

## **1.2 Overview of the Thesis**

The thesis consists of four main parts. Firstly, the current state of the art contains different views on essential concepts, shows significant discrepancies in general academic and Russian interpretations, and provides context for a better understanding of the realities of Russia and its academic world. Most importantly, the article defines the term “decolonization”, which is essential for the purposes of the thesis.

The next part is the theoretical part about postcolonialism, and it discusses the concept of hybrid identity and subalternity. The literature review on postcolonial theory continues with a deeper explanation and familiarisation with Frantz Fanon, Homi Bhabha, and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak and their respective studies. From the literature review on theory, various codes were derived and used in the methodology section to create themes for the interview guide and analysis of the data.

Experts and activists from the indigenous republics of Sakha and Buryatia were interviewed with a set of questions (Appendix A) concerning their perceptions of the term “decolonization”, the relevance of the term in relation to Russia, indigenous and hybrid identities, and the ability or inability of activists to reach a broad audience and be heard. The process of selecting interviewees is described later in the chapter on the methodology of the research. Thus, the third part of the thesis analyzes the findings. The same codes and themes used in the interview guide were used to transcribe all interviews and reflect on them for further analysis. The section includes a description of the crucial factors and insights solely from the interviewees’ perspectives.

Finally, the conclusion provides a connection between the theory and the findings and answers the research question of the thesis, followed by recommendations for further research and a discussion of the limitations and challenges of the work.

## **2. State-of-the-art**

The literature-scientific basis of the thesis lies in providing insights into the Russian interpretation of its practices and their presentation to its own nation and the world through a comparison of the Russian connotation with the generally accepted academic narrative.

The first course is to recognize the nature of the Russian Federation’s historical “territorial expansion” and how it has been presented in the academic world. This strand involves

analyzing the existing academic articles and passages and describing the historical journey of the Tsarist Empire in relation to its Asian counterparts, the indigenous population of the lands that make up present-day Russia, and the long record of injustice and enslavement.

Furthermore, this piece examines the trends of “federalization” of the contemporary Russian state and the indigenous population’s unequal treatment and participation in decision-making processes. It discusses the beginning of Putin’s presidency and the changes it brought to the newly emerged “democratic” Russian state regarding constitutional and governmental amendments and their implications for indigenous peoples in the regions.

A handful of articles mention the experiences of the local indigenous peoples and the injustices they have faced under Russian rule, starting with the very definition of indigeness in the Russian constitution. As the debate about the future of Russia, a country that directly affects them, escalates, the lack of inclusiveness and opportunity to participate in decision-making and ownership processes needs to be discussed.

Indeed, there is a lack of scholarly articles discussing the socio-political future of Russia concerning recent events and the ongoing war featuring indigenous perspectives. The primary focus of this paper is on the decolonization of Russia, a process mentioned in all debates as being essential. The term’s meaning and its implementation implications will be thoroughly addressed. The emphasis is required to illustrate the relevance of the study in the contemporary context and to point out the gaps in the existing literature and the political world on the further development and future of Russia.

Despite the academic and media attention to this topic and their speculation about the future of Russia and possible decolonization due to the war in Ukraine and Russia's recent political actions, the purpose of this particular line of analysis used for the research is to seek the opinion of experts from the indigenous Buryat and Sakha communities in the Russian Federation on the issue, as they are an integral part of the state and have a central voice in the discussion. The main reasoning is that it is a matter of justice, explicitly ensuring long-term sustainability and securing the peace of different communities and cultures in the region. Thus, interviews with indigenous activists will be used to shed light on indigenous perspectives and their views on contemporary Russian imperial policies and actions, as well as on the possible future of their own communities. The following paragraphs of this chapter will show the differences in the

interpretation of key concepts related to Russian historical and contemporary practice to the academic narrative of the same terms.

## **2.1 Settler Colonialism**

The origin of the word “to colonize” comes from the Latin verb “colon”, which means “farmer, tiller”. The word is closely related to the Roman practice of conquering a hostile territory and settling its citizens in their own country to work and inhabit the land. Later, the term “colonies” started to refer to those territories that were settled and where settlers established whole new communities over many generations but remained politically and economically subordinate to their former country of origin. The late nineteenth century and early twentieth century were marked by a new form of colonization with a “civilizing mission”, in which Western countries sought to educate the “barbaric” peoples of Africa and Asia (Ypi, 2013: 160-161). Fanon, describing the colonial period and the colonizing settlers, writes that the colonized, or as he uses the word, natives, are seen by the settlers as evil, devoid of human values, beauty, and morality. Rather, they are unconscious and amoral (Fanon, 1963: 41).

Nonetheless, the common understanding of colonialism is that it is a form of territorial expansion carried out by powerful states. Subsequently, expansion is followed by the displacement of the indigenous population of the colonies or, in some cases, the total extermination to create space for settler colonizers (Horvath, 1972: 46).

Moreover, the essence of colonialism is domination and a power relationship in which the colonizing states have control over the territory and the people who belong to it (Nicholls, 2011: 161).

### **2.1.1 Russian context**

The official Russian discourse to current and former non-Russian entities is one of incorporation, annexation, and assimilation, thereby attempting to tone down the representation of the colonial nature of Tsarist Russia, in contrast to the Western terms of colonization and enslavement. The Soviet and Russian historians and politicians justify using these terminologies by arguing that the expansion of the Russian Empire was non-violent and voluntary, thereby denying the colonial nature. However, excerpts from historical journals prove otherwise. Millions of indigenous non-Russian, non-Orthodox Christian, and “uncivilized” subjects were

executed or expelled from their lands (Schorkowitz, 2019: 126). It shows the tendency to give neutral or even positive connotations of these terms compared to the negative ones, which, according to historians, could only be associated with the West.

Another example from the excerpt is the notes from the Tsarist generals, who sometimes compared Russia to Western empires, referring to colonized subjects and labeling Siberia as India or other colonized countries (ibid: 127).

Colonialism in the Russian experience certainly does not fit into the established pattern of colonial relations between the West and the Third World. Therefore, when it comes to Russia's colonial legacy, the terms "underarticulated colonialism", "hybrid empire", or "self-colonization" have been used (Bovdunov, 2022: 648). It is a comparatively new phenomenon that differs from other empires and still raises questions. It began in Tsarist Russia and carried on into Soviet Russia. Foreign lands and cultures were colonized and later became integral to the empire. The famous writer Fyodor Dostoevsky, in his diaries, expressed the common opinion regarding the conquest and expansion of territories towards Asia: "In Europe, we were hangers-on and slaves, while in Asia we shall be the masters. In Europe, we were Tatars, while in Asia, we are the Europeans. Our mission, our civilizing mission in Asia, will encourage our spirit and draw us on" (Schorkowitz, 2019: 127, Dostoevsky, 1881: 509). The statement represents the prevailing beliefs of the leaders and intellectuals of the Tsarist Russian Empire, who advocated the conquest and exploitation of territories in Asia and presented themselves as colonizers. It highlights and provides a holistic explanation and ambition for their civilizing mission in Asia, emphasizing and pointing to the superiority and dominance of Tsarist Russia over the new territories, especially viewing themselves as "master" and continuing this hierarchical dichotomy of West and East by painting one as superior in status and the other as inferior. Dostoevsky's commentary provides a glimpse into the consciousness of the Tsarist Empire as colonizers of Asia, their attitude towards the "new" territories, and the indigenous people who had lived for centuries in these territories.

Despite the Bolsheviks' promises to liberate many peoples of Tsarist Russia and grant them their sovereignty, the USSR became yet another "People's prison". The USSR did not eliminate Russian imperialism and colonial policy but established a regime that retraces the steps of its predecessor and can be described as the "communal apartments" that were famous in the Soviet period because they have fewer rooms, are completely packed, and consequently residents have fewer rights and fewer votes (Schorkowitz, 2019: 131). Such accommodations mirror the

realities of Soviet colonialism in the best possible way, where people had no fundamental rights and voices, with places and rooms granted by the party and the leadership, and subject to confiscation at any time.

## **2.2 Federation**

A federation is a specific type of federal political system in which, under the Constitution, the central and federal entities are not bound to subordinate each other. The constitution grants the units sovereign powers and gives them the right to appeal directly to their citizens in the conduct of legislative, executive, and fiscal powers. Thus, the residents of these entities have the right to vote and elect each type of authority as they see fit. Another major aspect of the definition of a federation is the representation of various regional opinions in decision-making on federal policy (Watts, 2008: 9).

Consequently, there is no pronounced hierarchy in a federation, where the center dominates the subjects, manipulating the decision-making mechanism of the constituents and forcing them to comply against their political will.

Scholar Olivier Beaud, in a continuation of his work on federation theory, “Federation and empire: About a conceptual distinction of political forms”, agrees on the implication of the equivalent relationship, including equal treatment of citizens, between the subjects and the center comparing it to an empire. He claimed that a federation is not merely about free will but rather suggests member states’ political existence and autonomy (2019: 1206).

In a federation, the voluntary consent of citizens is essential, as well as compliance with the constitution as the fundamental authority. Therefore, the legitimate citizen representatives of all federated entities, whom the citizens elect, have the right to participate in political decision-making also through an open political debate on significant issues in order to avoid centralization of power and implement a system of checks and balances (Watts, 2008: 18). However, the interpretation of this term considerably differs in Russia.

### **2.2.1 Russian context**

Since the beginning of his presidency in 2000, Putin has worked to strengthen the vertical line of political power in which the president is at the top of the hierarchy. He has implemented

various alterations to the existing structure and measures to restructure the federal and, most importantly, the regional governments (Oliker et al., 2009: 9).

Thus, Putin's presidency has been characterized by a high degree of consolidation of power in the presidency. The Russian state is characterized as "extremely centralized", with the high possibility of becoming an autocracy if the current course of neglecting the diverse interests of ethnic minorities and excluding them from involvement in state governance continues (Gosart, 2018: 203-205). Moreover, like any other branch of power under Putin, the judiciary does not function as an independent entity but is increasingly under the influence of the Kremlin and designed to serve the interests of centralized power (Oliker et al., 2009: 14).

Moreover, Putin and his administration have made several significant changes to federal laws that strongly affect the rights of autonomous republics and regions. One example is the abolition of quotas to represent indigenous communities in the subject administrative bodies. Previously, this law had supported representatives of ethnic minorities, whose participation in legislation and decision-making processes was ensured through single-mandated constituencies (Gosart, 2018: 209-210). These legislative changes affect and limit indigenous regions' political rights and autonomy. Moscow appoints heads of constituent subjects, as well as prosecutors, judges, and other officials, displacing elected politicians from their positions at the local, regional, and national levels. These appointed governors serve the interests of the central government rather than the people, advancing their political careers, enabling the central government to profit from resource-rich indigenous territories, and creating obstacles to indigenous and ethnic minorities' struggle for their rights and representation in decision-making for the development of the subjects (ibid: 211-212).

In addition to weakening the autonomy and representation of the federal subjects, the president has the power to dissolve regional legislatures in case they fail to approve, within three readings, laws directly delegated by the federal government (Oliker et al., 2009: 15).

Basically, Russia's division of power, as well as its current treatment of its indigenous population, are similar to that of the USSR, despite regime change and a formal course towards federalism. These alterations in the attitude of the federal authorities do not create or support politically and culturally autonomous communities within ethnic minorities as equal subjects of the federation. Today, indigenous groups remain heavily dependent on federal aid and services while their rights are violated and their voices are suppressed. The inability of these communities

to make decisions about their political, economic, and social future is due to Russian policies and governance that are entirely contrary to the basic principles of a country that has declared itself a multicultural federation (Gosart, 2018: 215-216). The case of Russia and the aforementioned features of Russia as a federation directly contradict the basic principles of the federal form of government. In Russia, decision-making power remains highly centralized, without an authentic voice for its constituent entities, whose citizens have no representation of their interests and are in an unequal position.

As Shorkowitz stated in his article, Putin's regime continued the two previous colonial empires' methods of using patrimonial power to consolidate control, assert and revive Russia's status as a great power, and re-establish competition for territory along its borders. Modern Russia has once again become an empire (2019: 138). Therefore, the decolonization of Russia must be an ongoing phenomenon.

### **2.3 Decolonization**

Decolonization is viewed as a broad concept that includes actions that end such phenomena as imperialism and colonialism. In the most common and traditional perspective, the process is also known simply as "flag independence", whereby a dependent country achieves sovereignty and constitutional independence from its former colonizer. Nonetheless, the definition of the term "decolonization" needs to include the social, political, and economic legacy as well as the impact of the former colonial relationship and past not only on colonized countries but also on imperial powers (Collins, 2015: 1). In Fanon's understanding, decolonization implies a call to question and challenge the colonial situation. He used the phrase "the last shall be first and the first last" to explain the process more deeply and to eliminate the colonial hierarchy in which the colonizers dominate the colonized (Fanon, 1963: 36).

The term "decolonization" peaked in the 1960s with the rapid decline of European overseas empires. By this time, the number of UN member states had risen to 117, driven by the independence of former colonies as a result of decolonization. The legal independence of the Global South cannot be seen as the only time of decolonization but rather as a restructuring of the international system and world politics. The essential foundations of decolonization are the principles of nationhood or "self-determination". These two concepts largely contributed to the modern idea of decolonization, democratic will, and sovereignty. World War II accelerated the

processes of decolonization, which by then had been only partially realized. The overextension of empires, the large debts associated with the war, the rise of nationalist forces, and the weakening and undermining of imperial control enabled colonized peoples to decolonize and escape Western colonial domination (Collins, 2015: 2-4).

Fanon asserted that colonizers and settlers had committed crimes against colonized communities for centuries, using methods such as deportation, slavery, and mass murder to increase their wealth, gather and use resources, and establish power dominance. Even after their so-called “withdrawal from the territories”, the damage remained tangible (Fanon, 1963: 100). Therefore, the process of decolonization was necessary for colonized peoples to regain independence and control over their land and resources and use them for the development of their countries and nations.

Another understanding of decolonization can be through a concept explained by the Kenyan scholar, novelist, and literary theorist Ngũgĩ wa Tiong’o “decolonizing the mind”. In this book, he argues that the most effective and decisive way of colonization is to dominate the mentality of colonial subjects, which can be done through control of culture, how they perceive themselves of the world, their position, and their value (Ngũgĩ, 1981: 17).

Many theorists and scholars support Ngũgĩ’s position that the way out of colonization is decolonizing consciousness, eliminating colonial belief systems, and the ability to recognize, accept, and rediscover one’s Self. Furthermore, it is argued that decolonization must begin with reducing fear in their consciousness as the key to liberation (Kgatla, 2018: 151). Fanon supplements that the process of decolonization is called for and demanded, i.e., absolutely necessary. The only successful way to decolonize is to completely change the social structure, as well as the consciousness and lives of colonized men and women (Fanon, 1963: 34-35).

Simply put, decolonization of consciousness means drawing attention to and getting rid of colonial thinking, where a particular group can escape responsibility by perpetuating oppressive practices that are harmful to others (Bresciani, 2020: 27).

### **2.3.1 Russian Context**

As Alexander Etkind argues in his work on Russian colonialism, Russian academics and historians perceive Russian colonization as a welcoming process of expanding the territories of the homeland and Russian peoples. At the same time, Western colonization is portrayed as a



brutal military conquest and, naturally, in a negative way. Thus, from their perspective, decolonization does not apply to the case of Russia; it is logically possible only in relation to the West (Spivak et al., 2006: 835; Etkind, 2001: 64-65). In the same way, the Soviet Union, in its foreign policies, preached about decolonization and portrayed itself as a leading fighter for it. However, this applied only to Western colonies in Asia and Africa (Schorkowitz, 2019: 131).

Succinctly, it is clear that in Soviet times, Soviet scholars and politicians used the notion of decolonization in their speeches and publications and strongly advocated for it. However, the term was never intended to be used to its own subjects and indigenous communities - the colonies, but only in relation to the colonies of the West.

## **2.4 Indigenous Peoples**

According to the definition taken from the Convention 169 on Indigenous Peoples and Tribal People, the terms “indigenous peoples” and “tribes” refer to people whose “social, cultural and economic conditions distinguish them from other sections of the national community, and whose status is regulated wholly or partially by their own customs or traditions or special laws or regulations”, as well as to indigenous people in independent countries - due to “their descent from the population which inhabited the country, or geographical region to which a country belongs at the time of conquest or colonization or establishment of present state boundaries and who, irrespective of their legal status, retain some or all of their own social, economic, cultural and political institutions”. (Libakova & Sertakova, 2015: 115; Indigenous Peoples and Tribal People, 1989: Article 1).

### **2.4.1 Russian Context**

The researchers studied the concept of indigenous peoples in Russian conditions and noted that the understanding of this term by the public and political authorities is different from the academic concept formed in the West. The reason may be that in the Soviet era and post-Soviet Russia, the perception of Tsarist Russia has changed over the years. Therefore, it creates problems in determining the status of indigenous peoples and which groups belong to that status (Libakova & Sertakova, 2015: 115).

According to the legislation of the Russian Federation, the official term and status of “indigenous peoples” or “malye korennyye narody” in Russian (small-numbered native people)

relate only to a small part of the indigenous population, consisting of multinational Russia. An important aspect is an emphasis on the word “small”, as only an ethnic community with a population of 50,000 or less can benefit from the status and privileges funded by the government. There is also a geographical limitation of official status, as it relates only to those whose historical homeland is North Siberia and the Far East (On Guarantees of the Rights of Indigenous Minorities of the RF, 1999: Article 1; Gosart, 2018: 197). There is no consensus listing of all ethnic groups that identify themselves as indigenous to the land that is now considered the Russian Federation. However, the Russian classification of the term "indigenous", which includes only the small communities of Northern Siberia and the Far East, significantly limits and excludes many other, more numerous groups. Thus, for the purposes of this thesis, the concept of "indigenous population" is used in an international academic interpretation and does not centre on the Russian constitutional definition.

Although there are 41 ethnic minorities in the Russian Federation, ethnic Russians make up the majority of 80 percent of the population, which is more than 110 million people, according to the latest officially published 2010 population census with ethnic divisions. Only four ethnic minorities in Russia have more than a million people. The Tatars are 5 million, the Chuvashis 1.6 million, Bashkirs 1.6 million, and Chechens 1.1 million (Rosstat, 2010; Heinemann-Grüder, 2013: 7).

The current policies and attitudes of the Russian state towards indigenous peoples and minorities derive from a set of national measures and regulations of the USSR towards non-Russian cultures and peoples. They are based on the consciousness and understanding of the inferiority of non-Russian communities and dependence on central Moscow in all aspects (Gosart, 2018: 193-194). Additionally, the USSR did not ratify Convention 107 of the International Labor Organization, claiming that it only concerned countries, former colonies, and former empires, indicating that the Soviet Union did not represent itself as a colonial power in any way. The topic of indigenous peoples' rights was banned, and no open discussion was allowed (ibid: 195). Convention 107, “On the Protection and Integration of Indigenous and Other Tribal and Semi-Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries”, is regarded as the first attempt to target and reflect Indigenous peoples' rights in international law. This convention covers such basic issues as the right to land, working conditions, health, and education. Later, after much negotiation and expert pressure, Convention 169 was tabled and adopted in 1989, but, as with the

previous convention, it has not been ratified by Russia. The difference is that under the Convention, indigenous peoples are treated as political subjects with rights, duties, and conscience (Kryazhkov & Garipov, 2020: 2-3).

Convention 169 “On Indigenous and Tribal Peoples” in article 1 paragraph 2 includes the right of Indigenous peoples to self-identification as indigenous, in article 3 paragraph 1 the right to freedom from discrimination, in article 6 paragraph 2 the right to participate in decision-making processes, in article 7 paragraph 1 the right to determine their own priorities for economic, social and political development, in article 14 paragraph 1 the right to land ownership and in article 15 paragraph 1 the right to natural resources belonging to their land (1989).

Moreover, the Russian Federation did not vote when adopting the 2007 UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). Thus, the country and its authorities do not recognize the international provisions and instruments on the rights of indigenous peoples and are only subject to Russian legislation, which has a very limited concept of indigenous peoples and even more limited input (Gosart, 2018: 195).

Even historically, indigenous knowledge and perceptions have not been considered or taken into account as a basis for legislative power and changes affecting indigenous rights, liberties, and justice. The federal government appoints official representatives in the regions and decides on the limited rights granted to indigenous peoples. Thus, the country’s indigenous people have no voice of their own (ibid: 193). This assertion can be supported by examples of the federal government's neglect of the needs of indigenous communities.

For instance, the legislative changes regarding indigenous rights force indigenous communities to lease territories to carry out their cultural practices and compete with companies licensed to use territories originally designated for traditional community activities. In addition, these companies are exempt from any obligation to the communities and territories they use and can cause environmental damage through their activities without any legal penalties (ibid: 205-206).

These changes further worsen the rights of indigenous communities by reducing the funds allocated from the budget for the needs and development of indigenous communities and by eliminating the national bodies responsible for their well-being. In 2015, the Federal Agency for Nationalities was created to include indigenous peoples in its work. The Agency is directly subordinate to the president. In their program for 2017-2025, only 7 percent of the budget is

allocated to indigenous communities' issues, compared to, for example, 10.5 percent of the budget allocated to the prevention of extremism (ibid: 207-208). These numbers show the tendency of the Agency and the authorities to ignore indigenous peoples' needs.

Thus, Indigenous peoples are denied self-determination by the Kremlin regime and are not allowed any degree of autonomy over their social and political issues (ibid: 200). These are the two core paragraphs that are included in ILO Convention 169 and are the fundamental rights of indigenous peoples.

## **2.5 Right to Self-determination**

The UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples recognizes their right to self-determination, which means “freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development” (UNDRIP: Article 3). Self-determination can thus be seen as a bottom-up approach to development, which is significant for indigenous peoples because it allows them to exercise their fundamental human rights in determining their own political, social, and economic affairs (Cepinskyte, 2019: 279). In essence, self-determination is a tool for enabling and empowering indigenous communities to make their own decisions to benefit community life, where their voices can be heard and considered.

### **2.5.1 Russian Context**

Russia, predictably like its predecessor, the Soviet Union, abstained from voting on the UNDRIP. Thus, Russian law concerning indigenous peoples avoids using the term “self-determination” and formally acknowledges the right to “self-government” instead. In general, the concept of self-determination is rarely discussed in public discourse because of its association with separatism and extremism (Rohr, 2014: 16). Crucially, the UNDRIP explicitly states that the declaration does not implicate an encouragement to undermine and attack “the territorial integrity or political unity of sovereign and independent States” (Article 46 (1)).

In light of the aforementioned substitution of the concepts of “self-determination” and “self-government” in Russian law, it is crucial to understand the difference between these terms and their implementation. As discussed earlier in this section, self-determination is considered an inalienable human right of indigenous communities in the UNDRIP Declaration (Article 3). It is a protective measure for indigenous peoples against possible infringement of their rights as a

minority by the majority. However, self-government is not recognized by governments as a fundamental right of the people and is a privilege granted by the State. It implies participation in democratic processes where the majority rules when, in fact, indigenous peoples are often a political minority and do not have access to an equal role in decision-making, thus making participation in democratic processes impossible. Furthermore, unlike self-determination, self-government does not guarantee indigenous communities control over land and natural resources (Daytec, 2013: 31).

When it comes specifically to the Russian context, the highly centralized power of the state contradicts an understanding of self-determination where indigenous communities play the role of decision-making agents and determine their political activities.

In 2012, the Russian State Duma passed a federal law “Concerning the Introduction of Amendments to Certain Legislative Acts of the Russian Federation Regarding the Regulation of Activities of Non-Profit Organisations Performing the Functions of a Foreign Agent” commonly referred to as the “foreign agents” law, where “a non-profit organization that engages in political activities in Russia and receives funding or property from foreign organizations or citizens may be recognized as a foreign agent” (Article 2 b). This term has a tinge of stigmatization and is similar in meaning to the Soviet term “foreign spy”. After the law was passed, the Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North (RAIPON), the largest civil society organization for the protection of the rights, interests, and representation of indigenous peoples, openly discussed the fact that organizations would either have to lose international funding or register as “foreign agents”, which would jeopardize their relations with regional authorities and partners. As a result, the Russian Ministry of Justice suspended RAIPON’s activities and agreed to resume them only if a government favorite, who was a member of Putin’s political party, was elected chairperson (Cepinskyte, 2019: 276-277). In this way, the government has limited indigenous communities’ political activities and participation in representing indigenous rights, becoming the sole representative and decision-maker and making even self-government barely possible.

As already stated, without rights to land and rights to natural resources, there can be no right to self-determination, as in the case of Russia. According to the Russian Federation’s Constitution, much of Russia’s land and subsoil remains under state control. This means that while indigenous communities are given the right to use the land and its resources, the right of ownership remains with the state (Suliandziga & Sulyandziga, 2020: 7).