

“REVOLUSI COKELAT”

**Social Formation, Agrarian Structure, and Forest Margins
in Upland Sulawesi, Indonesia**

Felix Sitorus

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“REVOLUSI COKELAT”

Social Formation, Agrarian Structure, and Forest Margins in Upland Sulawesi, Indonesia¹

MT Felix Sitorus²

Summary

This paper examines the sociological implications of a fundamentally rapid change in rural ecology due to the rapid expansion of cocoa cultivation which is labeled as “Revolusi Cokelat” (cocoa revolution). As exemplified by the case of Sintuwu, a village in upland Sulawesi, such a revolution implies a radical change of local social formation, indicated by the shift of the dominant mode of production from subsistence production, which is the domain of the “indigenous people” (the Kaili), to the petty commodity (capitalist) one, which is the domain of mainly the “comer people” (the Bugis). Consequently, the revolution implies the fundamental change of the local agrarian structure through which the Kaili people have been downgraded from “landed” to “landless”, while the Bugis have been upgraded from “landless” to “landed”. Moreover, as the cocoa plantation becomes the main base of socio-economic security, such a change in the agrarian structure implies both the decrease of socio-economic security among the Kaili and the increase of such security among the Bugis. This condition has led the Kaili peoples to solve the socio-economic insecurity by encroaching on the forest margin inside of the Lore Lindu National Park as an alternative basis of socio-economic security. By reclaiming the forest area and covering it with cocoa plantation, the Kaili peoples, to some extent, have succeeded in overcoming the problem of access to land resource as well as the problem of socio-economic security.

Keywords: “revolusi cokelat”, social formation, mode of production, agrarian structure, socio-economic security, forest margin.

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1. Introduction

Since agrarian structure refers both the composition of agrarian resources and the social relationship regarding distribution of access to such resources, it clearly assumes the articulation of a social formation, which is “a multiplex entity in which several modes of production co-exist, one of which, however, is dominant” (Worsley, 1988). Referring to the elements of the mode of production, namely forces and relations of production (Worsley, 1988; Taylor, 1989), agrarian resources are connected with the forces of production, particularly the means of production, and social relationship is connected with the relations of production. Hypothetically, then, it can be said that any change in the structure of social formation implies any change in agrarian structure.

The hypotheses mentioned will be examined here through a case study of a forest margin community live in a village named Sintuwu. In a context of a local social formation, the community of Sintuwu is one of many which had experienced a shift of the dominant mode of production from the subsistence to the petty commodity one through the expansion of cocoa plantation over the food crop cultivation in the upland Sulawesi during the 1980s. Some have viewed the expansion phenomenon as the “cocoa boom” (Li, 2002), which is an economic term indicating the dramatic effect of a high market price. But I myself interpret it as a revolution labeled “Revolusi Cokelat” (Cocoa Revolution), since it implies a revolutionary change in the mode of production as well as the agrarian structure.

Rural Indonesia has learned a lesson from “Green Revolution” regarding the implication of a revolutionary change of social formation in agrarian structure. Many researchers clearly show that modernization of wet-rice cultivation in Java in the 1970s, which implied the shift of domination from subsistence to petty commodity production (or capitalist?), have brought about a social polarization phenomenon -- or at least social stratification -- among the peasantry, indicated by the increase of marginal and of landless peasants on the one hand and the concurrent accumulation of land resources in the hands of a little group of big farmers on the other (Hayami and Kikuchi, 1987; Husken, 1998; Wiradi and Makali, 1984).

The phenomenon of social polarization among wet-rice peasantry of Java who experienced the “Green Revolution” probably happened among the upland peasantry of Sulawesi who experienced “Revolusi Cokelat”. Li (2002) concludes that the “cocoa boom” has led the upland community of Sulawesi toward agrarian differentiation or, specifically, class formation based on land ownership. It can be suggested that a minority of “landed” people and a majority of “landless” people have emerged in upland Sulawesi as the result of “Revolusi Cokelat”.

Since the social polarization is accompanied by the declining of traditional village welfare institutions and, consequently, of economic opportunities for the lowest social stratum, namely marginal and landless peasants (Collier *et.al.*, 1978), a way out for coping with the lack of a livelihood would be applied. In rural Java, where the villagers experience the lack of land resources, the peasants have been practicing multiple occupation by expanding their economic activities into non-farm sector (White, 1991). Such a way out probably cannot be replicated for the context of upland Sulawesi, where the non-farm sector is not well developed yet. For the marginalized peasants of upland

areas, one possibility for expanding economic activities is probably the illegal encroachment on the forest margins for a new cultivation area.

The case study of Sintuwu, one of forest margin villages situated next to Lore Lindu National Park (LLNP) in upland Central Sulawesi, presented here, aims to describe the above-mentioned suggestions. Based on a qualitative work, with a support of small survey ($n = 30$)³, it analyzes the change of social formation or, specifically, the shift of the dominant mode of production named as “Revolusi Cokelat”, the change in local agrarian structure as one of its major implications, and its subsequent impact on the utilization of agrarian resources, particularly land resource in the forest margin.

2. Sintuwu: a multi-ethnic village

Situated in Palolo, Sintuwu has been a part of one populous district in Donggala Regency, at least since the beginning of the 1990s.⁴ Palolo, one out of 18 districts in Donggala Regency, Central Sulawesi, is a frontier area, which since the 1960s has gradually been occupied by both spontaneous and programmed immigration. Immigration has made Palolo valley, including Sintuwu and other villages, a high density population area, which is a deviant situation, considering the domination of dry land cultivation in the ecology of Palolo. Elsewhere in rural Indonesia, as mentioned by some researchers (Koentjaraningrat, 1987; Geertz, 1983), a high density of population is usually characteristic of a wet-rice field ecology.

As was indicated, Sintuwu was established during the last 30 years through a process of multi-ethnic immigration, which makes the village a multi-ethnic one (**Table 1**). Although the village community consists of more than four ethnic groups, it is clear that Kaili and Bugis appear to be the major ethnic groups. Since the Kaili peoples are the pioneer immigrants, they claim themselves as the “indigenous people” and, at the same time, give the Bugis people the label of “newcomer people” (Ind., *pendatang*).

³ Small survey was held in purpose of data collection on land holding and ownership and modes of land obtainment. Survey samples were 30 households elected randomly in village Sintuwu. In collecting data (April – July 2001) I was helped by Joula O. Sondakh and Sahyuti, two of post-graduate students of Rural Sociology Program, Postgraduate Program of Bogor Agriculture University who conducted research for completing master theses.

⁴ In 1999 population density in Palolo district (339.1 sq. km.) was about 79 persons per sq. km. Compared with the 1996 situation (69 persons per sq. km.), the 1999 situation represented an increase of about 13 percent. Meanwhile in 1996 the population density in Sintuwu (19.23 sq. km) is 54 persons per sq. km and three years later (1999), the number had increase to be 65 persons per sq. km. It means the growth of population density during the last three years in Sintuwu is 20 percent.

Table 1. Household Distribution by Ethnic Groups in Village Sintuwu, 2001

No. Ethnic Groups	Number and Percentage of Household			
	Hamlet-1	Hamlet-2	Hamlet-3	Total
1. Kaili*)	31	70	88	189 (57.62)
2. Kulawi	30	0	0	30 (9.15)
3. Bugis	42	51	2	95 (28.96)
4. Toraja	3	0	0	3 (0.91)
5. Others	6	5	0	11 (3.35)
Total	112	126	90	328 (100.00)

*)Including Kaili Taa (98 households), Kaili Tara (60 households), Kaili Ledo (25 households), and other Kaili (Ija, Unde, Rai: 6 households)

Source: Excerpted from MT Felix Sitorus (2002), Table 1. Based on the data of village profile, information from village secretaries, and information from key informants. Number in brackets are percentages.

Situated on the Gumbasa river banks, the first settlement in Sintuwu was pioneered in 1961 by five Kaili households. These households were forced by local government to move out of village Bakubakulu of Sigi-Biromaru District, after breaking the local law by practicing shifting cultivation in the protected forest area. Following the pioneers, the Kaili immigration then continually flowed mainly from Sigi-Biromaru to Sintuwu in the 1960s and had its peak in the 1970s. In the 1980s the immigration flow was still going on, but in a decreasing trend.

In 1968 the first Bugis immigrant entered Sintuwu to be a laborer in a small saw-mill company. Following the first one, in the 1970s a number of Bugis took their family to settle in Sintuwu. They were labor forces for a logging company (PT Kebun Sari), which logged the forest area now included in LLNP area. With immigration at its peak in the 1980s, most of Bugis immigrants came from Bone, Soppeng, and Barru districts of South Celebes throughout Palu city. The relative economic success demonstrated by the former immigrants was a pull factor which drew more Bugis to Sintuwu.

Following the Bugis were the Kulawi immigrants. The first Kulawi immigrants were a group of rattan gatherers came from a village of Kulawi District throughout the forest area now included in LLNP. With immigration at its peak at the last of the 1980s, most of Kulawi immigrants came from some villages of Kulawi District.

As the immigration flow into Sintuwu was going on, each ethnic group had established its own exclusive settlement. Administratively, the villagers are distributed into three hamlets, namely Hamlet-1, Hamlet-2, and Hamlet-3. As indicated in **Table 1**, Hamlet-3 is exclusively a Kaili settlement, while the others are mixed settlement. But sociologically Hamlet-1 and Hamlet-2 are not really mixed settlements, since each of the ethnic groups has established its own settlement exclusively. Actually Hamlet-1 consists of three main settlement cluster by ethnic groups (Bugis, Kaili, Kulawi) and Hamlet-2 consists of two main settlement clusters (Kaili, Bugis).

Considering the settlement pattern, it can be said Sintuwu is not really an integrated community, since each of the ethnic groups tends to develop its own social life exclusively. Referring to the concept of “sodality” (Tjondronegoro, 1984) one can conclude that the hamlets of Sintuwu are not the real sodality units, since social solidarity, particularly the “mechanistic” one, is not working, regardless of ethnicity. Social solidarity is likely to work exclusively among the members of each of the ethnic groups, especially in the unit of settlement clusters.

3. “Revolusi Cokelat”: the change of social formation

“Revolusi Cokelat”, on the whole, is really a fundamentally rapid change in rural ecology due to a rapid expansion of cocoa cultivation. Consequently, it does not include only the change in sociological aspect of a community but also the cultural, economical, and political aspects. Moreover, it also includes the fundamental and rapid change in natural aspects, such as biology, climate, chemistry, and physics.⁵

As the sociological perspectives are various, I choose to see “Revolusi Cokelat” as the change of social formation or, more specifically, the shift of the dominant mode of production which implies a fundamental change in the local agrarian structure. Assuming that the local social formation consists of three distinguishable modes of production, namely subsistence, petty commodity, and capitalist productions (Kahn, 1974), it seems clear that “Revolusi Cokelat” can be regarded as the domination shifting from the subsistence production to the petty commodity or petty capitalist one.

During the 1960s and the 1970s, as articulated in the local economic activities, the social formation of Sintuwu was characterized by domination of the subsistence production over the petty commodity one. The main subsistence production activities are the wet-rice cultivation in wet land areas and the corn cultivation in dry land areas. Rice and corn were produced, on the whole, for household consumption. Meanwhile, in the petty commodity sector, the villagers cultivate the perennial cash crops, mainly coffee. These kinds of cash crops were cultivated extensively, with minimum care, so that there was only low productivity. Nevertheless, coffee was a significant source of cash for the villagers, at least in the first half of the 1980s.

Cocoa was introduced about the mid-1980s and thereafter was cultivated extensively as a new “golden” crop. Unlike the coffee plants, cocoa plants need more intensive care, so that its cultivation needs more intensive capital. Briefly, as is the case in Sintuwu, cocoa is cultivated in a more capitalistic way than coffee is. Consequently, as the cocoa cultivation was rapidly extended all around the village, the domination of subsistence production fell. Thus, at least since the early of the 1990s, the petty commodity or petty capitalist production has risen to become the dominant mode.

Since the exact data about the area of cocoa plantation are not available, one can take the data of land utilization composition as an indicator for the purpose of approximation. At least in the 1990s, Sintuwu experienced a drastic change in the composition of land utilization. In 1998 the official data of Palolo District indicate that

⁵ However it is beyond my scientific authority to scrutinize the non-sociological aspects of the “Revolusi Cokelat” such as culture, economy, biology, climate, chemistry, and physics. Hence an analysis on “Revolusi Cokelat” calls for an inter-disciplinary research program.

dry land cultivation (647 ha.=34%), together with plantation area (491 ha.=25%), have dominated the village ecology, while wet-rice field contributes just a very little portion (75 ha.=4%).⁶ Since dry land cultivation also includes cocoa cultivation in a multiple cropping system, and the plantation area is dominated by cocoa plants, it can be said that nearly 60% of the village area was taken up with cocoa plantation. Moreover, land plots known as house gardens are also cultivated with cocoa plants so that the area of cocoa cultivation in Sintuwu is now exactly larger than what official data indicates.

Notwithstanding, the existing composition of land utilization patterns in Sintuwu is a result of the shift of the dominant mode of production from the subsistence production, namely wet-rice cultivation (and other food crops cultivation), to the petty commodity one, namely cocoa cultivation. During 1992-1998 nearly 72% of wet-rice fields in Sintuwu was converted to cocoa plantation, so that the wet-rice fields area drastically declined from 270 ha. in 1992 to as little as 75 ha. in 1998.⁷ The main reason for such land conversion is the good price of cocoa, at least during the first half of 1990s. Sometimes the decrease of wet-rice fields productivity, due to the lack of water for irrigation, is proposed as a reason, but it is only a minor one.

Without doubt, cocoa cultivation was a profit-making farm enterprise during the 1990s in Sintuwu. It was in the decade mentioned that the enlargement of cocoa plantations in Sintuwu drastically expanded in various ways. One of the ways was the conversion of subsistence agriculture area, namely wet-rice fields, corn fields (dry land), and house gardens into cocoa plantation. Although statistical data about corn fields and house garden conversion are not available, based on field observation, it can be said that such land conversion was done totally or partially. Partial conversion was done by introducing a multiple cropping system, in which cocoa plants and food crops, particularly corn, were put together in the same land parcel. Land conversion into cocoa plantations was mainly done by the Bugis, who bought rice-fields and dry land from mainly the Kaili.

The other way of enlargement, which is labeled as illegal, is the encroachment on forest area. This is mainly done by the Kaili people by reclaiming and grabbing forest area now included as LLNP. There are no exact data about the encroachment scale, but informants estimate that by mid-2001 the villagers of Sintuwu will cultivate nearly 100 hectares of cocoa inside the LLNP.

It is clear that “Revolusi Cokelat” has changed the economic structure of Sintuwu from the domination of subsistence to the domination of petty commodity production. More specifically, on the whole, the village economy has shifted from the peasant economy, which is domestically oriented, to the small-holder economy, which is market

⁶ Land distribution in Sintuwu by land utilisation patterns (1998): wet-rice fields 75 ha (3.9%); dry land cultivation 647 ha (33.6%); plantations 491 ha (25.5%), house gardens 30 ha (6.2%), iddle land 120 ha (6.2%); others including housing and roads 560 ha (29.1%) (Kecamatan Palolo Dalam Angka/*Palolo District in Figures*, 1999).

⁷ The 1992 data of wet-rice fields area in Sintuwu is cited from “Data Statistik Kecamatan Sigi-Biromaru” (*Statistical Data of Sigi-Biromaru District*) 1992. Sigi-Biromaru was the former district to which Sintuwu was included. Referring to an official letter issued by the regent (Ind., *Bupati*) of Donggala Regency, in June 1998 the head of Palolo District (Ind., *Camat Palolo*) had issued an official letter (No. 525/o406/PMD/1998) concerning the prevention of land conversion from irrigated rice fields to plantation areas.

(business) oriented. Concurrently, as the “cocoa economy” dominates the economic activities, the natures of capitalist production had gradually come to be significant among the village community. Two of the most notable natures are the phenomenon of land privatization and the phenomenon of surplus accumulation as well as capital formation.

As will be described in more detail in the next section, it can be said briefly here that land privatization relates with the ownership of land resources, which is the main means of production. In the subsistence production, which is mostly articulated by the Kaili people, land resources are under collective ownership. Each household holds one or more parcels of land under the approval of Village Head (Ind., *Kepala Desa*), who has been given the authority for distributing the land resources impartially to his/her peoples. As the cocoa cultivation dominates the economic activities, and concurrently most of the land resources inside the village have been transferred to the Bugis people through purchase, the phenomenon of private ownership of land resources has become clear through land certification. Transfer of land from Kaili to Bugis, as mentioned above, clearly indicates the second phenomenon, namely surplus accumulation particularly among the Bugis. Normally, as the Bugis peoples become successful in accumulating surplus out of the cocoa plantation, they subsequently use the surplus to accumulate capital by purchasing more land from the “indigenous people”. What then comes to be clear about the shift of mode of production, as is indicated by all of the mentioned phenomenon, is that it really refers to the shift of economic power from the hand of Kaili people (“indigenous people”) to the hand of Bugis people (“comer people”).

4. Structural change: “new landed” and “new landless”

From a sociological point of view, change in local agrarian structure is one of the most significant effects of “Revolusi Cokelat” in Sintuwu. As the “Green Revolution” brought about social stratification or even social polarization among the wet-paddy community in rural Java, it is the case that “Revolusi Cokelat” has brought a phenomenon of new social stratification to the upland community of Sintuwu. Assuming that land ownership is the base of social stratification, it can be said that this revolution has both downgraded the Kaili households from the status of “landed” to the status of “landless” and upgraded the Bugis households from the status of “landless” to the status of “landed”. Through the “Revolusi Cokelat”, the Bugis peoples have experienced a social rise to be the “new landed”, while the Kaili peoples have experienced a social decline to be the “new landless”.

Although it is not supported by quantitative data on land ownership, qualitatively I can say that in the 1960s and even the 1970s, when the Kaili immigration had its peak, the Kaili peoples luxuriated in land resources abundance. Under the collective regime of land ownership, which perceives land as the collective resource belongs to the community, in the beginning everyone could clear the forest area as much as he or she was able. One just needed to ask the chief of pioneer settlement, or then the village head, about a piece of forest area to clear and to cultivate. After considering the availability of land resources the chief, who was attributed the authority for land distribution and the responsibility for ensuring the land-based livelihood for his/her people, would immediately approve such an

application. This pattern of land acquirement, however, led the Kaili immigrants to be the “landed” in Sintuwu.

But in the 1980s, the distributive authority of the village head, generally, was not valid anymore as a way of obtaining land. It was the case that a number of Kaili immigrants still obtained land from the village head in the 1980s, but the land pieces were as small as the house-gardens. Survey data presented in **Table 2** indicates that grant (from the village head and/or relatives: 29% of parcels) is no longer the general way to obtain land among the Kaili of Sintuwu, but purchasing is (33% of parcels) the significant one. Generally, they purchased the pieces of land mainly from their own relatives. Sharecropping and forest grabbing are alternative ways of land obtainment for the Kaili people, especially for the members of the landless stratum.

For the Bugis people, land obtainment through the distributive authority of the village head is not valid. The exception is the first Bugis immigrant, who obtained a piece of land through such a mechanism. In the first years of arrival in Sintuwu, the Bugis households generally obtained the land for cultivation by practicing the land tenancy institutions such as sharecropping and leasing. However, for the Bugis peoples, sharecropping or leasing is not merely a survival but an accumulation strategy through which they get money or financial capital. Once they get enough money, as has happened since the early of the 1980s, they purchase the land parcels from the Kaili households. As shown in **Table 2**, land purchasing then is practiced by the Bugis households as the main mode of land obtainment (59% of parcels). Such a mechanism has led the Bugis peoples to be the “new landed”, with more and more land parcels in their hands. Concurrently, the regime of land ownership has also experienced a revolutionary shift. It has shifted from the collective type, in which land distribution is subjected to the political power, namely distributive authority of the village head, to the private type, in which land distribution is subjected to the power of the market.

The emergence of Bugis people as the “new landed” has its main explanation in the “Revolusi Cokelat”. As Sintuwu has experienced a rapid expansion of cocoa cultivation since the end of the 1980s, the social group that derives the largest benefit from this phenomenon is the Bugis. They have started to cultivate cocoa since the early of 1980s and also have started to accumulate land resources in their hand. Consequently, when the market opportunity came for cocoa in the end of the 1980s, the Bugis peoples were posited in a condition ready for a revolutionary expanding of cocoa cultivation. Moreover, as was shown by Acciaioli (1998), the Bugis people is one of the most active ethnic groups in seeking for economic opportunities.

However, comparing with the Kaili peoples, the Bugis peoples had more socio-economic advantages to participate in the “revolution”, such as technological skill, farming managerial skill, and economic capital particularly land and money. Once the Bugis peoples took the initiative and led the “revolution”, they consequently grew to be the leaders of cocoa economic as well as the leaders of village economy. Through a process of surplus accumulation, in a relatively short period they have grown to be “petty capitalists” or “rural capitalists”. Continually they accumulate capital both in term of surplus and of land resources so that most of the cocoa plantations inside the village are under their ownership.

**Table 2. Modes of Land Obtainment by Ethnic Group in Sintuwu, 2001
(Survey, n = 30)**

No. Ethnic Groups	Number of Parcels by Modes of Obtainment				Total Parcels
	Grant	Purchasing	Share-cropping	Grabbing	
1. Kaili (n1=16)	12 (28.57)	14 (33.33)	8 (19.05)	8 (19.05)	42 (100.00)
2. Bugis (n2=8)	7 (25.93)	16 (59.26)	4 (14.81)	0 (0.0)	27 (100.00)
3. Others (n3=6)	4 (26.67)	8 (53.33)	1 (6.67)	2 (13.33)	15 (100.00)
All (n=30)	23 (27.38)	38 (45.24)	13 (15.48)	10 (11.90)	84 (100.00)

Source: Excerpted from MT Felix Sitorus (2002), Table 3.

Particularly it seems that land accumulation among the Bugis is facilitated by the Kailis' habit of selling their land in order to get a large amount of cash money for covering the budget of "adat" rituals, such as marriage and funeral events. Normatively, a norm of intra-ethnic land transaction must be a framework, but actually it is not working well, since there is no significant number of wealthy Kaili households to rely on as the land purchasers. Meanwhile, there is a significant number of wealthy Bugis who already have cash to purchase land from the Kaili peoples at any time. Since a marriage or funeral ceremony needs a large sum of money for budgeting the customary (Ind. *Adat*) prerequisites, and most of the Kaili households have not enough cash to spend, the fastest way to get money is to sell a piece of land to the wealthy Bugis.

However, in the context of "Revolusi Cokelat", land market in Sintuwu has socially and economically led the Kaili and the Bugis in a different direction from each other. Survey data presented in **Table 3** give indications of how far the Kaili households are sinking towards the status of "landless" and to how far the Bugis households are climbing towards the status of "landed". Bugis households hold a total of 2.32 hectares of land on average, including ownership of a sub-total of 0.95 hectares of dry land. Meanwhile the Kaili households hold only a total of 1.86 hectares of land on average, including ownership of a sub-total of 0.81 hectares of dry land (0.69 ha) and wet-rice field (0.12 ha). The Bugis households of Sintuwu in general have no wet-rice fields anymore since they were converted to cocoa plantation.

**Table 3. Average of Land Holding by Ethnic Groups and Land Utilization Patterns in Sintuwu , 2001
(Survey, n=30)**

No.	Ethnic Groups	Dry Land (ha)		Wet Rice Fields (ha)		Grabbed Forest (ha)	Total (ha)
		Owned	Share-cropped	Owned	Share-Cropped		
1.	Kaili (n1 = 16)	0.69	0.62	0.12	0.06	0.37	1.86
2.	Bugis (n2 = 8)	0.95	0.81	0	0	0.56	2.32
3.	Others (n3 = 6)	1.37	0	0.1	0.17	0.42	2.06
	All (n = 30)	0.90	0.55	0.08	0.06	0.43	2.03

Source: Excerpted from MT Felix Sitorus (2002), Table 4.

The Bugis households have been growing as the economic elite in Sintuwu today. They are establishing hegemony over the village economy through a process of land accumulation as well as accumulation of surplus produced by cocoa plantation. A Bugis household has never sold a piece of land to other ethnic groups members. In case a Bugis household needs much money, usually for the purpose of funding a “pilgrimage” (*Ind., pergi haji*) to Makkah, the household would not sell the land, but pawn it exclusively to another Bugis household. That way gives the household an opportunity to get back the pawned land at the end of pawning period. Moreover the economic hegemony of Bugis ethnic group is being established through a domination in the cocoa economy. In spite of holding the largest cocoa plantation on average, the Bugis people also control the local market of cocoa. Some large Bugis farmer also take the role of “middleman trader”, who collects cocoa from the smaller plantation operators and then sells it in a relatively large volume to the larger traders, such as exporters and inter-island traders in Palu city.

5. Forest margins: alternative bases of socio-economic security

Having sold out their land to the Bugis people, where do the Kaili people go? In the case of the “Green Revolution” in rural Java, non-farm economic activities have come to be the solution for the marginalized peasants. In the case of Sintuwu or Palolo valley as a whole, non-farm economic activities are less developed, so there is no economic field for them except agriculture. But in the agriculture sector now the Kaili peoples are facing the problem of land scarcity, since most of their land parcels inside the village have been transferred to the Bugis peoples. In other words, the Kaili people have lost the bases of their socio-economic security on a substantial scale. Consequently, the economic opportunities for them have decreased.

Actually, the Kaili peoples have not experienced the declining of the bases of socio-economic security only in term of economic capital, namely land resources, but also in term of social capital, namely access to land tenancy institution. The root of such

problems, on the one hand, is the fact that most of the Kaili peoples practice the *bapetak* production relationship exclusively over the wet-rice cultivation⁸. On the other hand, the total area of wet-rice cultivation under the Kaili's control is severely reduced in Sintuwu, since a large part of rice fields have been transferred to the Bugis and subsequently converted to cocoa plantation. It is very clear that the space for *bapetak* has been narrowed, thus reducing the opportunity to work it. Such a situation is worsened by the Bugis' exclusiveness regarding access to land resources. Once the Bugis people have the land on their hand, there is no chance for other ethnic group members to get access to it. In addition the Kaili peoples are not familiar enough with land tenancy institutions practiced over dry land cultivation, such as land leasing (local term: *bapajak*), sharecropping, and land borrowing, in the way that the Bugis are.

It is clear that under the "cocoa economy" the Kaili peoples are experiencing the lower socio-economic security, while the Bugis peoples are experiencing the higher one. However, cocoa plantation is now an indicator of socio-economic welfare among the people of Sintuwu. The Kaili peoples, of course, are eager to cultivate cocoa extensively, as has been done by the Bugis peoples. But once again they are faced with the problem of land scarcity inside the village area, since most of the land parcels are now controlled by the Bugis peoples. Such a situation causes a sort of jealousy on the Kaili side and, to some extent, also causes a sort of social tension between the two major ethnic groups.

Coping with the "declining bases of socio-economic security", the Kaili peoples are seeking a new basis outside the village, realizing that forest area is the best alternative. Taking such alternative bases, the Kaili peoples then encroach on the forest area now included in LLNP area and cultivate cocoa extensively there. Such encroachment however has brought the Kaili people into land dispute with LLNP Office. On the one hand, the LLNP Office proclaims that the Kaili people have transgressed against the national park borderlines to cultivate the forest area and regards the Kaili as the land grabber. On the other hand the Kaili people do not agree with the latest park borderlines, which were established in 1982 along the logging road, separating the village and the forest area. The villagers argue that the borderline has proceeded about two kilometers into the village area, measured from a "colonial borderline" (?) inside the forest established on the top of Manjapi Hill. In fact, the Kaili had cleared and cultivated the forest area before the last official park borderline was fixed in 1982.

Although cultivating forest area is an illegal activity, locally it is formalized by the village head through issuing "letter of land utilization" (Ind., *Surat Keterangan Pengolahan Lahan*) for each of the Kaili households who apply to cut the forest down for cocoa plantation.⁹ Since the Office of LLNP is a public body, so that the LLNP is

⁸ *Bapetak* is commonly practiced among the Kaili households exclusively over the wet-rice fields. It is a control over a piece of wet-rice field based on a prerogative right for planting and then harvesting. All of work sessions between planting and harvesting, including financial cost, are responsibilities of the land owner. Working norm of yield sharing in Sintuwu is that one quintals of each "petak" (land piece) yields (rice) goes to the "bapetak" right holder, whatever the productivity. Since it is exclusively demarcated by either neighborhood or kinship, "bapetak" relationship is likely an equalization mechanism among the Kaili people regarding the fulfillment of subsistence.

⁹ Each of applicants will be charged about Rp 100.000 for each hectare of forest area asked for cultivation. However the letter is not officially accredited by supra-village government institutions, especially by National Agency for Land Affairs (Ind., *Badan Pertanahan Nasional*) at regency level. Meanwhile the

consequently under the public regime of ownership, it can be said that the Kaili peoples are now transgressing the borders of land rights in order to fight for private ownership in the state domain.

Anyhow, it seems that expansion into the forest area has worked effectively to cope with the scarcity of land as the main bases of socio-economic security inside the village. As shown in **Table 4**, the Kaili household samples that illegally cultivate the forest area (0.92 ha in average) legally hold only a total of 0.62 hectares of land inside the village. This number is much smaller than a total of 2.01 hectares of land legally held by the Kaili household samples who are not illegal cultivators.

Table 4. Average Land Holding among Cultivator and Non-Cultivator of Forest Area by Ethnic Groups in Sintuwu, 2001 (Survey, n=30)

No.	Status and Ethnic Groups	Forest Illegally Cultivated (ha)	Land Owned (ha)		Land Sharecropped (ha)		Total Legally Land Holding (ha)
			Dry Land	Wet Rice Field	Dry Land	Wet Rice Field	
I. Cultivator of Forest:							
1.	Kaili (n1=6)	0.96	0.54	0.0	0.08	0.0	0.62
2.	Bugis(n2=2)	2.25	0.50	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.50
3.	Others n3=2)	1.25	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	All (n=10)	1.29	0.42	0.0	0.05	0.0	0.47
II.Non-Cultivator of Forest:							
1.	Kaili (n1=10)	0	0.78	0.19	0.95	0.09	2.01
2.	Bugis (n2=6)	0	1.10	0.0	1.08	0.0	2.18
3.	Others (n3=4)	0	2.06	0.15	0.0	0.25	2.46
	All (n=20)	0	1.13	0.13	0.80	0.10	2.16

Source: Excerpted from MT Felix Sitorus (2002), Table 5.

village head argues that such letter is not a land ownership document but a land use document which prevents the cultivators from borderline disputes each others.

Compared with Kaili, a Bugis household has never grabbed a piece of land inside the forest area. The Bugis people always put the law first concerning with land holding. Moreover, the Bugis people calculate that land clearing activity inside the forest area needs much time, labor force, and money. Purchasing is more efficient than grabbing. This is the way taken by two Bugis household samples who had “illegal cultivation field” inside the LLNP area (**Table 4**). Actually they had purchased the field from the Kaili people before 1982, when the newest park borderlines had not yet been established.

It seems that land grabbing inside the forest area has been considered as a way of land obtainment especially for the Kaili people. When the Bugis people come to dominate land holding inside the village, so that the Kaili have not enough land to cultivate anymore, there is no other way to cope with the land scarcity but to grab the forest area around the village margin. Although the agriculture density in Sintuwu is not as dense as the case in rural Java, the access of landless people to land resources is relatively limited. Such an explanation of this phenomenon is that the land tenancy institutions which open the access to land, especially regarding access to cocoa plantations, are not well developed there. Hence, grabbing forest area is a way of accumulating a socio-economic security basis among the Kaili peoples who have been continually marginalized by the “Revolusi Cokelat”.

6. Concluding Remarks

“Revolusi Cokelat”, as exemplified by the case of Sintuwu, implies the change of local social formation. It was specifically indicated by the shift of the dominant mode of production from the subsistence production articulated as the wet-rice and corn cultivation to the petty commodity (capitalist) production articulated as the cocoa plantation. Since a mode of production in agricultural society assumes the land resource as the main means (force) of production and the social structure, namely relation of production, is mainly based on the access to land resource, the “Revolusi Cokelat” consequently brought about a fundamental change in the local agrarian structure. This revolution has significantly facilitated the shift of land ownership regime from the collective type, in which land distribution is subjected to the authority of local political leader (the village head), to the private one, in which land distribution is subjected to the power of the market (market of land).

As the collective regime exclusively enabled the “indigenous people”, namely Kaili, to accumulate land resource, and the private regime mainly enabled the “new-comer people”, namely Bugis, to do the same, the shift of regime however implies the transfer of land resource, by purchasing, from the hand of the Kaili to the hand of the Bugis. Consequently, it implies the fundamental change of local agrarian structure, through which the Kaili people were downgraded from “landed” to “landless”, while the Bugis were upgraded from “landless” to “landed”. In the context of “Revolusi Cokelat”, which established cocoa plantation as the main base of socio-economic security, such a change in the agrarian structure implies both the decrease of socio-economic security among the Kaili and the increase of such security among the Bugis.

Looking at the cocoa cultivation as a solution for the structural inequalities inside the village, the Kaili peoples face the lack of land resources in their hands, since most of such resources are controlled by the exclusive Bugis, who utilize it as the cocoa plantations. Moreover, land tenancy institutions, such as land leasing, land borrowing, and sharecropping are not in favor of the Kaili. This situation leads the Kaili peoples to look for a new basis of socio-economic security and, finally, they realize that the forest area in the margins of LLNP is the best alternative. Based on the traditional argument of forest borderline, and also informal as well as formal support from the village head, the marginalized Kaili peoples then encroach on the forest area and converted it to be the cocoa plantation. Perceiving the LLNP is under the public regime of ownership, it can be said that the Kaili peoples are transgressing the land right borders in order to fight for private ownership in the state domain.

It is clear that from the point of view of the Kaili, as exemplified by the case of Sintuwu, forest encroachment or conversion is not a problem itself but a problem solving for social inequalities as well as socio-economic insecurity. By reclaiming the forest area, and covering it with cocoa plantation, the Kaili of Sintuwu to some extent have succeeded in solving their problem of both access to land resource and socio-economic security. This has achieved social stability inside the village, with, however, forest margins destabilization, at least in a short term, as its cost.

However, analysis of “Revolusi Cokelat” reveals a warning that every “human-made ecological problem” inside the forest area, such as the “damaging forest encroachment”, has its roots in the “sociological problem” outside the forest or inside the village community. Consequently, any solution to solve any forest problem must be tested for sociological soundness.

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