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Abstract

Kommerzialisierung, Inszenierung und Revitalisierung: Gegenwärtige Auseinandersetzungen um *adat* im Distrikt West Manggarai (West Flores)

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The decentralization policy of the post-New Order era has caused the proliferation of administrative units at district level (kabupaten) in many places of Indonesia. In the course of this administrative reorganization, the westernmost part of the island of Flores, the Manggarai district has further been divided into three districts that presently try to develop their own distinct cultural identity. Moreover, since the end of the New Order period the new political freedom has enabled a critical reassessment of the long-term transformation processes that have caused what many Manggaraians today experience as the decline of *adat*, which in emic terms is broadly understood as shared local culture and indigenous ways of life. As a result of that, Manggarai presently participates in the „*adat* hype“ (Benda-Beckmann 2007) that can be observed in many other regions of the archipelago as well. Discussions about and ideas of authenticity merge with explicit calls to preserve, reinstall, and revitalize various aspects of *adat*. This paper examines several projects, enterprises, and identity performances in the 2003 established district of West Manggarai that focus on the revitalisation of *adat*. The impulses for these projects are provided by a range of different actors including the district government, which all expect to accomplish their particular interests. The results to be achieved partly overlap, but may point in totally different directions, depending on who gives the incentive (rural elites, urban diaspora, charismatic Catholics, Islamic reformers, etc.). *Adat* is in general considered as a guarantor for cohesion between different social and religious collectives. However, this paper argues that the revitalisation of *adat* gives rise to an opposed tendency, as it often reinforces social, religious, and economic differentiation.

Keywords: tourism, revitalisation of *adat*, social differentiation, administrative transformations, identity performances, post-New Order era, Kempo Manggarai, Western Flores