

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

This thesis deals with the factors affecting rural-urban migration and the after effects of migration on Nimboran household development through rural-urban ties. Field survey data, combined with the census data for 1971 and 1980 were used in explaining the migration process and migration direction in the past, present and future, although the sample used in the field survey was not representative of Nimboran migrants as a whole. Irian Jaya has been largely ignored in field research on migration since 1962. This study, although imperfect, is therefore a useful source of information on migration processes in Irian Jaya to follow on from Groenewegen and van de Kaa's earlier studies.

The first and the second chapters discuss the general background, the causes (pull-push factors related to environmental pressures and opportunities), effects (various kinds of socio-economic change resulting from the migration process) and migration direction. Chapter 2, with the limited census data available, analyses migration to and from, and within, Irian Jaya as part of the wider pattern of Indonesian inter-provincial migration. It, too, attempts to redress the neglect of Irian in previous Indonesian migration studies. These chapters provide the theoretical and empirical context for the examination of the field study data in chapters 3, 4 and 5.

Chapters 3, 4 and 5 discuss the field findings at the micro level, analysing the Nimboran migration process and direction in relation to push-pull factors, intervening variables, rural-urban ties and the effects on the rural households' development. The first Nimboran rural-urban migration dated from the 1920s as a response to the infiltration of western civilisation. The establishment and expansion of new development centres, the restructuring of socio-cultural values, the increasing awareness of modern life and the desire to possess money and industrial goods played a decisive role in initiating movement towards Jayapura. The migrants valued money and material goods as a means of obtaining new status and increasing their influence in rural society.

Rural-urban migration exists as a response to rural-urban inequality in money, industrial goods, western technology, know-how and skill. The rural Nimborans found themselves worse off, compared with urban residents, and moved to fulfill their needs for goods such as money and industrial items.

The inequalities faced by the Nimboreans in 1980 were rather different from Liptons' view of intra rural inequality in poor countries, which he characterized by scarcity of resources and agricultural opportunities, landlessness and rural economic-demographic pressures. He believed that these rural pressures push the most disadvantaged from their rural villages. The Nimboreans did not face this kind of rural economic-demographic pressures. The traditional household wealth within the villages was rather uniformly distributed. In terms of subsistence production the rural Nimborean was well provided for. However, in the future, the Nimboreans' relative equality within the villages may be changed into inequality through modernisation (the evaluation, selection and adoption of new values), development (see p.36) and the unequal acquisition of modern education and skills.

Age selectivity (the younger ages have a higher propensity to migrate, although this was not really represented by the data), and single status played an important role in Nimborean migration. This accords with the findings of many migration studies elsewhere. Being unschooled was not an intervening obstacle for the early migrants and did not limit Nimborean movement and access to new jobs because education was not used as a standard for the skill required for particular jobs in the past. The initial expansion of urban development required largely manual unskilled labour which uneducated Nimboreans were able to supply.

The Nimboreans' positive response to the new values accelerated the acculturation process. This was reflected in their decision to leave their agricultural background and to live and work in a new, sharply different, environment. Parents allowed their children to leave for education, jobs, money and industrial goods, while some young and middle-aged men left their wives and children behind in search of cash incomes and material possessions.

The micro evidence showed (chapter 4) that the location of urban relatives was a more concrete condition encouraging the migrants to move than education, money or goods per se, since these urban pull factors were rather abstract for them. The dependency system in the Nimborean life style strongly affected the Nimborean migration pattern and the migrants' decision to move. The migrants decided to move to where the relatives stayed because they were confident they could depend on the relatives' support. The day-to-day needs of the migrants could thus be guaranteed so the migrants' fears and the difficulties faced in the new destination were much reduced.

Rural-urban ties were really a manifestation of strong family ties and an interdependent social system. The migrants were representatives of and sources of status, goods and money for their families. Remittances of goods

and money were an important part of rural-urban ties and a positive response to rural-urban inequalities. However, the after effects of remittances did not significantly improve the socio-economic standard of rural households and did not appear to increase inter-personal and inter-household inequalities within and among the villages. Inequalities in material goods may arise in future if the Nimborans become more involved in rural development and as part of long-term social processes but they were limited at the time of the survey.

The remittances were used largely on non-productive expenditures which did not contribute either to growth or development, but were rather directed towards establishing and preserving long-term interdependence with relatives and others, enhancing social prestige as symbols of reciprocation, self respect and identity and in repayment of social debts. This pattern was an important part of the process by which Nimboran traditional ways of life have been transformed into more modern ways of life. It was a rational strategy for Nimborans. Spending money, even on education or transportation, mostly had a socio-psychological meaning rather than an economic rationale.

Recently, there has been a change in the previous pattern of movement, as indicated by declining rural-urban migration. This reflects recent rural developments, political change, inter-provincial migration (the influx of other Indonesian migrants), the increasing number of job seekers, the rising skill requirements, job competition and the connection system. These events modified the situation confronting the Nimborans, creating stagnation and repelling rural-urban migration. The Nimboran migrants who could not stand against this system and failed to get jobs, became frustrated returning home and discouraging new potential rural migrants.

The establishment of new transmigrant settlements in Nimboran rural districts and the improvement of road and transportation facilities may be other factors reducing rural-urban migration. However, on the positive side, transportation improvements increased commuting and circulation, enabling the Nimborans to develop their rural land and its resources, sell market crops and earn money for the purchase of industrial goods without the need to become permanent migrants.

The causes of rural-urban migration in Nimboran were rather different from many other places in Indonesia. The presence of relatives was the important factor in Nimboran rural-urban migration. Migration, in itself, did not appear to create socio-economic inequalities within the villages or to be related to these inequalities, which were minimal. Migration theories, such as those of Lipton which were developed in other parts of developing countries largely failed to explain Nimboran rural-urban migration.