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**Relationships between indigenous peoples and internal migrants. A case study
from the province of Maluku (Indonesia)**

Abstract of the dissertation

Indonesia is one of the most ethnically and linguistic diverse countries in the world. According to some estimates, this island country in Southeast Asia is inhabited by more than a thousand different ethnic groups. Such cultural diversity in the world's fourth most populous country is further enhanced by internal migration between islands, which in Indonesia takes place not only spontaneously, but also as part of the state transmigration program initiated by colonial authorities. Migration processes have a significant impact on ethnic and religious composition, social organization, politics, and relations between several cultural groups. These processes are much more noticeable in rural territories, where tradition is more important than in urban areas such as Jakarta. The consequences of robust migration processes are noticeable for example in West Seram – the district in the province of Maluku, located in the eastern part of Indonesia, where the ratio of internal migrants (66%) almost doubles the indigenous population (34%). Moreover, ethnic divisions there overlap with religious separations, as 78% of the district's residents are Muslims and 22% claim affiliation with Christian churches.

The purpose of my dissertation is a multidimensional analysis of intercultural relations and the socio-cultural effects of internal migration in the ethnically and religiously diversified district of West Seram. An important point of reference in my argument is also the ethno-religious conflict that took place in Maluku between 1999 and 2004. The peaceful reconciliation after violence did not have a long-term effect of easing tensions between the indigenous population and internal migrants. The dissertation demonstrates various types of segregation practices, actions that perpetuate social inequality and exacerbate mutual distrust. Special attention is given to the role of religion, local traditions (*adat*), power, and perceptions of property (land tenure and natural resources) in shaping intercultural relations in West Seram.

The dissertation is a part of the interdisciplinary research on multiculturalism and intercultural relations. The theoretical part discusses key concepts used in the mainstream research about them (interculturalism, transculturalism, or hierarchical pluralism, etc.). In the summary of this section, I conclude that the concept of intercultural relations is the most appropriate to organize my research because of being more flexible, capacious category than the of multiculturalism. Thus, it allows us to see different forms of social relations between cultural groups falling on a continuum from conflict to cooperation. Unlike in the concept of multiculturalism, I emphasize the role of cultural groups and relations between them, rather than the multicultural social system they created.

The dissertation, however, is distinctly empirical, rather than theoretical. Its core is the presentation and analysis of the materials I collected during my fieldwork. My stay in West Seram lasted eleven months in 2018 and 2019 and was divided into two stages. During these, I collected data using techniques specific to qualitative research, namely unstructured in-depth interviews and participant observation. From the field, I brought back my own field notes and one hundred and forty-four interviews in Indonesian, which after transcription, translation, and coding (MAXQDA) became the most important material used in the analyses in the thesis.

The dissertation is divided into nine chapters. I begin my analysis of the problem of the relationships between internal migrants and indigenous peoples with a theoretical chapter that discusses the concept of intercultural relations with the background of multiculturalism and other notions of similar conceptual scope. The second chapter has methodological nature and identifies the specific research questions and methods, as well as characterizes the fieldwork

and challenges of conducting research in the Maluku by a young European woman. The purpose of chapter three is to introduce the reader to Indonesian issues by outlining the history of the country and the region. I devote the fourth chapter to transmigration, a program of internal migration that had begun even before independence and shaped the ethnic structure of the various regions of Indonesia. In the next chapter, I focus on the situation of internal migrants and describe the prevailing hierarchy among them, which influences the way they build intercultural relations with the indigenous population. The last group of peoples is the main topic of chapter six, where I concentrate on tradition, broadly defined as *adat*, and its impact on intercultural relations. In the region I study it is strongly linked to religion, to which chapter seven is dedicated. In its body, I discuss how interreligious relationships transfer into relationships between indigenous people and internal migrants in West Seram. In chapter eight, I look at the constraints on access to power at the local level and the ability of the *orang pendatang*, as migrants are called, to decide for themselves. In this context, I show that the social order in West Seram operates on the basis of two interdependent normative systems – customary law and state law. The coexistence of these systems impacts the emotive issue of land ownership and use within the society in the researched region, which is discussed in chapter nine.

This dissertation responds to the need to fill the research gap in Poland in the field of cultural studies on diverse Indonesian society. Even foreign-led studies of internal migration in Indonesia usually focus on economic factors and relatively rarely address the present situation in Maluku. I have regard to the standpoints of both indigenous peoples and internal migrants in West Seram in the interview-based chapters, which offer a new perspective, as the few studies conducted so far have tended to focus on the problems of host communities, neglecting the dilemmas of immigrant communities. Meanwhile, through the numerous statements of my interlocutors, I show that members of each group can present rational arguments when justifying their positions. This way the study shows how complex and multidimensional intercultural relations are in the Indonesian district of West Seram.

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