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Families, Funerals and Facebook: Reimag(in)ing and Curating Toraja Kin in Translocal Times

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Abstract

The Sa'dan Toraja of upland Sulawesi, Indonesia have long been celebrated in the anthropological literature for their elaborate procession-filled mortuary rituals, which draw vast networks of kith and kin to mourn, memorialise, and reaffirm familial bonds and obligations. Whether residing in the homeland or abroad, most Torajans underscore funeral rites as the most vital expression of Toraja familial and cultural identity. Although some estimates suggest that more Torajans now reside off-island and overseas than remain in the homeland, extended familial funerals in the homeland continue to have a centripetal physical, economic and emotional pull. While various scholars have documented the ways in which remittances from Toraja migrants or the presence of international tourists have transformed Toraja funerals in recent decades, this article focusses on the role of social media in navigating global familial relationships and rituals. Indonesia has the largest number of Facebook subscribers in the world, and this study offers the first exploration of the ways in which Facebook interweaves far-flung familial relationships. This study also examines house-society orientations in the Toraja highlands and addresses the use of Facebook by Torajans in the homeland to cultivate continued allegiances to ancestral houses (around which extended Toraja families are oriented). Finally, this article also examines a large-scale 2012 Toraja funeral in order to spotlight the contours of the Toraja family in the current era of neoliberalism and cyber-technologies. The article offers insights into the ways in which various Torajans navigate social media and non-local corporations to image, reimagine and negotiate familial identities for various audiences (local, national and transnational).

KEYWORDS: Family, Facebook, house societies, migration, social media, Toraja, Indonesia

INTRODUCTION

Tᴇᴍᴘᴏʀᴀʀʏ ᴍɪɢʀᴀᴛɪᴏɴ (*merantau*, B.I.[1]) has long been a dimension of family life in various parts of insular Southeast Asia. However, recent decades of increased labour, educational, and recreational mobility have posed novel opportunities and challenges for Southeast Asian families. Various studies have traced the social landscapes of these profound transformations in parts of Indonesia,

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[1]Throughout this article, B.I. refers to Bahasa Indonesia.

focusing in particular on Java and Sumatra (e.g. Lindquist 2008; Silvey 2006). Yet, with a few exceptions (Forshee 2001, 2012; Hugo 2002; Silvey 2000), the contours of these changes remain understudied in rural eastern Indonesia. In a recent volume on contemporary Southeast Asian families, Yoko Hayami and colleagues underscore the need to better understand how families in different parts of this diverse region are "negotiated on the ground amidst worries over [the family's] disintegration in the face of globalizing trends and increased mobility, and how [families are] being affected by the increasing flows of people in the globalizing world" (Hayami *et al.* 2012: 3). An overarching aim of this article is to address this call, offering ethnographic insights into the changing 'translocal'[2] family dynamics of an Eastern-Indonesian minority group. To introduce the more specific themes animating this article, I offer a brief vignette.

ORIENTING SCENE: FRAMING FAMILIES ON FACEBOOK

In October of 2011, an unexpected Facebook Instant Message shattered my morning routine of coffee and online news scans. Sent from a Toraja village in South Sulawesi, Indonesia, the pop-up message bore news of the demise of Sindo' Toding, a woman who opened her home to me when I began fieldwork in 1984, and whom I considered akin to a 'second mother.' Over the years, her family had sent various messages about the deaths of other Toraja kin, usually via long-distance telephone calls or letters. However, this was my first Toraja death notification via Facebook. Poignant photos followed the initial message, all Facebook 'tagged'[3] to assorted far-flung family members. These included recent snapshots of Sindo' Toding and images of the small, mournful family gathering in the ritual space fronting her ancestral house immediately following her death. For geographically-distant Facebook viewing kin, these tagged and Instant Messaged photographs signalled the arrival of a financially and psychologically demanding period, a time when extended family members are expected to begin wiring funeral funds and planning voyages back to the Toraja homeland for the final mortuary ritual that would follow months or even years later.

[2]My use of 'translocality' (rather than 'transnational' or 'global') as a research lens underscores that twenty-first century Toraja families are constituted, maintained and transformed via processes and dynamics that traverse boundaries on a variety of scales – local, regional, national and beyond. As Grazella (2013), Freitag and von Oppen (2010) and others (cf. Oakes and Schein 2006) stress, a translocal research perspective fosters an analytical focus beyond the limits of the nation state: therefore I would argue that this is a particularly apt lens for understanding most Southeast Asian families today.

[3]Facebook 'tagging' someone entails typing a person's name into a photo uploaded onto Facebook. This alerts the person to the existence of the photo and simultaneously uploads the photo onto the person's Facebook page, thereby also enabling the tagged person's Facebook friends to view the photo.

Family members' Facebook pages were soon echoing the news: some posted images of Sindo' Toding's textile-enveloped corpse stored inside the ancestral house, accompanied by personal 'status updates' conveying farewells and prayers on her behalf. Such updates garnished sympathetic words from Facebook friends as well as inquiries from extended family members concerning dates for funeral-planning gatherings.[4] Each successive Facebook update drew far-flung kin from their daily internet surfing routines in distant offices and cyber-cafes, urgently reminding them of the pressing, emotionally weighty family duties beckoning from the Toraja homeland.

I open with this vignette because it embodies three themes concerning the contemporary translocal dynamics of the Toraja family that frame this article. The first theme concerns the ways in which Torajans negotiate sensibilities about self and family electronically, in cyberspace. In this article I aim to address some preliminary questions concerning how Blackberries, Facebook and Instant Messaging articulate with familial relations that are increasingly far-flung. That is, how do Torajans draw on cyber-technologies to reimagine, re-image, perpetuate, or navigate the family? Although one might herald familial relationship-building, 'care' and displays of familial pride as universal threads in the fabric of Facebook and other social networking sites, in what follows I suggest that in this era of global mobility and heritage tourism, certain social media platforms are drawn upon for *culturally distinctive* family projects. Specifically, I contend that Torajans use Facebook and other cyber-communication tools like Twitter not just to research, cultivate and amplify family ties but also to re-image and 'curate' *house-based* conceptions of the family.

The second theme (signalled by the ancestral houses ever-present in the background of these Facebook photos) concerns the need to excavate *local* ideas concerning 'relatedness' and 'family' in our studies of current-day Southeast Asian family dynamics. Here I draw inspiration from various scholars (e.g. Carsten 2000; Carsten and Hugh-Jones 1995; Sparkes and Howell 2003; Waterson 1990), who have shifted our thinking about the family away from the classic kinship structures of yore, which tended to carry Western scholarly presuppositions and to obscure on-the-ground practices in Southeast Asia. These scholars championed newer frames for unearthing conceptions of the family from the ground up, by approaching kinship as 'relatedness' or 'belonging'. For the Toraja, ideas concerning 'relatedness' and 'family' are entwined with ancestral houses, so much so that Roxana Waterson has hailed them a classic Austronesian 'house society' (Waterson 1990). As the shifting contours of Eastern Indonesian house societies in translocal times remain understudied, this article seeks to enhance our understanding of what happens when people become

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[4]Torajans do not issue formal invitations to funerals. Rather, the expectation is that extended kin will make contact upon learning of the death of a relative, determine the dates for the funeral and make arrangements to attend.

geographically distant from the physical structures in which familial identities are rooted. Via a case study of the economic, physical and cyber flows prompted by a death in a Toraja family, I aim to shed light on the social reproduction of Eastern Indonesian house-based families in trans-regional/national spaces.

This brings us to the third thread in this article, which concerns the relationship between funerals and familial identities (and networks) in the global era. Both migrant and local Torajans generally cite mortuary rituals as the most vital expression of familial and cultural identity, and Toraja funerals are not only prevalent on Facebook, but often draw extensive networks of migrant kith and kin back to the homeland to mourn, memorialise and reaffirm familial bonds. Today, as in the past, Torajan funerals are key arenas for bequeathing family inheritances, for elaborating Torajan sensibilities about kin obligations, for demonstrating 'relatedness', and for enhancing extended family prestige (Volkman 1985; Waterson 2009). Moreover, as I argue here, for new generations born and reared outside the homeland, a return for a relative's funeral is also a forum for 'touring' familial heritage, including the physical edifices to which broader familial identities are tethered. For some Torajans remaining in the homeland, the return of offspring of migrant relatives for funerals (and tours) offers the possibility of rekindling extended familial bonds frayed by distance. For other Torajans residing in the homeland, these returns signal an ambivalent period of household displacement, as many successful migrant families own second homes in the Toraja highlands that less prosperous relatives occupy during their absences.

Likewise, it pays to underscore that for geographically distant Torajan migrants and their children, family funerals in the homeland can pose complex quandaries. For many (especially migrants with resources), extended family funerals in the homeland continue to maintain a centripetal physical, economic and emotional pull. Yet not all Torajans residing outside the homeland have the financial means or, in some cases, the emotional desire to participate in these economically draining familial rituals.[5] For those first-, second-, and

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[5]Not only migrant Torajans experience this ambivalence: many Torajans who remain in the highlands experience anxiety and ambivalence about the extensive expenditures entailed in Toraja rituals. These expenditures have accelerated in recent decades due to the remittances of migrant relatives (Volkman 1985). Poorer families, in particular, would rather spend their limited resources providing for their children's futures (Waterson 2009: 221). Until the 1970s, Torajans wishing to escape the economic demands of Toraja rituals could only do so by emigrating and effectively allowing ties to their extended families in the homeland to wither. With the 1970s arrival of the Pentecostal Church, conversion to this brand of Christianity became another option, as the Pentecostal Church forbids engagement in the costly ritual exchange system undergirding Toraja ancestral house/kin-based activities. The Pentecostal Church has grown rapidly over the past few decades, especially in the more hierarchical southern Toraja region. In this southern region 30 per cent of Torajans have embraced Pentecostalism, making it the second most popular religion after Dutch Reformed Protestantism. Especially for poorer, lower-class families, the Pentecostal Church-based social life provides an alternative to the ancestral-house-based extended family

third-generation urban migrants who have shifted their orientations towards advancing their own nuclear family units,[6] funerals mounted by extended family kin are often sources of profound emotional ambivalence. Thus, the final portion of this article entails a micro-case study of Sindo' Toding's large-scale, aristocratic funeral ritual of 2012, a ritual that drew thousands of guests and kin from across the nation and beyond. As rank and wealth dictate the ability to mount rituals on a grand scale (drawing larger numbers of kin), it should be kept in mind that this case study represents one end of the social spectrum of the Toraja experience of family-building via the ritual arena. However, as large-scale aristocratic funerals draw Toraja affines and guests from all socioeconomic classes/ranks and as Torajans increasingly project these ritual events to Toraja kin worldwide via the internet, this case study offers insights into broader processes concerning the social reproduction of the Toraja house-based family in trans-local times.

The data forming the core of this article derives from three decades of anthropological field research initiated in the Toraja highlands in 1984–1985, with most recent follow-up fieldwork in summers 2007 and 2012. I employed a mixed methods approach (Bernard 1998), drawing heavily from qualitative open-ended interviews (Rubin and Rubin 2005) and participant observation in formal and informal community events, with a special concentration on familial ritual gatherings (Agar 1996; Ellen 1984; Pelto and Pelto 1981). I supplemented this qualitative research with archival research, photographic documentation of familial ritual events, origin house celebrations, and critical discourse analysis (Fairclough 1995) of verbiage and photographs depicted on Torajan origin house and heritage-oriented internet and Facebook pages. Critical discourse analysis was particularly salient to the aims of this study, as its premise is that "certain discourses are more powerful than others [and that these dynamics] can be revealed in the grammatical, semantic, and visual construction of texts and images" (Waterton 2009: 46).

The organisation of this article is as follows. I begin by offering background on the growing use of social media in Indonesia, highlighting its relevance for understanding how Torajans constitute, maintain and curate families in an era where kin span local, regional and national boundaries. Next, I provide contextual background on the Toraja and outline the ways in which Toraja ideas concerning 'relatedness' and 'family' are tethered to ancestral houses. I then turn to examine

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network and its costly ritual demands. For more on conversion to Pentecostalism as a strategy for limiting one's expenses within the Toraja ceremonial system, see de Jong (2013). In Northern Toraja, where this study is rooted, the dominant faith remains Protestantism followed by Catholicism. In contrast to Pentecostalism, neither of these faiths bars adherents from making extensive financial contributions to Toraja rituals.

[6]Hugo has documented how eastern Indonesians' experiences as international migrants have exacerbated a shift in primary emotional loyalties and responsibilities away from the multi-generational family and towards the nuclear family unit (Hugo 2002: 32).

how these house-based ideas of the family manifest on Facebook (projecting and promoting geographically-rooted ideas about family to the Toraja diaspora). Finally, I offer a micro-case study of a large-scale 2012 Toraja funeral ritual that drew thousands of kin from across Indonesia and around the world, in order to demonstrate the role of social media in orchestrating family activities as well as amplifying and curating house-based extended families. The article closes with a discussion of the broader themes emerging from the case study that pertain to the transmission of the Southeast Asian house-based-family over increasingly global spaces.

CURATING FAMILIES VIA SOCIAL MEDIA

Many have hailed Indonesia's love affair with social media, some going so far as to pronounce it the most social media-oriented nation in the world (Reed 2013). Indonesia has over 74.6 million internet users, most of whom access the web via cell phones (Markplus Insight 2013). Indonesia also outscores all other nations in its Twitter usage and is ranked as the fourth biggest Facebook nation in the world, with 64 million active Facebook users in 2013 (Grazella 2013; Lim 2013: 146). As Merlyna Lim observes, thus far, most studies of internet use in Indonesia have focused on religious issues, security themes, cyber-porn debates, or the use of social media for democratisation and social justice (Lim 2013).[7] Surprisingly, scholars have yet to devote serious attention to how Indonesians use the 'Net' to navigate far-flung potential and actual familial relationships.[8] Yet, the internet is ideally suited for "creating and disseminating visual symbols and stylized information that various actors call upon to create shared identities and accompanying social power" (Lim 2003: 115). In this regard, the internet offers a promising realm for exploring the social reproduction of the family in diaspora and trans-spaces. Indeed, several scholars have initiated this line of exploration in other regions of Southeast Asia, particularly the Philippines. (For instance, see Madianou and Miller's [2012] recent study of migrant Filipina mothers and their internet-mediated relationships with children in the Philippines, as well as Nicole Constable's [2003] work on Filipina women's use of the internet to seek foreign husbands).

My premise is that the swift and pervasive spread of inexpensive electronic communication technologies has ramifications for rural Indonesian sensibilities about families. Specifically, I am not arguing that the internet and social media

[7]For examples, see Lim (2003), Pambayun (2010), and Nugroho (2012).
[8]To date, only one book focuses specifically on Facebook in Indonesia (Yogaswara 2010). However, this book does not address the interplay between Facebook and familial relationships. Rather Yogaswara argues that Facebook has enabled new engagements in public life and thus serves as an agent of democratisation, an argument Lim suggests remains unsupported by concrete data (Lim 2013: 145).

are causal agents transforming Toraja families, at least not at present, but rather that social media amplifies particular conceptions of the family (and familial obligations) to second and third generations of kin reared outside the homeland. In short, I suggest that an internet-savvy generation of highland Torajans are using platforms like Facebook in ways that not only reflect their house-based conceptions of familial identity but also in order to convey these broader kinship sensibilities to migrant relations who may be in the process of shifting to more nuclear understandings of the family.

Following surges in smart phone purchases (especially Blackberries and Androids) and increased connectivity across Indonesia over the past six years, many middle-aged and younger Torajans now navigate aspects of their familial lives online. While statistics are not available for Toraja Facebook engagement per se, the growing number of extended-family-oriented Toraja Facebook groups hint at how this social media platform is rapidly becoming a terrain for Toraja 'kinship work,' as I will demonstrate shortly. In considering Facebook as an avenue for Toraja 'kinship work', it is worth clarifying that I use the expression 'kinship work' in the sense developed by Michaela di Leonardo (1984) in her study of Italian-American families in the San Francisco Bay Area. Di Leonardo employed this concept to convey the myriad ways in which female descendants of Italian immigrants in California re-affirm extended family ties and cultivate affective sensibilities (e.g. by corresponding with geographically removed kin, organising holiday and birthday celebrations, orchestrating gift exchanges, and initiating family visits). This sort of kinship work is all-important for the continued vitality of translocal families, be they Italian-American or Torajan.[9]

For a growing number of younger Torajans, social media serves to accomplish extended family tasks such as funeral and house-oriented ritual planning. Moreover, internet platforms such as Facebook also serve as avenues for discovering and connecting with distant kin, and for enriching family records. When I first began my field research in 1984, my Torajan language teacher could never have imagined the current day Facebook 'recipe' for cultivating knowledge of and ties between far-flung kin. In 1984, while discussing how his own children had moved nine hours away to the provincial capital of Makassar for jobs and higher education, he shared his worries that "in forty to sixty years, Torajans will no longer be able to know and trace their fifth or sixth cousins. It will be more like in the USA, knowing only second cousins. Because they live too far away to come together regularly at rituals – funeral rituals bring the extended family branches together so you know your kin." He could never have guessed that by 2013 his grandchildren in Makassar would be Facebook-'friending' me

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[9]While di Leonardo finds women to be the ones who have traditionally shouldered this genre of 'kinship work' in Italian-American communities, and other scholars have tended to depict Western women as the primary 'keepers of kin,' a preliminary analysis of Toraja Facebook postings coded as embodying 'kinship work' suggests that this gender bias is not a theme amongst the Toraja.

to request reminiscences and old photos of their grandfather, whose memory is now starting to fail.

In this regard, I consider the metaphor of 'curation' particularly salient to aspects of what is happening with Toraja families on Facebook. Over the past few years, the term 'curation' has moved beyond the museum world, where it concerned the research, care, and display of artefacts. In bleeding into the domain of everyday parlance, the term 'curation' harnesses new economic and cultural capital. Particularly as it emerges in business venues, the word 'curate' now melds a marketing-oriented quest for economic capital together with the older museum connotation of aesthetic attunement and selectivity (freighted with cultural capital). As Williams observed in the New York Times:

> "The word 'curate,' lofty and once rarely spoken outside exhibition corridors or British parishes, has become a fashionable code word amongst the aesthetically minded, which seem to paste it onto every activity that involves culling and selecting. In more print-centric times, the term of art was 'edit' – as in a boutique edits it's [sic] dress collections carefully. But now, among designers, disk jockeys, club promoters, bloggers and thrift store owners, curate is code for 'I have a discerning eye and great taste.'" (Williams 2009)

In this present article I suggest that via online narratives, Facebook postings, images, and groups, younger Torajans are not only nourishing longings, love and sometimes ambivalence (since not all Facebook commentary is rosy) for distant family, but they are also actively curating their families. That is, their Facebook activities sometimes entail researching, caring for and displaying selective images of 'family' for themselves and others. Before turning to spotlight the intersection between Toraja house-based families and Facebook via a case study of a funeral, I offer contextual background on the Toraja, and trace how Torajans use internet groups to project ideas about the family beyond local face-to-face audiences.

THE SA'DAN TORAJA AT HOME AND BEYOND: FAMILIES, HOUSES AND LIVELIHOODS

The Sa'dan Toraja are a predominantly Christian minority group whose homeland is in the South Sulawesi highlands (Figure 1). Most Torajans make their living via wet rice agriculture, cash cropping, or work in small businesses, civil service and tourism. Famed for their elaborately carved ancestral houses (*tongkonan*), spectacular, procession-filled mortuary rituals, and haunting cliff-side effigies of the dead, Torajans attract not only anthropologists, but also thousands of tourists annually. At the peak of tourism in the mid-1990s, as many as 50,000 foreign tourists and 200,000 domestic tourists were visiting annually (Adams 2006: 16). International tourist arrivals in the Toraja highland have tapered in
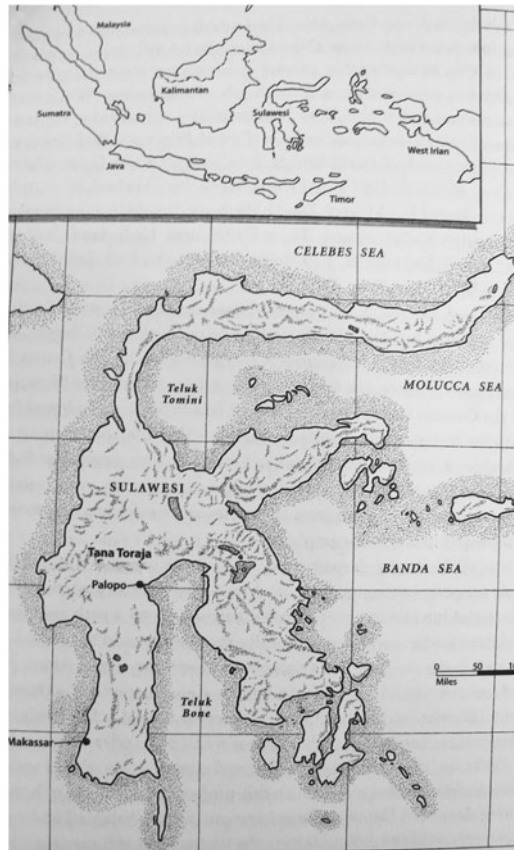
Figure 1.   Map of Sulawesi, Indonesia, highlighting the Toraja homeland (Amended from figure by Tom Willcockson, in Adams 2007)

recent years, due to post-September 11th security concerns, the 2002 and 2005 bombings of tourist venues in Bali, reports of inter-religious violence in an adjacent Sulawesi province, and fears of avian virus. Yet, domestic tourism remains relatively robust, and amongst these are Torajan migrants and children of migrants who travel to the Toraja highlands for family vacations and ritual events.

Today over 750,000 Toraja reside in their mountainous homeland and there are at least as many diaspora Torajans (de Jong 2008: 19; Suryadinata *et. al.* 2003). Land pressures, career limitations, and aspirations for enhanced livelihoods and prestige have driven many to seek wage labour and higher education elsewhere in Indonesia. Today, Torajans reside throughout Indonesia, working in mining, construction and timber in other parts of Sulawesi, Kalimantan and West Papua, manufacturing in Batam, and in business and government in Jakarta. According to Indonesia's 2000 census, an estimated 50,000 Toraja toil in Malaysia (Suryadinata *et. al.* 2003: 7)[10] and still others work in Singapore, Hong Kong, Japan, and South

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[10]This figure only counts documented workers. We should assume that the figures are much higher given that many Torajans abroad are undocumented workers.

Korea, primarily in childcare and domestic work. Torajan migrants have also sought wage labour, business, and educational opportunities in Australia, Europe, and the United States. Out-migration began in earnest in the early 1970s, and today some families include three generations living away from the homeland. As Volkman has observed, it is impossible to understand contemporary Toraja social dynamics without considering the Toraja diaspora (Volkman 1985). Although migrants maintain varying degrees of connection to the homeland, many make efforts to send remittances or return for familial funerals and ancestral house-centred rituals. In fact, as Volkman first documented in the 1980s, remittances from far-flung family members have contributed to dramatic ritual inflation, as migrants channel their familial status-enhancement efforts into funding ever-more dramatic, pageantry-filled funerals and house-consecration rituals in their homeland (Volkman 1985). Today, the Toraja diaspora includes grandchildren of first wave migrants (often products of inter-ethnic or international marriages), some of whom appear to feel far less tethered to the ancestral homeland,[11] an issue that concerns family members remaining in the highlands. During my visits, the importance of maintaining family connections with these new generations was a frequent topic of discussion.[12]

Before examining shifting Toraja visions of the family in the Facebook era, it is important to look more closely at the Toraja family. At an initial, cursory glance, a Toraja family would appear remarkably familiar to most North Americans and Europeans: Toraja kinship is cognatic and most Toraja reside in nuclear family households, with occasional grandparents, grandchildren or adopted kin also in the household.[13] Particularly in urban areas, Toraja households would seem to approach the Indonesian state's ideal vision of the nuclear family as the "natural unit" (Blackwood 2000: 88; Schrauwers 2000: 870; Silvey 2006: 25). However, as many have underscored, it would be misguided to conflate nuclear family households with conceptions of kin (cf. Harris 1984; Schrauwers

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[11]Several second-generation Toraja immigrants I interviewed in the United States expressed desires to take their children on a vacation to the homeland, but also noted that costs were prohibitive. As one explained, to return to the homeland would not only entail expenditures for airfare, but also bundles of gifts for kin in the highlands as well as the risk of incurring ritual expenses as it would be hard to refuse face-to-face requests for financial contributions to familial rituals.

[12]On numerous occasions as visiting kin from Makassar, Balik Papan and Jakarta, stopped by to say goodbye to the family in whose household I lived, I observed family elders turn to the migrants' children to emphasise the importance of frequent returns and maintaining family ties. In fact, the potency of these routinely-delivered emotional departure speeches struck me directly in the summer of 2012, when I brought my own young daughter to visit for the first time. Towards the end of our stay, one of my Toraja host 'brothers' who had become a family elder came to deliver his formal goodbyes. Asking me to translate, he initially directed himself to my ten-year-old daughter, telling her that she was also part of this Toraja family and that she must always know that she has kin and an ancestral home in the village. Turning to me, he then instructed me to make an effort to bring my family back every few years and to teach my daughter Indonesian so that the family tie could remain close even after we were deceased, for the generations that followed.

[13]However, visiting kin will frequently occupy guest rooms or spare beds and urban Toraja families tend to host younger kin from home villages for longer periods. These younger relatives contribute their labour to the household while pursuing work or education in the city (see Adams 2000).

2000). The Toraja family is not a slightly stretched Asian version of a Western nuclear family.

Recently, scholars have begun to recognise the house as a specific genre of social organisation that appears to resonate with many dimensions of kinship practices in Southeast Asia (Carsten and Hugh-Jones 1995; Erb 1998, 1999; Fox 1987, 1993; Waterson 1990). Roxana Waterson argued convincingly that Toraja relations can be productively understood as what Claude Lévi-Strauss call a 'house society' (Waterson 1990, 1995a: 47–48; 1995b). Claude Lévi-Strauss (1983, 1987) developed this term to describe societies in which kinship organisation is focused around named houses founded by ancestors, where these houses serve as the locus of ritual activities, and own property which may be both material (land, heirlooms, etc.) and immaterial (names, titles, and ritual duties). Toraja family houses of origin have all of these features (Figure 2). As in a number of other Southeast Asian house-oriented societies, the Torajan family house of origin is inseparable from how people conceptualise familial identities: they are not only "structures for remembrance" (a roadmap to genealogical memories and heritage), but their very "presence in the landscape simultaneously embodies and reinforces…hierarchical distinctions" between different groups of kin (Waterson 2009: 123).

Figure 2. A carved Toraja house of origin (*tongkonan*). (Photograph: K. Adams)

The most commonly used term for origin houses is *tongkonan*, which derives from the verb *tongkon*, 'to sit,' particularly "to sit in a funeral ritual context" (Tammu and van der Veen 1972: 658). This idea of 'sitting' when linked to the *tongkonan* clearly alludes to gathering and 'sitting' at meetings whenever business of the *tongkonan* descendants needs to be discussed (organising a funeral, negotiating inheritance divisions, etc.). Implicit in the term, then, is a tie to family and ritual familial gatherings. In principle, all Torajans have *tongkonans*, regardless of rank. In fact, Waterson reports being assured that "even the birds have their *tongkonan*" (Waterson 2009: 191). However, most Torajans I know use the term mainly for the elaborately carved ancestral houses (and affiliated kin groups) traditionally associated with the nobility.[14] The broader Toraja expression for origin houses is *banua pa'rapuan*, or 'house of the *pa'rapuan*' (those descended from a common ancestor are termed *pa'rapuan*), of which the carved *tongkonan* is but one type. In pre-colonial times, commoners and descendants of slaves were prevented from embellishing their ancestral houses with carved motifs. Thus, as physical structures, *banua pa'rapuan* embody not only kin, but also one's seat in society.

Each Torajan is potentially affiliated with a number of family origin houses, some older and more esteemed than others. Members of particularly celebrated ancestral houses "gain prestige from the myths about their founding ancestors, and from the heirloom valuables stored within them", including venerated kerises, beaded ornaments, and textiles (Waterson 1991: 65). Older 'mother' *tongkonans* founded by offspring of celestial ancestors are far more prestigious than satellite *tongkonans* erected by subsequent generations seeking their own glory. These offspring *tongkonan* have shorter, less glorious pedigrees, though they lend acclaim to their founders and may grow in size and stature over the course of many generations. One acquires one's house affiliations bilaterally, through both parents and affines, thus one has the potential to claim membership in dozens of ancestral houses. Indeed, aristocratic families often maintain *tongkonan* kinship charts, documenting their house-based ancestry back to houses founded by children of celestial ancestors (Figure 3). However, in practice, most Torajans exercise selectivity in their ancestral house attachments, given the heavy economic and social demands associated with each affiliation. One's ties to an ancestral house endure as long as one maintains ritual obligations to the houses, attending and contributing funds and labour to house consecration and house renewal rituals.

Torajans' sense of broader familial identity is so strongly tethered to these ancestral houses that when diaspora Torajans meet for the first time they will often compare notes on each other's *tongkonan* affiliations to determine possible kinship relations. Thus, when a Toraja graduate student I met in Chicago

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[14]Similarly, Waterson also finds this more 'restrictive' use of the term was most common in the area in which she works (Waterson 2009: 191).
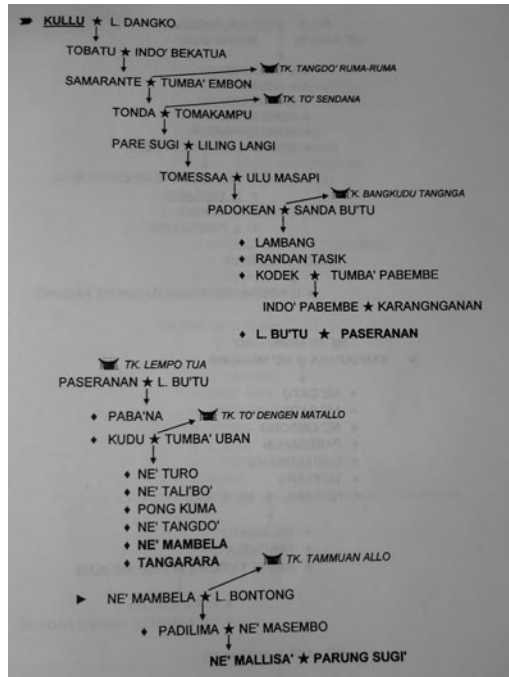
Figure 3.   Photograph of Toraja-made kinship chart in funerary booklet, highlighting tongkonans. (Photograph: K. Adams)

learned I had a fictive kinship affiliation with a Toraja family, he immediately asked about their *tongkonan*s. Upon discovering a shared house of origin, he triumphantly declared our kinship bond, which led to mutual assistance throughout his stay in Chicago and beyond. This is a common experience for diaspora Torajans: knowing one's familial *tongkonan*s facilitates the establishment of kinship bonds and social capital when one is far from the homeland.

HOUSE-BASED FAMILIES AND FACEBOOK

Today named family origin houses are making their debut in cyberspace. Snapshots of *tongkonan*-based ritual activities figure prominently in the Facebook pages of local and diaspora Torajans, interspersed between baby pictures, holiday greetings, images of coveted consumer products, birthday and vacation photos. Not only do internet-savvy Torajans post images of *tongkonan*-based ritual events, but they also offer up images of themselves ('selfies') in front of their ancestral *tongkonan*s. Significantly, at least seventeen named *tongkonan* Facebook groups have emerged over the past two years. Entitled '*Keluarga Besar Tongkonan X*' or '*Keluarga Besar Tongkonan Y*' ('Big Family of *Tongkonan* X' or 'Big Family of *Tongkonan* Y'), many, although not all, of these *tongkonan*

Facebook groups are open groups (membership need not be approved by the group administrator).

The Facebook group '*Keluarga Besar Tongkonan Sallebayu Kesu*' is fairly typical: Representing one of the older, more venerated *tongkonan*s in Northern Toraja Regency, this Facebook group has 87 members and was established in October 2012. Initially a 'closed group', it has recently shifted to 'open' status, presumably to attract more members. The highlands-based group creator explains that he established the Facebook group so that "all of the [*tongkonan*] Sallebayu families can know our family [*keluarga*]." As with some of the other 'Big Tongkonan Family' Facebook groups, the discussion on the group page shifts between Indonesian and Torajan, since diaspora *tongkonan* family members are often more comfortable interfacing in the national language. Thus far, members have posted a range of items on this particular group's page: Posts include historical photographs of celebrated *tongkonan* ancestors, images of current *tongkonan* figures, holiday greetings to *tongkonan* members, Jesus quotes, and urgings to participate in online discussions "so that fellow *tongkonan* family members will know one another better." Members also post updates on *Tongkonan Sallebayu Kesu*'-based ritual events: For instance, in early 2014, the *tongkonan*'s Facebook page announced that preparations were under way for the Indonesian President's visit to the site of this *tongkonan* (which together with several adjacent *tongkonans* now constitute a key tourist destination). More recently, a 'headline news' posting on the site announced the establishment of a new, closed Facebook group entitled 'Tongkonan Genealogy in Toraja'. The posting urges *Tongkonan Sallebayu Kesu*'s Facebook page members to join the new group in order to "participate and share our *tongkonan*'s pedigree, so that families know each other." The group has already attracted 803 members and is rapidly expanding its membership.

By far and away the largest house-oriented Toraja Facebook group, however, employs the broader term *banua* ('house') in its title, rather than the term *tongkonan*. This relatively new, closed Facebook group, *Banua Puan Tangdilino*' (House of Lord Tangdilino'), has already attracted 2494 members. Tangdilino' was a mythic ancestor who commissioned the construction of the first Toraja house (the *banua* that became the architectural prototype for subsequent *tongkonans*), and thus membership is open to all descendants of this progenitor, a sizeable number since most Torajans can trace a genealogical tie to *Puan Tangdilino*'. The founders (younger, educated Torajans residing away from the homeland) established this Facebook group on 26 December 2012, hoping to attract the thousands of descendants of Tangdilino' spread throughout the world. Their stated aims are to preserve Toraja cultural knowledge for future generations, to cultivate a sense of unity, and to develop plans for rebuilding Tangdilino"s original *tongkonan*, which group founders hope will become a "study center for cultural preservation" as Toraja faces "challenges from modern culture". Ultimately, the aim to rebuild the original structure erected by this

mythic ancestor would require economic contributions from members identified via Facebook.

It is worth nothing that there was a similar pre-internet attempt to organise Torajans to rebuild this uber-*tongkonan* in the 1990s. However, these earlier organisers were obliged to abandon their plan, as potential financial contributors could not agree upon a co-coordinator who could be trusted to manage rebuilding funds (Waterson 2003: 48–49). Given that fostering trust is even more challenging in the non-face-to-face world of the internet, it is unlikely that this plan will materialise. However, the creation and popularity of this Facebook group underscores my earlier point that what is being 'curated' on Facebook is most often a house-based *conception* of kinship. In this case, the invisible, long-vanished original house of *Puan Tangdilino'* demonstrates itself still 'good to think with' as it represents a vision of kinship in the broadest and most inclusive possible sense.[15]

The *Puan* Tangdilino' group's Facebook postings are relatively lively, centring on sharing knowledge about aspects of Toraja ancestral culture (including stories of *Tangdilino'* and other Toraja mythic heroes), explicating ritual verses, analysing *tongkonan* symbolism, and discussing other Toraja artifacts. Although this Facebook Group targets a mega-sized membership (in contrast to the Big *Tongkonan* Family groups which are smaller in focus), in this group we still find the theme of house-based kinship being projected and perpetuated electronically to ever more far-flung members.

Returning to consider the 'Big *Tongkonan* Family' Facebook groups, it pays to underscore that Torajans use their 'big family' pages in ways that not only overlap with how Americans, Europeans and others around the world employ extended family Facebook pages (for family reunions, genealogical information-sharing, and so forth), but they also use them in ways that are culturally distinctive. Unique to Toraja Big *Tongkonan* Family Facebook groups is the agenda of entwining scattered kin into the structural and ritual maintenance of physical edifices – their *tongkonan*. In short, internet-active Torajans use Facebook for broader origin house programs: to cultivate sensibilities and shared understandings of Toraja heritage, to regroup far-flung members of one's ancestral house, and to develop and amplify a particular *tongkonan*'s grand familial identity.[16]

Torajans' use of these house-based groups for broader family-building agendas evokes Daniel Miller's caution that while "the word Facebook stands

[15]I am grateful to one of the anonymous reviewers for this observation.

[16]It is worth noting that many of the media-savvy Torajans who are most devoted to discussing and debating aspects of Toraja traditions on these 'Big *Tongkonan* Family' Facebook groups are educated Christians. Some of these individuals are not particular enthusiasts for the ancestral religion of Aluk to Dolo, which is now on the verge of extinction. Rather, what they seek to preserve and eternalise via the internet are very selective visions of Toraja heritage. In short, via their online recounting of the wanderings and adventures of mythic ancestors and their online debates about the nuances of high register ritual poetry, we see the active curation of Big *Tongkonan* families.

for the social networking facility developed in the US…what any population actually uses [it for] based on that facility quickly develops its own local cultural genres and expectations, which will differ from others" (Miller 2011: 159).[17] Miller's study of Trinidadian Facebook emphasises the ways in which this imported networking facility is 'glocalized'.[18] (For instance, he reveals that even the Trinidad term for Facebook, *Fasbook*, is Trinidadian for 'getting to know someone too swiftly'). As with Miller's Trinidadians, Torajans are developing their own sensibilities about the possibilities and conventions of Facebook. A central thread of the Torajan Facebook glocalization centres on their house-based conception of families: For some Torajans, Facebook appears to offer an avenue for addressing some of the challenges posed to house-centred families in the era of global mobility. To illustrate these varied threads, let us now turn to a micro-case study of my Toraja adoptive fieldwork mother's large-scale 2012 funeral ritual.

FUNERAL, FAMILY AND ELECTRONIC MEDIA: A MICRO CASE

As the date of Sindo' Toding's funeral neared, a periodic electronic flow of Instant Messages and tagged Facebook photos went out to distant extended family members. This electronic flow delivered images and updates on the progress of funeral preparations, for those too far away to contribute directly to these crucial family activities (though many had already sent remittances to support these activities). These tagged Facebook messages included photos of bamboo guest pavilions in various stages of construction, images of Sindo' Toding's cloth-bundled body in her decorated *tongkonan* room awaiting the funeral, a picture of her newly completed, exquisitely-carved casket, and snapshots of water-buffaloes locking horns at the funeral site ('practicing' for the 'entertainment' they would later provide for the funeral guests, as the Facebook captions explained).

During the ten-month intermission between the death and the funeral, distant kin and their local family members also drew on cyber-technology to begin hunting for appropriate sacrificial water buffalos. Individual and familial prestige pivots, in part, on securing and sacrificing the grandest and most

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[17]Writing about the broader phenomenon of the Indonesian Internet (especially Blogging), Merlyna Lim has similarly emphasised the 'local' dimension of the electronic global community in her work, which has focused on the internet and gender, Islam, and democratization (Lim 2009, 2012).

[18]Roland Robertson (1995) was among the first to develop the concept of 'glocalization'. As an amalgam of the terms 'globalisation' and 'localisation,' amongst Japanese businesses the expression became associated with adjusting global products for specific local markets. As Shinji Yamashita (2003: 6) notes, the concept links to the Japanese word *dochakuka*, which translates as 'living on one's own land,' and initially referred to adjusting one's agricultural techniques to local conditions. More recently, anthropologists and sociologists have embraced this concept to refer more broadly to the melding of global phenomena to a variety of local cultural milieus, including tourism, sports, arts and even ports (cf. Adams 2008; Cho *et al.* 2012; Lee and Ducruet 2009; Raz 1999).

prized types of water buffalo at the funerals of one's close relations. (Years after a larger funeral's completion, one still hears comments about the splendid number of buffalos sacrificed). Moreover, relatives are expected to contribute to lightening the burden on the bereaved via mortuary offerings of additional sacrificial livestock, such as pigs. Children of the deceased keep careful records of relatives' funeral contributions, which they are obliged to repay when the time comes.[19] In fact, one key impetus for younger Torajans to leave the homeland is to secure jobs that will enable them to contribute to family rituals in the homeland, repaying familial mortuary debts and eventually honouring their parents when they die.

Especially successful migrants often fuel ritual inflation at home, as their remittances are frequently channelled into enhancing familial prestige in the ritual sphere (Volkman 1985). Those who are less successful may opt to avoid returns to the homeland, or may decide to return only immediately after a relative has died and to skip the larger funeral altogether (where one risks incurring further debt). Yet, this avoidance strategy erodes family bonds. Given the weight of Toraja mortuary expenses, the return home to help host or participate in a family funeral carries ambivalence, particularly for migrants raised abroad whose primary experiences of Toraja highland life and cultural expectations are via vacation-like family visits for ritual occasions. As one Toraja friend reared in Jakarta told me, returning his migrant father's body to his ancestral *tongkonan* for his funeral was one of his most emotionally haunting experiences. The ensuing familial negotiations over funeral funding expectations and the 'incessant demands' for additional financial infusions prompted so much resentment that he felt compelled to write a book about the experience in order to exorcise the negative emotions (Saroengallo 2010).

Here, it is worth noting that Toraja sensibilities about family interweave not only origin houses, but also expectations concerning presence at family rituals, embracing familial ritual debts, and protection of familial honour (*longko'*).[20] As Waterson notes, "*longko'* can refer as much to feelings of shame in relation to other family members, as to feelings between families…[these] feelings are equally elicited by a sense of one's failure to do the right thing, especially if one then incurs the scorn of other family members" (Waterson 2009: 180).[21]

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[19]At the funeral of Sindo' Toding, not only were the funeral offerings of kith and kin recorded on paper as they arrived at the funeral, but certain water buffalo contributors were later summoned via the funeral public address system so that they could be videoed alongside their sacrificial animal. Here, it is worth underscoring that prior to each funeral, the family gathers to determine whose water buffalo will be sacrificed and whose will not, since slaughtering a water buffalo at a funeral confers inheritance rights. Thus, via these public displays and loudspeaker announcements, certain individuals are marked and acknowledged as 'close kin.'

[20]My experience with the Toraja concept of *longko'* parallels Waterson's: Although Torajans occasionally borrow the Bugis word *siri'* to convey sensibilities about honour, *longko'* is not a synonym for *siri'*. For Torajans the idea of family lurks in the background of the concept *longko'*, whereas *siri'* can gloss as individual honor (c.f. Waterson 2009: 180).

[21]This calls to mind Causey's (2011) discussion of the tripartite Toba Batak notion of the self, which entails not only an individual self, but a spiritual and collective/group-oriented self. The relative importance of the Toraja group/familial/*rapuan* self seems to parallel what Causey describes for the

Not to sacrifice a magnificent water buffalo, not to return for a family funeral, not to repay an inherited funeral debt, even when one has migrated abroad, can shatter one's individual and familial honour (*longko'*). In short, partaking in a funeral, sacrificing water buffalo and pigs, or offering contributory funds for the heavy ritual expenses, all insure that one does not incur shame (*kalongkoran*): these sorts of activities help *constitute* family relations.

In the case of Sindo' Toding's funeral, since geographically distant kin could not be expected to secure their own sacrificial buffaloes from afar, relatives residing in the Toraja highlands scouted for local water buffalo on their behalf. Recent years have seen tremendous inflation of water buffalo prices in the Toraja highlands (due to several decades of migrants' remittances and shrinking grazing lands), thus some of Sindo' Toding's sons embarked on water buffalo-scouting road trips to adjacent provinces, relaying snapshots of the most promising water buffaloes on the market via Facebook and private Instant Messages. (Indeed, a perusal of adult male Torajan highlanders' Facebook pages reveals periodic tagged images of impressive water buffaloes for sale, as well as images of particularly cherished piebald water buffaloes, alongside coveted cars and consumer products).

Prior to the funeral, Sindo' Toding's family also set to work preparing her memorial booklet, which would be selectively distributed to funeral attendees. The 40-page booklet bore an image of Sindo' Toding on the cover, with her ancestral *tongkonan* in the background. Inside, a brief life history highlighted her traditional *tongkonan* leadership role as well as religious, political and tourism-related activities. In this way, readers find Sindo' Toding's life framed in a narrative of *tongkonan*, Church, state, and global tourism. Also spotlighted in the booklet was a list of her biological offspring, their academic degrees, as well as reference to her adoption of several children, "including one ethnic Javanese adopted child and even an adopted child who is a citizen of the United States." Again, the story of 'family' being crafted and imaged in the booklet is one that has both a national and international reach. The core of the memorial booklet, however, was a chart displaying her *tongkonan* heritage, reaching all the way back to the *banua* (ancestral house) founded by the mythic ancestor *Tangdilino'*. Significantly, the classic triangular and circular icons used in anthropological kinship charts to designate male and female kin were absent from this chart: instead, the icons employed were *tongkonan*-shaped. Finally, the booklet closed with a daily funeral schedule and lists of committees and committee members involved in actualising the funeral (e.g. leadership committee, art committee, safety committees, clean water committee, documentation and sound system committee, etc.)

When I arrived for Sindo' Toding's 12-day funeral, I was surprised to see that several kilometres of the rural road leading to the funeral site were lined with

Batak and may indicate shared underlying orientations rooted in the era when Austronesian language speakers first populated this region.

dozens of large yellow and red Balinese-styled banners bearing portraits of stylised Native Americans and the logo 'APACHE cigarettes.' Likewise, some of the team members on various funeral committees bore Apache-logoed Tee-shirts. I later learned that the Java-based tobacco company had also provided the family with an ample supply of Apache cigarettes to offer the thousands of guests passing through the funeral reception pavilion (where relatives of the deceased formally receive newly-arrived guests, and solemnly offer cigarettes, betel nut, coffee and sweets). When I asked one of Sindo' Toding's sons about the Apache presence, he replied "Sports teams have sponsors, and so does our family, for Mama's funeral." Over the ensuing days, I could not help but mull over my adoptive brother's imagery, drawn from the language of global capitalism and inspired by televised sports matches. This re-framing of the family as akin to a sports team meriting a commercial sponsor hints at an emergent ancillary way of envisioning family, as a brand-able resource (particularly in times of economic pressure, which is the case with funerals).

As we prepared for our familial funeral duties, the new baseline expectation of constant cell phone connectivity and funeral photo-documentation became all the more evident.[22] My assignment to the funeral VIP reception committee entailed donning the preselected family attire and formally receiving entourages of guests. Each member of this committee carried a betel-pouch (*sepu'*) filled with candies and cigarettes for offering guests. When I produced my 1980s Toraja pouch for this purpose, my adoptive Toraja sister swiftly dismissed it as inadequate and old-fashioned, as it did not have the crucial 'modern' innovation – a secret interior compartment in which to conceal one's cell phone. As she explained, with the hidden compartment, one could always have a cell phone available for photos and texting, yet no guest reaching into the bag for candy would be able to abscond with it. The 'secret compartment' was a clear testament to the new generation's expectation of connectivity and self-documentation while at rural familial funerals: even when obliged to forsake purses and pockets while wearing traditional dress to receive guests in formal processions, one's cell phone and the cyber-world to which it connects should be ever-present.

Whereas in earlier eras, only the Funeral Documentation Committee, tourists, anthropologists, and some of the wealthier return migrants engaged in photographing and videoing the various familial rites, today photo-documentation has become ubiquitous and is enfolded into Torajan funeral behaviour. Torajans frame key rites in their cell phone camera view-finders and hosts now schedule breaks in ritual events to enable smaller groups of kin to take photographs alongside the coffin or effigy of the deceased (Figure 4). Some younger

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[22]Family photo sessions at funerals are not entirely novel: decades ago, in the 1980s, Torajans were already taking photographs of reunited far-flung family members posed adjacent to funeral coffins or in front of an ancestral tongkonan. Likewise, wealthier families hired videographers to document larger funerals. What is new, however, is the posting and tagging of funeral images to Facebook pages.

Figure 4. Family members taking pictures in front of the coffin at a Toraja funeral. Ancestral *tongkonan* and temporary funeral housing pavilions are in the background. (Photograph: K. Adams)

attendees Instant Message these photos to distant kith and kin and others post these images on Facebook pages, where they are Facebook 'tagged' by others and continue to circulate in the cyber-world.

Via these photo sessions that now punctuate Toraja funerals, normally dispersed family members created final family portraits, memorialising the *complete* family, posed alongside the deceased. Through Facebook and Instant Messaging, these photos project these idealised images of kin groups to ever-wider audiences. Although migrant family members have missed out on the day-to-day, face-to-face interactions that help constitute and affirm familial relations in the Toraja highlands (and they may not even have known the deceased personally), via their participation in the funeral and via these final family photos, family sensibilities about 'belonging' and 'relatedness' are rekindled. One might even say that for these return migrant Torajans and their offspring, these Facebook-posted family funeral photos become 'trophies' of kinship. However, it is worth underscoring that cyber-trophies of kinship do not necessarily substitute for the face-to-face crafting of relatedness that is nourished via "everyday acts of feeling and living together in the house" (Carsten 2000: 18). Although *tongkonan* membership is not dependent on co-residence, in the past members did live nearby and had ample opportunities to visit. While return migrants' family reunion photographs taken at funerals and projected to others via Instant Messages and Facebook postings may seem to substitute for the missing ingredients in the recipe for making 'relatedness,' these cyber-ingredients seem akin to substituting margarine for butter. Without the face-to-face, everyday dimension, the richness and multi-dimensionality of the family is compromised. Comments from children of migrant Torajans often convey this diluted sense of connection to extended

family members in the homeland. Several recounted feeling 'like tourists' when returning for relatives' funerals. Others noted their discomfort with the language and their inability to fully understand what their highland kin were saying.

Returning to Sindo' Toding's funeral, let us pick up the thread of Toraja family curation via Facebook. Many Toraja extended family members speedily activated their cell phone cameras when a VIP guest – South Sulawesi's provincial governor – arrived at the funeral (Sindo' Toding was the widow of a local politician and her funeral was held at the peak of campaign season). Funeral attendees crowded behind the governor as he made his condolence-and-campaign speech on the plaza in front of Sindo' Toding' coffin and *tongkonan*. As the TV news cameras that followed the governor's entourage whirled, Toraja cell phone cameras clicked commemorative photos of family members in the presence of this political celebrity. These electronically-forwarded and Facebook-posted images further amplified both the poster's personal prestige as well as the greater family's prestige. In so doing, these Torajans were simultaneously being in the moment (as seen on television) and curating themselves as part of the broader *tongkonan* family.

The family also drew me into this process of lassoing the governor and media to enhance family prestige on the national airwaves. An elder surrogate brother nudged me forward to greet the governor. As the television cameras spun, my fieldwork brother indicated my traditional Toraja mourning garb that matched his own and informed the governor that I was an anthropologist adopted by his deceased parents. As he elaborated, so great was my respect for Toraja cultural practices that I had returned to sacrifice a water buffalo for my fieldwork 'mother.' Implicit here was a re-framing of Toraja mortuary sacrifices for the broader, television-viewing Indonesian public (which tends to disparage Toraja funerals as wasteful). My adopted Toraja 'brother' further informed the governor that my last name attested to my identity as a descendant of an American President, that is, from a similarly elite, political family. Having established my 'credentials' as an authoritative devotee of both his family and Toraja culture, my fieldwork 'brother' then invited the governor to interview me about Toraja culture.[23] My Toraja brother's actions constituted a clever ploy to amplify family status, not only in front of the South Sulawesi government entourage and other guests, but also on the national televised stage. In short, via his narrative to the governor, my Toraja 'brother' was actively 'curating' the family for broader publics.

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[23]Elsewhere I have written about how my adoptive Torajan family drew upon my last name as uncontestable evidence of my elite status – a status that seemed to mesh appropriately with the family's aristocratic identity (Adams 2006).

Touring Funerals and Familial Heritage

One Toraja extended family member, a migrant who returned to the highlands to attend Sindo' Toding's funeral, accompanied her Facebook-uploaded funeral shots with a witticism about herself "becoming a tourist in [her] own home." Such semi-ironic quips suggest what may be another thread in the ways that global flows are reshaping Toraja family image-making. After over two decades of foreign tourists photo-documenting Toraja rituals, returning migrant Torajans are now engaged in similar photographic behaviour at family rituals. Their funeral 'selfies' and their family group shots flanking the coffin or effigy of the deceased suggest that we are witnessing not only homages to tradition and ancestry but also an involution of tradition, where the family has become the Other.

Here class and wealth intersect in unique ways with migrants' ability to bond with their more rural kin on these return visits. Toraja migrants of ordinary means are more likely to stay with kin in the specially-constructed bamboo pavilions when they return home for funerals. There they have more opportunities for shared experiences and bonding. In contrast, wealthier migrants and their children accustomed to more comfortable urban households often voice ambivalence about staying in crowded funeral pavilions, sleeping on mats or shared mattresses and lining up for early morning showers in semi-public settings. Many of these more affluent return migrants tend to flee the crowds, unfamiliar smells and discomfort of their kinsmens' funerals as soon as they can politely do so, 'running away' to sleep in the cushioned comfort of hotels in town. Thus, while these more affluent migrants affirm familial bonds by returning for funerals, they are effectively less in the fold of the family, with only circumscribed opportunities for the close-quarter bonding that transpires when kin share funeral pavilions for the course of a multi-day funeral. At the other end of the spectrum, downwardly-mobile migrants cannot afford to return for funerals nor to stay as connected to their house-based families via the contribution of funds for house-oriented rituals.

It pays to note that many of the migrant Torajans returning from afar for family funerals bring along urban-raised and sometimes foreign-raised children who have little experience in rural Indonesia. Their stated aims in bringing their children back to the homeland centre on enabling the next generation to 'know' their family.[24] Since Torajans began migrating out of the homeland

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[24]These migrant family returns for funeral rituals represent significant income for the region, something that has not gone unnoticed by the local government. In fact, when economic, political and virus crises in Indonesia converged and resulted in a dramatic decline of tourism to the Toraja highlands, the local Toraja government initiated an annual festival designed to lure migrant Torajans home to reconnect with family and fellow ethnic group members during the tourist off-season. Called '*Toraya Mamali': Sule sang Torayaan Rindu Toraja*' ('Toraja longs for home: return to fellow Torajans'), the first government-sponsored festival for returning family migrants was held in 2006 and was deemed a success. Since that time, the festival has been repeated annually, drawing ever-growing crowds of return migrants as well as locals to celebrate Toraja heritage.

(*merantau*) in larger numbers in the 1970s and 1980s, a significant number of Toraja children have now been born and reared in distant cities. On their return visits for funerals, most migrant parents also spend time taking their urban or foreign-born children on impromptu tours of the Toraja homeland. Not only do they take their children to see the classic Toraja tourist destinations, but they also make it a point to visit familial origin houses (*banua pa'rapuan* or *tongkonan*) and affiliated kin.[25] They may even spend the night in these familial origin houses, engaging in a kind of ancestral tourism.

For instance, Stanis Sandarupa migrated as a college student to Makassar and has a grown daughter living in the United States. He summed up his plans for her long-anticipated visit as follows: "When she and her husband [a Mexican-American] and children come to Indonesia, we will bring them to see the family's origin house in Tumakke [an important *tongkonan* known for its unusual stone roof]. We will also bring them to see the new [offspring] *tongkonan* we are building (*anak tongkonan papa batu*) in To'Semba Panglion." Likewise, when Sandarupa's cousin in California recently returned with her family to attend a funeral ritual, the family gathered together and took her and her Manadonese husband to see the same stone-roofed ancestral *tongkonan* (a *tongkonan* that is not on the regular tourist circuit but rather represents familial identity).

Marjorie Esman (1984), Timothy Dallen (1997) and others have observed that members of some ethnic groups employ "travel and tourism to the 'home country' to (re)assert, reaffirm and perform their heritage" (Coles and Timothy 2004: 12). I suggest here that for Torajans it is not simply 'heritage' in the broad ethnic sense that is being (re)asserted but also *familial tongkonan*-based identity. In fact, for Torajans reared abroad who return to participate in funerals and simultaneously tour the ancestral homeland, tourism becomes an integral aspect of the discovery, exploration, affirmation and articulation of familial identities.[26] Thus, in Sandarupa's planned excursions for his returning migrant kin, we see the showcasing of ancestral houses as part and parcel of migrants' lessons in familial identities. However, the extent to which the next generation of Torajans born and reared abroad understands and appreciates the significance of this house-based identity remains to be seen.

[25]As Stanis Sandarupa notes, Indonesian colleagues of these raised-away-from-the-homeland Torajans frequently ask them about celebrated Toraja tourist sites. As a result, in addition to visiting familial *tongkonans*, they also feel compelled to make the rounds of tourist sites when returning with their migrant parents for funerals.

[26]However, when these overseas Torajans' snapshots from their return trips are posted on Facebook and IM'ed to friends back in their distant homes, the familial identities and familial funerals they document can end up being 'read' by non-Toraja Facebook friends as windows into Toraja ethnic identity rather than familial identity. A perusal of Facebook photos posted by returning migrant Torajans reveals comments and questions from non-Toraja Facebook friends about the colourful or unusual dimensions of Toraja cultural practices. In this sense, in the eyes of migrants' non-Torajan Facebook friends, Torajans' imagery of *family* ritual events on Facebook are conflated with ethnic and sometimes national Indonesian identity.

FINAL THOUGHTS

To sum up, in this article I have attempted to disentangle some of the myriad ways in which the Toraja family becomes reconstituted in the current era of global mobility and social media. We have seen how the very impetus for Toraja labour and educational mobility beyond the homeland is rooted in Toraja ideas and expectations concerning the family (to pay familial ritual debts and to sacrifice water buffalo for family funerals). I have also illustrated how classic Toraja ideas about 'relatedness' (as embedded in ties to ancestral houses) are recast on the broader regional and global landscape. The mushrooming of *tongkonan*-based Facebook groups, and the unique ways in which Torajans returning for funerals 'tour' their familial heritage by visiting ancestral origin houses, point to the need to better appreciate the particularity of various locally-based Southeast Asian family conceptions and practices in the translocal era.

Finally, I have argued that, via their online Facebook postings, images and groups, younger Torajans are not only nourishing longings, love, and sometimes ambivalence for distant family, but they are also actively 'curating' their families – researching, caring for and displaying selective images of 'family' (and simultaneously ethnicity) for themselves, their families, and even for ever-growing non-Torajan audiences of Facebook friends. In a sense, these younger Torajans are seemingly preserving their families and culture for all time, because it is 'on the net,' forever.

In hearing of Torajan moves to amplify house-based familial bonds and status to far-flung audiences, one colleague observed that the metaphor of amplification may well be apt in another sense. With amplification also comes a loss of fidelity. In a few generations, he speculated, will there be a new development of 'ritual by remote' whereby if you don't have the funds to return to the homeland for a funeral, you simply click the Facebook 'like' button and forego the face-to-face cultivation of relatedness that happens at Toraja funeral rituals? It is too soon to tell, but one wonders to what extent Facebook will be able to nurture the same kind of family fidelity for far-flung generations in the future.

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