

# predatory voyeurs: tourists and “tribal violence” in remote Indonesia

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*Tourism has been theorized in a new ethnography of modernity, stressing the museumization of the premodern and its production as spectacle. In this article, I explore the voice and perspective of the “tribal culture” recently exposed to a new type of gaze. Tourists are perceived as predatory voyeurs on Sumba, a once remote area now receiving increasing numbers of foreign visitors. An idiom of visual consumption encodes a critical awareness of global inequities in access to and use of technology, and a history of changing self-perceptions. The cameras that every tourist brings to capture images of headhunters and primitive violence become the very emblems of the exotic violence that they are designed to capture. [tourism, photography, cultural identity, Eastern Indonesia, violence, headhunting.]*

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Fantastic stories about foreigners have been common in Indonesia’s eastern islands for some time. For years, the most common fear was of white headhunters, who would come in the dry season and raid villages to steal children. The children could be sold as slaves or beheaded and used to fortify the foundations of large construction projects (dams, hospitals, cathedrals, or government offices). Ethnographic reports of these fears include Haddon’s account of white headhunters in Sarawak in 1894 (Haddon 1901:173–175); Tsing’s (1993, 1996) and Drake’s (1989) reports of government headhunters in Borneo in the 1980s; Barnes’s (1993), Erb’s (1991), and Forth’s (1991) accounts from Flores; and Needham’s story of a “*penyamun* scare” in Kodi, Sumba in the 1950s (Needham 1983).

In summer 2000, when I returned to visit Sumba after twelve years away, I encountered a new image of horror and a new way of imagining foreign predation. As I accompanied a couple of young friends to an ancestral village that I had not visited before, I heard the woman of the house call out, “She isn’t one of those foreigners with metal boxes (*dawa mbella*) is she? She isn’t one of those foreigners we are afraid of (*dawa pa kambohi*), one of those tourists?”

“No, of course not,” my companion answered, “this is Tari Buku, who lived here 20 years ago and took a Kodi name. She speaks our language. She is not a tourist.”<sup>1\*</sup>

Intrigued by her comment, I sat down on the veranda of her house and offered her betel nut from my betel bag. After a few moments of polite conversation, I asked her to tell me more about the Sumbanese image of tourists as “foreigners with metal boxes.”

“We don’t really know much about them, but they are supposed to travel around, often at night, carrying metal boxes. They have long hair and disheveled clothing, and they smoke cigarettes dipped in potions that can make you sleepy. They are said to blow the smoke into children’s faces so that they lose consciousness. Then they take

the children and hang them upside down, with feet near the rafters and their heads next to the metal boxes. They open up a hole in their heads and use a hose, sucking on one end of the hose to draw out the blood and make it flow into their metal boxes. They collect the blood, then leave behind the children's bodies."

"Do the children live?"

"Sometimes they do, sometimes they don't. They are very weak and may have nightmares about what the foreigners did to them. They lose a lot of their strength and often they die afterward."

"What do the foreigners do with the blood?"

"They bring it home to their factories and use it to wash out electronic devices—radios, televisions, tape recorders. They say it makes the electric current run through the metal vines (*lolo bahi*, a reference to electric cords). Without human blood the electricity would not work well. It would get blocked—just like all our own electric devices get blocked after awhile. The foreigners have better electronic devices because they wash them out with the blood of our children."

I was both intrigued and horrified at this new image linking bloodthirsty tourists and Western technological ascendancy. Over the next few weeks, I asked many other people about *dawa mbella* and was able to confirm that it was a well-established discursive construction. Everyone had heard of foreigners with metal boxes, although not everyone was convinced that they really existed. But many noted that they were especially feared in the months of July and August—the traditional season of head-hunts and slave raids and also (because of European and American vacation schedules) the peak of the tourist season. My Sumbanese friends said that stories of *dawa mbella* had increased greatly over the past decade (with the modest boom in backpacker tourism) and especially since 1988 (when electricity was introduced into 39 Kodi villages and television broadcasts to the island first began). They told me that the foreigners with metal boxes were associated with the (supposedly white) drivers of the ABC delivery trucks that traveled along the roads of Sumba. These trucks—which are used to carry gasoline, solar, and other fuels—have huge sealed tanks, unlike the open pickups commonly used to transport both people and animals. They are believed to be filled with the blood of children, and sometimes their heads and parts of their dismembered bodies.<sup>2</sup>

Was there a connection between the modernizing changes associated with the introduction of modern media and a new demonization of foreign visitors? Why should the relatively discrete visits of a few dozen youthful adventurers be mythologized into predatory raids on body substances, which would be used to power the continuing technological domination of the developed world? The answers to these questions require a careful examination of several kinds of evidence: First, I will examine the history of slavery and colonial conquest on Sumba and reasons for the recent increase in tourism to remote areas, which are associated with a new market value being placed on cultures described as tribal or primitive (see Figure 1). In guide books and official tourist publications, these cultures are promoted by emphasizing their potential for violence. However, the thrill of flirting with violence became a bit too real when foreign tourists became the unexpected eye witnesses of a 1998 incident described in newspapers and on CNN as real "tribal warfare." Tourists are attracted to beaches in Kodi, places that are ambivalently charged for local people. Their presence on these beaches may contribute to some local people's fears of foreign visitors.

The metal box must be interpreted as a form of visual consumption and explored in relation to the meanings of photography and comparative accounts of tourists as



Figure 1. Air-conditioned bungalows at Nihi Watu are modeled on the thatch-covered houses of Sumbanese ancestral villages, but they have the region's first hot showers and flush toilets.

bogeymen or electronic phantasms. The tourist gaze is seen by local people as aggressive and threatening, in ways that turn the titillating visions tourists have of predatory primitives back on themselves. In this article, I seek to show both how once remote tribal peoples are produced as a form of spectacle and also—more importantly—what sense *they* make of the spectacle of tourism, representing their own visual appropriation through the idiom of globalized vampires who come to feed on local sights.<sup>3</sup>

### history of slavery and colonial conquest on Sumba

People's fears of foreigners were no doubt inspired by a history of slave raiding that began to be important in the 18th century. Sumba was a neglected backwater during the early years of Dutch and Portuguese exploration because it had neither the spices of the Moluccas nor the hard-working peasant populations of Java and Sumatra. The only material resources that excited the interest of overseas traders were sandalwood, horses, and *ikat* textiles. But the Makassarese people of Ende, on the island

of Flores, developed a reputation as pirates and became the commercial rivals of the Dutch. They sought new trading possibilities on Sumba and found them in slaves. In 1750, the Dutch East India Company sent an expedition to Sumba to sign trading agreements with the local rajas, forbidding them from trading with the Makassarese. By 1757, Sumba was a significant source of slaves sold directly to the Dutch East Indies Company and exported to Bali, Sulawesi, Java, and even South Africa, Mauritius, and Madagascar.

In 1800 after the company went bankrupt, the Dutch government made some efforts to control the slave trade. In 1838, they asked the Raja of Ende to sign a treaty to stop trading slaves, but his subjects continued to abduct and transport Sumbanese in great numbers, especially after the 1843 founding of the port town of Waingapu in East Sumba (de Roo van Alderwerelt 1906). An Arab trader, Sharif Abdulrahman, controlled the legal trade in horses and buffalo as well as the clandestine trade in humans, acting as an "extremely enterprising but sinister character" to develop a flourishing exchange of metal, cloth, and manufactured goods in return for living beings (Needham 1983:24).

The interior of 19th-century Sumba was torn by wars between neighboring domains, initially to settle headhunting scores and later to procure captives to be sold as slaves. In 1820, a Dutch sea captain was shipwrecked on the island and spent twelve years there, reporting "there is such enmity between these domains that whenever someone crosses the borders set by the ancestors, armed or unarmed, man, woman, or child, they must be captured and put to death immediately" (Kruseman 1836:75–76). By the later half of the century, only men were put to death, whereas women and children were more valuable if taken alive. In 1888, Rato Malo, a prominent nobleman from Rara, was ambushed and decapitated. His son Yuseph Malo was spared and later sold as a slave. Rato Malo's head was taken to the Kodi village of Ratenggaro (now a tourist attraction) where it was stored for 30 years before his son negotiated for its return (Djakababa 2002; Hoskins 1989).

Slavery was officially abolished in the Netherlands Indies in 1860, but at about this time the Makassarese Endehnese began settling on the island, especially along the northern coast at Waingapu, Memboro, and Waikalo. From these points, they made raids into the interior and traded guns for slaves, working as mercenaries who would fight for Sumbanese leaders against their enemies. When they were paid in human beings, the Muslim traders would try to sneak their captives onto ships at distant ports and take them away before they were spotted and sunk by Dutch military envoys.

The Dutch did not take effective political control of Sumba until 1911, when a substantial armed force arrived to achieve pacification. In Kodi, a locally chosen raja initially accepted the Dutch scepter and a treaty, but then insults to local women and forced labor provoked a three-year guerilla resistance to colonial conquest, led by a local headhunter (Hoskins 1987b). The first Kodi raja died in a Dutch prison, and the whole region fought bitterly to expel their new masters. When the population was finally starved into submission, the leaders of the resistance were sent into exile and later became glorified as heroes of local autonomy (Hoskins 1993c). At this time, the Makassarese Endehnese communities along the north coast were dissolved by the Dutch, and the descendants of Sharif Abdulrahman and his slave raiding companions settled in Pero, a small village near the district capital of Kodi. This community has remained Muslim, on an island where only two percent of the total population follow the religion that embraces the vast majority of Indonesia's population. It is the descendants of these early Muslim slave traders who have taken an interest in developing tourism on Sumba and have opened up the first homestay accommodations in Kodi.

The export of slaves overseas was effectively brought to an end in 1913, but the presence of a large population of slave descendants (estimated at from 38 percent to 75 percent in the east [Hoskins 1993c; Forth 1981] and perhaps 15 to 20 percent in the west [Kuipers 1989]) remains a characteristic of Sumbanese societies. In 1988, a slave girl was presented as a funeral gift to the royal family of Kapunduk, East Sumba, and her transfer was reciprocated with gifts of gold and cloth (Hoskins 1998a). Slaves who leave their masters' homes are still pursued by the police and encouraged to return to live as "poorer relatives" in a relation of dependency to the noble houses (Hoskins 1998b:87). So the memory of these troubled times lives on through the descendants of people whose lives were changed by being kidnapped from one region into another.

Both the Dutch and the Makassarese Endehnese were labeled "foreigners" (*dawa*) by the Sumbanese—using a word that apparently derives from Java but is used for all people whose ancestors do not come from the island. The Dutch were the "white foreigners" (*dawa kaka*), distinguished by their strangely light colored "cat eyes" (*mata wodo*) and "furry snouts" (*wulu ghoba*). Europeans' facial and body hair are frequently the subject of comments among Sumbanese. They claim that Europeans look like ferocious beasts and that their body hair (*wulu ihi*) has a distinctive and unpleasant smell. The Makassarese and Endehnese were the "sarung clad foreigners" (*dawa ronda*), who wore tubelike garments of green cloth rather than the ikat woven loincloth favored by Sumbanese men. The Japanese, who kicked out the Dutch in 1942 and were remembered as particularly brutal during their four years on the island, were called *dawa nippon*. Other Indonesians on the island are designated by categories such as *dawa jawa* (Javanese) or *dawa bali* (Balinese), indicating a foreignness that is marked not by race but by ancestry from outside the island. The closest neighbors of the Sumbanese, immigrants from the island of Savu who have lived on the island for four or five generations, are still known as *dawa haghū* (Savunese foreigners). Both Muslim foreigners and the Savunese foreigners are believed to be fierce fighters and powerful witches.

Foreignness is so associated with danger that the Sumbanese often joke about this fact, laughingly offering me their children and saying "Go ahead! Take this girl! We want her to learn English! It doesn't matter if they think she is your slave!" When I began fieldwork in Kodi in 1979, my language teachers helped me to prepare a short speech in traditional couplets. I used this speech to introduce myself at all formal gatherings, arguing that I should not be identified with these ferocious figures in Sumbanese mythology:

I am not a foreigner who steals kids	<i>Nja ku dawa deke lakeda</i>
I am not an enemy who comes to raid	<i>Nja ku muhu mai munundur</i>
I have not come to bump foreheads in battle	<i>Nja ku mai konda koba</i>
I have not come to smash kneecaps in strife	<i>Nja ku mai mbera kundo</i>

These same couplets were also used in ritual contexts to inform the listening ancestors of my presence and to secure their consent for me to attend prayers and sacrifices.

Although a young woman in her early twenties traveling alone might seem an unlikely candidate to be suspected of violence, I did encounter people who were afraid of me when I first entered their villages. Mothers would sometimes call their children away from me and keep them within the house until I had spoken to them in their own language. I was sometimes also associated with a particularly fearful white demoness called "Kali Nggaka," who was said to be of gigantic size, with long flow-

ing hair, spiky fingernails, and a single pendulous breast. (The image suggests Rangda of the Calon Arang dance drama in Bali—herself indeed an avatar of the Hindu goddess Kali—who corresponded to my appearance in skin color, height, and hair length.)

### expansion of tourism in the 1990s

Since Sumba came under Dutch control in 1911, there have never been many foreign residents—no more than about 30 to 50 at any time on an island with a present population of about six hundred thousand. Tourism also was almost nonexistent: During a two year stay in 1979–81, I saw exactly five tourists, three of them at the equestrian *pasola* (group jousting) festival and two others traveling independently. In the 1990s, however, a modest boom in tourism began, and new accommodations were opened up, catering mainly to backpacker travelers who wanted to wander in some of Indonesia's more remote areas. Four new hotels opened in the regency capital of Waikabubak (three had been there in the 1980s), and seven small homestays operated by local people were established.<sup>4</sup> In the late 1990s, two-starred beach resorts were established—one on the north coast in the traditional domain of Laura (Newa Sumba, about an hour from Kodi), another (Sumba Reef Lodge at Nihi Watu) on the south coast in Lamboya.

The 1990s also saw dramatic changes in the infrastructure that could support a tourist industry: The road from the principal port of Waingapu to the western side of the island, once unpaved and a very rocky 13-hour ordeal, was paved and the travel time was reduced to three and a half hours. The *pasola* festival—now touted as the finest attraction in the province of East Nusa Tenggara and promoted on an Indonesian postage stamp—began to attract plane loads of tourists from Europe and Japan, and the summer months brought dozens of visitors each week to West Sumba, with eight to ten of these each week making the roughly one hundred kilometer trek out to the Kodi district, the most distant and (according to the tourist guides) most traditional area of Sumba.

Travelers were drawn to the region mainly because of the dramatic new image that it began to receive in popular backpacker's guides, such as *Indonesia Handbook*, an early backpacker's bible for the archipelago (Dalton 1977, 1988); the *Lonely Planet Guide to Indonesia's Eastern Islands* (Turner 1998); and the French *Guide Routard de L'Indonesie* (Hachette 2000). In the 1970s, when I first traveled to Sumba, Dalton's guide told visitors that the island was notable only for its "giant tombstones and giant mosquitos\*," and most travelers chose to stay away (Dalton 1977:432). By 1988, however, Dalton's guide was proclaiming Sumba "one of the most fascinating islands of the Nusatenggara. . . . Here you find an authentic ancient culture with none of the layers of Hinduism, Islam or Christianity found elsewhere in Indonesia" (Dalton 1988:724). Turner's *Lonely Planet Guide* described Sumba as "one of the 'in' destinations in the region" with "a fascinating megalithic culture largely intact" (1998:43). The *pasola* festival, during which several hundred mounted warriors ride against each other in a mock battle and throw blunt lances to knock their opponents off their horses, was called "one of Indonesia's most spectacular events" and "the most famous festival of the Southeastern islands" (Turner 1998:374). Both guides spoke of the island as still well-off the main travel routes and relatively isolated, but this isolation was, for the audience they were writing for, only another inducement to inspire them to make the trip (two hours on a weekly flight from Bali).<sup>5</sup>

By the summer of 2000, some of this tourist boom had stalled because of political upheavals in Indonesia following the 1998 fall of the Suharto government. Bali,

which had seen an increase in tourists each year and had been built up immensely for an apparently always increasing flood of visitors, saw its numbers level out for the first time this century. On Sumba, one of the new backpacker hotels in Waikabubak had fallen on hard times, but four others were still full of travelers, most of them from Europe and Japan. The luxury resort on the south coast was fully booked, drawing its guests mainly from the United States and Australia, and town hotels and village homestays were still filled close to their modest capacities.

Owners of the new establishments argued that ancient tribal culture was the first reason to come to the island, but at places like the Sumba Reef Lodge in Nihi Watu it was emphasized that this remote and isolated tribal life could still be “experienced in comfort and style,” and the brochure added “whether you adventure into the wild or simply come here for serenity is entirely up to you” (Nihi Watu Brochure 2000:4). To fulfill the expectations of a class of visitors willing to pay \$150 a night for lodging instead of \$3 a night (the rate at the Homestay Story in Kodi), they had to offer the island’s first hot showers (powered by a private generator), flush toilets, and gourmet meals—prepared by a Western chef who had worked in luxury hotels in Australia and flew in most of his ingredients from supply centers in Bali. Each visitor was offered a number of activities, including horse riding, scuba diving, a visit to a traditional village, sport fishing, surfing, and visits to waterfalls and local rituals. The wildness of the island was evoked but controlled and managed by a Western staff (two Americans and three Australians) so that it could provide an exotic but unthreatening spectacle—as close or distant as desired.

#### **adventure tourism: tribal warfare and violence in tourist promotion**

The main attraction of remote outer islands like Sumba was that they had adventure tourism—a term explicitly used on the Sumba Reef Lodge website (Nihiwatu 2000) and in the *Periplus Adventure Guides* (Muller 1997). Although Bali is described as an island paradise associated with a long Hindu–Buddhist culture, remote areas like Sumba offer “tribal traditions” and “visions of duality and balance” (Muller 1997:38). Sections describing Sumba are headlined “Spirits and Stone” and summarize descriptive passages from two of my own earlier articles (Hoskins 1985, 1987a), presenting accounts of indigenous beliefs and stone draggings as proof of an enduring ancestral presence. Later sections are labeled “Tradition: Old ways still strong on Sumba” (Muller 1991:200), “Peaked roofs, stone tombs and ritual” (1991:208), and “Fighting horsemen of Sumba” (Muller 1991:214). For the present analysis, the stress on violence as a key element of Sumbanese tribal culture is important. Note the following descriptive passage:

The air was charged with tension and taunts were hurled as the black-clad horseman spurred his mount for yet another charge. At full gallop, he survived a shower of lances and reached his target. His spear was flung, and landed squarely and strongly on the back of one of his opponents. The blunt-pointed spear bounced off with an audible thud. Had this been a real battle, the victim would have been dead. Out of weapons, the man in black dropped his reins and fended off spears with both hands while he used only his legs to guide his horse, at full gallop, back to the sidelines. . . . The women went wild, shrieking and ululating for the triumphant warrior. It was the *Pa-sola*. [Muller 1991:214]

Muller describes the same event earlier as “a ritual fight with spears featuring hundreds of horsemen. It is a wild and martial event, and although the government now insists on blunted spears, serious injuries are common and there are occasional

deaths" (1991:198). His colleague Peter Turner stresses the sacrificial element of the combat: "Its pattern is similar to that of other ritual warfare that used to take place in Indonesia—the cause not so much a quarrel between opposing forces, as a need for human blood to be spilled to keep the spirits happy and bring a good harvest. . . . Injuries and sometimes deaths still occur" (1998:374). Bill Dalton tries to contextualize the event comparatively by saying: "Essentially a jousting match between horsemen carrying long wooden spears and shields, riders are frequently injured and, just as in an American football or boxing match, occasionally killed" (1988:732).<sup>6\*</sup>

A more sensationalist account by a travel journalist argues that "war is the heart and soul of Sumba" and "the first year the police came to control Sumba's Pasola passion . . . priests felt the presence of tourists had ominous overtones. To appease the gods, they decided to sacrifice some tourists. When the police intervened, a full scale riot ensued and many people were killed" (Gluckman 1994).<sup>7</sup> This unlikely story—reported from a tour-van driver—is just the kind of fantasy the Sumbanese delight in inventing for gullible visitors because they realize that portraying themselves as either too threatening or too peaceful could ruin the tourist fantasy in either direction.

All accounts stress the fact that tourists are coming to see a dangerous ritual battle that is likely to include a certain amount of bloodshed and possibly even fatalities. It is therefore particularly ironic that the strongest blow to Sumba's developing tourist industry was the 1998 occurrence of something described in the media as real "tribal warfare": On November 5, thousands of angry villagers from the Lauili region (near the town of Waikabubak) faced off villagers from neighboring Weyewa right in front of Mona Lisa Cottages, one of the larger backpacker tourist hotels.<sup>8\*</sup> Using real spears, bush knives, and shields, they attacked one another, resulting in hundreds of injuries and anywhere from 26 to 114 deaths (depending on which source you consult).<sup>9</sup> Dozens of bodies were scattered in front of the windows of the tourist cottages, and the four foreign visitors staying at the Mona Lisa were immediately evacuated. Headlines the next day in national and international newspapers and on CNN proclaimed that tribal warfare had broken out on the island (Vel 2001:141).

The event certainly did involve tensions between regions, but the precipitating incident was hardly traditional: The people from Lauili argued that the Regent of West Sumba, who came from Weyewa, had listed several Weyewa people as having successfully passed the examinations necessary to enter the civil service, when in fact these people had *not* actually taken the tests. So these were charges of governmental favoritism, the political nature of which was somewhat obscured by official language referring to "tribal conflicts," apparently stemming from deeply atavistic tendencies rather than legitimate reasons to challenge improper procedures.<sup>10</sup>

The nature of this "tribal warfare"—and its relation to the ritualized "tribal warfare" that is Sumba's most famous tourist attraction—raises the delicate issue of how and when the term *tribal* should be used at all. When I was a young graduate student preparing to do research in eastern Indonesia, I was told by one of the most respected scholars of the region, James J. Fox, that the term *tribal* was "never used" in the ethnography of island Indonesia. He was certainly right that none of the published monographs at that time, or in the next few decades, used the term—although it is used extensively in reference to culturally similar hill tribes in mainland Southeast Asia and the Philippines. Its recent revival in tourist guides (including Muller's 1991 and 1997 guides, to which Fox contributed) is therefore a matter of some interest. Have these island peoples suddenly become "tribal" simply for the purposes of tourist promotion?



Sumbanese themselves call the 1998 conflict “bloody Thursday” (*Kamis berdarah*), a label suggesting historical specificity, but the line adopted by Governor Piet Tallo was to seek resolution for a *perang suku adat* (a war between traditional groups). He flew to Sumba and presided over the peacemaking process himself but did not acknowledge the connection between the bloodshed and charges of corruption. The Indonesian term *suku* is generally translated as “people” or “ethnic group” (Echols and Shadily 1989:531), and *suku terasing* is the term used for isolated tribal groups in Sulawesi, Kalimantan, and Sumatra.<sup>11</sup> Sumbanese were not classified as an isolated tribe—although Sumba was the last island of the Malay archipelago to maintain a pagan majority, remaining faithful to their traditional religion in very large numbers until the final census of the 20th century (Hoskins 1987a, 1998a). The criteria for isolation seemed to be minority status and marginalization in relation to a larger population of Muslims or Christians, and because the Sumbanese make up the vast majority (over 90 percent) of the population of their own island, they do not see themselves as an isolated tribe, and were not labeled in that way by official authorities. And yet when I spoke to government officials about the events of 1998, they used the English term “tribal warfare” that had been used in English-language newspapers like the *Jakarta Post*. It seemed to have replaced the earlier description of armed conflicts over land as *perang tanding* (competitive wars) something that made them sound a bit like organized sports events.<sup>12</sup>

The “resurgence of tribalism” in Sumba at the end of the 20th century is part of a discourse that combines tourist promotion with an official veiling of reasons for legitimate protest. Government edicts and journalistic accounts concerning the events of November 1998 may have invoked the term *tribal* to primitivize the instigators of the protests and neutralize their political clout. Although they all acknowledge that both villagers and city dwellers were involved in the killings, associating this violence with tribalism is still safer than portraying it as legitimate dissent or civil protest.<sup>13</sup> But “tribalism” can also be a political asset in certain circumstances. Anna Tsing, writing about tribal fantasies in green development schemes in South Kalimantan, has argued that,

the concept of the tribe, with all its simplifications and codifications of metropolitan fantasy, comes to mean something to people caught in particular political dilemmas. The fantastic aspect of tribal identity does not make it irrelevant to marginalized people who pass as tribals; to the contrary, it is the fantasy of tribe that becomes the source of engagement for both tribals and their metropolitan others. [1999:196]

Noting that the political rehabilitation of the tribe has come at the same time as its scholarly rejection, she suggests that newer forms of this fantasy may lead to collaborations between urban activists and village leaders to build environmental and social justice in the countryside.

The term *tribal culture* on Sumba is also used in official rhetoric with many positive implications: At a series of large scale Traditional Oath Ceremonies sponsored by the Regent’s office in July and August 2000, the Regent himself stressed the importance of horses and buffalo in “Sumbanese tribal culture [kebudayan suku Sumba]” and asked thousands of participants to swear before the spirits of their ancestors (invoked by traditional priests) that they would not participate in livestock theft. The “tribe” may evoke a moral community that can police its own with supernatural sanctions, but it can also evoke tribal enmities and a long history of regional warfare.<sup>14</sup>

Although Western fundraisers and environmental activists have focused more on the rainforest-dwelling peoples of Kalimantan than Sumbanese villagers, the recent

establishment of new rural development projects administered by NGOs (the Sumba Foundation, Yayasan Milla Ate) suggests that the goal of “saving a tribal community” may eventually mobilize international donors in these lesser known areas, as well.

### **beaches: a site for encounters with tourists and with taboos**

Backpacker guides portray Kodi as particularly enticing to tourists, both because it is the most “traditional” area and because of its splendid beaches, rock formations, and coastal panoramas. But here again there are contradictory messages being sent, because the tourists’ attraction to sandy beaches places them in the company of slave raiders, Muslim merchants, surfers, and the violators of many important taboos.

Most Sumbanese are not strong swimmers, and so beaches and especially estuaries are places filled with dangers and taboos. There is one ancestral village that is the traditional “owner of the crossing” (*mori menanga*), and a token payment of betel nut and money (usually only Rp1000, about 25 cents) must be presented to a representative of that village before it is safe to cross. If such a payment is not made, or if an ancestral spirit is angry for another reason, then rip tides can come to drag an unsuspecting violator out to sea or to swallow up someone in quicksand. I heard many instances of this happening: Mama Lina, the fourth wife of the late raja, was almost swallowed up by quicksand when she started to cross to attend a funeral, after failing to attend her own father’s funeral—but she prayed to her father’s and grandfather’s spirits and was eventually able to get loose from the sand that had sucked her in up to the waist.

The tabooed beach at Watu Malando—where eight huge boulders stand just offshore, supposedly once human beings turned to stone—requires a ritual payment to approach it and also to take one’s leave (see Figure 2). In August 2000, I accompanied



Figure 2. The tabooed beach at Watu Malando—and especially the huge stone boulder that “stands astride the river”—is a ritually restricted space on Sumba that is, however, often violated by tourists.

a group of Kodi people on a bus to this tabooed beach on the recently finished road, and we arrived safely but were stuck in a gorge for ten minutes on the way back. Finally, another ritual payment was made and everyone pushed once more to get the bus loose. Both incidents—observed by Kodi spectators who were Christian converts but still fearful of ancestral sanctions—were interpreted as violations of the rules of entering tabooed spaces.

A local tour guide who led trekking groups along the southern coast of Kodi told me that it was his responsibility to make all the required ritual payments and contact the “owner of the crossing” at each site that his group visited, but he had greater difficulty explaining to local people why Western visitors would want to swim out to tabooed boulders and climb on top of them to have their pictures taken. The eight huge boulders at Watu Malando (which are seen as having almost human faces) were supposedly created from petrified ancestors who started out to cross the bay and then quarreled about the proper marriage of their sister until they were frozen into their places. The most dangerous boulder is the most visually appealing: called the *Watu Kahongo Loko* (“the stone which stands astride the river”), it marks the division between the two camps as a warrior whose feet lie on either side of the estuary, and it is totally forbidden to touch it or pass below it—both feats that earlier Western visitors could apparently not resist doing.

The “owners of the crossing” claimed that any visitors who touched the stone or climbed on it would suffer repercussions later. Almost inevitably, the Protestant minister assigned to the parish of Bondokodi (originally from eastern Sumba) felt obliged to defy this taboo to show that his faith was stronger than local taboos. And my other Christian companions on the trip also urged me to take photographs of the stones themselves (but not of taboo violations), in part as an experiment to see if it would be possible to develop recognizable images.<sup>15</sup>

What are the consequences of this testing of taboos by tourists (and sometimes even anthropologists), who seemed to Sumbanese often foolhardy in their willingness to swim in dangerous waters and touch forbidden stones? Is it to contribute still further to a mythology of unknown foreign powers? Or simply to demonstrate disregard for local customs? These questions require returning to the hidden meaning of the metal boxes that tourists carry and wider problems of interpreting these stories in a comparative context.

### **the meaning of the little metal boxes**

The first interpretive puzzle that needs to be resolved is the primary meaning of the “metal boxes” (*mbella*) that all threatening foreigners are supposed to carry, and this will in turn lead to a better understanding of wider issues. Metal boxes are fairly common items in Sumbanese households and at markets: usually first sold as containers for biscuits or milk powder, they are continuously recycled as containers for dry rice, sugar, corn meal, and other grains, and the standard size “box” (Indonesian, *blek*) is a unit of measure for dry goods. Why, then, should a metal box be particularly identified with tourists, who are considerably less likely than Sumbanese to travel with supplies of grains or sugar?

None of my Sumbanese informants could tell me exactly what the boxes were or what they represented, but one local man did say, “Maybe these village people were just looking at things that seemed to be boxes to them. They might really have been something else, not necessarily used for storing children’s blood.” It was on the basis of this comment that I decided that the metal boxes really represent the preeminent emblem of the tourist, which is often inexplicable to the “toured”: They are cameras.



Figure 3. The large camera used by Laura Whitney and Janet Hoskins to film *Feast in Dream Village* was called a “bei mbella,” or “mother metal box” (Photograph by Susan Hoskins 1988). Here, participants in the film are interviewed after viewing edited footage.

My hunch that the metal boxes are really cameras is supported by the fact that in 1988, when we brought a 16 mm film camera to Sumba, it was described in Kodi as a “large metal box” (*bei mbyella*, which could also be translated “mother metal box”) (see Figure 3).<sup>16</sup> I was also sometimes asked to give small cameras and tape recorders

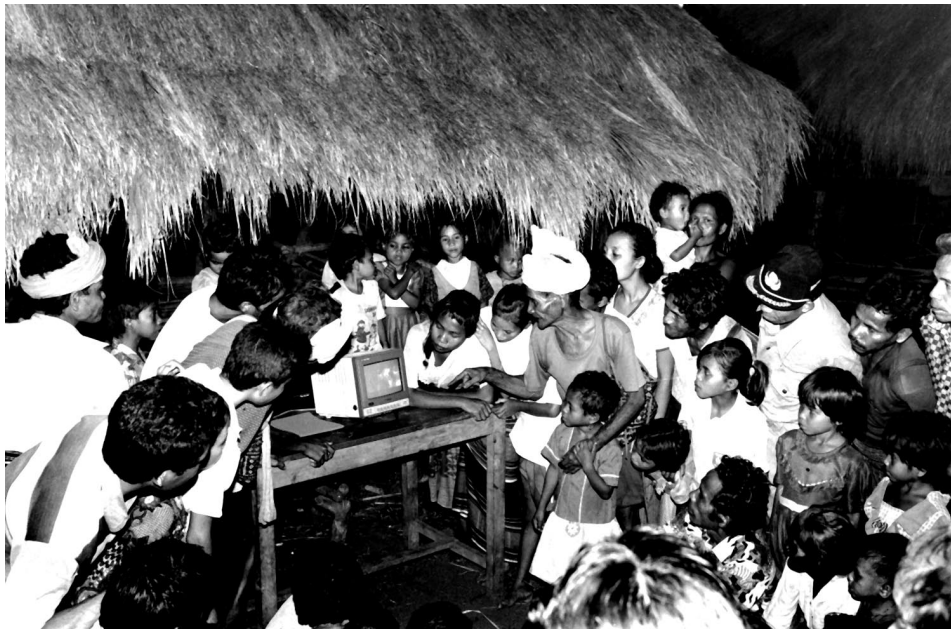


Figure 4. Villagers in Mangganipi (*Dream Village*), Kodi watching film footage of themselves on a small battery-powered video monitor in 1988 (Photograph by Susan Hoskins 1988).



Figure 5. The “tribal decor” of Sumba Reef Lodge include real spears, fanning out from behind a couch in the lounge area.

(Kodi, *ana mbella*, “metal box child,” and *ana tep*, “tape recorder child”) to people as souvenirs or mementos. The use of size-measurement terms commonly used for animals suggests an idea that these electronic devices were in some way animated or at least used to store forms of vitality (see Figure 4).<sup>17</sup>

The camera is, in fact, the main determining attribute of all tourists, whether they are paying \$150 a night at Sumba Reef Lodge or \$3 a night at Homestay Story. It is an instrument of visual consumption, which captures an essence or image that can then be brought home for reexhibition and admiration in the home country. Capturing photographic images provides a motivation for tourists to travel to many of the most remote villages and seek out particular sights (bare breasted women, betel-stained mouths, traditional houses, animal sacrifices) that they could not purchase and take home with them in any other way. A trip to these areas without a camera is virtually inconceivable because photography provides the proof, the legitimation, and authentication of an “exotic” experience and is the springboard for discussions about other things that were seen or heard there.<sup>18</sup>

Sumbanese are not necessarily opposed to photography, but they often find its use rather mysterious. Most are more than willing to pose for photographs, especially if there is a possibility that they can receive a copy of the pictures taken of them. In this sense, they are as fond of souvenirs as the tourists who come to photograph them—but with much less access to cameras or the money needed to develop pictures. No Sumbanese has ever suggested to me a fear of soul loss (as has been reported in parts of the Middle East), but I have sometimes handed older men a souvenir snapshot and been asked if I could “make it move” or “bring it to life” (*pa mopi*—the Sumbanese word for film is “living pictures,” *nggambaro mopi*). The recent development of video freeze frames, still shots, and then continuous action shots has made that request easier to fulfill.

But the stories of foreigners with metal boxes suggest strongly that photography can also be imagined as a form of consumption that might ultimately be debilitating to the people who are captured on film. Children, more often than adults, may follow a foreign visitor and ask to have their pictures taken.<sup>19</sup> They also may beg for candy, hair clips, pencils, and other handouts that they have sometimes received—although the most common hospitality gifts of cigarettes and betel nut are given only to adults. Children are attracted to cameras and may not—according to their parents—show sufficient caution in relation to the strange and unfamiliar people who possess them. Thus, children are seen as the favored victims of the horrifying perpetrators of Western technological predation.

### **tourists as bogey men and electronic phantasms**

Similar stories of predatory tourists and travelers are found in many other parts of the world.<sup>20</sup> One of the best documented are the stories of “slaughterers” (*nak'asaq*) and “fat extractors” (*lik'ichiri*) in the Andes (Gose 1986; Mannheim and Van Fleet 1998; Szeminski 1987; Taussig 1987). In 1574, the Peruvian priest Cristoabal del Molina reported that Andeans believed Spanish invaders were “sent from Spain for Indian body fat, to cure a certain disease, for which no medicine could be found except body fat” (Mannheim and Van Fleet 1998:330). In 1952, Efrain Morote Best reported that “slaughterers” extracted fat not only for medicines but also to “grease machines, cast church bells, or shine the faces of the statues of the saints” (Taussig 1987:238). More recently, Mannheim in the late 1970s heard that the “disease” treated by extracted fat was the aging process: Nivea cream supposedly made from the fat of peasants was sold to the Spanish-speaking elites and middle classes to keep their skin moist (Mannheim and Van Fleet 1998:331). He also reports one instance where a new rumor took shape: His assistant’s tape recorder was rumored to be a blood extracting machine, after the tape clicked off and the assistant explained the tape recorder noise (*grabadora*) with a term that was misheard as “blood machine” (*yawardora*) (Mannheim and Van Fleet 1998:331).

The stories that Taussig presents of slaughterers in the Peruvian Andes in the 1950s have many close parallels with the stories I heard of *dawa mbella*:

Rarely was the Nakaq said to be an Indian. Nearly always it was a white or a mestizo. In some versions the victim would immediately disappear. In others, the victims were first put to sleep or into a trancelike state by means of magic powders and after their fat was extracted they would awake without remembering what happened. There would be no sign of a wound. They would continue their journey and slowly die. Some people didn't die but became forever sick with sadness. Upon awakening some people did remember, as if it had all been a dream. [Taussig 1987:238]

As Mannheim and Van Fleet note, “Most recent commentators have treated *lik’ichiri* as an the implicit, conceptualized theory of social subordination in which the life force of the poor, their fat, is taken by the rich” (1998:333). They object, however, that

the specific formulations of such stories do not map easily onto specific modes of political-economic appropriations of value. Moreover, an account that would ground such representations in specific forms of neocolonial dependency would need to account for a similar cluster of stories in Europe and the United States, both historically (See Hufford 1982\*) and currently, with the North American counterpart to the *nak’aq* an extraterrestrial. The celebrity that such stories have obtained among scholars of the Andes (anthropologists, in particular) is probably a mixture of a nervous self-doubt that our monographs are the church bells that resonate beautifully with the life force of our native Andean interlocutors and misplaced self-importance of the role of scholars in mediating the relationships between native Andeans and others. [Mannheim and van Fleet 1998:332]

Mannheim and Van Fleet conclude that popular allegorical interpretations may not take into account the social alignment of face-to-face interaction and so may be both too broad and somewhat off base in clarifying the meanings of such beliefs. They propose a dialogical look at how such stories are constructed, emphasizing particular forms of evidence and participation, in which the conversational context of elicitation is always given.

Conversations about *dawa mbella* occur in a variety of different settings—from girls giggling by the riverside as they do their washing, to adults speculating late at night about why a child is sick, to the kind of encounter with a new person that I had in 2000. It should be noted, however, that specific details in each account present layers that are related to particular historical circumstances and local contexts. On Sumba, the rumors of drugs sprayed onto cigarettes resonated quite specifically with accounts of marijuana use among foreign travelers. The long-hanging hair and disheveled clothing of tourists on the “hippy trail” through Asia evoked for local villagers unintended associations with the way that Sumbanese dressed for the battlefield: loosening their long hair from its usual tight bun at the top of the head and allowing it to flow over their shoulders in order to terrify the enemies with an image of how their own heads would hang on the skull tree. (One of the usual taunts, used both in warfare and on the *pasola* field, was “This is how your own leaves [i.e., hair] will look on my tree!”).

In Southeast Asia, rumors of white headhunters have been common for many years, but there are also recent reports that, like the stories of *dawa mbella*, link children to sources of electric power. The Orang Lom of Bangka in western Indonesia told an ethnographer in the late 1980s that electricity was made by tapping the energy of a pair of newborn babies placed in acid. The Dutch supposedly introduced the practice when they imposed a kind of curfew that allowed them to collect stray cats, dogs, and chickens that roamed outside from dusk until dawn. Although they did not mention children, “everyone knew that they were meant as well” (Smedal 1989:78). The practice of generating electricity from children did not end when the Dutch left but escalated after independence and new moves by the Indonesian government to develop the region by building more bridges and power stations. Convicts serving life sentences were supposedly sent to capture the children on commission and were told to leave some money as compensation in the houses from which they stole the babies. The younger the baby, the greater its potential power, so babysitters and nurses in maternity wards were also involved in this commerce, at times even removing fetuses

from pregnant women. Smedal attributes these anxieties to the Lom's fear of strangers and their general unresponsiveness to government modernization efforts, not an increase in tourism (Smedal 1989:77–79).<sup>21</sup>

Writing about a number of such accounts from eastern Indonesia, Barnes speculates that “such fears and rumors have much more ancient roots and that the only novel and potentially datable element was their association with Europeans” (1993:152). I think the evidence I have presented here suggests that although some of these stories are ancient, their forms are also subject to significant changes and modifications—and the versions recorded in western Indonesia in the late 1980s and in Sumba in 2000 show the imprint of a number of new ideas and additions that given them fresh historical meaning.

Headhunters and slave raiders who came to Sumba in the 18th and 19th centuries did not bring cameras, nor did they exhibit a series of elaborate technical gadgets (tape recorders, compact disc players, and video cameras with monitors) that were hard for local people to figure out. Although they were certainly predatory, they were not voyeurs as modern tourists are, always seeking something more remote, more authentic, more unseen in order to capture it as a kind of virgin spectacle for their own cameras. The new importance that electric power and electronic technology have assumed in the imaginations of people living in remote locations is a testimony to their perception of the significance that this technological edge has for the world order.

Dangerous foreign predators have played a role in the nightmarish imaginations of isolated villagers for some time, but these electronic variations present a new phantasm of technological inequality. Like the distorted shadows cast by a magic lantern, they create a series of apparitions in which figures can increase or decrease in size, pass into each other, or dissolve. They haunt traditional villagers, seeming to explain why so many local devices (the electric water pump at the source, the parabola satellite dish, the generator used by the local clinic) often falter and fail, whereas the fancy new toys of the tourists seem to have a longer and more reliable life. The blood or fat of children is harvested in these stories in order to assure that the West will remain technologically superior, even when mass media and electronic communication start to reach distant village locations. The tourists, in turn, seek to capture the spiritual wisdom of indigenous peoples with their cameras, bringing back visual testimonies to their ageless insight and closeness to the natural world. This is what Taussig has called the slippery and magical power to “exorcize from the colonizing self the evil of having more” (1987:241).

The camera—the unseeing eye of the absent audience, the magic mirror that sucks up new images and spits them out later, in faraway places—is the quintessential modern device, the master “metal box” that established a template that all the other devices (tape recorders, VCRs, CD players) have tended to follow. In looking at these new stories, we must understand them by turning the lens back onto ourselves, and see how we might appear, distorted and malevolent, looking out from behind the metal box onto a newly constructed spectacle of “tribal culture.”

### **cameras and the tourist gaze: is photography a form of consumption?**

Theorists of the tourism in less remote locations have emphasized the importance of picture taking for the semiotic purpose of appropriating alterity (what Harkin 1995 calls “exotopy,” a function of framing and interpreting cultural difference that tourists share with anthropologists). Dean MacCannell's idiosyncratic but influential analysis of European tourism is built up from his idea that tourism makes an ethnography of modernity possible because “tourist attractions are precisely analogous to the



religious symbolism of primitive peoples" (MacCannell 1998:2). In turning directly to tourism that seeks to penetrate more remote areas, however, he dismisses perhaps too quickly the possibility of encountering any real alterity: He proclaims instead that the primitive world has already vanished, and today there are only "ex-primitives" and "performative primitives"—people who reenact commercialized versions of earlier savagery (MacCannell 1992:18).

I argue, on the contrary, that alterity still exists, perhaps even in the presence of Western visitors with fancy cameras and technological gadgets. It is not necessary to use adjectives like "primitive" or "tribal" to recognize that there may indeed be another way of looking at the world that is quite different from the one carried into these locations by European and American travelers.<sup>22</sup>

It also is quite possible that images of predatory voyeurs such as the *dawa mbella* may provide a critical perspective from "the toured" that is worthy of attention, not ironic derision. The camera for the tourist functions both as a way of organizing the activity of participant observation and framing it defensively. Susan Sontag noted that taking photographs is a way of certifying experience and of refusing it: "The very activity of taking pictures is soothing, and assuages general feelings of disorientation that are likely to be exacerbated by travel. Most tourists feel compelled to put the camera between themselves and whatever is remarkable that they encounter" (1977:9).

In a similar fashion, Kodi people often asked me, "Why do tourists have to take photographs of everything they see? What do they do with the images of us that they take away?" Many were anxious about whether pictures of women with bare breasts or dirty clothing would be laughed at overseas. They were aware that some photographers were able to sell their pictures for money, and although their sense of the commercially marketable was a bit shaky, they did sometimes argue that journalists and professionals should make more generous donations to the guest book.<sup>23</sup>

MacCannell's treatment of the political economy of photographing remote areas starts with his assertion that tourists begin with a utopian vision of exchange in which there is no appropriation or loss:

The touristic ideal of the "primitive" is that of a magical resource that can be used without actually possessing or diminishing it. Within tourism, the "primitive" occupies a position not unlike that of the libido or the death drive in psychoanalysis, or the simple minded working class of National Socialism which was supposed to have derived an ultimate kind of fulfillment in its labor for the Fatherland. . . . These are all post-capitalist moral fantasies based on a desire to deny the relationship between profit and exploitation. Let's pretend we can get something or nothing.

The fable is as follows: The return in the tour of the headhunters and cannibals is to make the tourist a real hero of alterity. It is his coming into contact with and experience of the ultra-primitive which gives him his status. But this has not cost the primitives anything. Indeed, they too, may have gained from it. Taking someone's picture doesn't cost them anything, not in any Western commercial sense, yet the picture has value. The picture has no value for the primitive, yet the tourist pays for the right to take pictures. The "primitive" receives something for nothing, and benefits beyond this. Doesn't the fame of certain primitives, and even respect for them, actually increase when the tourist carries their pictures back to the West? It seems to be the most perfect realization so far of the capitalist economist's dream of *everyone* getting richer together. [MacCannell 1992:29]

And yet the photographic subjects of the tourist gaze are not convinced that all will benefit from what MacCannell calls "the suppression of an understanding of exchange within exchange relations" (1992:29). What the local Sumbanese see is in-

stead a parade of technological devices to which they have no access and that take away some aspect of their lives and their children's. The Sumbanese believe that the cameras take away their children's blood. The blood that is taken away will permit this technological ascendancy to remain and even—in a sense—feed off their status as the objects of a gaze and an instrument (the camera) that captures and freezes that gaze.

The perspective I heard from Sumbanese villagers was, however, more in accord with Susan Sontag's observation that "to photograph is to appropriate the thing photographed. It means putting oneself into a certain relation to the world that feels like knowledge—and therefore like power" (1977:4). "They are taking something away from our villages without giving much in return," I often heard. "Some of them write down our addresses, but they rarely send us the pictures."

MacCannell argues that "the picture has no value for the primitive" (1992:29), but this is not true in eastern Indonesia: The photographic subjects who are sent copies of their pictures cherish them, showing them to me proudly even one or two decades after they were taken, as proof of prestigious encounters with outsiders. (I have even been shown photographs of myself—taken 20 years ago and given to older informants—that their children have taken out, without realizing I was depicted in them, to prove how successfully their village attracts tourists and visitors.) The act of aggression that is implicit in the invasive taking of a photograph can be neutralized when the photograph as memento is shared with its subjects, who in this way appropriate a bit of the power of the outsider into their own sphere. But local people are only too aware when they are "turned into an image or a souvenir" (Sontag 1977:9) without any promise of reciprocity, and they resent the one sidedness of an encounter where obligations are not mutual.

Tourists are particularly concerned with the visual, the aesthetic representation of experience, because they are usually limited in terms of linguistic communication. But this is not always true: About half of the backpacker tourists who come to Sumba have some command of Indonesian, and most are not on their first or second trip to the islands, but at least their third or fourth. Tourists who have already visited the most popular inner island destinations in Bali or Java then spiral out to more remote outer islands. By the time they reach Sumba, they are usually familiar with the most common questions asked of visitors and know to bring betel nut and cigarettes with them when traveling to people's homes. Many profess to seek a miniaturized version of an ethnographic experience—living in local people's homes for a week or two and attending a few marapu rites.\*

Their interest in the traditional religion may intrigue their hosts, who laughingly told me stories of tourists who said they wanted to "convert to the marapu religion" ("but these are *our* ancestors, not theirs!" the Sumbanese added) or join them in worshipping the spirits of natural sites such as trees, rocks, or springs. At the same time, however, the quest for an alternative spirituality that many backpacker tourists profess does impress recent Christians on Sumba with the fact that their own traditions could interest a wider audience. New access to television and movies has also made them aware of ways in which marapu beliefs resemble not only the customs of Old Testament Hebrews, but also Native Americans and other indigenous groups.

Westerners' quests for self-discovery through travel can, of course, seem narcissistic and self indulgent—exercising what Valerio Valeri has called "the rich man's luxury of using the entire globe to put space between himself and himself" (2001:370). The difference between even the serious traveler and the ethnographer is a difference of time: The characteristic desire of tourists for consuming ever newer im-

ages and experiences makes them always eager to move on, always in search of undiscovered areas where their cameras may be the first to capture a new reality. Sontag notes that "needing to have reality confirmed and experience enhanced by photographs is an aesthetic consumerism to which everyone is now addicted" (1977:24), but the time constraints of tourism make that form of consumer identity especially operative for foreign visitors.

In *Empty Meeting Grounds*, MacCannell identifies two primary fantasies that Western visitors have about primitives: The first is that they are cannibals, who feed off human flesh, and the second is that they are hoarders of wealth, of magical and herbal knowledge that has great power. His ironic treatment of these fantasies could be expanded by noting, in the mirroring mode of self-reflection, that both of these fantasies are also entertained by Sumbanese villagers about Europeans. When a father asked his shy young son to deliver a message to the local priest, a German missionary who had spent 15 years on the island, I overheard the son begging his father to send someone else. "I can't speak to the foreigners, you know." "Come on," his father said. "You sound like the village people a generation ago. We now know that priests don't eat human flesh." His father later told me that his own parents had heard stories of European construction sacrifice and cannibalism when the mission first opened. Priests were said to hunt children late at night to place their bodies under the foundation stones of the new cathedral and to keep their blood to use for liturgical purposes in the place of wine. Kodi villagers refused to allow their children to board at the mission school for a decade after it was established because of fears that their bodies would be used to reinforce building projects. The idea that Western visitors can use children's blood to clean electronic circuits is a closely related descendant of this fear with the added element that consuming human blood adds life to mechanical devices whose veins and arteries are modeled on those of the human body.

Toby Volkman, writing about the impact of tourism in Toraja, Sulawesi, notes that the distinctive gaze produced by tourism "may become a model for local gazes, too, put to work along with other kinds of cultural visions and revisions" (1990:91). Tourists' interest in local culture and religion can influence people to rethink their own categories, to put not only a commercial value but also other values on traditional rituals and products. Other studies of interactions between tourists and local people have reported anything from direct hostility (Abbink 2000), to staged sullenness (Evans-Pritchard 1989), to curiosity (Volkman 1990), flirtation (Dahles and Bras 1999), and increased self consciousness (Picard 1996; Vickers 1996). Tourism can provide local people with new information about the world and sometimes also an increased valorization of the "traditional" elements of their culture, but it also risks transforming ritual into empty spectacle, "local arts" instead of local ways of life (Acciaoli 1985; MacCannell 1992).

Bali remains the center of Indonesia's tourist industry. Scholars and journalists have debated whether tourism has polluted Balinese culture or kindled a renaissance of cultural expression. Michel Picard, perhaps the most serious student of tourism in Bali, argues that the real effect of tourism was to promote a self-consciousness about culture:

It is as if tourism had convinced the Balinese that they were the inheritors of something at once precious and perishable called "culture", which they perceived as a value to be conserved and promoted. And as it was distinguished and enhanced by the tourist gaze, their culture became reified and externalized in the eyes of the Balinese, by becoming an object that could be detached from themselves in order to be displayed and marketed to others. [Picard 1996:198]

He concludes that the “touristification” of Bali proceeds by changing the way its members see themselves.<sup>24</sup>

On a very different scale, something of the same process can be observed in more remote parts of Indonesia like Sumba. Local culture is the product of a dialogical interaction between the Sumbanese and their different interlocutors: the Dutch, the Japanese, and—most importantly for the present generation—the Indonesian state, which has penetrated deeply into distant corners of the archipelago through recent campaigns to support literacy, village reorganization, and economic development. A national model of progressive history has been used to glorify the early headhunters who resisted the Dutch (Hoskins 1987b), and education has been tied to Christian conversion and citizenship in the modern nation (Hoskins 1993c).

Tourism, coming after several decades of rapid change, is only capable of modifying these trends in significant ways because it involves a closer interpersonal contact between Sumbanese and foreign visitors. The stories of *dawa mbella* reflect an awareness of global inequities and the importance of technology. But—on an island still unconnected to the Internet or other information highways—this awareness is cloaked in a form more mythological than political or economic. At the same time, tourist interest in the *marapu* religion, headhunting traditions, and village rituals have impressed local people with a sense that their beliefs might be of some unsuspected value. I quote from a few interviews I conducted from June to August 2000:

Before, when the foreigners came, we knew they were looking for cloth and handicrafts, so we brought those out and sold them on the veranda of certain villages. But only some of them want to buy. More want to take pictures and see what our houses are like, how we cook and weave, how we ride our horses. They ask many questions about our ancestral spirits and places that are sacred to them. Some of them even try chewing betel nut! One couple asked to stay for a week in my parent’s house because it was quiet and their home in Germany was too noisy.

The tourists, for their part, say they want to find “villages that have never been visited by any white people before,” refuges from the civilized world where they imagine that they will have pristine access to ancient traditions. Some tourists, having read the guidebooks and popular magazine articles emphasizing megalithic grave-stones, came expecting a stone age culture. Volkman reports a similar refrain from Toraja (1990:94).<sup>25</sup> They were disappointed not to see stone tools and skulls and bones everywhere and to note that local people wore T-shirts and sarungs as well as *ikat* loincloths.

### **tourists objects and the objectification of culture**

An important theme of Volkman’s work on the impact of tourism in Toraja was the ways in which new media (photography, print, video, and audiotape) select “indigenous media” (houses, effigies, rituals) and “develop” them through a process of “dislocation, decontextualization, disassembly, replacement, reconstitution, reproduction and interpretation” (1990:92). She does not note that this process is linked to an explicit government policy to “upgrade” (using the English term) indigenous culture and make it both more accessible and more marketable. Although much of this dislocation is obviously destructive of the integrity of traditional beliefs and practices, it also provokes a necessary reinvention of both the local concept of culture and the local concept of the tourist.

The *dawa mbella* idea is the local reimagining of tourism as a form of visual predation and consumption. The “upgraded culture” that is offered to travelers is a

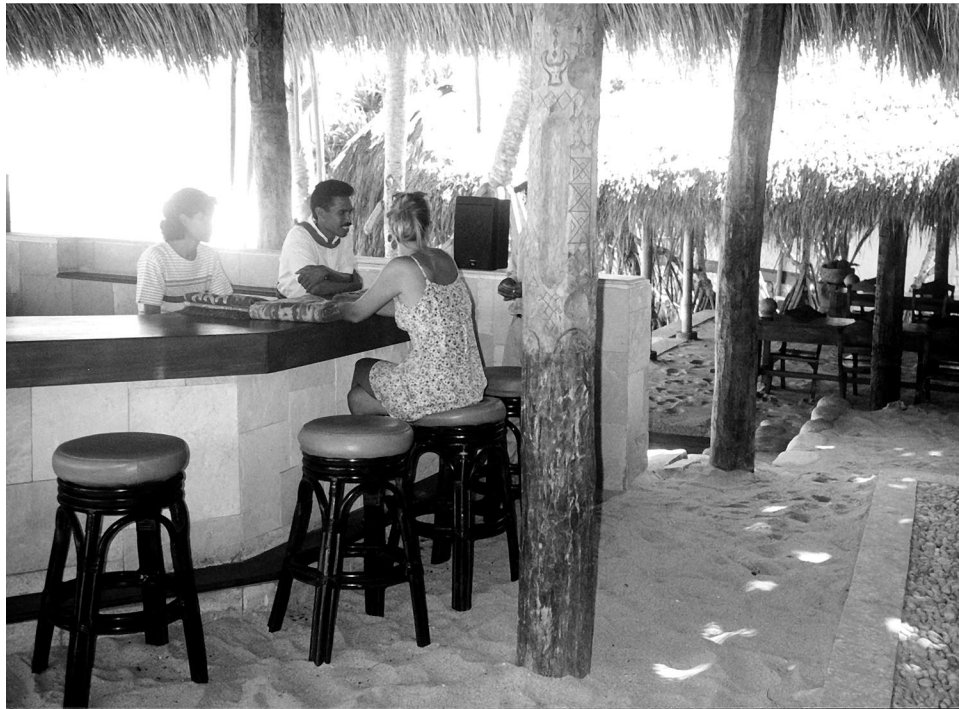


Figure 6. Carved wooden pillars taken from ancestral houses ornament the bar and restaurant of Sumba Reef Lodge.

cleaned-up, rationalized, and standardized form of custom (Indonesian *adat*) that was initially formulated to remove embarrassingly “primitive” or “tribal forms,” but that has now realized their market value and started to reincorporate them. So indigenous forms of decoration—such as the ladders of buffalo horns stacked on house posts to commemorate feasts or the cloths hung in a canopy over a dead person—are now found as design accents in the Sumba Reef Lodge at Nihi Watu (see Figures 5 and 6), and as emblems of tradition at government-sponsored feasts to cut down on crime. The skull tree motif on East Sumba cloth (depicting severed heads hung from their hair on the headhunting altar) has been reinterpreted as an insignia of aristocratic rank and is used to honor guests from faraway places (Hoskins 1996).

A new structuring of governmental offices pairs tourism and culture as two mutually generating phenomena. The task of the tourism ministry is to “identify and produce culture” for tourists (Dinas Parawisata Sumba Barat 2000), whereas the task of “cultural researchers” (*peneliti budaya*) is to document and process local custom until it takes forms that are easily digested by foreign visitors. This is done by providing an often rather confusing narrative explanation of local customs such as this excerpt from the brochure I received from the regency tourist office in West Sumba in summer 2000:

Pasola is a skill racing/play to fling a “hola” (wooden stick spear) at each other by two groups of selected and brave horsemen. . . . The game will be more and more lustre when “kalakak ina” and “payawungu ama” (shouting of women and men) begin to spirit their own groups. Each players try to use tactics and mostly intrincating mockery to each other. In old time before the Dutch colonialization, they used sharp pointed spears for Pasola. Due to their belief, it is exactly time for the young involved in Pasola

to test their supernatural powers to heal their wounds. The fighting spirit of the braves will be greater if someone injured, even died in battle. [Dinas Parawista Sumba Barat 2000]

Each Indonesian island is supposed to have a motto that expresses its traditional essence (Bali is “the land of the gods,” Toraja “the land of the ancestors”), so Sumba is called “the land of Ina Ama”—a phrase that represented the dual gendering of authority through the pairing of Ina (mother) with Ama (father). The brochure explains this motto as an acronym for the eight “strategical programs” that have been developed to make Sumba a more comfortable tourist resort: “Indah—beautiful, Nyaman—pleasant, Aman—safe, Andalan—trusted, Makmur—prosperous, Abadi—everlasting.” Four particular “cultural heritages” are highlighted: megalithic tombstones, traditional villages, traditional dances, and ikat cloth.

Tourists are advised about which villages have the most impressive houses, tombstones, and textile production, and where art shops and souvenirs may be found.

Some ritual functionaries have been classified as civil servants (*petua adat*, “traditional elders”) and given small government subsidies by the regency tourist office to improve their homes, costumes, and rituals so that they will be more appealing to tourists.

The Indonesian government interest in developing tourism to remote locations has encouraged some indigenous peoples to seek active participation in their own image building, successfully capitalizing on a reputation for impressive ritual pageants and traditional architecture. Kathleen Adams (1997), writing about the Toraja, argues that tourism can be used to promote rather than diminish indigenous peoples’ agency, especially if it is used to counter stereotypes that sacrificial rituals are meaningless and wasteful. Maribeth Erb (1996:709–736) shows how the people of Manggarai, Flores see tourists as extraordinary beings, similar to spirits, and accommodate them within local conceptual categories that domesticate their power in a host/guest\* idiom.<sup>26</sup> Ann Schiller recounts how Ngaju Dayak activists invited National Geographic filmmakers to cover a sacrificial ritual that they wanted to appear “exotic,” but also forcefully distanced themselves from any mention of links to headtaking and human sacrifice (2001:48–49).

The Sumbanese have a less secretive attitude toward their own heritage of headhunting, translating the indigenous term for headhunters into Indonesian as “heroes” (*pahlawan*) because of the nationalist campaign to glorify the leader of an anticolonial resistance movement launched from one of the traditional headhunting villages (Hoskins 1987b, 1996). In July 2000, I videotaped a long interview with Diakababa, the son of a headhunter, who proudly described how his father had avenged his grandfather’s death by taking a head, in order to reestablish his family honor (Hoskins 1989, 1996; see also Djakababa 2002). “When he first tried to lift the head, it slipped from his fingers because of all the blood. He had to pick it up again and twist the hair around his wrist to take it home.” The dances that accompanied that triumphant return to the village were repeated in a different context in November 1999 when a wedding party from the United States arrived on Sumba to celebrate the marriage of the headhunter’s granddaughter to an American from New Jersey.

The marketing of Sumba as “exotic” and “tribal” is not necessarily seen in negative terms by many Sumbanese because of positive associations with assertiveness, regional pride, and masculinity. The pasola equestrian performance is a display of bravery, horsemanship, and virility, that young men enjoy both as a way to attract the eyes of local girls and as a way to show off the vitality of their own cultural traditions. When an Indonesian film crew recruited riders to perform in a historical epic about

the Majapahit Empire, local horsemen were enthusiastic participants in staging “the living past” for a national television audience. *Millennium: Tribal Wisdom for the Modern World\** (1992), a ten-hour series on public television, featured Sumbanese dragging tomb stones, feasting and singing to their ancestors to show how tribal peoples could offer modern viewers lessons in ways of living.

The category of “the primitive” in framing and marketing Sumbanese art seems to be a relatively new one. In 1994, a “Sumba Primitive” art shop was opened in Kuta, Bali, by a Chinese Sumbanese entrepreneur, who encouraged local cloth weavers to feature large human figures in yellow and orange tints, many of them more representative of design styles once popular in Borneo than of the traditional cloths of Sumba (Forshee 2001:172). Another shop called Tribal Art featured many Sumba cloths and artifacts. Carved objects—musical instruments, lime flasks, human figures, and knives—sold to tourists are increasingly called antiques (*barang antik*) or primitive objects (*barang primitif*). When auctioned on places like eBay, even recently manufactured objects are described as the remnants of a vanished culture, so that those who purchase them can have the reassuring sense that they are salvaging valuable scraps from certain extinction.<sup>27</sup>

In her portrait of East Sumbanese textile producers and merchants, Jill Forshee analyzes the appeal of distant locations:

In its vastness, the Indonesian archipelago invites an intensified mystique of remoteness among foreign tourists. There are forever islands, mountains and peoples remaining out of reach—beyond the travel and time constraints of any particular holiday. In this way, an eternal elusive “elsewhere” beckons, from which tourists seek objects of value. [2001:167]

What MacCannell (1992:27) has called the staging of authenticity is a search for an imaginative, utopian realm where those disenchanted by postindustrial life can find respite and a new spiritual anchoring.

For their part, Forshee argues that many East Sumbanese view their foreign visitors as “aberrations upon normalcy. However impressed they might be by the foreigner’s cameras and clothing, villagers often consider tourists as oddly displaced people, sometimes bordering on madness” (Forshee 2001:159). Outsiders may provoke local people to reflect on their own senses of location and rootedness or to seek expansion of their own social worlds. But there is almost always a tension produced by the fact that the outside visitor has access to wealth and resources that seem unattainable by local actors.

As Forshee notes: “Risky behavior such as singular travel, bungee jumping, sexual promiscuity, or even sleeping on the ground are consequential phenomena in the construction of the foreign. As world travelers and collectors seek a certain ‘wildness’ in Sumba and its arts, sometimes they unwittingly are cast as wildly exotic by eastern Sumbanese” (2001:199). Western Sumbanese people I met echoed many of these ideas, although they focused more on the scantiness of the bathing suits and halter tops worn by tourists, their attraction to surfing and dangerous tides, and their resistance to the witchcraft and sorcery supposed to be rampant in Muslim coastal villages.

Many Sumbanese at the present moment are ambivalent about the new attraction their home has for Western visitors. Owners of the local homestays and hotels, who tend to be Muslims, Chinese, or Javanese, were eager to tell me to encourage everyone I knew to visit the island because they see the commercial potential for development. But they also know that tourism to remote areas is intermittent, subject to

abrupt shifts in the political climate, and as fickle as any fashion. This year's "in" destination may be out of favor next year, and the dozens of local service providers who have readied themselves for a new crop of visitors may be disappointed.

The only West Sumbanese owner of a tourist resort, Cornelius Djakababa, is himself the son of the headhunter who served as Raja of Rara under the Dutch colonial administration. He has chosen to promote Newa Sumba not as an outpost of "tribal cultures" and customs, but as an "Eden east of Bali," a place of rest and reflection in a wildlife preserve, where tourists can frolic in privacy on an isolated beach. His response to the stories of *dawa mbella* was one of mild concern because he was aware of fears of outside visitors but wanted to turn the tension between the terms around. "The little metal boxes may be seen as ways of capturing something from Sumba and stealing it away," he told me, "but we Sumbanese can be as predatory as any Westerners. My father used to spy on the Dutch and trick them, stealing their secrets so that he could manipulate them to do his bidding. If tourism becomes more developed here, we ourselves will become the predatory voyeurs, and the visitors we welcome will find their ideas transformed in our own cultural devices and reproduced to power a new life for the Sumbanese." It is an intriguing vision of inversions in the tourist world, which is already a hall of mirrors pointing in many different directions.

## notes

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1. My Kodi name, Tari Buku, is in fact a play on words because in the Indonesian national language the words "cari buku" mean "looking for a book," and the name is pronounced with an initial /c/ when reference is made in the third person. I was named after my ostensive purpose in doing ethnographic research.

2. Webb Keane, an anthropologist who worked in the Anakalang district of southern Sumba, reported being warned by a young girl that the ABC trucks contained human remains and he could himself become a victim of such raids in the late 1980s (personal communication, January 14, 2001).

3. Luise White (2000) has recently published an account of rumors in colonial Africa about nurses, firemen, game rangers, and prostitutes who work for white colonists by capturing unwary villagers and taking their blood. She argues that in Uganda these stories reflected anxiety about colonial medicine, in Kampala they were about royal politics, and in Northern Rhodesia they concerned inequities in labor relations. Her analysis focuses primarily on the colonial period (but includes contemporary interviews) and obviously draws on similar notions of blood extracted from black bodies to fuel white projects. The exact uses of the blood are often unspecified, and she does not link them to tourism or photography.

4. The homestays were extra rooms or cabins rented out in the village compounds of prominent families—in Kodi, these were only Muslim families, but in Wanokaka and Lamboya they included Sumbanese men who had married Javanese women. The hotels and beach resorts were owned by foreigners (Chinese, Arabs, Javanese, Americans) and employed workers who



came predominantly from other islands. Many Sumbanese are reluctant to work as wage laborers, and are generally considered unreliable, so very few of them have ever been employed in the tourist industry.

5. Air connections to the island were more frequent in the 1990s, when at one time there were up to four weekly flights to West Sumba's Tambolaka airport. Even then, however, the small Fokker 27 jets that flew there could hold no more than 35 passengers, and all the guide books note that flights were often fully booked or canceled. The airport in Waingapu, East Sumba, has more scheduled flights (three to four a week) as well as monthly Pelni boats, but travel to the island is still fairly erratic and unreliable. The government tourist board estimated international tourists visiting the island by air as 3,624 in 1996; 3,291 in 1997; and 2,446 in 1999—but only 387 in 1998 (the year of Suharto's fall and the violence of "Bloody Thursday" (Hans 2000:5). Two airlines that once served the island (Zamrud and Bouraq) stopped operating because of a combination of bankruptcy and crashed airplanes. The northern cape of East Sumba is still littered with the bodies of aircraft that landed in remote places without roads and have remained there, their rusted carcasses testifying to failed attempts to leave the island.

6. He is wrong about the shields, which were used in warfare, but are not allowed on the pasola field. The shields appear in photographs of dancers and men in traditional costume, and this error may demonstrate once again the importance of a picture over and above the experience of eyewitnesses.

7. Stories of attempts to sacrifice tourists were invented to intrigue the credulous, but murders have occurred at the pasola because it is a time of bloodletting when old scores are sometimes settled. Rioting at the Wanukaka pasola in 1988 followed the killing of one man by his lover's husband. Other deaths that occur on the playing field are supposedly caused by taboo violations, especially breaking the ritual silence before the match or fishing from the tabooed beaches (Hoskins 1990).

8. On November 5, 1998, the *Reuter's* headline was "Tribal Battle in Eastern Indonesia Kills 19" (TAPOL 1998). The next day, Agence France Press (1998) reported "Spears, machetes used in tribal warfare," outlining the events and adding as explanation the fact that "deep distrust exists between the fiercely individualistic tribal communities in western Sumba."

9. The official figure, cited in government reports and most Internet sources, was 26 people, all of them from the Weyewa area. The larger, unofficial, figure is from the Indonesian journal *Fakta*, with the *Jawa Pos* reporting "over a hundred" fatalities (Mitchell 1999; Vel 2001). It was suggested to me on Sumba that the deaths of Lauli people were concealed because they occurred during *wulla podu*, the "taboo month" of ritual silence when it is forbidden to beat the gongs or kill buffalo for funeral sacrifices. Any Lauli people killed in these events would therefore have to be buried secretly.

10. David Mitchell, an Australian doctor who has worked on Sumba for over 30 years, notes (1999) that the events began with a small demonstration by 30 university graduates on October 24, 1998. He argues that "the action had clearly tapped a deeply felt resentment against the abuse of power by those already in office using their influence to get jobs for their relatives," but the official response was to treat it as a "tribal" or ethnic conflict, ignoring the way it arose out of a criticism of the political elite. According to Mitchell, the largest provincial newspaper, *Pos Kupang*,

put emphasis on the [insulting] use of the regent's childhood name, and on a wild rumor that a Lauli man had been murdered in Weyewa which inflamed the situation. These details are indeed part of the story, but the emphasis on them presents the villagers as an emotion-driven irrational mob rather than as political actors who, however misguidedly, are attempting to defend their vital interests. [Mitchell 1999:6]

His analysis is consistent with a similar argument that the Ambon violence in the Moluccas was caused not by religious hatred but by a corrupt civil service (Klinken 1999). Mitchell notes that Lauli villagers argue that there were disproportionate deaths on the Weyewa side because the Weyewa had sworn at a peacemaking ceremony in 1992 never to invade their territory, and they brought a curse down on their own heads by breaking this vow (Mitchell 1999:8).

11. The term corresponds to an official government category of unacculturated groups that includes people like the Wana of Sulawesi (Atkinson 1989), the Mentawai people of the island of Siberut off Sumatra (Scheffold\* 1998), the Penan of Kalimantan (Sellato 1994\*), and others.

12. Government officials to whom I spoke were quick to point out there was no hint of racial or religious divisions in the conflict because the island's non-Sumbanese inhabitants (Chinese, Javanese, etc.) were not targeted and both sides had equal numbers of Christians and pagans fighting. They were emphatic that "this was not like what is happening in Ambon or in Aceh." Their fondness for the term *tribal warfare*, however, has disquieting parallels with journalistic accounts of revivals of headhunting and tribalism among the Dayaks of Central Kalimantan in early March 2001.

13. Jacqueline Vel, a Dutch development specialist who lived on the island for six years, has argued that "the battle in Waikabubak can be understood as a modified purification ritual that occurred at the start of the new agricultural cycle" (2001:158) because drought conditions made it impossible to hold traditional wild boar hunting rituals, and Lauli priests "asked their gods for permission to substitute *orang Weuwewa* [Weyewa people] for wild boar" (2001:156). She claims Lauli leaders took advantage of a vacuum of authority after the fall of Suharto to mobilize traditional networks and create a show of force after two years of drought, monetary crises, and political turmoil. This explanation provides a clearer context for understanding the events, but nonetheless tends to primitivize a conflict that began as a protest by university graduates about equal access to government jobs.

14. The term *tribal* also is applied to several other traditional activities that may involve bloodletting and violence. Tribal boxing (a form of group boxing where teams of three to ten face each other holding onto a single rope) is the most common of these, and guests at the Sumba Reef Lodge luxury resort are routinely taken to (financially sponsored) demonstrations of this traditional sport. Tribal death rites are another attraction. Marapu funerals involve the sacrifice of large numbers of water buffalo in a bloody performance that bears some resemblance to a bull fight: The bulls are cut at the neck while standing and often rear back, charge around the village, and occasionally gore their killers with their horns (Hoskins 1993a). Funerals include many elaborate cultural expressions, such as dirges in traditional verse, dancing, and exchanges of fine textiles, but tourist promotion stresses sacrifice rather than prayers or exchanges. Illegal horse races (*pacuan liar*, lit., "wild racing"), usually accompanied by gambling and often fighting, are also sometimes part of tourist entertainment.

15. I was often asked to photograph objects to see how powerful they were. The most sacred objects, such as a drum supposedly once made of human skin, were forbidden to photograph, but the descendants of important ancestors asked me to photograph tombstones and gold heirlooms to "see if the pictures would come out." When they did, this was interpreted as evidence of diminishing power, but the owners very much wanted to keep the photographs in their possession.

16. The 16 mm camera was used in 1986 to produce *Feast in Dream Village* (Hoskins and Whitney 1987) and in 1988 for *Horses of Life and Death* (Hoskins and Whitney 1989). Local community leaders invited us to film their rituals and cooperated enthusiastically, in part because they were promised that they could see all the footage and provide input for the editing process. The filmmaker who collaborated with me on both projects, Laura Whitney, traveled back to the United States with film stock and had it copied to video so that Kodi participants could view and comment on each scene. This was an important part of our research design for studying ritual communication, but the experience of seeing deceased relatives on film provoked an intensely emotional reaction that I have explored in Hoskins 1993b.

17. Educated Sumbanese living in the district capital of Bondokodi and the regency capital of Waikabubak agreed with me that the original reference for the metal box might well be the single-lens-reflex cameras (often outfitted with intimidating zoom lenses) that many tourists brought with them. Although all of these educated people had heard the stories, many of them dismissed them as villager's fantasies. They noted, however, that in recent years the metal boxes have also included boom boxes, camcorders, CD players, and digital cameras with external monitors. Local people told me, "It seems each time a new group of tourists comes, they have a

new kind of metal gadget" that can both thrill and terrify the uninitiated objects of this mechanical gaze.

18. I interviewed about 30 tourists staying at hotels, homestays, and resorts in both East and West Sumba. All—without exception—had at least a still camera, and about half also had a video camcorder, portable CD player, or digital camera. Backpackers often carried high quality cameras, and tourists at the starred resorts were especially well equipped. After attending demonstrations of tribal boxing, they played their tapes back for some villagers, and three brothers from Santa Barbara, California, obligingly showed me and my young children how they had learned Sumbanese boxing techniques while we waited for a flight out of Tambolaka airport.

19. The *Lonely Planet Guide* warns visitors that people in Kodi

can be very direct, if not downright aggressive. Some villages get a steady trickle of visitors, which perhaps explains the negative reaction that you may encounter. There are persistent (but unconfirmed) rumors of tourists who have wandered into villages, behaved inappropriately and have been chased out by rock-throwing villagers. . . . The kids in particular can be a real pain. . . . Some travelers have reported being mobbed by kids, jostled, cigarette packets snatched from their hands and even spat on, while the elders looked on. This is certainly the exception rather than the rule, and many villagers are friendly if you take the time and behave appropriately. . . . Tourism is not organised and villagers generally cannot see the reason, let alone the benefit, of tourists visiting. [Turner 1998:382\*]

20. Stories of organ snatching and body mining by Western predators are also reported from the slums of urban South America in Nancy Scheper-Hughes's *Death without Weeping: The Violence of Everyday Life in Brazil* (1992).

21. In an extended commentary on an earlier draft of this article, Smedal adds that he was himself sometimes taken for a white headhunter or *penyamun* while doing fieldwork in the Ngadha area of Flores, especially when he wore a rain cape designed for backpackers: "The cape has a sort of hunch-back's extension for the backpack and from a distance it might easily seem as if the approaching apparition has twin heads. Scary, no doubt. Children and women screamed when they saw me and bolted into the brush" (personal communication, February 2001). In Kodi, as well, I often heard that the most terrifying dawa mbella carried large backpacks into which they stuffed children's heads and limbs as well as the metal boxes containing blood.

22. MacCannell notes, with some justice, that "the term 'primitive' is increasingly only a response to a mythic necessity to keep the idea of the primitive alive in the modern world and consciousness," noting that the empires built on the necessity of the primitive include "anthropology's official versions of itself" as well as tourism (MacCannell 1992:34). Anthropologists have, however, long sought to distance themselves from the analytic use of this term, agreeing with Johannes Fabian that "*primitive*, being essentially a temporal concept, is a category, not an object of Western thought" (1983:18). A respect for cultural difference and alterity does not imply a temporalizing of this difference or its relegation to an earlier evolutionary stage.

23. The guest book is a way of organizing tourist donations. It is widely used in textile-producing villages in East Sumba and is found in West Sumbanese villages that attract relatively large numbers of visitors, including Tarung in Waikabubak and Tossi, Parona Baroro and Ratenggaro in Kodi. Guests are asked to sign in and leave a suggested donation (usu. Rp2000 [about 25 cents]) if they want to visit a village and take photographs. The *Lonely Planet Guide* also suggests bringing betel nut and money and cigarettes if there is no guest book. However, because one of the main goals of adventure tourists is to visit villagers where they haven't ever seen any white people, the presence of a guest book is, for them, evidence that the village does not fit their own agenda. Some local guides aware of this preference have encouraged villagers to hide the guest book and pretend astonishment at the sight of foreign visitors.

24. Edward Bruner has argued that in Bali a tourist focus has created an enhanced sense of value among locals of elements of their own culture. These elements are later studied by ethnographers as traditional (1991, 1996). Both Picard (1996) and Vickers (1989, 1996) make similar arguments.

25. German missionaries did publish a volume of essays in 1979 that was titled *The Island of Sumba: Power and Myth of the Stone Ages in the 20th Century* (May et al. 1979) but, of course, Sumbanese have in fact been using metal tools for many centuries. The cover of the book depicted villagers cutting out megalithic tombstones from a limestone quarry with steel bush knives.

26. The Manggarai area has experienced an intensive development of tourism in the period since 1986 (Erb 1996:714), and the great numbers of tourists in the 1990s may have produced a routinization of images of foreigners that were once a bit more terrifying. Erb suggests that,

the earliest tourists were often feared as *gorak* (dangerous, foreign, supernatural kidnapers) as was true of other early European visitors. Tourists, indeed, are more consistently associated with the unpredictable and unknown than are missionaries or anthropologists, for they have even more about that is the opposite of what the Manggaraian villagers know about themselves and their world. Tourists are far more likely to act unpredictably, because of their greater ignorance of local cultural norms and language, and precisely because they are there as tourists. [1996:725]

27. The category of "tribal art" is the main label used in marketing cloth and artifacts from the outer islands of Indonesia. On websites, I found Sumbanese objects for sale identified as "tribal Arts\*," "talismans," "antiquities," "ethnoart," "antique tribal Arts," and "tribal treasures" ([www.tribalarts.com](http://www.tribalarts.com), [www.tasliman-tribal-arts.com](http://www.tasliman-tribal-arts.com), [www.antiquities.com](http://www.antiquities.com), [www.ethnoarts.com](http://www.ethnoarts.com), [www.tribaltreasures.com](http://www.tribaltreasures.com)). Several sites specifically spoke of the objects as coming from "tribal Indonesia," and included things identified as "shamanic fetishes" and "masks used in healing ceremonies" for which it was hard for me to summon up a Sumbanese equivalent. Category labels, such as "primitive art," "ethnic art," and the "art of indigenous cultures" occurred at some sites, as well, but the notion of the "tribal" seemed a much more resonant term in the marketing of the exotic.

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