with the political practices, social networks, and patrimonial elites of the Suharto’s era (see Robison and Hadiz 2005), the *Reformasi* marked important aesthetic discontinuities with the New Order’s cultural politics. To put it simply: from the point of view of time, the sense of anticipation triggered by the

¹⁵ As Bakhtin (1981: 157) pointed out: “[o]nly under conditions of pure simultaneity -or, [...], in an environment outside time altogether- can there be revealed the true meaning of ‘that which was, and which is and which shall be’: and this is so because the force (time) that had divided these three is deprived of its authentic reality and its power to shape thinking. To ‘synchronize diachrony,’ to replace all temporal and historical divisions and linkages with purely interpretative, extratemporal and hierarchicized ones-such was Dante’s form-generating impulse, which is defined by an image of the world structured according to a pure verticality.”

collapse of 32 years of authoritarian regime and the beginning of the new age of reforms posed fundamental challenges to the New Order's way of imagining time as an immobile present. From the point of view of space, the New Order's centralist and verticalized framework was at odds with the ongoing implementation of regional autonomy and called for the development of new modes of discourse that could aesthetically account for the new emphasis on "civil society"¹⁶.

As mentioned earlier, during the early 2000s, Toraja public discourse gestured toward a political temporality of imminence and towards the need to shift from a "top-down" to a "bottom up" form of governance. The Reform Era appeared as an "almost present future," suspended between the announcement of the Reform's imminent arrival and the ascertainment of its decentralizing effects. The anticipatory character of this new time of beginning was at odds with the New Order's protracted elevation of verticality and erasure of historical depth and futurity. Thus, the crumbling of the New Order's forms of chronotopic imagination triggered by the collapse of the authoritarian regime and the beginning of this new age of reforms posed an aesthetic problem for Indonesian political actors and speech makers: Somewhat unexpectedly, they found themselves searching for a new poetics of the possible in order to imagine the emerging political present. How did political actors deal with this new hybrid mixture of imminence and actuality, which seemed to be hazily lingering between the "no longer," the "just started," and the "not yet?" Through what discursive images and representational practices did they voice the decentralizing reforms endorsed by the neoliberal advocates of structural adjustment (IMF, World Bank, and Asian development Bank) and multilateral institutions?

¹⁶As Cole (2010: 6-7) points out, "[t]his shift can be quickly grasped by comparing the oft-used Soeharto era phrase *Persatuan dan Kesatuan* (Unity and Integrity) [...] with the many public statements on the significance of Indonesia's diversity made by [...] Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, including "democracy's true and ultimate strength lies in its diversity [...]."

I argue that an appeal to a temporality of “pastness” and to the value of linguistic locality played a key role in the reorganization of the main tropes of New Order political discourse. The aesthetic re-articulation of the New Order’s chronotopic representation of the Indonesian nation-state entailed a revival of formulas of the nationalistic and anticolonial rhetoric of the 1940s and 1950s and new expressions of local pride through the deployment of regional languages in contexts where bureaucratic Indonesian would be expected.

In order to give you a sense of this discursive semiotics of “the vintage” and “the peripheral” let me provide you with a visual shortcut. The two pictures below (Image #1 and #2) show the façade of the sub-district “leadership” council of Indonesia Democratic Party of Struggle (PDI-P).



Image #1. PDIP sub-district regional branch, façade. Photo by the author, June 2013

The key emblems of the party stand out: the national colors the Indonesia’s flag, red and white, the party’s logo, the wild bull’s head, the Javanese *banteng*, symbolizing democracy by deliberation, one of the five principles of Indonesia’s national philosophy (i.e *Pancasila*), but also combativeness, given its angry look, pictures of the party’s leader Megawati Sukarnoputri, displayed in Muslim and “Westernized” outfits to appeal to the Muslim and

non-Muslim segments of the electorate, and of course, last but not least, black and white portraits, presumably dating back to the 1940s, featuring Sukarno, who was not only Megawati's father, but also the most famous leader of the country's anti-colonial struggle and the father and first president of Indonesia.



Image #2. PDIP sub-district regional branch, façade detail. Photo by the author, June 2013.

Vintage Aesthetics: Indexing the Past to Envision the Future

As conveyed by the images above, the stylization of the national anticolonial past represents an important semiotic resource to produce a metanarrative of fracture vis-à-vis the Suharto's regime. During the *Reformasi*, making intertextual references to the Sukarno years has gained a subversive flair¹⁷.

To achieve a better grasp of the temporal and stylistic crossovers produced by the revival of this vintage temporality, let me examine a 2002 radio announcement for the law on

¹⁷ On the subversive effect of the replacing of Suharto's face with that Sukarno and Megawati's face on the 50,000 rupiahs bill in the aftermath of Suharto's resignation, see Strassler (2009).

the freedom of press, sponsored by Indonesian Coalition for Freedom of Press and the Partnership for Governance Reform of Indonesia, a multilateral organization emblematic of the transnational assemblages of political actors that characterize the new political landscape of post-Suharto Indonesia¹⁸.

The announcement is conveyed in the form of a *pidato* (I: oration) and clearly resounds with the glorious tradition of anticolonial and nationalistic rhetoric embodied by Sukarno. Before delving into the lexical and grammatical aspects of this excerpt (5), it is important to underline the complex web of meta-references created through the sonic and material characteristics of the ad. The clip starts with the loud background noise of an assembled crowd, which is quickly interrupted by the piercing sound of a megaphone feedback squeal.

In her ethnography of the interplay between FM radio and the emerging of democratic publics in contemporary Nepal, Laura Kunreuther (2013: 15) invites to “tak[e] seriously the materiality of voice—its sounds and how these sounds are linked to particular persons.” As it seems to me, the dense sonic materiality of this ad is crisscrossed with a meaningful web of indexicalities and political allusions. The carefully chosen sound effects (i.e. the noise from the crowd and megaphone distortions) are evocative of the very practice of public assembly, its association with the large rallies of the early post-Independence days and their emancipatory political significance. These noises thus become indexical of democracy and popular participation. Furthermore, the rich sonic texture of the ad’s beginning materializes

¹⁸ Most of the discursive material that substantiated the political debates during at least the initial phases of the decentralization process in Indonesia and in Toraja originated from agencies such as the Partnership for Governance Reform in Indonesia. The Partnership was founded in Jakarta in January 2000 by a set of transnational agencies: UNDP [United Nations Development Program], World Bank, and ADB [Asian development Bank]. It originated as collaboration between the international community (which comprises international development agencies as well as foreign – mostly North American, European, and Japanese-donors) and local actors (namely the Government of Indonesia, local NGO leaders, as well as the private sector) in support of governance reform.

another indexical reference to the vintage temporality and to the elevation of linguistic pastness via gesturing towards “radioaurality,” which during the Sukarno years constituted the “dominant mode of political communication” (Strassler 2009: 75)¹⁹.

These indexical connections with the glorious days of pre-New Order times are made even more explicit by lexical and stylistic features typical of the Sukarno’s speechmaking style. For example, the speech opening line “saudara-saudari sekalian” (at line 1, used in place of the longer honorific openings typical of the New Order Indonesian bureaucratic and political speech), the direct oratorical style, as well as certain lexical items (marked in **boldface**), such as the word “rakyat” (I: people, line 3), are clearly reminiscent of Sukarto’s anticolonial speeches:

(5) Radio Ad on the Freedom of Press (I: *Iklan kebebasan Informasi*)- Partnership for Governance Reform in Indonesia- December 2002

1. **Saudara-saudari sekalian,**
‘Ladies and Gentlemen,’
2. Sistem pemerintahan yang terpusat dan tidak demokratis selama puluhan tahun
‘a government system that has been centralized and non-democratic for decades’
3. telah membuat hubungan **rakyat** dengan pemerintah
‘made the relationship between **the people** and the government’
4. seperti **hubungan budak dengan tuhan.**
‘similar to the relationship of slaves to [their] master.’

In a paradigmatic realization of the discursive crossovers discussed earlier on, the appeal to the repertoire of anticolonial rhetoric is juxtaposed to the global ideology of “good governance,” expressed through a profusion of references (marked in **boldface**) to the

¹⁹ Indeed, as Strassler (2009: 76) pointed out, Sukarno, who used to call himself “an extension of the people’s tongue”, “spoke to and for his people via the radio in a deeply resonant and powerfully affecting voice”. Drawing on Shiraishi (1997: 91), Strassler (2009: 75) pointed out how “the transition from the Sukarno years (1945-1965) to the Suharto regime (1966-1998) coincided with a technological shift in the dominant mode of political communication from radioaurality to televisuality”.

“aspirations” (line 6) of the civil society (line 20), the call for the abolition of corruption (line 16), and the promotion of greater “transparency” and accountability on the part of the government (line 40).

5. Mereka dianggap pengamat
‘They [the people] were considered observers’
 6. tanpa **aspirasi**
‘without **aspirations**’
 7. yang siap melaksanakan program apa saja yang disusun oleh pemerintah.
‘ready to execute whatever program that had been compiled by the government.’
 8. Bukan hanya itu,
‘But not only that,’
 9. pemerintah juga menutup rapat akses publik [...]
‘the government also prevented the people from accessing official political meetings [...]
 13. Akhirnya
‘Eventually’
 14. pemerintahan berjalan tanpa kontrol
‘governance ran without control’
 15. yang berarti
‘which thus meant that’
 16. maka merajalela **Korupsi Kolusi dan Nepotisme** membengkakkan utang negara
‘**Corruption, Collusion, Nepotism** broke out, the national debt swelled,’
 17. maka hilanglah kepercayaan kepada pemerintah.
‘[with the result that] the government’s credibility faded away.’
 18. Dan pemerintah juga tidak memperdulikan dengan kehilangan kepercayaan itu.
‘And the government did not even care about the disappearance of its credibility.’
 19. Oleh karena itu hal mendasar yang harus dilakukan
‘Therefore the main thing that should be done’
 20. adalah memperkuat kedudukan **masyarakat** dihadapan negara.
‘is to reinforce the position of the **civil society** with respect to the state.’
- [...]
40. Mari kita dorong terwujudnya peraturan daerah **transparansi** dan **partisipasi publik**
‘Let’s support the creation of regional regulations, **transparency** and **public participation**’

Speaking from the Margins and Redrawing the Ideas of the Local

Closely related to the vintage aesthetics of the temporal and discursive crossovers examined above, Toraja political discourse of the early 2000s was marked by a new appeal of linguistic regionalism.

In a highly multilingual context such as Indonesia, the juxtaposition between local and national languages has long constituted a key locus for the production of language-mediated forms of community belonging (see among the others, Cole 2010; Errington 1998; Goebel 2002, 2007, 2008, 2014; Keane 1997b, 2003; Kuipers 1998, Smith-Hefner 2009). During the New Order, in addition to the verticalized spatiality and the synchronized diachrony described earlier, the manufacturing of vertical encompassment was also produced through a language ideology that established Indonesian (I: *Bahasa Indonesia*) as a “transcendent metalanguage” (Keane 1997b) endowed with the political-semiotic capability of containing Indonesia’s local languages (I: *bahasa daerah*)²⁰. Indeed, Indonesian enregisterment as the country’s national language was achieved through its promotion as the standard medium of communication in official contexts such as the school and the government and through its characterization as the language needed for interethnic communication across the archipelago (see for example, Cole 2010; Keane 1997b, 2003; Kuipers 1998; Goebel 2008).

Indonesian’s status as a “no-one’s first language,” that is, a language lacking an original community of native speakers (Errington 1998: 53), was key in reproducing a top-down articulation of the relation between the language of the nation and the hundreds of local codes spoken natively in the country. The ideological erasure of Indonesian’s connection to localized forms of belonging and the parallel foregrounding of the connection of non-national languages to ethnicity, intimacy, and peripherality, engendered an ideological sociolinguistic

²⁰ By this I refer not only to Indonesian’s ideological association with ideas of socioeconomic development and prestige, but also to its embeddedness within an ideology of un-native-ness and superior denotational transparency and functional effectiveness (Errington 2000).

regimentation in which regional languages were localized and demoted to a position of semantic and socio-economic marginality (Kuipers 1998).

Locally referred to as *basa toraya* (T: toraja language) or *basa solata* (T: the language of our friends), or *basata* (T: our language), Toraja, like many other Indonesian regional languages (see for example Keane 1997b, 2003), had developed during the New Order a strong indexical connection to a sense of ingroupness, functioning as a sociolinguistic embodiment of the intimacies of the immediate community. At the same time, during the New Order, in Toraja, as in most of Indonesia, especially outside Java, the use of the regional language within institutional settings had been highly stigmatized as a marker of backwardness and illiteracy (Donzelli 2002, 2004, 2007c).

However, the corpus of linguistic data I collected in the early years of the *Reformasi* reveals how forms of vertical encompassment ideologically mediated through a hierarchized relation between local and national language were at the time reversed through an emergent aesthetics of linguistic marginality. By this I mean a series of indexical and discursive practices aimed at subverting the powerful regimentation of Indonesian as a code endowed with the political-semantic-pragmatic capability of encompassing regional languages.

An example of such practices was the proud display of ethno-linguistic identity through explicit metapragmatic comments in which speakers would introduce a switch to the local language in contexts where Indonesian was the expected choice. This practice is apparent in example (6). Here we may see how a self-aware switch to the Toraja language interrupted and subverted the regime of discussion based on the use of bureaucratic Indonesian. In this excerpt drawn from an official meeting (I: *rapat*), the speaker begins his speech with a metapragmatic statement (line 1). The statement is followed by the performance of a typical ‘mekatabe’ (lines 2-5), that is, the formulaic deferential opening of Toraja oratory, where we

may observe a highly consistent deployment of formal Toraja (*marked in italics*), with no Indonesian interference.

(6) Civil Servant- –*Rapat Pembentukan Tana Toraja Barat* (I: Meeting on the Formation of Western Toraja Regency) - Pegawai Negeri [Saluputti Regional Office, November 19, 2002 -Tape 18/Video 6]

1. *Eh lama 'basa basata bangmo aku saba 'torayaki'*
'Eh I will just speak our language because we are Toraya'
2. *Eh kukua tabe'*
'Eh I say tabe' (excuse me)'
3. *lako olo mala 'bi 'ta sola nasang la 'biraka*
'To us all honorable and respected [people]'
4. *lako to diona to maparenta*
'To those from below [that is] to the government officials' ((referring to the fact that the government representatives were coming from the Regency capital of Makale, geographically located in a lower valley within the highlands))
5. *tu rampo lan alla 'ta sola nasang*
'Who came in among us all'

The metapragmatic statement (at line 1) framed the switch to the local language not only as a deliberate move, but also as tautological consequence of the speaker's membership in the Toraja speech community, which he further authenticated through the display of competence in the genre of traditional Toraja speechmaking. Through this discursive move, the speaker not only conveyed a sense of enhanced oratorical agency—which Bauman (1993) would call a “breakthrough into performance”—but he also mobilized a “chronotope of community” (Eisenlohr 2004: 81) different from the spatiotemporal forms of national subjectivity that had been characteristic of the New Order.

The excerpt was extracted from a longer meeting held in the district of Saluputti, where several local officials gathered to discuss the political project of constituting the independent Regency of Western Toraja. The meeting had the formal official atmosphere typical of the *rapat*, but it was also deeply imbued with the rhetoric of decentralization and

regional autonomy. In this context, the speaker's proud statement provided a tautological assertion of ethno-linguistic membership ("I will speak Toraja, because I am Toraja"). In this way, he materialized a fusion between a temporality of immanence (i.e. the here and now of the context of performance and the almost present future of the Reform Era) with a traditional structure of addressivity (i.e. the *mekatabe*' honorific address) that underscored the irreducibility of a local form of belonging grounded in a radically other elsewhere (i.e. a distinctive community) and "elsewhen" (i.e. a distinctive ancestral past projected towards the independent future of regional autonomy).

Excerpt (7) offers another example of the constellation of indexical and discursive practices aimed at subverting Indonesian's ideological regimentation as the encompassing code within which regional languages were deemed incorporated during the New Order. Here, while speaking in Indonesian during another *rapat*, the chief of the village where I lived between 2002 and 2003, framed his complaint for not having been paid his salary as a local official for 14 months by switching, after a long 7 second pause, to Toraja and quoting a Toraja saying (at line 1850). The switch did not only mark the "subversive" violation of bureaucratic Indonesian code consistency, but it also materialized an appeal to a distinctive form of political rationality, embodied by Toraja societal values, which are presented again as irreducible to be culturally and linguistically translated into Indonesian.

Toraja is italicized and Indonesian is in roman, CAPITALIZATION indicates higher volume.

(7) Village Chief - *-Rapat Pembentukan Lembang* (I: village construction Meeting) - [Marinding Elementary School, February 4, 2003 - Tape 24]

1847. EMPAT BELAS BULAN SAYA TIDAK PERNAH MENDAPATKAN HONOR
'I HAVE NOT RECEIVED MY HONORARIUM FOR 14 MONTHS'

1848. pernahkah saya menagih kepada masyarakat
'[But] have I ever reproached the villagers'

1849. bahwa saya tidak dishonor?

‘For not having been paid?’

[7 secs.]

1850. *kada-kada Toraya kumua to meapi tu disaroi*
‘[According to] the Torajan saying, [even] the one who helps us lighting the fire [in our stove] receives compensation’

[2 secs.]

1851. *na kusanga yate kupogau’ te tannia mora to meapi manna*
‘And I think that what I have done it is much more than lighting the fire’

1852. *yanna tomale meapi*
‘If we go [to another house to ask for] fire (to light our stove/hearth)’

1853. *paling tidak ma’nasuki’ sola ke ba’tu tunu dua’ raka*
‘at least (we would offer to) cook together or we would roast some cassava’

1854. *aparaka dikande sia sola*
‘or whatever and we would eat together (with the person we borrowed the fire from)’

1855. *TAPI KAMI TE*
‘BUT AS FAR AS WE ARE CONCERNED’

1856. *MA’JAMA ALU-ALU selama SANGPULO A’PA’ BULANNA*
‘[I] WORKED FOR FREE for 14 MONTHS (and I did not get anything in return)’

1857. *Dan saya kira ini akan berjalan seperti itu*
‘And I think it will continue like that’

This excerpt exemplifies another interesting crossover between different genres and alternate forms of community belonging. Embedded within a larger discursive unit in bureaucratic Indonesian, the Toraja proverb triggered a shift in code and genre. More specifically, the proverb as a genre mobilized a representation of the local community through a “bucolic-pastoral-idyllic chronotope” (Bakhtin 1981: 103), corresponding to a spatiotemporally self-enclosed community where space and time are romanticized through the affective frames of idyllic domesticity and through a “blend of nature time (cyclic) and the everyday time” (Bakhtin 1981: 103).

Furthermore, certain prosodic features such as the higher volume (at lines 1847 and 1855-6) and the long pauses (at lines 1850 and 1851) augmented the affective charge of

the generic and linguistic shift further consolidating its capacity to express the speaker's personal and politic indignation. The violation of the discursive regime that prescribed the use of bureaucratic Indonesian as the un-marked linguistic standard operated as a diagrammatic icon (or a synecdoche) of the heightened sense of oratorical agency and political radicalism aimed at challenging the status quo through a "groupness affirming act" (Silverstein 2003: 593). The shift marked an appeal to local popular wisdom and local norms of reciprocity (i.e. even the man who helps us light the fire expects something in return), presented as morally and logically superior to the political rationality of the bureaucratic State apparatus.²¹

Crossover Politics

Central to the New Order's political imagination was the production of "a taken-for-granted spatial and scalar image of a state that both sits above and contains its localities, regions, and communities" (Ferguson and Gupta 2002: 982). This centralist framework was reproduced through discursive chronotopes of verticalized space and synchronized time and through a language ideology in which sociolinguistic diversity was regimented and reduced under the assertion of Indonesian's political-semiotic capability of encompassing the archipelago's local languages.

While existing analyses of the post-Suharto era have been mostly concerned with a political analysis of regional autonomy reforms (see the great work done by Davidson and

²¹ Goebel (2008) and Cole (2010), whose ethnographic research has been centered in Java, point out the recent emergence of a pattern of identity enregisterment in which the use of a regional language among speakers of different ethnolinguistic backgrounds is aimed at producing a sense of "adequation" (Goebel 2008), a denaturalization of the ideological primordialist connection between language and ethnicity, and what may be called an enregisterment of local cosmopolitanism, something that Cole (2010:3) described as the enregisterment of the persona "diverse Indonesian". My analysis of the performances of ethnolinguistic Toraja difference presents both continuities and disjunctures with respect to these recent works on the relationship between Indonesian and "Languages other than Indonesian" or "LOTI" (Goebel 2008). On the one hand, these performances depart from what described by Cole (2010) and Goebel (2008) as they attempt at renaturalizing the primordialist link between language and identity. On the other hand, they resonate with the aesthetics of local cosmopolitanism that transpires from Cole (2010) and Goebel's (2008) analyses of Indonesian-LOTI code-switching.

Henley 2007; Henley and Davidson 2008; Li 2001; Nordholt and van Klinken 2007; Roth 2007, among the others), I advocated the need for a linguistic and aesthetic level of analysis. Key to this analysis has been the exploration of the unsaturated negotiation between generic models and their textual realizations (Briggs and Bauman 1992). More specifically, I foregrounded the notion of crossover as useful tool that can help us make sense of the fuzzy ambiguity underlying the “cross-cultural and long-distance encounters,” which constitute the “frictions” (Tsing 2005: 4) underlying global processes of late capitalism.

The examination of linguistic transformations within democratic processes is at the center of recent linguistic anthropological literature on the co-articulation between discursive genres and political meanings and practices (see for example, Bate 2004; Cmiel 1991; Cody 2009a, 2009b; Hull 2010; Jackson 2013). In spite of their profound differences, these studies share a focus on the semiotic relevance of diacritic oppositions and indexical relations (i.e. modes of semiotic signification based on contiguity or causality). Whether in contemporary urban Madagascar (Jackson 2013), post-revolutionary (Cmiel 1991) or WWII America (Hull 2010), or twentieth-century Tamilnadu (Bate 2004), this literature shows how broad systems of cultural diacritic meanings (e.g., marked vs. unmarked, rational vs. emotional, aristocratic vs. popular, cultivated vs. spontaneous, etc.) are mapped onto subsystems of oppositions that organized distinctions in registers and ways of speaking and models of the moral person. This important literature establishes semiotic correlations between modes of speaking and culturally and historically constructed “social attributes [...] such as gender, class, caste, and profession” (Agha 2005: 39).

This semiotic framework—based on an understanding of linguistic signs as pointing towards (i.e., “indexing”) broader horizons of significance—resulted in an incredibly productive technology for the analysis of the cultural construction of language and the linguistic construction of culture. Through this perspective we have become more aware of

how people's ideas and beliefs about linguistic varieties (i.e. *language ideologies*) partake in constructing culturally and historically specific models of humanity (see the seminal work by Kroskrity 2000; Schieffelin et al. 1998; Woolard and Schieffelin 1994). However, the emphasis on the association of certain "linguistic varieties with typical persons" (Irvine and Gal 2009: 403) does not always completely saturate our understanding of the linguistic underpinning of globalization. The frictional encounters of different publics, practices, and the misunderstandings generated through the "heterogeneous, contingent, unstable, partial, and situated assemblages" of late capitalism (Collier and Ong 2005: 12) may at times ripple the orderly logic of semiotic associations. It seems to me that the notion of crossover can further our understanding of the misunderstanding and interruptions that propel the transnational circulation of global discourses of neoliberal democracy.

Conclusions: Chronotopes of the Global

How can we achieve an understanding of the impact of globalization on the sociolinguistic orders that structure people's everyday life and forms of collective membership? In this paper, I tried to highlight how Bakhtin's (1981) insights on the organic interconnectedness of time and space can be applied to the examination of the sociolinguistics of globalization.

At the turn of the millennium Indonesia's transformation from state-led development to a "decentralized regime dominated by neoliberal policies" (Peluso et al. 2008: 377) has opened the country to new configurations of global flows of money, ideas, and idioms. As a result, Indonesia experienced the increased circulation of a transnational discourse of neoliberal democracy and the implementation of an IMF-driven set of structural reforms. Drawing on the analysis of situated interaction, this paper aimed at exploring how these global processes impacted the sociolinguistic construction of the Indonesian nation-state that

was hegemonic during three decades of authoritarian regime. This analytic endeavor triggers a broader question: How can the microscopic study of face-to-face communication shed light on phenomena whose scale seems to require an analytics based on a global perspective?

Emerged in the early 1970s, as a result of the popular circulation of pictures of the planet Earth taken by space explorers, the notion of globalization has mobilized two (main) opposite and yet related modes of analytical investigation (Marcus 1995; Robinson 2007; Sklair 1999). One, grounded in the tradition of world-system theory, has encouraged scholars to embrace a broader scale in order to advance the understanding of the contemporary global interconnectedness. The other trajectory, stemming from the ethnographic interest in fine-grained descriptions of the particular has originated a body of work concerned with accounts of the local (and at times subversive) incarnations of the global.

Departing from these two major approaches, this paper suggested a different tactics to understand and describe globalization. Rather than framing globalization as an analytic concept that can be used to understand specific processes happening in the world, I proposed to view globalization as something quite similar to the Bakhtinian chronotope, which is both a discursive process and a semiotic artifact. In this light, we may conceive globalization as a chronotope, whose most popular current representation is that of a progressively shrinking space and ever accelerating time.

Commenting in 1971 on the sight of our terraqueous planet he could grasp from the cosmos, Apollo XIV astronaut Edgar Mitchell is reported to have said: “It was a beautiful, harmonious, peaceful-looking planet, blue with white clouds, and one that gave you a deep sense...of home, of being, of identity” (Sklair 1999: 154). Following the astronaut’s words and Bakhtin’s (1981) insights, I suggest that “the local” and “the global” do not have any precise referential value. In other words, they do not qualify any specific process, nor can they be understood as referring to any inherent scale. Rather, they denote spatiotemporal and

language-mediated configurations (i.e. chronotopes) of collective belonging that can be actualized through specific (and often recurrent) discursive acts, of the kind I examined in the previous pages.

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