

English summary

Bijlage 1

The aim of this study is to give an evaluation of a specific period in the history of Dutch anthropology, using methods developed in the history of science. The period under consideration, falling between the achievement of Indonesian independence in 1949 and the end of active Dutch colonial control over Western New Guinea in 1962, is characterized by intensive ethnographical study of this region. Evaluation of the material gathered during this decade presents problems because it resulted not only from academic research, but also from research done by Roman Catholic and Protestant missions and by the colonial administration. This aspect makes the description and comparison of the diversity of backgrounds of the ethnographers necessary. For this purpose an analytical model has been developed to account for the relations which can possibly be involved in any research-situation.

In this study the formation of knowledge is presumed to be a collective and historical process. Besides the existence of knowledge itself, formation of knowledge presupposes a group of people involved in the expansion of this knowledge. Such a collective process will be referred to as a 'scientific discussion.' It refers to any and every exchange of information between a group of persons, in whatever context, aimed at extending a specific body of knowledge. For the individual ethnographer this means that during the writing down of the ethnographic information he personally gathered, he will closely follow the example of existing knowledge on the subject in question. In so doing, he attempts to have his research report accepted by the participants in the scientific discussion on the subject. In the context of the ethnographical description of Western or Dutch New Guinea several scientific discussions can be isolated. Nature and form of these discussions are by and large determined by the background from which research into the native population, the Papuans, was stimulated.

In the period and region in question the ethnographers can best be distinguished by their occupations and/or their sponsors. By using occupational criteria research can be distinguished in three main categories: administrative, missionary, and academic research. These occupational fields determined the main points of interest and the material conditions, which in their turn shaped the possibilities for research. In this respect the separate areas remained fairly autonomous; coordination of means and motives for research remained fairly limited. In theory the administration - as the most important sponsor - could have played a unifying role, but the ambiguous attitudes within the adminis-

tration itself towards the uses of ethnographic research precluded any such development. Although nearly all ethnographic research done in this period shows some signs of administrative involvement, its influence remained marginal. Even research done by the administration itself did not show much continuity in its over-all approach to ethnographic inquiries. In general such research involved the day-to-day problems of administration.

This also means that the colonial character of the administration cannot be seen as an independent determining factor for the ethnographic research done in Western New Guinea. Indirectly all research was influenced by the nature of colonial society. Especially the formal relations between researchers of separate backgrounds were strongly influenced. Also the image of Papuans living in small tribal groups without any overt leadership was probably more determined by the arrangement of the population in administrative units than by available ethnographic information. Unintentionally this reinforced the prevalence of research into small, local societies, originating in part from limited time and means, partly from methodical preference and in part from a strongly focused interest. However, in all cases one can hardly refer to the result as colonial research. The influence of colonial administration on ethnographic research was too haphazard and too marginal for this to be true. The other sponsors present, though functioning in a colonial context, did not share any long-term colonial interests and cannot be seen to promote colonial research.

The lack of general aims for ethnographic research did not mirror a lack of research. On the contrary, there was a genuine need for ethnographic research, which also led to separate research efforts within each occupational field. In the early fifties most research was instigated by the administration, whether or not it was executed by administrative, missionary, or academic researchers. In the second half of the fifties the occupational fields conducted more and more research on their own. This originated from a need felt by the separate fields to satisfy specific interests through ethnographic research. This led to a growing diversification. Based on the separate areas of employ scientific discussions developed, between which exchange of information was limited.

A growing foreign interest further enhanced diversification. On the one hand academic researchers, especially from the United States looked upon Western New Guinea as an ideal location to study small-scale societies in isolation. Especially the fact that large areas of Western New Guinea were but infrequently visited by administration or missions presented an ideal ethnographic laboratory-situation. On the other hand the 'unpacified' areas also drew many missionary societies - Protestant and Roman-Catholic - both from Holland and abroad. An increasing number of such groups became involved in christianizing the area.

Despite increasing diversity in the production of ethnographic knowledge and the lack of integrating factors, there exists within the

Dutch context a certain notion of unity concerning the ethnography of Western New Guinea. This notion of unity had no influence on either form or contents of the ethnographic description of the area. Nor, except for a very limited sense, has it been a base for further initiatives towards research. It can be traced largely to a degree of familiarity the ethnographers show with each others occupation, work and background. This familiarity is in a sense an inheritance from the colonial context. Western New Guinea as a colonial society was very small-scale and operated - certainly as far as ethnographic research is concerned - with very limited means. Especially administrative and mission-researchers were in actual practice - despite manifest differences in interest - very dependent upon each others' expertise and cooperation. Academic researchers were relatively well off as far as research-means and -time were concerned. However, here too, support for instance with the selection of research locations and logistics, but also social contacts played important roles. These elements form the main supports of an informal network mainly involving Dutch researchers, which is still functional. Though many individual Dutch researchers also maintain contacts with foreign researchers dating back to the period involved, these remain by and large individual relations.

Neither the effects of the linking in an informal network, nor the causes of the diversification are visible in the ethnographic products of the researchers who were active in Western New Guinea. The diversification into scientific discussions is not markedly diminished by the existence of the informal network. It is even possible to maintain that the network has lessened - and still does lessen - the necessity to decrease the present diversification. The familiarity with each others' work dispenses with the problems the researchers might have with their adherence to different scientific discussions. This implies that the ethnography of Western New Guinea is in fact more integrated than might be supposed using formal criteria alone. On the other hand, the resulting exchange of information is largely possible through the existence of informal relations and does not imply a lowering of barriers between the diverse scientific discussions and their related bodies of knowledge. Much less does it imply that the present situation will continue when in time the present informal network will disappear.
