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RESEARCH REPORT

TRANSMIGRATION IN MALUKU: NOTES ON PRESENT CONDITION AND FUTURE PROSPECTS

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With the presence of the transmigrants, eventually some of the indigenous population in neighboring villages have been able to change their way of life, which previously depended upon nature. Now they can also prepare *sawah* and plant rice and several other types of vegetables (*Sekretaris Desa*, Waihatu, Kecamatan Kairatu, West Seram).

The Transmigration Program

Transmigration is the government-sponsored movement of agricultural, and in some cases urban, populations from the relatively overpopulated islands of Java, Bali, and Lombok, to planned settlements in the more sparsely populated Outer Islands of Indonesia. The government develops infrastructure, acquires and clears land, constructs irrigation facilities, and builds rudimentary homes for settlers. They are provided with agricultural inputs and subsistence supplies for a year or so, after which the community is expected to become self-sufficient.

Indonesia's transmigration program is today the biggest and longest-running government-sponsored land resettlement or colonization scheme in the world. It was initiated by the Dutch in 1905 with resettlement of Javanese peasants in Lampung, Sumatra, as a means to redistribute population and ostensibly to improve the welfare of the native population. Java was then, as now, characterized by extreme rural population densities and small farm holdings, with extensive landlessness and poverty. At the same time transmigration was motivated by the concerns of

the colonial government to increase the production of food-crops and the supply of plantation labor (Hardjono 1988:428).

Under the independent Indonesian government, transmigration continued as an important part of national policy, mainly as a means to address the uneven distribution of population, but also for reasons of national security. For Sukarno, the sponsored movement of Javanese was a means to populate frontier territories (especially near borders with Malaysia) and to promote national integration.

Under the New Order, after a brief period of economic crisis and policy confusion, Indonesia's modern transmigration program became a central element of the government policy, and, partly as a result of the personal interest taken by President Suharto, for whom transmigration has been described as a "personal fetish" (Tirtosudarmo 1990:24), the program became a simple panacea or "miracle cure" for the problem of national development (Babcock 1986). The modern program combines the demographic, developmental, and nationalist goals of the previous regimes. The seven goals, according to Law No. 3 in 1972, are (Babcock 1986:158-159): (1) improved living standards; (2) balanced population distribution; (3) utilization of natural and human resources; (4) regional development; (5) the equitable distribution of the benefits of development; (6) national unity; and (7) national defense and security.

However, it is unlikely that the goals within this complex package will have equal priority in policy or meet with equal effectiveness in practice. The problem of uneven population redistribution remains central to the thinking of the bureaucratic elite in Indonesia (Tirtosudarmo 1990:4; Babcock 1988:159), but it is clear, even within the government (Osborne 1985), that transmigration can have only a limited impact on the population problem in Java. Relative emphasis on the other two goals is more likely the outcome of a behind-the-scenes political struggle within the New Order government between the technocrats, supported by the World Bank, who see transmigration as a tool of economic development, and the military, who view transmigration as a means to promote nation-building and national security (Tirtosudarmo 1990:3-4).

During the 1970s and into the mid-1980s, oil revenues and generous World Bank loans provided the funding for a dramatic expansion of the program, and large-scale resettlement was carried out without adequate research and preparation. Independent observers suggested that serious problems were developing at some sites (see, for example, the review by

Arndt 1983), and a series of detailed surveys conducted by the Ministry of Transmigration (MOT), in cooperation with the World Bank and United Nations Development Program (UNDP), revealed systematic deficiencies in both conceptualization and implementation of the program (World Bank 1988, Babcock 1988). Even the popular media began to voice criticism of conditions in some of the settlements (Babcock 1988). As a result of budgetary constraints and policy review, the program has been scaled-back and revised.

However, the rate of transmigration to Maluku has actually increased in the present Five Year Plan (Repelita V) and the MOT has ambitious plans for resettlement during the remainder of the decade. Resettlement in the far east of the archipelago is due in part to the fact that previous destinations, particularly Sumatra and Sulawesi, are saturated, and to the recently announced eastern development initiative. Transmigration is conceived as an important agent in the further integration of the province of Maluku into the national political economy through commercialization of the agricultural economy and modernization of society.

I would like to briefly review some of the problems of the transmigration program in general, as identified in the reviews cited above, and the implications of the present and projected resettlement program for the economy, environment, and culture of Maluku. First, however, a note on the present numbers and distribution of transmigrants in the province.

The Demographic Impact of Transmigration in Maluku

In 1992, there were 13 settlements in the province. A total of 14,269 households, or 58,501 individuals had been transmigrated by the government (see Table). This represents only 3.1% of the total provincial population of 1,850,900, certainly a relatively small proportion of the population compared with some provinces. However, even with a population growth of 2.7% in the region, as a result of the expanded program, the proportion of transmigrants in Maluku will increase to approximately 4.2% by the end of Repelita V—the MOT plans nine new settlements and extensions to six existing settlements, involving a total target of 5988 households (24,550 individuals). This is a small proportion of the provincial population, to be sure, but the demographic impact of transmigration will be greater than these figures suggest.

Table: Actual and Projected Transmigration to Maluku, 1954-1994

	YEAR	POP. SETTLED		POPULATION*			PLANNED
		HHS	INDIVS	YR.	HHS	INDIVS	HHS 92-94
Maluku Tengah							
Seram							
Waimital	54/55	407	1592	80	534	2582	
Waihatu	73/75	400	1595	84	410	1846	
Naitelo							200
Pasahari	82-84	2000	8292	90	2144	9338	
Samal	85-92	1763	6833	91	1780	7145	622
Banggoi	87-92	525	2106	92	545	2131	200
Kobisonta							500
Buru	79-81	4000	16871	86	4342	18030	500
Maluku Utara							
Halmahera							
Biang	82/83	600	2628	90	629	2691	
Toliwang	83-92	849	3147	91	836	3140	326
Goal	90-92	350	1407	92	350	1407	
Pediwang							300
Doralamo							200
Mangole							300
Taliabu							325
Bacan							300
Obi							300
Halmahera Tengah							
Wasilei	82-86	2300	9604	90	2423	10151	
Mancalele							300
Ekor	86-91	540	2166	92	373	1535	
Nusliku	91-92	485	1933	92	485	1933	815
Maluku Tenggara							
Benjina	90/91	50	222	92	36	174	300
Totals		14269	58501		14847	62103	5988

* Year refers to year of population estimate, which is also the year that administration of settlement was transferred from the Ministry of Transmigration to the local government.

SOURCE: Kantor Wilayah Departemen Transmigrasi Propinsi Maluku, May 1992.

The figures above do not include spontaneous migrants who follow later. Sometimes these are relatives or village-mates of the original settlers, but they may also be migrants from other parts of Indonesia, typically farmers buying land from disillusioned transmigrants. (Although transmigrants cannot officially sell land until after 10 years, in most schemes, a land market rapidly develops.) If the settlement develops sufficiently to support them, petty traders and artisans may also follow.

Although the attrition rate in transmigration settlements is often quite high and many return to their place of origin—the Table shows a decline in the number of households in most of the more recent settlements—a significant proportion are likely to abandon the transmigration settlement to become wage laborers or traders in provincial towns and cities. It is not yet possible to determine how many households are involved, but in Waihatu, W. Seram, for example, which is a relatively successful site settled from 1973-75, our field study reveals that 148 households, or 37% of the original 400 transmigrant households, abandoned the settlement. The figures based on settlement populations do not indicate how many such households have moved on to be replaced by spontaneous settlers.

In addition, most transmigrant families are still in their reproductive phase and are likely to be encouraged to have large families, given the availability of land and the need for agricultural labor on the transmigration site. The Table suggests a marked increase in family size from the period of settlement to the most recent census, particularly in the newer settlements, and both anecdotal and survey data from W. Seram confirm that this is indeed the case.

Finally, regional-level figures obscure locally more significant demographic effects of transmigration, particularly on some of the smaller or less densely settled islands. If current targets are met, by 1994 transmigrants will represent 25.1% of the population of Aru and 20.4% Buru. Even on the two largest islands, Halmahera and Seram, they will represent 6.9% and 7.8% of the population, respectively.

Problems with Transmigration and Implications for Maluku

The problems that have most severely compromised the national transmigration program include: its failure to improve the living standards of migrants; inappropriate farming systems and subsequent environmental degradation; land availability; and cultural conflict. Not all has been bad,

of course, and I will briefly review below the positive contribution of transmigration to Maluku. However, the settlement models adopted in the current program and the ambitious scale do suggest that some of the problems previously experienced will be repeated.

First, evidence from a series of studies sponsored by the World Bank and MOT shows conclusively that, in general, incomes of migrants are lower than those of the receiving communities and even lower than those in the sending communities on Java (World Bank 1988:xxiv-v). In addition, although costs of living may differ, and transmigrants may have accumulated assets in land and housing, more households in transmigration communities live below the national poverty line than in neighboring communities or in Java.

Nor has the recruitment of potential transmigrants in source areas generally favored selection of those with either the disposition or skills for success in the resettlement environment. Voluntary recruitment in the poorest areas leads to the transmigration of "the less enterprising and less resourceful people in the village" (Hardjono 1977:36), and urban squatters and vendors transmigrated in the early 1970s were almost entirely unsuited to subsistence agriculture. In Waihatu, most of the urban households abandoned the settlement for Masohi or Ambon and (re)turned to trading or other service occupations.

If this is the case, transmigration may be conceived as the export of poverty and unemployment from Java to the Outer Islands. For some observers, the replacement of the relatively skilled and educated individuals who migrate to join the workforce in other parts of Indonesia by relatively unskilled populations presents a future development problem (Hettaria 1989).

Second, transmigration schemes have often involved inappropriate farming models poorly adapted to local environmental conditions. Particularly problematical has been the attempt to transfer the Javanese system of rice cultivation to the Outer Islands, consistent with what Dove (1988) calls the Javanese agro-ecological mythology—a belief in the inherent superiority of rice as subsistence crop that has resulted in its centrality to policies promoting national food security. Babcock (1988:170), for example, has argued that "in the government's eyes, the single most important, and often the only, indicator of the agricultural health of a transmigration project is its production of rice." This fixation has changed somewhat, as alternative models based on tree crops, rural

industry, and even fisheries have been developed, but still, irrigated wet rice (*sawah*) has dominated the plans for Maluku. The Department of Public Works estimates that a further 46,000 ha of irrigated rice land can be developed in the province, mostly on the islands of Halmahera, Seram, and Buru.¹ According to the masterplan for Repelita V-VI, 25,000 ha will be developed by the year 2000, and this will necessitate the transmigration of approximately 24,000 families from Java (KWDTM 1992:5).

In many settlements, including several in Maluku, transmigrants suffered hardship because insufficient *sawah* was cleared and irrigated, and productivity could not be sustained due to technical or ecological problems. Moreover, where swampland has been reclaimed for rice production, saline intrusion and hardpan formation have severely limited productivity. The productivity of *sawah* in transmigration schemes has for these reasons generally remained low, despite the application of modern technological inputs, with the exception of some areas in Sulawesi where irrigated schemes have been developed on fertile soil. In Maluku, for example, yields are generally well under 2.5 t/ha (KSMT 1989). Nevertheless, transmigration settlements contribute a significant proportion of the province's rice production—50% in 1983 (Babcock 1986:171). Rice imported from other provinces is, of course, readily available at a price in most local markets, but the settlements may be instrumental in effecting change in the indigenous food complex. Transmigrants in Waihatu, for example, have provided the labor, knowledge, and irrigation technology necessary for households in surrounding villages to develop *sawah*, and, according to villagers, their intensive use of pesticides has apparently driven rice pests to destroy hill rice (*padi ladang*) to such an extent that it is no longer sown. Although some transmigrants cultivate and process sago, and most eat it occasionally (particularly between rice harvests), rice is the only acceptable staple and they have gone to considerable lengths to open up and maintain water supplies to their *sawah*.

Where rice cultivation is not considered practical, the Department of Transmigration, with the cooperation of the Department of Forestry, is developing settlements based on industrial forest crops (*Hutan Tanaman Industri*). Although only one settlement has so far been developed (200 households on Buru), a total of 60,000 ha will be developed and 4800 households resettled within the present Five Year Plan (Repelita V) on

Buru, Halmahera, Seram, Bacan, and Obi (KWDTPM 1992:7). There are plans for such schemes eventually on Wetar and Yamdena (Tanimbar). The MOT is also pioneering fishing settlements (producing fish and fish oil for export), with 500 households at Benjina, Aru. It is hard to say what the environmental impacts of such schemes will be, and how sustainable they will prove to be. Much will depend upon the rapid development of marketing infrastructure and the ability of the migrants to grow subsistence food crops in the meantime.

The cultivation of irrigated rice, and especially of tree crops, requires the acquisition of extensive tracts of land, usually from indigenous populations that have some historical claim recognized in *adat* law. The government, however, does not recognize such claims in cases of national interest, which includes transmigration (MacAndrews 1986). Thus the government does not pay cash compensation for land acquired for transmigration since "it feels that local people should be prepared to relinquish unutilized land for programs that will contribute to local and national development" (World Bank 1988:92). Unfortunately many of these "unutilized" lands form part of the territory and resource base for shifting cultivation practiced by the local villages, and such expropriation may compromise the long-term viability of this form of production. The government promises compensation for tree crops that are actively cultivated, but many irregularities are reported. In the case of Waihatu, for example, the government expropriated disputed territory between two villages and has not compensated either the villages for loss of their forest land (*ewang*) nor villagers for loss of their fruit trees. Such situations almost inevitably lead to hostility if not overt conflict between the settlers and the local people, who resent not only the un(der)compensated loss of their land, but also the resources that the government preferentially invests in the transmigrant community. Some of the capital invested in transmigration (about 40% of Maluku's development budget allocated by the central government) might be more directly and efficiently invested in local development and might be less likely to leak from the region in the form of returned transmigrants and investment in land in Java.

Many otherwise critical observers argue for the positive role of transmigration in regional development, particularly in the provision of physical and social infrastructure (Babcock 1986 and 1988; Leinbach 1989; Arndt 1983). The transmigration program contributes to the de-

velopment and upgrading of roads and other transport facilities, and in Maluku almost one-third of all provincial roads are transmigration roads (Babcock 1986:176). The Trans-Seram and Trans-Halmahera highways are being constructed as part of the program and will dramatically increase the efficiency of communication on these large islands. Similarly, each transmigration settlement boasts an array of social facilities and services, including a primary school, health clinic, and a cooperative agricultural extension center.

Many local people undoubtedly benefit from increased accessibility to markets and social services resulting from these developments, but there is some question about the distribution of benefits and the resulting effects on local communities. There is evidence that some may not be culturally disposed to take advantage of the services available (Leinbach 1989:87), but more important perhaps is the fact that the improved access for some inevitably causes relative marginalization of others. In West Seram, for example, the coastal road through the transmigration settlements has increased the relative isolation of the interior villages, and the social facilities have intensified their relative underdevelopment, such that residents resent and often complain about being left behind by their government.²

Finally, there remains the question of potential ethnic conflict between the transmigrants and indigenous peoples. Some critics view transmigration part of a Javanese colonial enterprise (see *The Ecologist* 1986), and local populations have often met the transmigrants with hostility. The program's colonization of the interiors of outer islands inevitably brings it into conflict with the ways of life of Indonesia's remaining tribal peoples, and it is hard to believe, in fact, that this is not one of its implicit goals. Monbiot, for example, claims:

The Indonesian Government is indulging in a ruthless board game in which the board is a 3000 mile wide archipelago and the pieces are whole populations. Ostensibly attempting to relieve the overcrowded cities it is simultaneously exterminating tribal peoples with a determination reminiscent of Stalin's purges. (Monbiot 1989:26)

Although this is most certainly an extreme view, the planned further settlement of Buru and the development of transmigration sites on Obi, Bacan, Aru, and Wetar raises questions about the fate of interior tribal peoples on these islands. In the case of Buru, attempts have already been made to incorporate tribal peoples into transmigration schemes.

Conclusion

In a 1998 report, the World Bank report argued:

The Moluccas have little land available for settlement and are unlikely to attract large numbers of spontaneous transmigrants given their rather limited economic possibilities and the number of migrants from the eastern islands competing for jobs in those areas (World Bank 1988:131).

However, transmigration to the province continues, and ambitious plans have been formulated for the remainder of the decade. Undoubtedly the province benefits from some of the capital investment and infrastructure development, but there are several well-documented problems with the program that compromise its developmental goals.

At this stage it is hard to know exactly what the outcomes will be and it may not be appropriate to apply the findings of previous studies that critically evaluate the program's various dimensions (Arndt 1983, World Bank 1988, Babcock 1988). These studies have relied almost exclusively on regional-level census data or survey research conducted by the Ministry of Transmigration and other agencies involved in resettlement, and have mostly resulted in ambivalent conclusions.³

With the exception of some work done in Kalimantan (see Babcock 1988) and South Sumatra (Leinbach et al. 1992), relatively little detailed empirical research has been conducted by independent observers, and there is a desperate need for ethnographic and socio-economic research into, among other issues, factors affecting the relative success of various types of schemes and the relative success of various types of transmigrant households and their survival and accumulation strategies; the evolution and respective roles of social, economic, and political institutions in transmigrant communities; and the relations between transmigrants and host societies (Babcock 1983).

So far, I am not aware of any sustained investigation into resettlement in Maluku that addresses these issues. However, I am presently involved in two cooperative projects that address different aspects of these issues: the first project involves study of socio-economic differentiation on various types of schemes on different islands and with different settlement dates; the second involves study of the interaction between indigenous

villages and the transmigrant site in terms of food security and land. I hope to report some of the findings in this journal shortly.

NOTES

1. This excludes small-scale development, defined as less than 500 ha (KWDTM 1992:4).
2. In the case of one village, Lohiatata, the center of gravity of the village has shifted toward the neighboring transmigration settlement as villagers have moved nearer its road and other facilities to such an extent that there are plans to merge the local village into the transmigration settlement.
3. As Babcock (1983:79) himself admits, the "staggering amount of data ... collected by agencies involved in land settlement ... is commonly of such poor quality and of such an indigestibly large volume as to be relatively unusable."

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RESEARCH REPORT

STUDYING SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY AMBONESE MALAY: EVIDENCE FROM F. CARON'S SERMONS (1693)

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WITH A TECHNICAL SUMMARY BY J. ERIC MEYER

Introduction

Since 1980 there have been a number of publications about the history, grammar, lexicon, and social setting of Ambonese Malay. (See Collins, in press a, for an account of these materials.) Indeed, Ambonese Malay has found its way into recent books and studies about creolization theory (for example, Keesing 1988 and Holm 1989). This contemporary burst of interest in Ambonese Malay—a refreshing resumption of research that had been abandoned since the late nineteenth century (van Hoëvell 1876 and de Clercq 1876)—has frequently focused on the relevance of viewing this language variant from the perspective of creolization theory. Yet, interpreting a language variant as a creole depends most basically on reviewing the history of its development (Collins 1980). Some progress has been made toward understanding the history of Malay in Ambon (see Grimes 1991, Steinhauer 1991, and Collins 1992c), but these efforts have not been able to draw upon language materials from the earliest known periods of Malay in Ambon.

There are no known extant Malay language materials from Ambon as early as the sixteenth century.¹ The religious works written by (mostly) Portuguese priests stationed in Ambon during that century apparently have not survived.² Nor do we have wordlists, legal documents, *hikayats*, or even a few sentences in travel reports. It cannot be contested