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## **WESTERN KALIMANTAN IN DEVELOPMENT: A REGIONAL DISAPPOINTMENT**

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In this article based on a short one month stint of fieldwork in the two neighboring provinces of West Kalimantan (Kalbar) and Central Kalimantan (Kalteng), a region we will refer to here as western Kalimantan, I will be dealing with the regional development context. I will focus mainly on what makes it a regional periphery under domination: an over-exploitation from the national center of its space and resources, followed by organized or spontaneous in-migration, without investment in sustainable economic development. These contributing factors of mal-development are found in many areas of Outer Indonesia which are not wracked by violent conflicts; this suggests that this context is not directly responsible for the conflict, but may have influenced it.

### **From Resource Wealth to Organized Scarcity**

The riches of western Kalimantan are found primarily in its forests, its mines (gold, diamond, mercury and others) and its space. The two provinces cover nearly 300,000 km<sup>2</sup> (16% of the national territory), which is more than twice the island of Java but with only 2.7 million people at the beginning of the development period (1971); which gives a density of 9 people per km<sup>2</sup>. Central Kalimantan (Kalteng)

was much less populated (4.6/km<sup>2</sup>) and much more forested. Thirteen years later, by 2000, the population doubled and reached 5.5 million mainly as the result of in-migration.

### **A Dynamic Area in the Archipelago before Independence**

Even with a sparse population, the regional economic performance was not bad before Independence, as illustrated in Touwen's (2001) research. In this interesting publication, Dutch archives are used to evaluate the economic activities of Outer Indonesia between 1900 and 1940; it takes into account the westerners' activities, the share of the indigenous or "Asiatic" industry and trade, and export to Java or elsewhere.

By that time Kalteng province was included in the large *Zuider- en Oosterafdeling van Borneo*, which also covered today's South and East Kalimantan provinces. As Kalteng was peripheral to Banjarmasin where activities were concentrated, we get little data on this specific sub-region in Touwen's study. But West Kalimantan (Kalbar) covers the ancient *Westerafdeling van Borneo* and was classified as place of "very active indigenous entrepreneurship" (p. 43), characterized by a good level of exports without a significant presence of westerners.

The main production was copra on the coastal area, rubber and pepper inland. The rubber boom started early with the first plantation in 1903; the rubber tree was introduced from the Malaysian peninsula by Chinese already settled in the province. Export data started to be significant in 1910 without any westerner estate, meaning a spontaneous spread of the trees among the local population. The Dayak adopted it as they were already used to collecting natural latex (gum) from the forest to meet the external demand, and they integrated the rubber tree in their *ladang* system.<sup>1</sup> Rubber was

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<sup>1</sup> When a clearing is made in the forest for food cultivation, usually paddy is planted for one or two harvest, during which time useful trees (fruit-trees, or trees valued for their wood, and rubber) will be also planted and protected. The field will be then left idle, allowing the forest to grow back, along with the trees that were planted, among them rubber. Those trees will enriched the forest diversity and will serve as property markers. Coming to maturity, the valuable trees will be used if market prices justify the work involved.

exclusively exported to Singapore, and until 1930 Kalbar was always the second or third largest export area, behind Jambi but sometimes before Banjarmasin, with around 25,000 tons every year. In 1936 Kalbar became the first exporter of rubber with 35,000 tons (Touwen, 2001:186), which indicated a dramatic extension of the planted area on Dayak land.

### **Box 1: Coconut and Spontaneous Agricultural Settlement**

Pioneer settlements were started in the 1920s by Banjarese people in the coastal area near the border between the two provinces of Kalbar and Kalteng, at the river mouth of the Mentaya near the town of Pangkalan Bun. They were the first to open the tidal swamp, reproducing the technique they had applied in the homeland (the Barito swamp area); digging drainage canals at right angles to the river; first growing rice between mounds in construction, then converting to coconut orchards (Collins 1993:203-207).

Bugis traders collected copra and brought it to Surabaya with their ships. Information about promising land beyond the sea spread not only among Bugis, but also among Javanese and Madurese crew members. The new migrants were usually employed for the hard work of land clearing and for rice harvesting on the fields of earlier settlers, before being able to open their own land. This process of pioneer settlement involving the four ethnic groups occurred in the swampy coast up to Pontianak and lasted at least until the 1950s (Hendro Suroyo 1983:29-37). The pioneer front then switched to the eastern coast of Sumatra, although without the Madurese, for whom western Kalimantan became a second home. It is possible that an earlier migration of the Madurese happened on a smaller scale, either as salt traders or as soldiers for the Javanese army.

Those early pioneer settlements had a multi-ethnic character, even if each ethnic group usually settled along the same canal; they managed to live for decade with no major inter-ethnic conflict. During the Sampit violence, the area around Pangkalan Bun was involved at the end of the conflict, not as a starting point, but as a spreading process involving outsiders. Longtime Madurese settlers were force to flee. They were also the first to come back as they were able to prove they were born in Kalimantan, one of the condition imposed by the local population. This illustrates the different attributes and perceptions of the earlier Madurese families compared to the later migrant waves.

Coconut trees are grown traditionally in and around settlements but was the Chinese who started larger orchards, quickly followed by the coastal Malays, who used migrants' manpower. Copra was export to Java and Singapore and then directly to Europe and Japan (Touwen, 2001:175).

Pepper production and export was regular but much less than other well known producing areas (like the Banjarmasin hinterland). Between 1911 and 1920 it amounted to 12% of the archipelago export (Touwen, 2001:379). We should add to this export, mentioned by Touwen and which interested Dutch traders, all the valuable traditional forest production (rattan, resin, gum, feathers, bird nests, and other products) collected by the Dayak, and which made them early actors in an ancient trade.<sup>2</sup>

Pontianak port became more and more important with regular service to Singapore, Batavia and Belitung in 1930. In 1938, it ranked fifth of the Outer Indonesian ports, slightly better than Banjarmasin with 13.4 million guilders of export, half of Semarang in Java, quite a good performance for such a sparsely populated area (Touwen, 2001:350).

Western Kalimantan has had a strategic location on the maritime exchange route between China and the West since early times. This advantageous position was confirmed during colonial times with the growing importance of Singapore as a place of trade. The presence of a large Chinese community re-enforced this position.

The pre-colonial performance of Western Kalimantan is reminiscent of local adaptive capacities and of local dynamics without direct intervention from the Dutch, and with a steady stream of spontaneous migration to compensate the lack of sufficient local manpower. We should view the present situation by taking these favorable historical elements into account.

### **Riches Squandered: Forests under Severe Threat since Orde Baru**

According to a 1939 estimate by the forestry department under the Dutch, forest covered three quarters of the Indonesian part of Borneo

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<sup>2</sup> Earlier trade included also gold exports. Large scale exploitation of gold started in the 18th century by Sambas and Mempawah sultans and marks the beginning of the Chinese migration in the area.

island before Independence (Durand 1994:344).<sup>3</sup> In 1990, before the second stage of deforestation, forest cover declined to 44% of the territory. The main culprits for deforestation were forest concessions (HPH), industrial forest estates (HTI), large plantations, mining exploitation, and the transmigration program. Despite the *ladang* agricultural system of the local people having been identified by the government for decades as highly destructive, the slight impact such slash-and-burn practices have on the environment has been amply demonstrated, so long as population density remains low.

The forest became a significant resource at the beginning of the Orde Baru (Suharto's New Order regime) with the infusion of foreign capital after years of restraint under Sukarno. As soon as 1966, some 9 million ha of forest concessions were distributed. Since then, timber continued to be a source of wealth for the State and its cronies.<sup>4</sup>

**Table 1: Timber Exports from Indonesia, 1968-1972**

	Million M <sup>3</sup>	Value million US \$
1968	1,240	12,512
1969	3,596	26,015
1970	7,412	100,805
1971	10,700	168,635
1972	13,471	230,396

<sup>3</sup> By that time Java had already less than a quarter of its territory under forest (21%) but the island was inhabited and cultivated everywhere else. The western tip (Sambas-Pontianak) and southern one (Banjarmasin hinterland) had less forest because it was there that commercial agriculture made progress. On the contrary, Central and East present provinces were much more forested.

<sup>4</sup> Indonesia has become the Southeast Asian playground for forest companies after the Philippines and Thailand, as forest cover reached the 20% critical stage.

In 1972, the forest concession already covered 23.9 million ha (plus 24.7 awaiting issuance of permit, see Meijer 1975:16), and Kalimantan had the sad privilege of accounting for nearly two-thirds of it.

**Table 2: Forest Concession in Indonesia in 1972**

<b>Island</b>	<b>Province</b>	Committed under concession or agreement (M ha)	Requested or under survey
<b>Sumatra</b>		7,2	4,6
<b>Kalimantan</b>		14,9	12,1
	<b>East</b>	7,5	3,6
	<b>South</b>	0,9	0,9
	<b>West</b>	<b>1,4</b>	<b>3,7</b>
	<b>Central</b>	<b>5,1</b>	<b>4,0</b>
<b>Sulawesi</b>		0,9	1,8
<b>Maluku</b>		0,7	1,0
<b>Irian Jaya</b>		0,2	5,2

Source: Forest Planning Bureau, 1972.

Forest data are always difficult to gather because of contradictory objectives: the State hides the problem and environmental activists overestimate it to sound the alarm before it is too late. Another difficulty is the cumulative aspect of the data with ended concessions, those still running, and new ones. Some of the older concessions have been converted to transmigration sites, other to large estate plantations, but many of them have simply been left empty and in a very degraded state (*lahan kritis*). Often, selective cutting regulations were not applied and reforestation obligation (*reboisasi*) forgotten, even if the concession received state subventions for that purpose.

Forest reserve area (*hutan suaka-wisata*), melted like snow in the sun after the re-classification in 1983, which identified three main forest categories: areas that can be exploited, converted, or protected. In 1995, the total protected forest area, *hutan lindung*, was reduced to only 2 to 4 million ha in Kalbar, and 0,8 to 1,8 million ha in Kalteng, a tiny part of the territory that should remind untouched.<sup>5</sup>

**Table 3: Classified Forest Reserve (*Hutan Suaka-Wisata*), 1980-1993**

	<b>Kalbar</b>	<b>Kalteng</b>
<b>1980</b>	14 676 000 ha	15 260 000 ha
<b>1993</b>	1 340 000 ha	730 000 ha

The same year, land covered with savannah, *alang alang* (*Imperata cylindrica*), and those classified as critical, reached 4.3 million ha in Kalteng and 3.4 million in Kalbar.

#### **The Forest Concessions (HPH)**

In Kalteng, forest concession distribution began in 1969 with three enterprises sharing 381,000 ha. It continued until the crisis (Table 4) with an apex in 1990 with 117 enterprises working on 11.9 million ha.

An audit report from Kalteng forestry service in 2001<sup>6</sup> mentioned that half of the territory has been used by forest concessions and that 37% of this land is in a very critical state of degradation. The Governor recognized the magnitude of the disaster, and began to wonder what the “after forest plan” and its cost would be.

In fact, if cumulated areas are taken into account, the situation is even worse, with nearly all the reachable forest already visited and exploited. During our fieldwork, even after a three hour speedboat

<sup>5</sup> Even though somewhat unreliable, forest data are from the Statistical Agency, *BPS*, are included here in order to allow some comparison between areas and to chart the evolution of land use.

<sup>6</sup> *Quovadis forestry Central Kalimantan*, special report of the Forestry reformation, Sept 2001, Central Kalimantan Governor.

search upstream, we were unable to find a patch of the famous “Borneo jungle.” We then realized that it was already a fairy tale.

**Table 4: Forest Concessions in 1995/1996**

	<b>Kalbar</b>	<b>Kalteng</b>
Number of HPH 1996	45	77
Area HPH, ha	5 281 936	8 277 472
<b>Fabrik HPH, unit, 1995</b>		
Saw mills	10	36
Plywood	11	22
Moulding	5	10
<b>Fabrik HPH, Capacity m<sup>3</sup>/year, 1995</b>		
Saw mills	302 250	1 241 710
Plywood	1 276 878	2 179 980
Moulding	608 400	206 217

The industrial forest concept was implemented at the end of the 1980s, at the beginning of the “liberalization era.” The HTI (Table 5) allows enterprises to completely clear the land in order to replant with fast growing trees for the pulp industry (paper and rayon). It became a good opportunity for the former forest concession to sidestep the selective cut regulation and to sell all timber. Supposed to be implemented only on critical land, in fact HTI developed mainly on re-growth and secondary forest because soil is still fertile to insure the success of the new plantation. Some of the HTI never planted any fast growing trees, other young plantations were ravaged by fire.

The methods used to acquire land were brutal and aggressive under the HPH and even worse under the HTI, i.e., no detailed preliminary studies, rough mapping, and use of large scale maps on which huge blocs of land were attributed around a table in Jakarta, with support from the Governor and the regents, *bupati*, who each had a financial stake in the deal.

**Table 5: Industrial Forest (HTI): Growth in Cleared Area (ha)**

	<b>Kalbar</b>	<b>Kalteng</b>
1992	5 747	0
1993	7 294	549
1994	20 637	5 721
1995	226 694	95 190
2000	n.a.	157 000

It is stipulated in the contract that village land is not included in the concession and that the boundaries of the village should be settled by the two parties. At best, enterprises acted by manipulating village heads. Most of the time, local settlements were completely surrounded by heavy machines for few nights, and even fruit-trees of the surrounding village orchard belt could fall under the axe. Until the fall of Suharto, villagers had no way to defend their land. Land clearing was done under the supervision of impressive civil guards, criss-crossing the new network of roads in Jeeps and with walkie-talkies, sometimes helped by soldiers or policemen. Manpower for clearing land and for sawmills are new migrants coming from poor areas of Java, Madura or Flores.

### **Grabbing Land in the Name of Development**

#### **State-sponsored Settlement**

In western Kalimantan, the state's migration and settlement program, Transmigration, started in the 1960s but remained small-scale until the mid-1980s, by which time Sumatra and then Sulawesi had become the main receiving islands.<sup>7</sup> By 2000, there were 369,000 people in Kalbar and 380,000 in Kalteng installed on some 200,000

<sup>7</sup> A total of 13,824 people were already installed in Kalbar, and 9,825 in Kalteng in 1973 out of a total of 587,785 transmigrants.

ha in each province,<sup>8</sup> which is nothing compared to the amount of land given to forest concessions in 1972 or to HTI in three years, between 1992 and 1995.

Until the middle of the 1980s most of the settlements were designed for food cropping on the two ha of land given with full property rights to each family. Thereafter, sometimes a cash crop program was proposed (either rubber or palm oil) on a larger holding (sometimes five ha). Then, in the 1990s, the land status of the transmigrants became unclear as some of the new settlements were included in estate plantation or a HTI concession, and the transmigration schemes were more or less regarded as a source of cheap labor.

Compared to forest concessions, the responsibility of Transmigration regarding land appropriation should be tempered. Often the new settlements were installed on former forest concessions, the land have already been seized and degraded. At least in this case the land was given to expand the agricultural domain and to address the national smallholder problem. Even if often the result might be criticized, there have been some notable successes (Levang, 2003).

The way to acquire land for Transmigration is much less traumatic for the local population than the means employed to create forest concession and plantations. Most of the feasibility studies were more detailed, even if mistakes were still common (and often detrimental to the new settlers, such as when settlements are isolated or on land that is infertile or subject to flooding). The human background was at least taken into account, though one might criticize the perceptions developers had of the local population. The case of Tumbang Sanggai village in Kalteng illustrates the process. There, the Department of Transmigration wanted to install the new settlements along the river for them to be on fertile land and to be well connected to the only transport network. But a study successfully demonstrates that the land along the river was the local population's traditional land used for the expansion of cultivated areas. The empty segments along the

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<sup>8</sup> In the otherwise excellent Peluso & Harwell article (2000:95), the amount of land given to transmigration is mistaken and induces a faulty interpretation. The transmigration question will be discuss below.

riverbanks were to being preserved for the reproduction of the local population in their traditional process of settlement. The transmigrant villages thus ended up in the area in between rivers (the inter-fluvial land), some 5 km from the banks, on land seldom used by the local population due to its isolation and general low fertility in comparison to land nearer the river.<sup>9</sup>

Land conflicts (or conflicts over timber resources) have always existed in the transmigration areas but they were usually settled in a humane way because transmigrants, with limited bargaining power, respected the land rights of the locals. From my experience among Balinese and Javanese settlers, I have found that they always agree that local people are the lords of the land, even when they hide behind the administration to resolve a conflict (Charras 1982).

An important difference in the acquisition of transmigration land is that, contrary to HPH, HTI and private estates, the land was not bought by the Transmigration Department but given by local government (often with compensation for new infrastructure). That means that Governor, *bupati*, *camat* or village head did not receive any financial cut in the deal, contrary to the case of forest concessions, plantations or HTI.

### **The Boom in Large Estates and Mining**

Development of large estates came late to western Kalimantan<sup>10</sup> but accelerated drastically in the 1980s, after the 'village law' was passed in 1979. In 1996, the area under large estates reached 1.8 million productive ha in Kalbar, and 700,000 ha in Kalteng. Rubber and palm oil were the main products.

Since the 1990s, oil palm is favored by planters, and the amount of allocated land is enormous. In Kalteng authorization for future oil palm plantation covers 3.2 million ha. 175,000 ha are newly planted, and 10,641 ha have been planted on transmigrant land. A Japanese

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<sup>9</sup> Patrice Levang, personal communication. Orstom-IRD (the French development agency) has been in charge of preliminary studies of transmigration plans in Kalteng since 1980. They were also aware that the land being proposed for transmigration was on poor, mainly sandy, soils.

<sup>10</sup> Under the Dutch, small estates in Kalbar run by Westerners were only able to produce 3% of the total export of latex in 1940 (Touwen 2001:375).

Cooperation project (JICA 1998-1999) proposed to create a “corridor of development” connecting all the middle streams of Kalteng rivers where the plantation will be concentrated (Casson, 2001). In Kalbar, in 1997, the governor authorized 165 large estates to develop 2.4 million ha. Malaysian companies with Indonesian partners are well involved in this sector, and have already planted more than half a million ha in the two provinces.<sup>11</sup>

A new program had been implement before the crisis to integrate smallholders better than the former programs: the “Primary Co-operative Credit for Members”, *Koperasi Kredit Primer Anggota, KKPA*. But apparently this program become an opportunity for the numerous brokers roaming around to take advantage of the financial opportunities to the detriment of the smallholders. During fieldwork, we met numerous farmers (local people or migrants) who mortgaged their land for a plantation enterprise to be able to get bank credit under all of their names; planting was not completed and the farmers could not work their land until the dispute with the bank was settled by the court.

Mining resources are important and diversified, particularly gold, diamonds, iron and mercury have been exploited for ages. Our data are incomplete but from field interviews it seems that gold was the main issue during the *Orde Baru* period. One of Suharto’s sons secured a large concession in Kalteng where manpower were brought from outside, and individuals miners, local people or migrants, searched for gold inside and outside the concession. In 1982 a sweeping of illegal miners was organized with the help of the elite Kopassus battalion and reports were that tens of miners were buried alive with bulldozers.

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<sup>11</sup> After successfully converting part of its forest into large plantations under the FELDA system, Malaysia reoriented its national policy, investing capital and *savoir faire* in plantation in Indonesian (mainly in Sumatra and Kalimantan). And so the last track of the Malaysian forest can be preserved, the early plantation industries (latex and CPO) can still be supply by neighbouring producing areas, and the new industrial development can concentrate on light and new technology industries to give employment to the increasingly urbanised Malaysian population, among them sons and daughters of workers of the FELDA program.

Mining is often associated with violence in western Kalimantan, particularly with gold. It is also related to environmental degradation through the clearing of the forest, digging, or pollution of land and rivers. The consequences of exploitation are the same both on large or small concessions. After the institution of regional autonomy, the local government distributed tiny concessions of 50 m<sup>2</sup> to individual miners for 1.5 million rupiah. The atmosphere of the mining towns is still tense, conducive to igniting provocative responses to the usual fights among miners, as happened in 2001 at Kasongan in Kalteng, a few days before the events in Sampit.

### **The Apex of Land Folly: The “Mega Project”**

The amount of land grabbed has grown frenetically since the 1990s in the two provinces and reached an apex in Kalteng, as illustrated by the “Swampland Development Project” (*PLG*) or “Mega project.” In 1995, it was decided to develop a million ha of coastal swamp in between the mouths of the Kahayan and Kapuas rivers. The plan was to convert the swamp into rice fields (for the transmigrants) and plantations (for transmigrants and large estates), despite the disastrous results of earlier agricultural experiments with planting rice on peat soils in tidal estuarine systems (on the east coast of Sumatra and South Kalimantan). Rice production there was also supposed to sustain the national food independence, an old challenge no longer economically justified at the national level in 1996.

The permit to convert the land was issued by the Ministry of Forestry. The project was first very lucrative to the private forest concessions allowed to sell all the timber,<sup>12</sup> then extremely costly for the government, which had to spend nearly US \$3 billion for engineering work, including 27,000 km of canals to drain the swamp. This work was granted to the same private companies involved in

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<sup>12</sup> The acting governor of Central Kalimantan raised the matter recently: If the timber was sold for US\$15 per cubic meter (about Rp 109,500 at US\$1 = Rp 7,300), and if the timber felled amounted to 10 million cubic meters (one hectare yields 10 cubic meters of timber) how many trillion rupiah would we get?

forest concessions, all cronies of President Suharto.<sup>13</sup> The main canal (photo) and road used to transport trunks were quickly completed and deforestation was absolute.



To do the heavy work, 15,600 Javanese families were resettled via the transmigration program. Some 35,000 Dayak Ngaju who formerly lived in the area had the choice to join the transmigration project or to leave.

During the 1997 dry season, fire was used to accelerate clearance for plantation. Given the particularly severe drought of that year, fires burned continuously for six months, smoldering in the peat and spreading to the forest outside the project, bringing the total amount of deforestation to 1.4 million ha. July 1997 was also the beginning of the economic crisis, and the scandal regarding this huge project made headlines. President Habibie proposed a new project that was later abandoned by President Gus Dur.

It was only under Gus Dur's government that the 27,000 Dayak were able to complain, be heard, and ask for compensation. They lost their rattan gardens,<sup>14</sup> their rubber jungle, their hunting, fishing and collecting<sup>15</sup> areas, to mention just their economic activities. It was also only at that time that the majority of Javanese transmigrants,

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<sup>13</sup> The Mega project was in the hands of PT. Mapindo Parama (Nusamba) and PT. Nusagro (Nusamba), which belonged to Muhammad `Bob` Hasan and to PT. Sumatra Timur Indonesia (Pulau Sambu Group), which belonged to Tay Juhana.

<sup>14</sup> In the former Dadahup village they were able to collect more than 100 tons of rattan a year (500,000 rupiah per ton), each family collecting between 8 to 10 tons a year.

<sup>15</sup> They used to collect resins, gums, and long grass (*purun*) for matting.

unhappy in this swampy environment and unable to grow anything, dared to ask to return to their home island.

Generally speaking, the planned plantation (for industrial forest, oil palm, or rubber) had been attributed by the Ministry of Forestry to the same companies involved in wood exploitation. They also received an allocation for replanting. A few conglomerates took more than half the share of the 5.4 million ha of land convert into palm oil in Outer Indonesia. Land problems are old problems but with the wind of “liberalism without control” starting in the early 90s, it has become an unbelievable folly of usurpation, leaving local people and smallholders powerless and hopeless. With the crisis and the fall of Suharto, large areas of devastated forests have been left idle.

## **A Receiving Land**

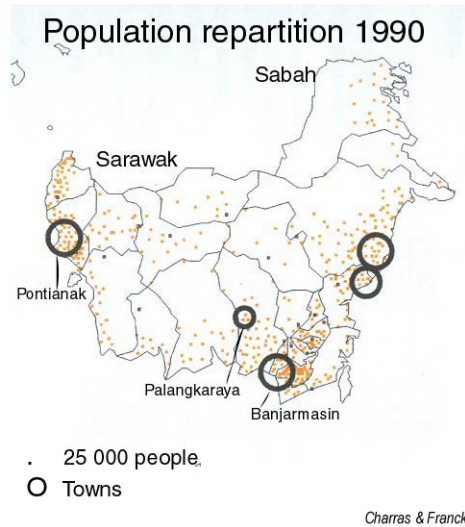
### **Sparsely Populated but Multi-ethnic from Early On**

*Dimana ada gula, ada semut*, Where there is sugar, there are ants. The natural resources—wood, minerals, space—attract outside populations. Local manpower has been insufficient to supply the wood industry and plantation development. Not only were there small local populations but also, as in all extraction and development areas, the local populations were not prepared to give up their lucrative multi-activities (such as farming, collecting, trading, which they could do in an environment they know well). Especially given the very low salaries offered for full-time jobs with the companies.

Only displaced people, migrants coming from overpopulated areas with low salaries like Java, or people coming from regions with few resources (Madura, NTB, NTT) will accept such working conditions. Far from their cultural and social environment, they spend all their time working hard, living as cheaply as possible in order to send money home or to build up capital for a hoped-for better life in which they could buy land or start a small business in the receiving areas. As usual the migrants are considered hard workers and the local people are lazy (*malas*), “primitive” and underdeveloped because they spend so much time performing their cultural and social duties. We should keep in mind that multi-activities is an ‘economic system’

not yet shown to be less lucrative than most coolie salaries in Kalimantan.

At any rate, local populations have been denied better-paying, qualified employment, and the only work proposed to them is as forest guides, as nobody is able to compete in this field.



The population of western Kalimantan represented only 3 percent of the total population of Indonesia in 1971 as well as in 2000. Population density is less than 25 people per km<sup>2</sup>, and historical differences between the two provinces is still notable. The map shows an uneven population distribution: more concentrated on the coastal fringe, particularly in the western part. In the hinterland population is sparse and settled along rivers that remain the main means of transportation.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Cf. *Atlas sumber daya nasional*, Bakosurtanal 2000:20-21 and Charras & Franck 2002:177.

**Table 6: Population Evolution, 1971-2000**

	Area km <sup>2</sup>	Population '000 people				Density people/km <sup>2</sup>	
		1971	1980	1990	2000*	1971	1990
<b>Kalbar</b>	146 760	2 020	2 486	3 229	3 740	14	22
<b>Kalteng</b>	152 600	702	954	1 396	1 802	5	9

Note: The 2000 census is said to be less reliable than other decades (Hull, *BIES*, 2001).

The demography is typical of the less populated parts of Indonesia. The annual growth is more important than the national mean mainly because of in-migration. Generally speaking, population growth in those areas experienced a slowdown since the 1990s as the out-migration stream to Java became more important due to the strong industrialization and urbanization process of the island. But, in the case of Kalbar, the breakup of annual growth between 1990 and 2000 is clearly the result of the conflict. Not only did Madurese die or run away but other settlers became frightened and moved out and new migrant candidates postponed their plans to move in. The image of an unattractive place is certainly the same in Kalteng today. Violence, but also the political crisis and regional autonomy, are slowing down the stream of migration for the moment.

**Table 7: Annual Population Growth, 1971 to 2000**

	71-80	80-90	90-00
Kalbar	2.31	2.65	1.5
Kalteng	3.43	3.88	2.6
Indonésie	2.40	2.00	1.3

The strong population growth is mainly due to in-migration. It is not a new phenomenon, particularly in Kalbar, where ancient coastal polities—Sukadana, Sambas, Mempawah, and more recently Pontianak (founded in 1771)—were cores of the maritime trade network, places where Buginese, Javanese, and other archipelago

people were living with other foreign traders from the Middle East, India, and China<sup>17</sup>.

In 1750 the Sultan of Mempawah asked for Hakka Chinese manpower to work in his gold mines. Later on they settled in special areas granted by the Sultan and organized by them, becoming farmers, fishermen, small traders or shop owners. In 1930 they were at least 108,000 in Kalbar.<sup>18</sup> Today the province has a higher proportion of people of Chinese origin than in the rest of country<sup>19</sup>: 11 percent of the total population against 3 percent in Indonesia; 35 percent of Pontianak's population and 60 percent in Singkawang town are of Chinese descent. During the Japanese occupation many Chinese traders were eliminated as well as the local aristocracy. In 1959 they were banned from rural areas. In 1967, the military incited the Dayak to attack the Chinese, accused not to be good Indonesian citizen and allied to the communist party. Since then they are concentrated in the coastal area from Singkawang to Sambas, some are wealthy entrepreneurs but the larger part of the community is very poor.

Bugis, Javanese, and Arabs were involved in the Sultan court and kinship, particularly in Sambas (linked to Mataram and Brunei) and in Pontianak (line of Arab Hadramut). The spontaneous agricultural settlement of the Bugis, Javanese, and Madurese started at least at the beginning of the twentieth century following trade relations (see box: coconut and settlement).

Since the 1980s, the stream of in-migration has intensified and the migrants' activities have become more diversified with a more systematic exploitation of resources in western Kalimantan (opening roads, forest clearance, plantation and other work).

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<sup>17</sup> Prof. Alqadri told us that Madurese soldiers were sent by the Mataram Kingdom to help when Sambas was attacked by Chinese. Some soldiers settled in the area. During fieldwork some people mentioned that during their childhood the "Madurese man" was used like the bogeyman to frighten them, even if none of them knew what a "Madurese" was.

<sup>18</sup> The census did not count all the population in the inaccessible hinterland.

<sup>19</sup> As well as North Sumatra, around Medan.

**Table 8: In-migration from 1971 to 1995**

	1971	1980	1990	1995
Kalimantan Barat	20 805	104 856	196 876	250 617
Kalimantan Tengah	50 078	140 042	240 374	325 028

Source: BPS; recent migration: change of residence five years before the census. 1995 data are not from census but a “survey.”

**Table 9: Main Origin of Migrants in the Two Provinces**

<b>From</b>	<b>To</b>	<b>1975-1980</b>	<b>1985-1990</b>
Jawa Timur	Kalbar	13 153	12 223
Jawa Tengah	Kalbar	7 955	10 733
Jawa Barat	Kalbar	4 174	
Jawa Timur	Kalteng	19 333	26 868
Kalsel	Kalteng	17 892	22 928
Jawa Tengah	Kalteng		12 528

Source: BPS publications on migration analyses post-census

East Java, including the island of Madura, is the main source area as shown by the table listing the three main origins of the migrants. Banjar migration from the neighboring province (South Kalimantan or Kalsel) is also important in Kalteng.

This stream of migration includes Transmigration settlements—agricultural settlements organized by the state. Given that Kalbar and Kalteng have nearly the same number of transmigrants, the effect of transmigration on the ethnic balance has been more important in Kalteng, as transmigrants represent 22 percent of the total population (versus 10 percent in Kalbar), not taking account of the demographic evolution of these groups (mainly from Java and Bali).

**Table 10: Transmigration in Western Kalimantan**

	<b>Kalbar</b>	<b>Kalteng</b>
Pra Pelita 1960-68	5 222	3 465
1971-1973	4 244	6 567
1974-1979	17 764	6 299
1979-1984	122 158	79 481
1984-1989	33 251	99 185
1989-1994	101 012	51 422
1994-1998	85 156	126 745
1999-2000	n.a	5 409
2001-	n.a	1 319
<b>Total</b>	<b>368 807</b>	<b>379 892</b>

This settlement program caused some resentment among the local population. Transmigrant families are looked upon as government-spoiled children. They received a ready-made village with all the basic infrastructures the locals never got: schools and teachers, a health clinic dispensing free medication and contraception, access roads (even if just dirt roads), and a marketplace. In fact for a long time, transmigration settlement was the only expression of “development”<sup>20</sup> for the receiving province. The transmigrants also received a minimum of two ha of land with property certificate, a document unknown to the local farmers.

However, over time perceptions regarding transmigrants changed. From “spoiled” they became the “poor guys,” stuck on their piece of poor land, unable to make a living from their meager food crop production that inundated the local market, and forced to accept the same low wage as the poor new migrants.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>20</sup> In 1984 transmigration took 60 percent of the total investment in roads (Badcock, 1986).

<sup>21</sup> I have found this change in perception in every place where I have studied transmigration settlement. In Kalteng, the Dayak Ngaju affected by the PLG project recognized that the transmigrants’ situation is worse than theirs, as

**Table 11: Three Main Migrant Groups in Kalteng, 2000**

		% to total pop.
Java	325 160	18
Madura	62 228	3
Banjar	435 758	24
Total migrants	823 146	46
Total population	1 801 006	

**Spontaneous Migration**

In 2000 the census included ethnic grouping for the first time since 1930. Because of the conflict, publication of the data was postponed in Kalbar,<sup>22</sup> whereas in Kalteng it was published before the conflict broke out.

In this last province, the three main migrant groups represent 46 percent of the population, and the biggest group, the Banjarese, come from the neighboring province. While many Javanese came with the transmigration program, most of the Madurese, by far the smaller migrant group, came spontaneously. In fact, the Madurese, though very poor, dislike transmigration because it restricts their choice of timing (when to migrate) and place (where to settle). Generally speaking, Madurese have a high level of geographical and professional mobility.

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they are condemned to stay on their barren land. In the receiving rural area the resentment is clearly aimed at the central government and not at the transmigrants. This changed perception has not occurred among the local (or national) urban elite, who direct their anger directly at the transmigrants, attributing to them the same arrogance of the central government civil servants. In South Sumatra, where transmigration has a long history, a dictum says something like: "When Javanese comes barefoot, they just follow in silence, humble and submissive, but as soon as they wear shoes, they will walk on your head".

<sup>22</sup> The Kalbar Governor ordered the Statistical Agency not to give data about migration and ethnic groups. One week before our visit the data were stolen from the Agency.

Distribution by sex and type of area (urban and rural) inform further the migrants' characteristics. In the last wave, Javanese migration is more rural; Banjarese is slightly more rural, and the Madurese show the inverse, being slightly more urban. This may indicate a change in the nature of Madurese migration: before more attracted to land and farming, the new migrants may find urban work more appealing or more easy to find, something emerging, too, from our fieldwork but that needs further study.

**Table 12: Rural/Urban and Gender Distribution for the Three Main Migrant Groups, Kalteng, 2000**

		<b>Banjar</b>	<b>Jawa</b>	<b>Madura</b>
<b>Rural</b>	Male	131 443	125 996	13 373
	Female	126 774	105 148	12 615
<b>Urban</b>	Male	90 119	51 344	18 928
	Female	87 422	42 672	17 311
<b>Rur. &amp; Urb.</b>	Male	221 562	177 340	32 301
	Female	214 196	147 820	29 926
	<b>Total</b>	<b>435 758</b>	<b>325 160</b>	<b>62 227</b>

Men are typically more numerous for all migrant groups in receiving areas, but the strong imbalance among Javanese is striking and inexplicable for the moment.

Data from the Department of Manpower on official migrant working contracts gives a very partial image of working migration, as most migrants find work on the spot or recruited by *calo* unofficially in their home land. Out of 15,366 working contracts from 1997 to 2000, 52 percent of workers came from East Java and were employed mainly in Kotawaringin districts (Timur and Barat). Recruitment is usually done in the poorest villages and it is assumed that a great

majority of the workers may be Madurese.<sup>23</sup> The others are coming from Central Java (40 percent), NTB (3 percent), and 120 workers were from Kalbar in 1999. The contracts are issued mainly by forest and timber enterprises but most of their workers do not have an official registration.

Recent migration data are certainly underestimated. They don't take into account migrants working in remote forestry and mining base camps, the wandering migrants who try to offer their manpower everyday, everywhere; the peddlers going from one village to another; the seasonal workers; and those who came around looking for quick money (in smuggling, prostitution, or other such enterprises). Spontaneous migration is always difficult to evaluate but the fact is that it is certainly much more important than transmigration.

After the first large conflict in Sangau Ledo in Kalbar, out of 11,135 total refugees, there were only 190 people (1.7 percent of the total) from transmigration villages in camps (Down to Earth 2001).

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<sup>23</sup> Kutaneegara & Nooteboon's (2004) study on the crisis in rural Java mentions Madurese recruitment in Java villages.

### **Box 2: Transmigration versus spontaneous migration, and conflicts**

Often Transmigration is blamed in the conflict analysis. It is true that any type of in-migration is a recurrent and important factor in all the communal conflict: in Kalimantan, Poso, and Maluku. But it is wrong to equal all in-migration with Transmigration.

A transmigrant is a person from a densely populated island—Java, Bali, Madura, or Lombok—whom the Department of Transmigration has registered, moved, and settled in a new village. This is not to say that any Javanese, Madurese, or other migrants from those islands are transmigrants. For example, there are many Balinese spontaneous migrants in Central Sulawesi. In the receiving area, in the eyes of the local population and local administration, there is no confusion between spontaneous migrants and transmigrants.<sup>24</sup> Traditional migrants from and to Outer Indonesia are not included in the transmigration programme: Minang, Batak from Sumatra, Banjarese from South Kalimantan, Bugis, Mandar, Buton, Minahasa from Sulawesi, and people from the south eastern archipelago (mainly Flores).

In western Kalimantan, Madurese transmigrants comprise a tiny part of the transmigrants as a whole, and a tiny part of all the Madurese living there; I would evaluate it at less than 3 percent. The large majority of them came by themselves, didn't register before migration, and found housing, land or work through their own networks.

In Maluku, some 19,000 families (around 85,000 people) have been settled by Transmigration since Independence. Between 1986 and 1990, some 3,500 transmigrant families (some 16,000 people) were settled, and at the same time a similar number of spontaneous

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<sup>24</sup> For the Transmigration Department's civil servants, they do not even exist, as the spontaneous migrants do not pass through it. In the late 1980s, looking to reduce the cost of implementation the Department of Transmigration added a new category, "swakarsa" (spontaneous) transmigrants, who do not receive a full package of allocations, but who were still registered, moved to a certain place, and received free land (Charras & Pain, Bouvier & Smith 1993).

migrants arrived from the two southern peninsulas of Sulawesi (Sulsel and Sultra). People born in southern Sulawesi living in Maluku in 1990 reached 71,000.<sup>25</sup> So it is not transmigrants, or not only the transmigrants from Inner Indonesia, who upset the religious and political balance in Maluku, as it is too often pointed out (and has become a repeated cliché) in the many studies of that conflict. Data on Maluku refugees are clear on that matter: among them are 200 *people* from transmigration villages against 23,000 *families* from Bugis and Buton ethnic groups.

In Poso district, Transmigration opened new villages in the 1970s, but spontaneous migration from Bali and South Sulawesi was stronger. Ethnic distribution in 2000 was 11,802 Bugis; 7,243, Javanese; and 6,384 Balinese. Another important migrant group was the Gorontalo people, with 15,723. So who upset the historical religious balance? Certainly not the Transmigrants. On the southern side of the mountain, in Luwu, the inter-village conflicts that regularly shake the area do not involve transmigration settlement but rather villages of locals and immigrants, Luwu historically being a receiving land for the Bugis and the Toraja.<sup>26</sup>

As far as transmigrant refugees are concerned, most of them came from areas that at the time were considered “at war” against the central government: Aceh (3,500 families) and Timor (800 families). Transmigration settlement in this case was one of the central

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<sup>25</sup> The 2000 population census is not reliable, as it was performed during the conflict. But the result gives: 121,579 Butonese in Maluku province and 42,122 in North Maluku; 53,552 Javanese in the first province and 21,211 in the second.

<sup>26</sup> Luwu has been a receiving area since the 1930s under the Dutch *Kolonisasi* program, and Transmigration started again at the end of Kahar Musakar Rebellion (1966). Luwu is also a traditional land of migration for the Bugis and the Toraja. Bugis noble families have been the lords of land and of the local people, linguistically affiliated to the Toraja and Pamona ethnic groups. Recent Bugis migration was first associated with the transformation of the mangrove into shrimp ponds (1970s) and then to cacao and tangerine smallholdings (1980s). See Charras (1982) and ICG (2004). See also Ammarell (2002) for Bugis adaptation to local condition.

government's population policy "weapons" to force the integration of reluctant "Indonesian citizens." From the rebels' point of view, expelling the transmigrant served to advance the independence struggle. In East Timor's case, too, the spontaneous flow of migration from eastern Indonesia was much more important than Transmigration from Java and Bali. The background is identical in Papua and the story may evolve the same way.

In a study on spontaneous agricultural settlement in South Sumatra (Charras & Pain 1993) the conclusion was more in favor of spontaneous migration than Transmigration from an agricultural and regional development point of view. Spontaneous migrants, either Javanese, Sundanese, Balinese, or Buginese were better able to integrate into the local dynamics than the transmigrants, who were isolated in their enclave and stubbornly stuck to their former agricultural system, rather than adapting it to their new environment. Tension exists in South Sumatra, but it has never reached the scale of violent conflict, even though this province is the second largest receiving area (after neighbouring Lampung) for transmigrants and spontaneous migrants.

Today, looking at the three migration-based conflict areas (Kalimantan, Maluku, and Poso) I posit that spontaneous migration may be a greater source of conflict. Spontaneous migrants had more entrepreneurial spirit and ambition than transmigrants, and the local people feel threatened when migrant figures start to be involved in local politics, a position usually acquired after achieving economic strength in certain fields.

### **The Mal-development**

Mal-development is a trend that marked all of Outer Indonesia during the Suharto years (Charras: 1993, 2001), and western Kalimantan does not escape the general schema of an extractive national policy geared to absorb Java's development problems. Land grabbing, forest destruction, and large estate growth in Kalimantan are good examples of it. In return local smallholders hardly benefited from any special attention, and the area was not planned to enable sustainable

development. The agricultural censuses between 1983 and 1993 show that rubber smallholdings regressed in Kalteng, and that the whole smallholding plantation sector regressed for farmers in Kalbar. Tangerine smallholdings, at one time the primadona of Kalbar, nearly collapsed after the takeover of the market monopoly by one of Suharto's sons, which led to inaction against serious pest attacks.

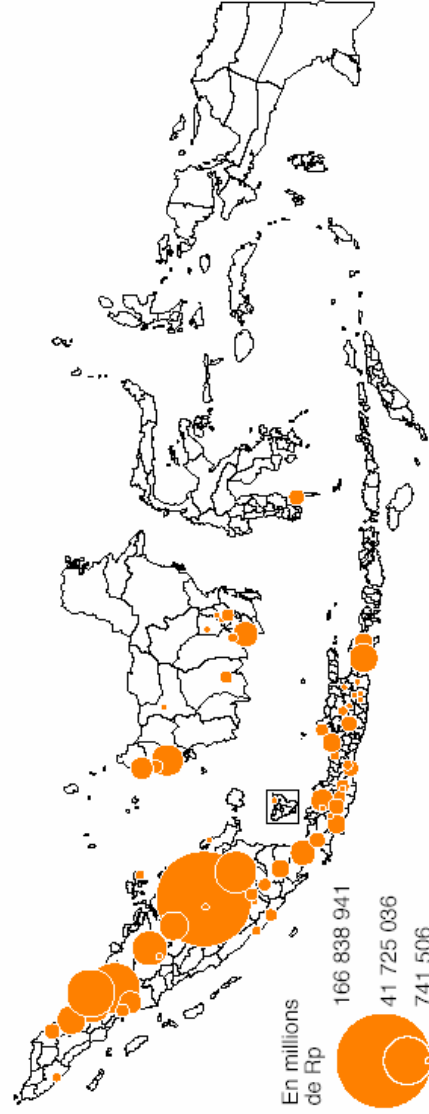
The road network improved over the last two decades, but mainly with the opening of forest concession and estate roads, extending a secondary road system that was poorly interconnected. Rivers still provide the main means of transportation. Very few industrial investments were made in the two provinces. Only primary wood industries (sawmills, plywood) flourished in the 1980s and 1990s, but base camps closed their doors and changed locations as soon as the resources were depleted. This industry didn't encourage the development of others, like wood or rattan furniture. Those manufacturing industries are still concentrated in Java, like those that use other raw material from Outer Indonesia. Rubber is an example illustrated on the maps below (see Maps 1 and 2)<sup>27</sup>; western Kalimantan's vast area devoted to rubber production corresponds to very little in the way of transformation industries.

Centralization and uneven regional development in Indonesia can also be illustrated by the distribution of export and import data per province. For 1987, Map 3 shows that all Outer Indonesia fulfills the lion's share of national exports (dark grey upper half of circle) while receiving an infinitesimal amount of imports (light grey lower half). The only areas receiving more imports than they provide in exports are Java and Lampung. It is not only because of population concentration, particularly of urban consumers, but also it is to sustain development infrastructure: for industry (concentrated in Jakarta and neighboring West Java, in Surabaya, the ancient industrial town of the archipelago, and the sugar plantation and related industry that started in Lampung), harbors (Jakarta and Surabaya), energy and communication. Outer Indonesian exports finance the imports of Java.

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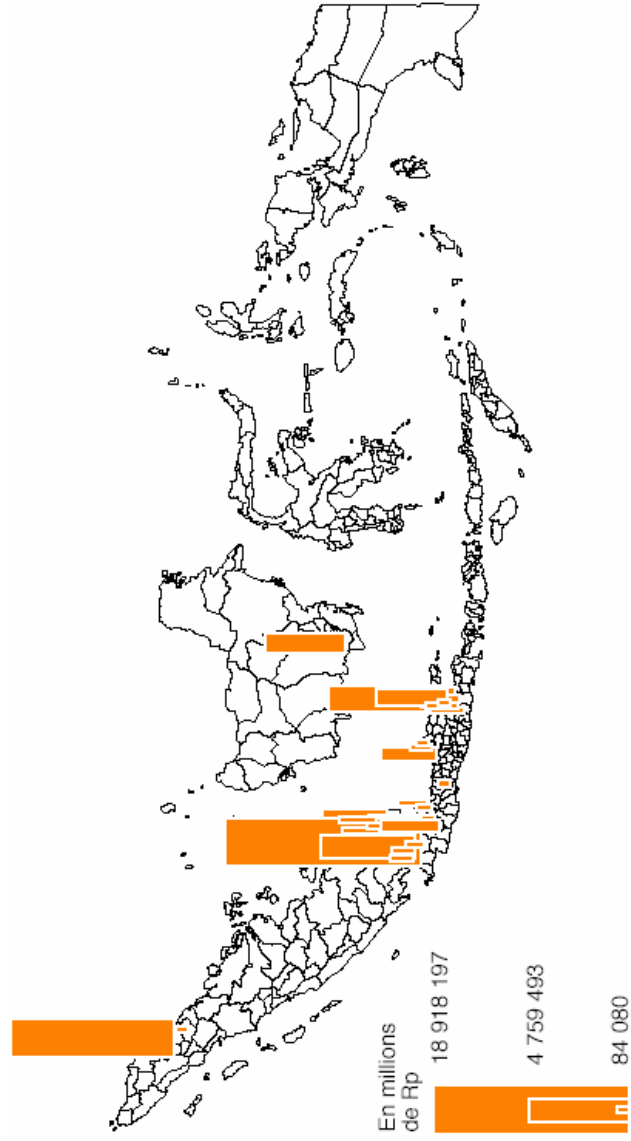
<sup>27</sup> Maps 1 to 4 were drawn with *kabupaten* (district) as the basic unit, using the Indonesian Statistical Atlas program (Lasema/ CNRS-Triskati) by Manuelle Franck, *Urbanisation et organisation de l'espace en Asie du Sud-Est*, unpublished, 2002.

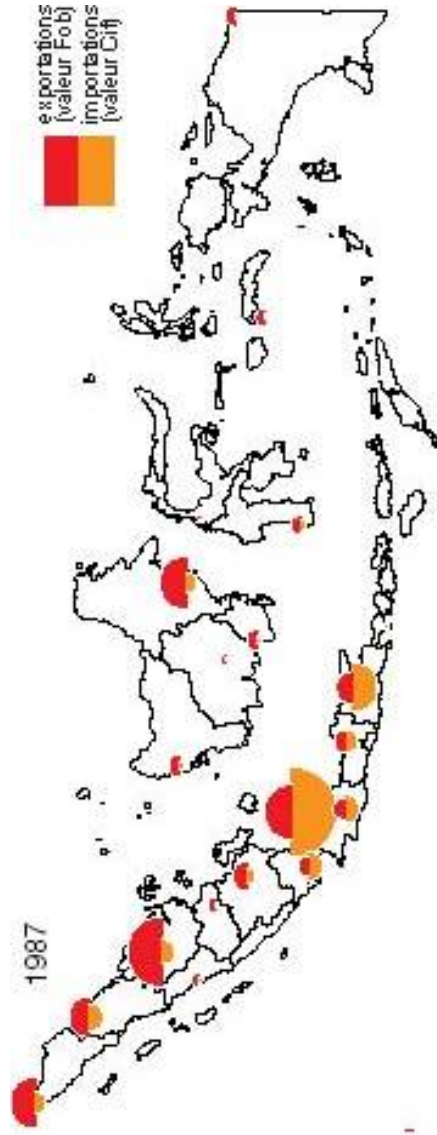
**Map 1: Added value for first stage rubber industries (Isic 35520) Indonesian enterprises, 1994**



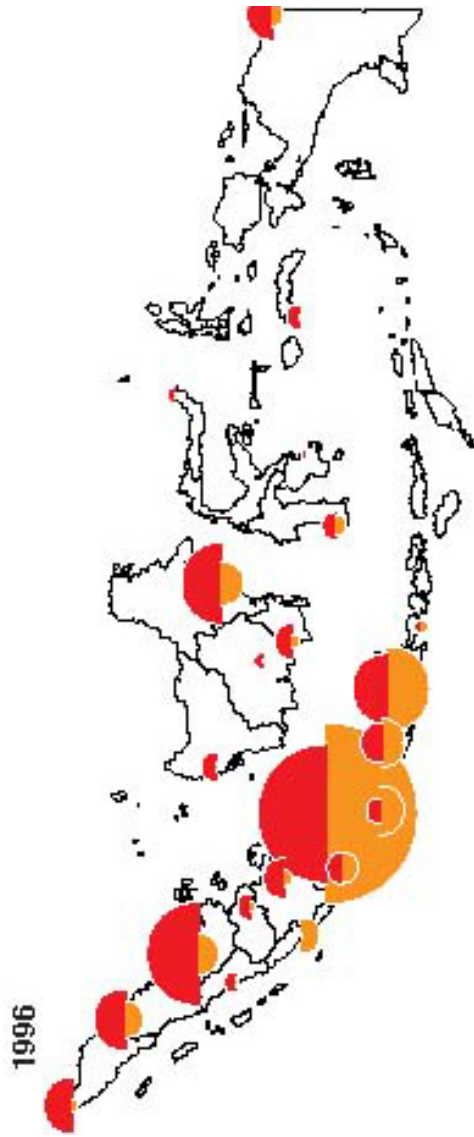
Sources for Maps 1 and 2: Ministry of Industry – Annual Survey on Large and Medium-sized Enterprises; Manuelle Franck 2003, Trisakti University & LASEMA-CNRS, *Indonesian Statistical Atlas Project*

**Map 2: Added value of manufacture rubber industry (Isic 35590-93)  
Indonesian enterprises, 1994**





Map 3: Distribution of Imports and Exports per Province, 1987



Map 4: Distribution of Imports and Exports per Province, 1996

In 1996 (Map 4), just before the Asian financial crisis and at the apex of the industrial boom in Indonesia, although the outer Indonesian trend did not change (much more exports than imports), Javanese exports took off, thanks to early investment in the manufacturing industry, and imports are still concentrated there.

For the inter-island (domestic) maritime exchange, in a context of a global growth of five times the volume in between 1983 and 1996, Java in 1983, and Java plus Riau (with Batam, the industrial satellite island) in 1996 continued to receive 50% of the goods from other parts of the archipelago (mainly raw materials or materials having had a first transformation). By the same time, Java redistributed to the archipelago less and less goods (rice and manufactured goods): 29% in 1983 against 13% in 1996.

In the meantime and in western Kalimantan (West and Central provinces), the volume of the good sent outside was multiplied by four, but in counterpart the region received from other parts of the archipelago only 1.7% in 1996 of the total unloading, even less in proportion that 13 years before (2.5%).

The excessive economic centralization has other consequences. As most investment has long been concentrated in Java, human resources and capital flow out of Outer Indonesia to Java, the place to invest and to work. Education policy since Independence has been quite well engineered to attain a degree of provincial leveling. In western Kalimantan, rates for attending primary school are higher than the national average. For first and second level secondary school attendance it is on a par for the nation. West Kalimantan does slightly less for secondary school but this does not included attendance at private or mission schools.<sup>28</sup> This is a good performance if one takes into account that numerous villages are located far away from secondary schools, but parent manage to send their children to town to stay with receiving families or with friends in a simple hut.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Calculation is based on the number of pupils in public schools in 1996. The UNDP Human Development Report (2001) find the same result for the number of children attending school. Central Kalimantan is slightly higher, and West Kalimantan slightly less than Indonesian average.

<sup>29</sup> In the field in Kalteng, people point out the system sending young rural children to other family members in town has been a factor in the mixing of

Often, this rural out-migration doesn't stop there and students or young people are forced to go to Java to attend high school or to get a job.

For civil servants, though they could begin their career locally, there was little chance of moving up as it was usually Javanese who got the highest seat, or civil servant from other places who have been through Jakarta. So there is a real *'fuite de cerveau'*, and the result is a globally low Human Development Index, HDI (SDM, *Sumber Daya Manusia*), usually interpreted as an "undeveloped," "backward" or "traditional" local population.

Since the *Orde Baru* period, power in the territorial administration was not given to local leaders; there were no governors, no bupati (heads of districts) from the region. Instead, as often we were reminded during fieldwork in West Kalimantan: "we even had one Madurese bupati!" This disempowerment was completed by the Village Law in 1979, reforming the traditional village organization, integrating it into a national bureaucratic structure. The impact was tremendous, large and very deep.<sup>30</sup> The Law allowed for full control from Jakarta and the fulfillment of its plans. Together with later laws or decrees about the management of so called "unused" and forest land,<sup>31</sup> the legal framework was set to allow a very large part of Indonesia to be in the hand of the State and ready to be converted into estates. In western Kalimantan it was vast swathes of land in between rivers, seized without discernment and including communal lands and fallow lands that were a part of the rotating swidden agriculture system. Since the 1990s, no national program was properly designed to support agricultural smallholding, even irrigated rice cultivation

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religious in families and of general inter-religious tolerance. Contrary to Kalbar, when a Dayak is convert to Islam he doesn't become "Melayu" but rather a Muslim Dayak.

<sup>30</sup> Few researchers were aware of this situation (Kato [1989] in Riau, Charras & Pain [1993] in South Sumatra, and Galizia [1996] on the Rejang in Bengkulu), but it came into light when the profound resentment was allowed to be expressed, and when conflicts with outsiders (institutions, companies or individuals) blow up.

<sup>31</sup> Tjondronegoro 1991; Durand 1994; Peluso 1992.

was no longer the priority.<sup>32</sup> Nothing was done to promote the reproduction of existing agricultural systems, even if the rural population still represents at least 75% of the total population, and even if the local system already proves to be very adaptable to cash and tree crops.

While rural economy was not promoted, social life was deeply affected by the Orde Baru. The Village Law of 1979 completely altered traditional social control. The village head had to have attained a certain education level and be affiliated to or at least sympathetic to the Golkar party. All organization—social and cultural (such as the “customary counsel,” *Dewan Adat*), economic (such as village cooperatives, *KUD*)—have been modeled on a national type, denying any role to the “elders” or the wise ones. Anyone doing fieldwork during that time can remember the obligatory interviews with the so-called *toko masyarakat* (village leaders), official representatives of the people, and the difficulties in locating the key individuals who had genuine knowledge of the communities. Land use regulations and relation among villagers were no longer in the hand of the customary leaders, but were now managed using external criterion. This disturbing of the local social fabric happened also in a context of increasing urbanization and urban aspirations that reached all rural areas in Indonesia in the 1990s.<sup>33</sup>

### **Western Kalimantan in Conflict**

This discussion of the background to the region’s development since 1900, and particularly since Orde Baru is not intended to oppose two eras, one better than the other. Strong tensions and violent conflicts have occurred before between ethnic groups, even between villages, at least since the end of the nineteenth century. Rather, the aim is to point out new elements that may have nourished or oriented local or

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<sup>32</sup> In Java, rice fields have been converted into industrial parks, golf courses and urban sprawl.

<sup>33</sup> See Antlöv (2000) for the village bureaucratization process, and Bamba (2001) for the West Kalimantan case.

regional discontent. It is in this soil that western Kalimantan's social and political history has evolved.

In Western Kalimantan the conflict may be qualified as extremely violent, not only because of the death toll but also given the nature of this violence. Among all the regional conflicts that occurred during the transition phase of Indonesia, Kalimantan's are the only ones that we can characterize as "communal" or "ethnic."<sup>34</sup>

The pre-conditions of conflict are of the same nature in West Kalimantan where it started in 1997, and in Central Kalimantan where it (hopefully) has ended in 2001. It seems that there is a link in between the two conflict areas, a kind of reproduction mechanism from one area to another, involving the same ethnic victim but different ethnic assailants. In one of the CIFOR reports,<sup>35</sup> a villager in Kapuas district referring to a forest land problem, says in June 2000, six months before the Sampit episode:

If the government does not act quickly...it can become a much worse problem. So many months and no follow-up. The people are afraid to act because there are generals behind the company, but sometime they will lose patience, and there will be no accounting for how they will react. But we try to find a peaceful way, via negotiation, but whether we like it or not, it might end up like that. The community [in Kalbar] acted like that against the Madurese people because the frustration had festered for so long...." [If there is no resolution then] "the people will take justice into their own hands (*main hakim sendiri*) (McCarty 2001:24).

On the one hand this villager points out the nature of the conflict— industrial relations and state-community conflict—and on other hand he shows that the first violence (between 1996/97 (Saunggau Ledo, Kalbar), 1998/1999 (Sambas, Kalbar) served as a way to "resolve it," a weapon to challenge authority, or a way to affirm the strength and power of the local people.

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<sup>34</sup> The second stage of the conflict in Sambas (1999), involving Malays and Madurese, demonstrates the non religious nature of it as the two groups were from the same faith.

<sup>35</sup> <http://www.cifor.cgiar.org/highlights/Decentralisation.htm> (Decentralization and Indonesian Forestry Sector).

The first episode, in Sanggau Ledo, occurred while Suharto was still president, the economy of Indonesia was booming<sup>36</sup> and the army and the police still intervened *à la mode* “Orde Baru” to protect central government interests and project power.<sup>37</sup> Decentralization and regional autonomy was not on the political agenda yet. The following conflicts, much more violent, occurred during the turbulent time following Suharto’s resignation, when army and police lost legitimacy and authority, and the two state institutions were fighting each other. Local government was still in the hand of the central power but President Habibie’s announcement of a “true” implementation of regional autonomy (end of 1998) put local elites (many of them still linked to the former network) in the spotlight of the political arena everywhere in Indonesia. At the village level it brought about hopes that land conflicts would be treated differently.

Most probably, after the Sanggau Ledo conflict, the tensions existing between communities were used by segments of the local societies (Dayak, Malays, Madurese and other well-established migrant communities), and also continued to be used by national actors (the army, police and political parties) who had an interest in seeing the conflict blow up. In this nightmare setting, the conflicts became intricate and transformed into true massacres.

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<sup>36</sup> In fact, the economy was overheated but nobody seemed to be aware (they had perhaps become too used to the miracle of Indonesian development). Land problems reached an unbearable stage for the local population all over the country.

<sup>37</sup> We find clear elements of involvement of the authorities at that time. A Javanese village head told us that two weeks before the start of the battle, unknown persons (*oknum*) came to check their lists of Madurese families and to look at the location of their houses. Reluctant to clearly state who these people were, he questions “who are the only ones who have this kind of data?” They also checked in the villages headed by Dayaks. The Javanese prepare for a safe exodus for thirteen Madurese transmigrant families, while the Dayak were preparing for an announced war.

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