



From Ashes to Fire: The Possibilities of the Phoenix Effect in Post-Disaster Lombok, Indonesia

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The Lombok earthquake of August 2018 killed approximately 555, injured 1400, and displaced 353.000 people. With Indonesia being vulnerable to natural disaster due to its geographic location, events like these are not uncommon. However, this event was significantly different from the majority of disasters in the Indonesian archipelago. The difference pertains to how the communities researched in this thesis, coped with the adversity they had experienced and how they showed resilience in a unique way.

A disaster drastically ushers in a liminal period wherein its victims are forced to rethink certain aspects of social life, give meaning to what has happened, and determine how to rebuild society sustainably.

This thesis argues that going back to a pre-disaster state of society is not possible, due to the lived experiences during the disaster and aftermath. Instead of going back, the culture of response of the Indonesian government (and the NGOs and communities) on which this thesis is focused, started a process towards Dyer's Phoenix Effect.

This thesis explores the cultural, social, and organizational changes in post-disaster Lombok, which make the occurrence of the Phoenix Effect likely. (1) Cultural changes constitute the explanations for the earthquake from different religious perspectives and the resurgence of traditionally embedded building strategies. (2) Social changes equate to the reinvention of gotong royong from being a state-philosophy to an embedded set of mutual help. (3) Organizational changes, signify biopolitics of disaster management of the Indonesian government, the role of NGOs, and the emergence of peoples' initiatives in order to become more resilient.

This thesis concludes that the possibility of the Phoenix Effect is likely, if the involved communities can maintain their cultural, organizational, and social changes sustainably.

