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*One or Two Words: Language and Politics in the Toraja Highlands of Indonesia*. By Aurora Donzelli. Singapore: NUS Press, 2020. xv+298 pp.

*One or Two Words* is an engrossing presentation of ethnographic accounts on the Toraja highlanders of Indonesia in the post-Suharto, or the *Reformasi* (reform), period. The book offers a highly original perspective on the transformation processes in the Toraja politico-ideological landscape following the downfall of Suharto's authoritarian regime towards the end of the twentieth century. Whereas most previous studies have taken a socio-economic or political stance, Donzelli details the discursive implications for Toraja of the radical decentralization and democratization policies of the Indonesian 'reformation' government from a sociolinguistic and cultural perspective.

Donzelli, trained in both anthropology and linguistics, weaves together ethnographic data on language—as concrete and situated practices—in shaping modes of power, collective belonging and political imagination. In this, she aims to go beyond the specifics of the local and contribute to wider anthropological theories by reflecting on the complex connections between the micro-cultural worlds of the Toraja language and discourse and the macrosocial forces taking place in Indonesia.

Based on fieldwork in Toraja spread over two decades and blending more conventional ethnographic research practices with those used by linguistic-oriented fieldworkers, Donzelli reconfigures how to think about and question Torajan place and space as well as identity politics. She pushes her readers to go beyond cultural and aesthetic boundaries and explore “crossovers” (p. 220)—the interconnections between the sociocultural transformations that have taken place in

Toraja and Indonesia in the twenty-first century. Starting from a fairly conventional presentation of Toraja, Donzelli moves to the changes that have taken place in Toraja, through globalization, decentralization and democratization processes, in terms of a spatio-temporally inflected structure (chronotype) of the imagination. As such, the book is a valuable addition to the ever-expanding scientific literature on Toraja. Furthermore, the rearticulation of previous debates opens fresh avenues for crafting new forms of ethnography: ones that pay appropriate attention to who in situated interactions is telling which stories and using what kinds of concepts and language, while also acknowledging the connections and entanglements of the different worlds of people living at a specific locality, and those far beyond, including the author herself.

After a comprehensive introduction, Donzelli's book is organized in two parts. The first part is mainly based on data collected through various interlocutors at events and localities throughout Toraja. Here, Donzelli equivocates over the notion of Toraja as a locality with people sharing a common identity and language. Rather, in the terms of Eduardo Viveiros de Castro (2004), she sees a type of communicative disjuncture in which interlocutors might use the same terminology while not always being aware that they are not talking about the same thing. Building upon earlier sociolinguistic and cultural accounts of Toraja, she brings to the fore the divergent perspectives of tourist guides, Toraja people of all classes, and migrants. Their worlds are partially connected through historically interwoven discursive communications, a shared locality and everyday interactions, as well as material and symbolic exchanges enacted at ceremonies for funerals, weddings and housebuilding. As such, Donzelli provides a 'kaleidoscope' of intra-connected fractal parts that, together, produce alternative forms of belonging to and exclusion from what she calls the imagined Toraja community.

The second part draws heavily on an ethnographic study in the village of Marinding in the south of the region. Here, Donzelli further scrutinizes 'Toraja in-the-making' by turning to the role of

language in producing local modes of enacting political authority and personal leadership, and how the use of the Toraja language and the reformation rhetoric are mobilized to both craft novel spatio-temporal forms of collective belonging as well as to enhance one's power. Donzelli provides an extensive account of how the vertically organized Indonesian state and the hierarchies of Toraja society—the latter embodied in complicated rituals and material exchanges and the role of symbols such as amulets and cloths, and communicated through the high and low Toraja languages—resonate with a more horizontally organized form of politics framed by the global discourse on democratization and decentralization.

The second part presents a tantalizing hors d'oeuvre, whetting one's appetite for more on the semantic richness and metaphorical indirectness of the Toraja language, such as “what is in the hearth is different from what is in the mouth” (p. 167), used alongside the Indonesian language for specific purposes.

Unfortunately, the book ends somewhat abruptly and omits to draw an overall conclusion connecting all the fascinating empirical bits and pieces that the sophisticated and diligent argumentation of the book deserves. The book could have benefitted from replacing some of the repetition in building the argument with additional ‘thick descriptions’, especially in the closing elements, to illustrate how the described complex empirical worlds are connected. It would be fascinating to know more about how the Toraja languages, which are typically based on a ‘we’ code imbued by hierarchical layers, are translated into, or interchangeably used with, Indonesian concepts to denote individual democratic modes of organization at specific meetings and events, or for particular political purposes. Also, how the powers of objects, such as amulets, cloths and *tongkonan* (ancestor houses), as well as the social networks of ritual debts and credits underlying the relations between individuals and Toraja groups, shape and are negotiated at different localities by people using the ambiguous political arenas to establish or strengthen authority and power. Nevertheless, this book is certainly a must-read for Sulawesi scholars and a valuable resource for Indonesianists and

for (linguistic-) anthropologists interested in the interplay between language, politics and identity.

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*The Republic of Vietnam, 1955–1975: Vietnamese Perspectives on Nation Building*. Edited by Tuong Vu and Sean Fear. New York: Cornell University Press, 2019. vi+198pp.

This edited volume is a unique collection of memoirs by an unlikely ensemble of historical characters. It brings together the voices and memories of senior officials in the Republic of Vietnam (RVN) government alongside those of teachers, soldiers, journalists and artists of South Vietnam, all of whom resided outside Vietnam at the time of publication. The volume sets out to promote a deeper understanding of the RVN by creating an opportunity for these important figures to record their memories and viewpoints in writing. With a view to addressing what the volume editors observe to be a tendency to "dismiss non-communist Vietnamese perspectives" (p. 2) in English-language scholarship on the Vietnam War, the volume presents—with minimum editing for clarity and length—personal accounts of life in the RVN by an important generation of South Vietnamese.

The gravity of the first fourteen chapters rests in no small part on the fact that had these accounts not been recorded now they would be lost to time in the near future. As such, the volume is both a valuable archive for historians of the period and of the Vietnam War