

A Contested Cultural Identity among Migrants in Three Sumatran Cities of Indonesia: Ethnic Entrepreneurs between Global Economy and Ethnic Identity¹

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Abstract

In the Indonesian context, migration has been a long tradition since colonial era up to present. The migration nevertheless has had different forms, reasons and processes from time to time. Their impacts have also varied from one person to another. The current migration is undertaken by different people or various groups of people who still maintain their own ethnic identity in the socially heterogeneous city of settlement. In this city, migrants economically adjust themselves mostly in self-employment of small and middle scale of economy where their ethnic attributes still attach within. Hence, they are called as ethnic entrepreneur. In Indonesia we are familiar with a number of ethnic groups such as Minangkabau, Bugese, Javanese traders etc. This kind of involvement is unavoidable for them in dealing with city life where the global economy has obviously pervaded to it for decades in Indonesia. However, some predisposing factors, such as inaccessible labor market, high educated requirement of employment, highly competitive market play also an important role to prevent migrants from fully involvement in open market economy of the city. In this sense, on the one hand, migrants are inevitably incorporated in globalizing economic organization of city, *positioning process*, on the other hand, they persist ethnic identity of their own, *process of collective identity*. Hence, regarding these contested processes, migrants obviously consider importance of globalizing market economy as well as ethnicity to maintain the cultural identity. This situation nevertheless may bring about a kind of reshaped, changing cultural identity. This paper wants to explain dynamics of cultural identity experienced by ethnic migrants in the city and the influence of inevitable penetration of globalization as a major role of an understanding of ethnic identity among ethnic entrepreneurs. This paper is mainly based on my research on ethnic entrepreneurs in three Sumatran cities conducted in 2001-2003.

A. Introduction

The last two decades have seen unprecedented change in the economic, political and social fabric of the most Southeast Asia, including Indonesia, and there has been much discussion in academia about the upsurge of entrepreneurial dynamism in Asia. Most of discussions come to the notion that *traditional patterns of livelihood have been dramatically transformed and urban centers have been the subject of much attention* (Leibanch 2004, 3-4; Rutten 2003: 1). Urban economy is always attractive for all and then enormously filled by people who seize any possibilities to improve their life through employment. Urban development, as part of global development, and migration, as a

¹ Paper presented at 4th International Symposium of the Journal *Antropologi Indonesia* "Indonesia in the Changing Global Context: Building Cooperation and Partnership?" on July 12-15, 2005 at University of Indonesia, Depok. This paper is included in the panel, convened by Prof. Shinji Yamasita of University of Tokyo, of Innovation and Manipulation of Cultural Resources in Indonesia in the Age of Globalization.



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consequence of global development, are two interacting sides of social development that take place as a result. The most striking effect of them is emergence of urban entrepreneurship from small up to large scale mostly practiced by migrants. They are part of urban society who frequently create entrepreneurial development. In relation to the entrepreneurial development, most of the analyses, however, are based on studies that focus on large enterprises in urban areas, and still lack of analysis on middle and small scale enterprises (Mc Vey, 1992).

Factors of industrialization, trade and technological changes regarded as integral part of entrepreneurial dynamism have closed relations to rural economic development as being experienced by Indonesia, Malaysia and India (Rutten 2003). Inasmuch as Indonesian context, the rural economy is undergoing dramatic change and villages are no longer uniformly characterized as isolated, inward looking, and self-sufficient based solely on agriculture. As transformation of the rural economy takes place, urbanization is an obvious effect of it. These have been major reason of migration moves in Indonesia as a result since two decades (Leinbach 2004).² Indonesian villagers migrate to cities in national as well as in international boundary and social Diaspora is proliferating subsequently (Hugo, 2004, Jones 2000).³ Their migration is not mostly perceived as an act of pursuing better-off economy because of agricultural structure in their villages of origin after the rapid industrial growth has been disadvantageous and therefore cannot strong enough to sustain economic life, but also their own interests due to rapid changes in transportation system that give accessible and easier way for villagers to mobilize than before. Pull factors of cities are even more attractive to many villagers to go out of village of their own than before.⁴

² There has been classical study on migration in Indonesia done by Ida Bagoes Mantra "Population mobility and development in Indonesia" (1979). Based on research in central Java, this study emphasized on the understanding of pattern of social mobilizations mainly among villagers by virtue of economic pursuits. One of the most important results of the study is terms of migration, that are, a daily migration (*nglaju*) and a circular migration (*migrasi sirkuler*). The first describes a kind of social mobilization from village to a nearby city in order to trade their own agricultural product. Villagers usually go to the city in early morning and go home in the evening in the same day using by cycle or any local transports. The latter depicts a kind of social mobilization from village to cities in order to stay for a short period of time. Villagers usually live for a while in the city and then go back to their own village. The case of this migration is generally shown by villagers who migrate to the city for a short term, a couple of months. They are usually involved in wage labor or any other unskilled works, such as being a low-paid construction worker. After the works finished, they are back to the village for a while until they migrate again in the next term. This study gave basic ideas to understand Indonesian migration so far. Nas notices a type of migration in Indonesia, that is, permanent (also called *transmigrasi*) and circular migration (called as *merantau*) (Nas 2002:7).

³ At the global level, van der Veer noticed development of Diaspora in South Asia is quite tremendous. He gives some comparable data that are proportion of people of south Asia is some 8 million worldwide (compared to the 1 billion residents of South Asia). Meanwhile, the Chinese are 22 million worldwide; 1 billion in China, the Jews are 11 worldwide; 3.5 million in Israel, the African are 300 million worldwide; 540 million in Africa, and the Europeans are 350 million worldwide; 700 million in Europa (van der Veer, 1995).

⁴ In the case of Javanese of Island of Java, migration is mostly forced by the State. The first migration has taken place in the era of Dutch colonialism in the beginning of 19th century. At that time, the term that is used was *colonization*. They were moved by the government's policy in order to settle another region out of the Island of origin. In 1905s, for the first time 155 Javanese families have been settled in Lampung region located in the southern Sumatra. In the period of 1921-1922, 1923-1927 and 1935-1939 at least



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In current time, industrial development in rural areas is indicated by the changing function of agricultural land becoming industrial parks.⁵ One of some Rutten's arguments (2003) on the development of rural capitalists in Asia is that the emergence of rural capitalism in the Asia context, including Indonesia, creates pattern of economic state's patronage, meanwhile, villagers encounter decreasing size of their agricultural plot from time to time.⁶ Significant impact of such development is farm activities are reducing, on the one hand, and number of off-farm activities is increasing, on the other hand. Therefore, this situation mobilizes most villagers to maintain life out of their home land. Beyond this situation, voluntary migration (*merantau*) has been also taking place among a number of ethnic groups in Indonesian for many years. This is a kind of social mobilization that is traditionally practiced without any relation to external interests, such as state's support or economic changes in villages, rather it is driven by a long standing tradition derived from their ancestors' example, for instance among the Minangkabau⁷ or the Bugis⁸ or Madurese.⁹

One of the most important effects of migrations in Indonesia is form of social relations is more complex than before. It is not only the relationship between demographical category of native (*orang asli*) and new settler (*pendatang*), but also ethnic-based, and economic relationship. Classically, this complex relationship has been pictured by Furnivall with the concept of plural society, that is "comprising two or more

35,390 Javanese have been already inhabited there. Between 1950 -1969, transmigration was part of state policies and well known as a national program (*program transmigrasi nasional*). The purpose of migration was mainly to employ people at rubber or tobacco plantations in east Sumatra. They were well known then as a forced worker (*koeli kontrak*). After national independence, Indonesian government replaced term of *colonization* with the term of transmigration (*transmigrasi*) that means a planned mobilization of group of people from one region in particular island to another region in another island. In 1950 -1969, transmigration was part of state policies and well known as a national program (*program transmigrasi nasional*). The purpose of this transmigration is mainly to gradually reduce a population density in island of Java. During that period of time, thousands of Javanese families have moved to area of South Lampung regency (for further information, see http://www.geocities.com/lpolamsel_data/historis/sejarah.html). Nowadays region of transmigration has expanded, not only Lampung region as a target place, but also some other regions in Indonesia such as west Sumatra province (home land of the Minangkabau), Jambi province (home land of Jambi Malay), Molucca (home land of Moluccan), west Papua island (home land of hundred ethnic groups) etc..

⁵ Geertz and Peacock have indicated that these phenomena had also happened in the colonial era. Under the Agrarian Law 1870, foreign capitals could acquire land. At that time, beside for family subsistence, big part of family-owned agricultural land should be provided for cane plantation (Geertz 1963, Peacock 1973).

⁶ Taking the case in Javanese villages, the desperate need of land for industrial development, such as for building dams, industrial parks and so on, caused big numbers of villages should have been disappeared, as a result, entire villagers should move to other areas under the transmigration program. Transmigration of entire villagers is well known as *bedol desa*.

⁷ The landmark book about voluntary migration among the Minangkabau is by Naim 1979. Especially to the Minangkabau, to most Indonesians this ethnic group, mainly inhabited in west Sumatra province, is famous as an entrepreneur society and the migration is mostly linked to their involvement in small scale as well as large scale business activities (Effendi 1999: 30).

⁸ the Bugis are well known as seafaring people indigenous to South Sulawesi. They are well known as the maker of wooden sailing vessels. This ship is locally known as *phinisi*. This ships range from 120 to 450 tons and are made from hardwoods without power tools and constructed with minimal bolts inserted by expert shipwrights. Based on history, their sailing tradition could bring them until South Africa.

⁹ The Madurese are well known as inter-archipelago trader. They are widespread in all over Indonesia and usually make a small community wherever they arrive.



elements or social orders which live side by side, yet without mingling, in one political unit" (1944:446), to indicate ethnic, religious complexity of relationships among Indonesian (in the colonial context, *the Netherlands Indies*). In current situation within which globalization as a *prime mover* for changes, plurality requires a re-understanding of how it works and even looks like. Since Furnivall's concept, there have been factors arose that changed picture of Indonesian plurality in the context of global world. On the one hand, some might argue, ethnic- or religious-based plurality is not longer enough being major element of its content. On the other hand, economic disparity, educational development and unequal prosperity are among other factors that fill in the fact of plurality. In other words, although inter ethnic relationships appear to have been a social basis among Indonesian, but picture of plurality become mingling, even, interlacing among many factors. Existing social problems are the most elements to indicate how plural actually Indonesian society is. Social problems have risen in the gamut from national integration to inter ethnic conflicts, from traditional religious to secularized life, and from national economic interests to local economic ethnic interests.¹⁰

Based on argument above, effects of migration and ethnicity on social development in Indonesia seem to be crucial to be understood primarily in the relation to socio-cultural identity. A social development cannot be solely seen as a matter of single ethnic group. Instead, it is a matter of inter-ethnic problem. Theoretically, inter ethnic relationship within which social identity as a prominent element is not merely assumed a conflict perspective, but also on an integration perspective. Within such realtionships, these two perspectives are able to be incorporated in a single social development discourse (Schlee 2002: 5). In any society, Schlee argues that as long as the construction process of social identities, which is either based on common ethnicity or defined by an open list of criteria, the hatred is concomitantly articulated (Schlee 2002: 4-6).

How can we observe phenomena of inter-ethnic relationship? Taking into consideration the result of migration and ethnicity in the city context within which globalized society being a preferred model, the phenomenon of ethnic entrepreneurship¹¹ seems one of dimensions to understand problem of inter-ethnic relationship and of dynamics of ethnic identity. This phenomenon is based on assumption that migrants deal with social economic challenges in the host society, meanwhile maintenance of their ethnic identity is also challenging in dealing with other identities. In this sense, there is an assumption of a relation between the importance of market and community interest. Theoretically, market and community complement one another, conjoin, and are separated in acts, institutions and sectors (Gudeman, 2001: 11). In light of this Gudeman's argument, ethnic entrepreneurs can be regarded as one of important roles, within which migrants can play, to join as well as to separate, in the challenging situation

¹⁰ Social conflict emerged currently in some capital cities of Indonesia, such as Jakarta, Surabaya, Makassar, Medan, Kalimantan, Sulawesi and Ambon especially few years before and after the financial and political crisis in 1998. This conflict is allegedly regarded as kind of religious and ethnic conflict.

¹¹ Ethnic entrepreneurship is regarded as a significant variable of understanding process of socio-economic adaptation among immigrants in dealing with changing economic condition in the country of settlement. This concept is mostly referred to ethnic small business practiced by immigrants and a viable route to upward economic mobility for immigrant groups. As a matter of fact small business played an important role in economic progress of several immigrant groups in advanced economic countries such as the United States, the Great Britain or some European countries (Waldinger et al 1990: 15-17).



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in the host society. This assumption is also sustained by the assumption of “trader’s dilemma” (Evers and Schrader 1994). Traders might deal with two dilemmatic decisions. If they practice trade in own community, they should do social obligation, but it will impede their economic benefits. A decision that is to go out of own community is a better decision for them to overcome this dilemma. Therefore, becoming migrant traders, it can reduce burdens of social obligation, in order to maximize profit in business (Evers and Schrader 1994). In brief, ethnic entrepreneur phenomenon is closely linked with dynamic process of ethnic migrants in the midst of challenging situation in new area of settlement.

The phenomenon of ethnic entrepreneur is mostly perceived as cases of migrants’ social as well as economic life. It can be indicated by their involvement in small or middle scale economic business, ethnic relationships, maintenance of ethnic symbols in urban context, and ethnic strategy in the city of settlement. In other words, they experience an adjusting, reshaping, or sustaining process of ethnic identity in the socio-economic structure in the city. These experiences bring about an understanding of contested identities among migrants in such context. In this sense, it could be argued that migration and emergence of ethnic entrepreneur are phenomena of ethnicity in the city context. At the global context, these phenomena have been analyzed by Waldinger et al. in “Ethnic Entrepreneurs: Immigrant Business in Industrial Societies” (1990). After more than a decade, these were developed by Kloosterman and Rath in “Immigrant Entrepreneurs: Venturing Abroad in the Age of Globalization” (2003). These books are a landmark of study on ethnic and immigrant entrepreneurs so far and highly considerable to develop a similar study in other regions. However, they do not provide phenomena in Asian context in spite of a number of Asian migrant communities such as Chinese, Vietnamese, Japanese, Korean, Filipinos, Cambodian, Indonesia, etc, have been focused on their study.

In order to look at how migration relates to ethnicity in the Indonesian city context within which globalization process is also taking place, then this paper emphasizes on phenomena of ethnic entrepreneurs and focuses on small and middle scale business proprietorship. They are put on the center of explanation to look at the process of global penetration and of positioning of locality as the consequences of setting up social and economic life in the city.

Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to have an alternative understanding of another dimension of ethnicity in the city context. Most data of this paper are based on field research among different ethnic groups who migrated in the cities of Padang, Pekanbaru and Jambi of island of Sumatra and found themselves as self employment.¹² In this sense, on the one hand, migrants are inevitably incorporated in globalizing economic organization of city, *positioning process*, on the other hand, they persist ethnic identity of their own, *process of collective identity*. Hence, regarding these contested processes, migrants obviously consider importance of globalizing market economy as well as ethnicity to maintain their cultural identity. This situation nevertheless may bring about a kind of reshaped, changing cultural identity. This paper wants to explain expression of identity experienced by ethnic migrants in the city and the influence of inevitable penetration of globalization as a major role of an understanding of ethnic identity among

¹² The field research has been conducted under the financial support of the office of Indonesian Ministry of research and technology during 2001-2003.



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ethnic entrepreneurs. This paper is mainly based on my research on ethnic entrepreneurs in three Sumatran cities conducted in 2001-2003.

B. Cities of the Study: Incorporation into Globalization

Three Sumatran cities where research on ethnic entrepreneur is based on are Padang, Pekanbaru and Jambi. They are located in the middle part of Sumatra island (see the map 2). Colombijn notices that Sumatra island covers an area of 434,000 square km, and measures 1,650 km from north to south, and 350 km from west to east at its widest point. Its most distinctive feature is the mountain range, the Bukit Barisan, which stretches from the northern to the southern tip. This mountain range forms the backbone of Sumatra and divides the island into two unequal parts: the narrow western coast and the wide eastern half comprised of hills and alluvial lowlands (Colombijn 2002: 284). According to early period of city history, these cities can be regarded as coastal or trade cities in Sumatra¹³ and were included in part of central Sumatra regional economic development under the Dutch colonial government. These cities, especially Padang and Jambi, had an important role in the contextual establishment of Sumatra identity that was indicated by the important plays of the existing kingdoms, sultanates or tribal societies until the religious, ethnic and nationalistic struggles for existence dealing with the conquest of Dutch Colonialism (Dahm, 2000). Plenty of natural resources, landscape is mountainous, accessible due to a big number of rivers make Sumatran townscape look like a big garden extending for miles (Colombijn 2002: 286). Nowadays, these Sumatran cities show differently their own level of development, but the major similarity among them is that the function of market economy is very strong. This strong market economy indicates that globalization can penetrate in society smoothly. Hence, it can be said that these three cities have specific geographical, economic and social factors to influence their development from the past up to present time.

Persoon and Herwig also notice that within Sumatra island, cities, which are provincial capitals, like Pekanbaru, Tanjung Karang, Medan, Palembang, Jambi and Padang grow much faster than many other provincial cities (Persoon and Herwig, 2002: 260). They are indicated mostly as port cities. Some other factors have also driven the acceleration of development in those cities, and consequently they are economically attractive for those who want to migrate there. These factors are concentration of administrative offices, employment opportunities, and institution of higher learning. Persoon and Herwig further notice that:

As major ports for both import and export these towns have also attracted new manufacturing and processing plants serving export markets in fertilizers and chemicals, sawn timber and plywood, cement, oil paper. These ports are also used for export of industrial crops like rubber, palm oil, coffee, tea and cinnamon. These centers consequently also attract support services like management offices, banking institutions, insurance companies and firms specialized in transport and

¹³ Nas distinguishes roughly two types of early Indonesian towns as inland or agrarian and coastal or trade cities (Nas, 2002:4).



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communication facilities, maintenance shops and shipyards (Persoon and Herwig, 2002: 206)

As far as development is concerned, the cities of Padang, Pekanbaru and Jambi are included in category of middle range cities in relation to population numbers, occurring economic growth and geographical size.

Nowadays Padang city is inhabited by 786.000 people (1999 census) and can be indicated as a middle-range city according to Indonesian context (Padang Statistical Book, 2000). The emergence of global market symbols has been taking place in this city within which hypermarkets or other modern markets are available. In spite of distribution of population lack of ethnic category in provincial census, it is presumed that the number of migrants are quite high and remarkable.¹⁴ Based on historical perspective, in the outset of development, Padang was established economically by the Dutch colonial including the participation Chinese migrant entrepreneurs in 1818 as 'Emma Haven' port (now Teluk Bayur port) regarded as the entry point of the city was established. Seeing from this part, the Padang city has basically grown from a kind of port city or Nas called it as part of coastal and trade cities (Nas 2002: 4).¹⁵ Dominant ethnic group of the city are the Minangkabau who are well known as an entrepreneur society (See also Kahn, 1980). Padang is regarded as part of the Minangkabau coastal land (*rantau*) beyond the Minangkabau highland area (*darek*). Although Padang is considered as home of the Minangkabau, in the light of its composition of people based on ethnic background is quite interesting to observe. Based on my observation, this city consists of mixed ethnic groups, such as Chinese, Indian- and Arabic-born people (sometimes called as *keeling*, literally means 'black'), Javanese, Sundanese, Batak, Nias, Bugis, Madurese, Betawi. They are scattered throughout the city with only Chinese maintaining their existence by establishing a small China town located in the western coastal area of the city. This area is well known as *Pondok*. Even though on daily basis, social relationships are overwhelmed by the Minangkabau realm in respect to language and tradition in this city, but other factors such as social stratification background, type of jobs, or economic activities notice that various ethnic groups that are living there. For example, based on my observation at Patimura street located in the heart of the city, market and ethnic identity are juxtaposing. Kiosk hawkers are not only run by the native, the Minangkabau, but also by Sundanese, Nias, Madurese, or Palembang.

Pekanbaru city has been well known as a developing and trading city in east Sumatra region. In this city, icon of global market is more remarkably developing than Padang city, such as hypermarkets, global life style etc. Market network with Singapore is the most important factor that sustains its remarkable economic development. After the implication of the local autonomy policy of Indonesia since 1999 and as the capital city of Riau province which is one of the most important centers of national oil and wood production, Pekanbaru is getting stronger enough to proliferate its areas in economy and

¹⁴ As long as my experience to live in this city since 1990s, existing migrants from different region in Indonesia and their different ethnic background are quite obvious. This situation can be indicated also by existing ethnic associations from different ethnic group such as Ikatan Keluarga Sunda (The Sundanese Brotherhood association), Perkumpulan Perantau Jawa (the Javanese Javanese Migrant Association), Ikatan Marga Batak (The Batak association), *Ikatan Bersatu Teguh* (Chinese association), etc.

¹⁵ The History of Padang has been written deeply by Colombijn in 'Patches of Padang' (1994)



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population. Due to economic growth in the province, this city has allegedly become one of the wealthiest cities in Indonesia. Based on observation, the city is now overwhelmed by physical development activities from city infrastructure, hyper markets, starting hotels until the construction of high buildings. Therefore, Pekanbaru city has become a barometer of economic development in the province as a whole. To some people, this city is indicated as a middle-range metropolitan in Indonesia. Now, Pekanbaru city has 597.971 inhabitants based on a 2001 census (Pekanbaru Statistical book, 2002). With the close geographical position regarding Singapore and Malaysia, this city has many advantages, especially after the implication of Asian Free Trade Area (AFTA) policy which has been in action since 2000. Markets are commonly pervaded by imported goods and become a nice place for shoppers. Socially, this city is one of Malay Riau people (*orang Melayu Riau*) cultural areas. Regarding their development undertakings and expanding settlement areas, Pekanbaru, even though less is number of inhabitants than Padang, is an attractive enough destination of migration. City population is not overwhelmed by the Malay, but is also comprised by some ethnic groups, such as the Minangkabau, Batak, Javanese, Chinese, Sundanese, Palembang. In this city, a number of ethnic associations are also established, such as *Ikatan Minang Pekanbaru* (Minangkabau association), *Ikatan persaudaraan Batak* (Batak association), etc.

Jambi city is geographically located at in the southeast and is smaller than Padang city. City inhabitants reach 383.000 people based on 2001 census (Jambi Statistical book, 2002). This city like Padang and Pekanbaru is also overwhelmed by market economy. Historically, this city was developed as part of the 'river economy' that crowded as far as Batanghari river which flows from the hinterland area (the heart of central Sumatra) until the Pacific ocean. This city is also divided into two parts by this river. Jambi has been an open city for immigration in Sumatra for a long time. Up to the present day, most of social and economic centers in Jambi are located a long side the river. This city is the home of Jambi Malay (*melayu Jambi*) which has closer cultural affinity with Minangkabau than the Riau Malay. Like Padang and Pekanbaru cities, ethnic distribution in the entire population is not clear. In the common idea, Jambi is well known as a city that is driven mostly by the Chinese immigrant economic role. They are the minority but play a majority role for market economy in the city. Some people sometimes joke that 'Jambi city cannot stand up economically without the main role of Chinese migrants'. As the destination of migration, Jambi city population is mixed by other ethnic groups such as Minangkabau, Javanese, Sundanese, Batak, Banjar, Madurese etc.

Based on the above general picture of cities, the interacting characters between global and local economic development and ethnicity are quite obvious. As a matter of fact, all in all, those cities provide a driving force to a possibility of migration. Regarding social composition, a current picture of these cities is more pluralistic indicated by existing various ethnic groups than before. It is beyond the picture of Sumatran town as Colombijn has ever explained as more ecological rather than social character (2002). The prominent factor that makes issue of ethnicity plausible be discussed in the context of those cities is an open opportunity structure dealing with social and economic development. In line with this, these three cities have not been noticed as inter ethnic conflict areas in Indonesia so far, as the conflict that happened in a number of cities in Kalimantan, Sulawesi, Molucca and Papua between 1998-2002. Therefore, there is no stagnation in social and economic development in Padang, Pekanbaru and Jambi towns.



Map 2. Location of the Study



C. Ethnic Identity: Between Positioning Process and Collective Identity dealing with Global Penetration

In the Indonesian context, villagers migrate to a city because of a number of reasons.¹⁶ The most important reason is to seek for a better life than before as they were. In fact, most of them cannot successfully indicate how to make it in a reality.¹⁷ In the beginning of the arrival, migrants encounter unpredictable experiences in order to incorporate into new circumstances. “Where could find place?” or “with whom or how find a job for surviving?” are some beginning questions among new comers in cities that should be answered immediately. Cases of such setting up life among migrants can be found differently. Each group of migrant has own single story, such as Javanese are ethnic groups who are fond of staying in group rather than individually, meanwhile this way of strategy is not found among the Batak who prefer to stay individually instead of collectively. The Minangkabau are usually going to find relatives to stay.

¹⁶ It is just a comparable picture from above statement that massive movement of social mobility in Indonesia has occurred in the 50s, where big numbers of Javanese villagers were relocated in the Lampung region of Sumatra. This movement was facilitated by the Indonesia State. Although migration makes the social mobility common among Indonesian, but by reasons it varies from one community to another. We cannot say in general term that migration is familiar to a particular community or ethnic group nowadays. As a matter of fact, most Indonesian have an access to live in other parts of Indonesia archipelago as proper transportation makes it possible.

¹⁷ Urban poverty can be characterized as new comers adaptive failure of structuring themselves in the city.



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A process of setting up a stay at the beginning period of arrival in the city can be defined as a form of social positioning process.¹⁸ This process contains strategy for an adaptation in new circumstances. Access of social communication to own ethnic members in the city of settlement is a crucial prerequisite to cope with new circumstances. For example, it is not uncommon the Minangkabau before migrating to all region of Indonesia, they had a list of relatives to whom they will contact in the city of settlement. Therefore they usually do not loss their orientation as they have arrived in the city. Although this strategy is different from one ethnic group to another, some of individuals of particular ethnic group might have similar experience about that. Therefore, it is argued that social contact among own ethnic members may represent existing social network based on ethnic interest.

Migrants are usually self-employment. It is a strategic way of economic struggle in the city. They are generally far reaching from existing economic structure of city, therefore the main challenge for migrants is a disadvantage structure of city in terms of social as well as economy. As far as job concerns, most of migrants are usually involved in small scale entrepreneurship, especially their involvement in trade, or in various small businesses such as to a restaurant, being side-walker trader, or kiosk keeper. The Javanese for example are quite familiar among Indonesian as migrant who plays an important role in middle scale food entrepreneur. They are mostly vendor of food and drinks. The Batak as well as the Madurese are famous to Indonesian as a migrant who are involved in small trade. We can also find other ethnic groups practicing migration in all over Indonesia archipelago by combining it with self-employment strategy. In a nut shell, the existence of migration as well as entrepreneurship are closed together to build strategic positioning process.

As stated above, phenomenon of ethnic entrepreneurs stands side by side with migration.¹⁹ Identity as migrant and their ethnic identity are also the other coin in this sense. Existing ethnic members in the city have various motivation of doing migration rather than motivated by a single background.²⁰ Why are they migrating? It is a question

¹⁸ Sackmann defines a positioning as structural conditions and structured practices through which members of a society get a position within the social structure (Sackman et al., 2003:2).

¹⁹ Theoretically, how can we see this process? Taking a case of Indonesia, Both notices that over three decades, the role of agriculture has been relative declining as indicated by less appropriate income that can be provided by farm activities (Booth, 2004: 19-21). The tendency of rural non-farm economies is increasing as a result. However, this increasing demand of creating off-farm economies in the rural areas unfortunately is not concomitant to rural economic capacity that becomes less viable to soak up this tendency. Labor capital is increasing as a result and over capacity. Meanwhile, rural industries have no much access for these labors due to kinship patterns of their enterprises impede an open labor market. State's support to cope with this situation is even though very crucial to rural industries but still less strength than expected (Rutten 2003: 196). Consequently, migration from village of origin to look for non-farm activities in the city is more obvious than before, and they also relied more on those activities for their main source of income (Booth, 2004:24).

²⁰ Reason of migration is not based on a single factor that makes people moving out of their own home land. Theoretically, there are pull and push factors, or forced or voluntary interests, or internal and external influences, or spirit of nationalism (van der Veer, 1995; Nas 2002). Despite this compartmentalization of knowledge of social mobilization is quite enough to look at social movement, there still needs for clarification in regard to cases that can depict cross-cutting or, even, overlapping backdrop of mobilization takes place. Therefore, some cases of migration below experienced by ethnic migrants in order to get such clarification are taken up. The description emphasized on various reasons to migrate and try to give another



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that seeks for various answers as a result. As a matter of fact, reasons to migrate can be a basis for having a broad comprehension of migration process and subsequently this comprehension can be used to know the strength or the weakness of social and economic adaptation among migrants in the host society.

Taking into consideration of Waldinger perspective, reasons to migrate can be put into the notion of resource mobilization, that is, intimately is bound up with the dynamics of ethnic identity (Waldinger, 1990: 33). A common pattern of social interaction among different ethnic groups will move on a contemporary pattern of social interaction after migrants are open each other and a share of experiences and indicate their own identity explicitly. In this sense, ethnicity plays a significant role as long as migration happens. Waldinger emphasizes on the ethnicity function in migration that is a possible outcome of the patterns by which intra- and inter-grouping interaction are structured. In addition to it, ethnicity is acquired when the social connections among ethnic group members help establish distinct occupational, industrial, or spatial concentration (Waldinger, 1990: 34).

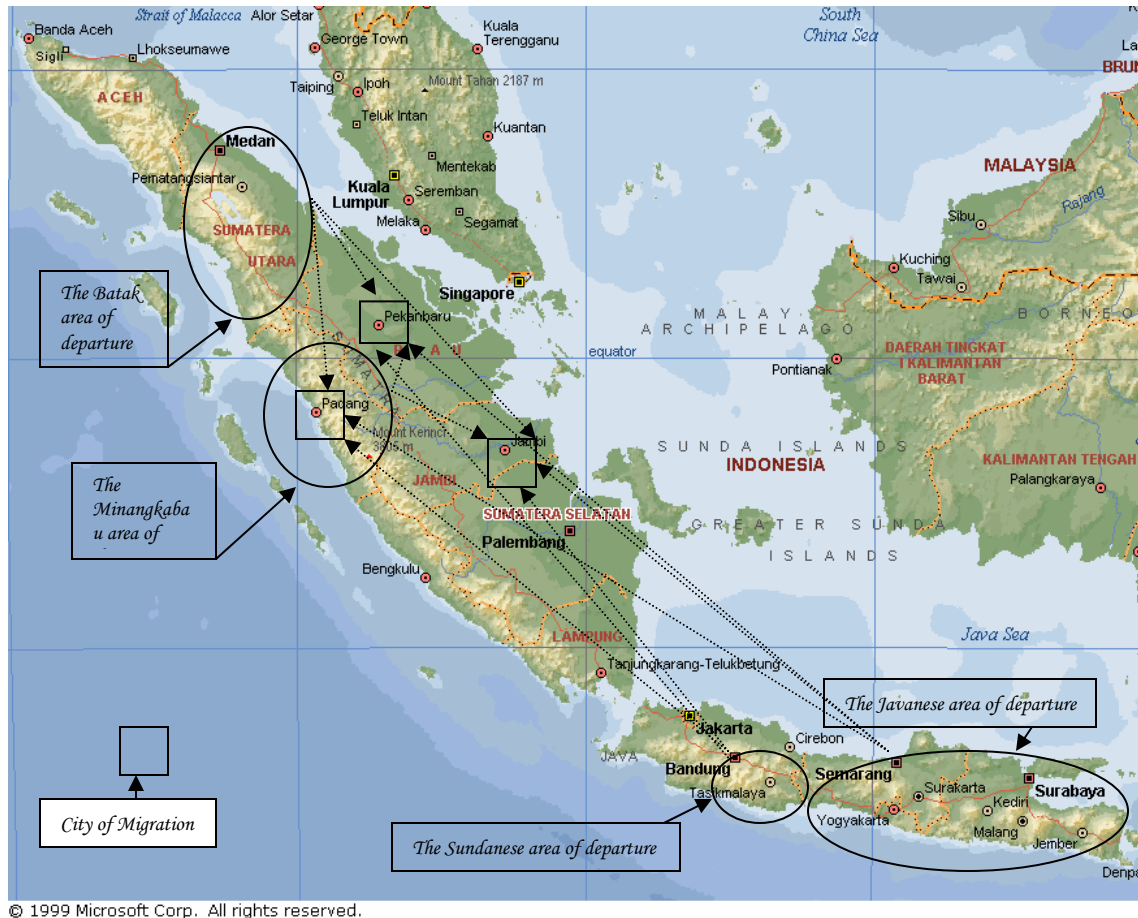
Migrants who are identified in this description are the Javanese, the Sundanese, The Batak, and the Minangkabau.²¹ Taking empirical data of the research into consideration, I would argue that these ethnic groups are people who are fond to migrate, especially to cities, and find themselves as actors who are independently involved in market economy and develop self-employment by doing small and middle scale enterprises within which their ethnic identity is still expressed in their economic activities.

Map 1. Pattern of Migration: Areas of Departure and cities of migration based on researched ethnic groups (two islands pointed here are Sumatra and Java)

dimension of migration that can fill slots of that theoretical compartmentalization. In this sense, it is argued that individual reasons to migrate are sometimes not able completely to be incorporated into a single conceptual frame work but could embrace all conceptualizations.

²¹ Another ethnic group researched is also including the Chinese, but due to their existing migration to Indonesia was part of long standing Indonesian history, I exclude for a while from this description. This also impacts the general pattern of migration that they are not part of the map 1.





In order to know how ethnic identity plays important role in maintaining migrant's position in the city structure, then the reasons to migrate are quite important to have a look. Based on data collection, reasons to migrate can be categorized as (1) family concern, (2) type of ethnic enterprise, (3) 'struggle for faith' (*mengadu nasib*) and (4) local tradition. These reasons are actually not strictly typical to a single ethnic migrant. Inasmuch as migrants concerned, these are rather overlapped and experienced crossing among ethnic migrants. Family concerned is a resource mobilization that depicts closeness of family member relationship or the intention to maintain unity of family. Family member in this sense is still in the nuclear family or at least of two generations. They are husband/wife, brother or sister or uncle. Family members who are prior to migration are prone to migrate of other family members who live in home village. These facts will be illuminated in collages of case. A case shows that:

St Dj, 31 years old, Javanese, female, has been living in Padang since 1994. She came to Padang city with her husband who works for a construction firm. Her husband had to move to this city because his expertise was needed to run an office branch of this firm. When she got married, she was still studying in the Surabaya city of east Java. Despite this she was aware of his husband's type of work which sometimes entails mobility from one place to another, she had no idea before that



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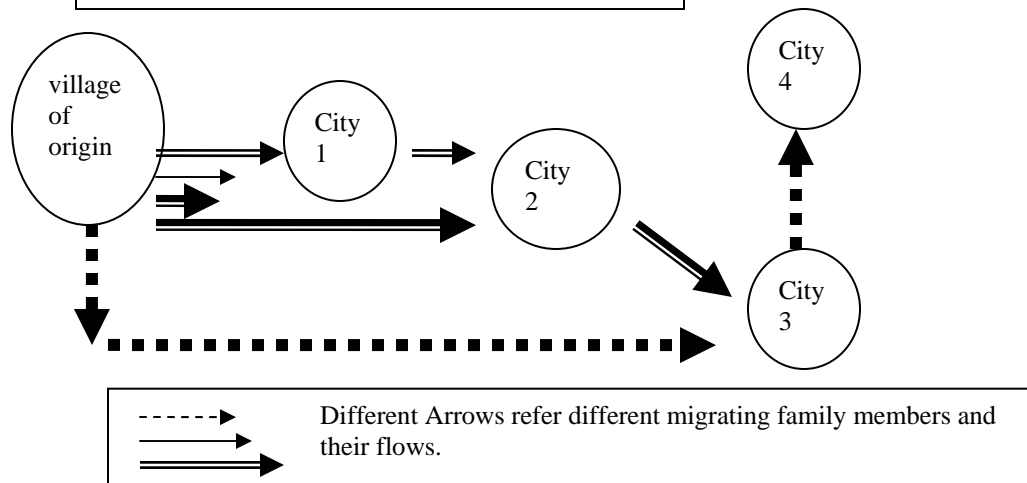
she would finally migrate to the Padang city of west Sumatra which is located far from her home in east Java. A few years before, due to work, her husband was only moving around to a few small cities in the region so that it was not necessary to follow him and could still stay at home. But, this time she should move out and, consequently, drop her study out. Of course, she regretted to this decision somehow. But, because of family unity it compelled her to accompany her husband to move. In Padang city, it was about two years that she was only taking a role as a housewife, just at home and taking care of husband and a child. Regarding one of her informal courses in beauty and cosmetics that she ever took it, then, she decided to kill her time by opening a tiny beauty salon at a part of her rent house in Padang. By doing so, she found herself as self employment but could still maintain her duty as a house wife.. She names her enterprise with “Ashafa Hair and Beauty salon”. “Ashafa” is the name of her daughter. Part of beauty methods she uses, especially for a body care, is based on Javanese tradition, that is called *luluran*. She is now categorized as a migrant entrepreneur.

Some similar cases also show up in the field in relation to this reason of family concern. Those who have migrated to a particular city, it is not perceived that they undergo a social separation to home village.²² Rather, they have extended their social structure that is indicated by a chance or an access to other family members who want to migrate to the city in the future. Sometimes, this way also provides an idea of an expansion of area of migration to ethnic members. By doing so, it builds a kind of extended family ties across different city of migration. Taking a notion of Anderson’ “imagined communities”, this idea could be meant as ‘an extended imagined communities’. For example, A has migrated to the Pekanbaru city from his home village in North Sumatra, then he invited his younger brother B to also migrate to Pekanbaru and can stay along with him. After a particular period of time, B continues to migrate to another nearby city of Pekanbaru, that is Padang city. Based on this pattern, they are both be able to provide more alternative access of migration for their other family members, either be able to migrate to Pekanbaru or to Padang city. This pattern can be seen in the figure below.

²² Taking into consideration of gender perspective and regardless ethnic identity, all cases of migration at the first step of mobilization are done by male actors. But, then at the next steps, he might involve other female member of his family.



Fig. 2. Pattern of Expansion of Migration Among Family Members



Another reason to migrate is due to a fame of particular enterprise that is usually practiced by a particular ethnic group. To most Indonesian, the Minangkabau, for instance, are well known as food trader or restaurant keeper, micro credit 'vendor' (*tukang kredit keliling*) is familiar to the Sundanese, or puncture tire 'fixer' (*tukang tambal ban*) is famous to the Batak, noodle meat ball hawker (*tukang bakso*) etc.. this fame brings about consequently somehow a particular image attached to these ethnic groups. From the migrant's point of view, this familiarity motivates indubitably members of mentioned ethnic group to involve in employment that commonly is done among these ethnic members. It is not a matter of prejudice or job discrimination, rather a positive image among the Indonesian. It might drive the same enterprise in different cities and it means also to drive migration to various cities.

Of course, there is an exception of this picture. Not all Minangkabau migrants are doing a food trader in the city of settlement. They find also themselves as clothes hawker, or bus driver etc. It is also happening by members of Sundanese migrants. They are not familiar with only doing micro credit vendor, but also as a shoe mender, or chicken porridge vendor, etc. Similarly, not all Batak migrants do as tire fixer, but also have jobs as a bus driver, or a food tent side-walker, etc. This situation happens due to possibility of market condition that leads them to seize a chance of creating employment in changing situation in the city.

P. Daulay, 41 years old, Batak, male, has migrated to Padang city from his home village in Gunung Tua in South Tapanuli of Nort Sumatra for more 15 years ago. He came to Padang city because his older brother, who is government employee at a Padang government office, asked him for migrating to follow him. Unlike his brother, he was not fortunate to get job in the city. His secondary educational background was not enough for him to enter labor market in the city of settlement. After almost two years living with his brother without job, through his brother, he got an acquaintance with a tire fixer, who is also the Batak and



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have done the job for many years. This fixer lives in Lubuk Buaya district located about 12 km from the heart of Padang city and runs his enterprise there. This fixer coincidentally needed a worker who could help his business on daily basis. After offered to help him, Daulay then worked for this fixer and treated him as his patron. He decided to be employed by this fixer because he was motivated also to be a tire fixer by his own in the future time. He is quite aware of the public image that the Batak is familiar with a tire fixer. It took about one year and eight months for him to learn how to be a good tire fixer. After getting permission from his patron, he quitted his position. Then, he started up his enterprise. After seeking for a strategic place to start up his business, he finally found a place direct to the main road in Tabing area located about 7 km from the heart of Padang city. He erected a tent as a non permanent place for running his enterprise there. Initial capital for opening his enterprise was partly from his saving and partly from a loan that was provided by his Batak friend. Up to present, after more than 10 years, he is still a tire fixer but he has had a permanent place for running his enterprise. By doing this job, he can sustain his life together with his wife and 5 children.

‘Struggle for faith’ (*mengadu nasib*) is another reason to migrate. It means a high expectation to change life in order to have a better condition in the city, and at the same time, means a consciousness that life uncertainty is also high. Put it in another way, this reason means a struggle for getting a fortune. A fortune can be obtained by a struggle rather than by expecting it as a gift from someone else. Most migrants believe in God’s role to have this good faith, and in God could reward if someone struggle for it. By doing so, migrants are also aware of changing situation from time to time. Nevertheless, they will understand that there is no guarantee for getting future life successfully or unsuccessfully after efforts have been provided because the final decision depends on faith in Got (*manusia berusaha, Tuhan menentukan*).²³ Regarding ethnic background, this reason has been found mostly among Muslim migrants of the Javanese, Sundanese or the Minangkabau.

Shmt, 32 years old, Javanese, Muslim, male, has been living in Jambi city for about 2.5 years. After graduating from a high school in his home village, Purworejo, in central Java in 1985, he was involved with various non-permanent jobs such as noodle meat-ball hawker, soft drink vendor, etc.. But, he was always failed with these jobs, no gain he could get at all. He also frequently tried to apply for a permanent job at any government offices, but this effort was also frequently failed. After many years without having permanent jobs and only depending economically on his parents he felt his life uncomfortable. In 1995, he arrived in Pekanbaru city where his younger brother has already been there for many years. His brother works for an authorized motorcycle workshop of ASTRA Motor company (A biggest national Motor Company in Indonesia). Of course, it was his advantage to migrate to Pekanbaru where he has no difficulty to find a particular place for staying. Arriving in that city, a good faith

²³ In daily discourse among migrants, success or fail in life or in doing enterprise is based on faith in God. Therefore, fortune or fortuneless (*rezeki*) is also a faith in Got. It seems to be a fatalistic perspective somehow.



belonged to him, by a help of his younger brother, he found himself also working for this workshop. After about two years in Pekanbaru city, he got married with a Malay girl from Bengkalis in 1997. He felt really fortunate because his wife works as a teller at a private bank in Pekanbaru city, so that his life is quite comfortable in respect to economic needs. He and his wife complemented economically to each other. As long as three years he experienced as motorcycle mechanic and also during that time he had improved his skill significantly. Based on this experience of repairing motorcycle, he came to a decision that it would have been better if he could try to have own motorcycle workshop. "If my younger brother could independently life better after many years in the city, of course I could make it also...". After making many discussions with his younger brother in relation to positive and negative possibilities to run own motorcycle workshop, he finally came to a conclusion that he perhaps could make it, but not in Pekanbaru, rather to another city. Then he planned to go to Jambi city as the destination to move out and to struggle for independent life (as he was asked by researcher of what reason he chose Jambi city, he only said that he only presumed that in Jambi there is no high competition in small-scale motorcycle workshop, and the main thing is based on faith (*nasib*). Based on self motivation and let what would be happening on faith in God, then he was convinced to move to Jambi city (He emphasized to the researcher that as he planned to go to Jambi, he had no enough economic capital with him for opening such intended workshop, rather he just had a little saving of his wife). In 1999, he and his wife, who was still pregnant at that time, went to Jambi city. They had no family but a friend of his wife as they had arrived at that city. With the help of this friend, they were fortunate to find a stay immediately. They stayed at a rented small semi-permanent house belonging to a Minangkabau family. Just after few months living there, he quickly decided to open a small motorcycle workshop at the front part of his rent house. The location of his stay is an advantage for this plan, because its location is right beside the street. This intention was also getting a permit from the owner. After erecting four wood pillars and zinc roofs at the front of the house, like a shed, his house became a double function as a house-cum-workshop. Based on saving of 2 million rupiah (about US\$ 200), he capitalized the initial opening of the workshop and bought some tool kits, such as keys, screw drivers etc. Only in about one year, people in the vicinity have been familiar with his workshop in respect to his qualified skill for repairing motorcycles. Seeing from this point, he was feeling fortunate that he has no difficulty to have customers all the time. His workshop was developing rapidly and never getting slack time of customers. It was plausible that he could gain many benefits of the works in a short time. He could also employ four wage workers to assist the workshop (as the research done, the workshop was permanently built and full of spare parts and tools). Beside these good faiths of his struggle for life so far, he and his wife should unavoidably deal with a bad faith. They lost their loving daughter who has passed away because of her heavy illness. What he had had all the time, according to him, was a faith in God (*nasib*).

Reason to migrate is also due to a long history of family member as experienced by the Minangkabau. Their fame of voluntary migration effects on the social existence crossing generation in the town. Based on the research, at least three generation has been established among the Minangkabau migrants.



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I.M. or based on customary title, is called *Sutan Bandaro*, Minangkabau, 59 years old, male. He lives in the Pekanbaru city due to his parents have been migrated from Bukittinggi to Pekanbaru area in 1940s, because that time was a difficult time for his parents to stay in home village. He was born in Kampar and grew up in Pekanbaru (migration area). *Sutan Bandaro* was born a couple years after his parent's migration. Now, he lives with his five children and his wife has passed away for several years. Although he experienced long life out of Bukittinggi as his homeland, he strongly admitted Bukittinggi as his original home land and Pekanbaru as his second home land. He got a fortunate life as his parents still lived. His father was ever taking a position as head of Kampar regency (*Bupati*) in 1960s. He grew up in a better-off family. It is not surprised that he is relatively well educated and the last education was senior High School (*SMA*). As long as living in city of settlement he got no great difficulty to enter labor market. He got job mostly in private offices. The last position was a manager of Minas Lumber Corporation in Pekanbaru (a wood plantation). Due to his poor in health, he resigned from his position as he was still 46 years old (in 1988). He got a light stroke that is still suffered from at present (As the interview conducted, his condition was little bit better than before). Still in the same year of resignation, he decided to start up business by opening a restaurant, because he did not want to get loss everything due to his bad health. His first child, son, was taking in charge of this business. To remember his died parents especially his mother who was well famous as a religious teacher, he named the restaurant with 'Sari Bunda 88'. (*Sari Bunda* means literally 'decent' of mother, and number of 88 refers to the year of foundation). His restaurant is located in the heart of Pekanbaru city at Cokroaminoto street. This restaurant is only part of his house that is a kind of premises (*rumah toko*) located at the second floor. His entire land he posses is 480 qm². It is quite enough to put house and his restaurant together in the same building. Therefore, a premises is a suitable place for this business. Beside restaurant, he expanded his business in 1999 with two other enterprises that are, a cellular shop and another is a public telephone shop (*wartel*). His cellular shop is run also by his first child (a son) and the public telephone shop is charged by his second child (a daughter). These three enterprises are located at the one place and done by one family.

What can be captured from these pictures is that reasons to migrate give a broader information of migration process and it ends with successful possession of particular enterprise. This is a very crucial point to understand that the process of migration is a long term rather short term. As long as the process, high motivation appears to have been a big deal of survival strategy in the city. Cases taken from the empirical field above are not only presenting a special picture of a particular ethnic group, but also some representative reasons to migrate that could be happening among other ethnic groups. Four kinds of these reasons are family concern, type of ethnic enterprise, 'struggle for faith' (*mengadu nasib*) and long tradition fills part of migration story from ethnic groups described. These reasons mingling each other and can be seen during the process of migration.



C. Being Self-Employment and Identity among Ethnic Migrants: Process of Collective Identity as contested Process

Javanese

Theoretically, self-employment is the major strategy of migrants in dealing with disadvantage economic structure in the city of settlement. Practically, reasons to be self-employment are different from one ethnic migrant to another. Some comparable pictures will be given in this part, even though similar reasons across ethnic groups researched also take place.

Economic reasons are mostly influential to migrants in many cases to be self-employment, but situational reasons also come up in a few cases. As far as interview in the field concern, most of migrants are reluctant to expose in detail their social background in the village of origin. This background is important to know if their milieu in the village of origin might be influential to the decision of being self-employment. Most of migrants only emphasize on the actual situation in the city in order to be self-employment or not. It can be said that most of migrants tend to be outward-looking rather than inward looking in this sense. In regard to Waldinger's notion, there are predisposing factors and resource of mobilization that are influential enough to perceive the migration process from village of origin until to social and economic adjustment in the city of settlement.

Among Javanese migrants, reasons to migrate and to be self-employment vary from one to another. Most of them migrated in order to follow one of family members or a brother/s or a friend/s who previously lived in the city of settlement. A success story from some migrants being self-employment motivated them to adjust in the economic structure in the city of settlement. These family and friend factors illuminate other Javanese to strongly migrate and decide what will be in the city.

There is a Javanese who was really disappointed to his failure to enroll military academy in central Java, then he decided to migrate to Padang city following his brother. His brother is regarded by him as a successful person, because he has own enterprise in the city of settlement. Another case is a young Javanese migrated because he has been motivated by his friend. His friend has been allegedly successful in the city by running an enterprise. Then, he migrated to the city to come to his friend there. Another case is a story about family reunion. After family separation for one year, a young Javanese woman reunited with his husband in the city of settlement. Her husband has previously migrated to the city due to his work for a building contractor there. In the city, this woman has to support household economy by opening a small enterprise. Another Javanese woman followed her husband in the city. There, she cannot stay at home in the whole time without anything to do. To kill her time, she is then self employed by making cakes. Her home-made cakes then are sold at cake shops in the city.



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By looking at general resume cases, reasons to migrate and situational condition have to do with the decision to be self employed. In addition to it, among Javanese migrants, kin relationship is still one of prominent factors that facilitate them eager to migrate and to find themselves self-employed. Wherever the Javanese live in the city of settlement, they strongly maintain their nuclear family ties. Therefore, they are quite convinced that they will find their relatives or at least their ethnic members in the city of settlement. For maintaining this, they usually make a tiny social compound, living in a group at one roof. A Javanese who joins to the compound is not always meant that this person is under the auspice of the older persons who previously migrated.

Even though a number of Javanese migrants live together in one rent house, they separately live between men and women, but they do enterprise independently. It means that the Javanese migrant compound does not give us an idea of a form of collective action in doing business. I quite agree with Hefner (1998) that the Javanese entrepreneur is actually more individualistic than ever thought. They are quite strong to be called collectivism socially, but too weak to be called collectivism economically. In the sense of capitalistic perspective, the Javanese entrepreneur is closely linked to the idea of independent entrepreneurship as Rutten argues that the Javanese entrepreneur has lack of organizational skills (2003: 200-201).

Living in a social compound is also part of transitional process to become a single entrepreneur in the city. This is also the place where an imitative entrepreneurial process undergoes. It is not uncommon that many Javanese migrants doing a similar kind of enterprise. For example, becoming a noodle meat ball hawker (*bakso*), as the most preference of general self employment among Javanese migrants, is not original idea of enterprise, rather an imitative enterprise from other fellows. Therefore, a social compound can be a good place to cope with any disorientation as a migrant for the first time comes to the city. However, this place is not merely regarded as a permanent place for living. Some migrants regard this place only as a stopover before they finally live on by their own. Others regard it as a place of undergoing a kind of learning and adjusting process to cope with economic and social challenges collectively. They help hand by hand one to another, even though they would be later on independently doing enterprise.

Based on above description, therefore, predisposing factors among Javanese migrants are family or kinship ties and social compound. In so doing, they can escape from discriminated market condition that usually impedes migrants to get into it. The outcome of this situation is Javanese migrants become self-employed.

Minangkabau

Reasons to be self-employed among the Minangkabau are to some extent similar with Javanese. Social reasons still light up their migration and decision to be involved in the self-employment up to present. Unlike Javanese migrants, the Minangkabau have not been accustomed by living in a social compound in the city of settlement. Their social life in the city of settlement is usually independent. We can find the Minangkabau who lives individually in a single rent room/tiny house (*rumah petak*), or live temporarily by relatives, or live with a village fellow (*urang sakampung*) in tandem. Even though the Minangkabau has been well famous as a migrating society because of their social structure allows them doing so with their tradition of a voluntary migration (*merantau*) (Radjab 1956; Naim 1979), but personal reasons to stay in the city independently among



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them have also variously shown up in my research. In general, resource of mobilization and market condition are influential to the position of the Minangkabau as a people who are fond to migrate in many areas and doing entrepreneurship independently.

Wherever someone goes in Indonesian cities, Minangkabau entrepreneurs are easy found, at least their existence can be indicated by the icon of Minangkabau restaurant or Padang hot spicy food shops (*rumah makan Padang*). There is an anecdote that represents this icon.

“there is a question who is the first Indonesian living in moon, if there will be the human being settlement? The answer is the Minangkabau, because they would be opening a restaurant up there”.

“there is also a joke that asks why the Minangkabau were not targeted in the ethnic conflict in Ambon or Sulawesi took place few years ago? The answer is because they still opened the restaurant or food shop and then actors of conflict could get meals in amid of ongoing conflict there”.

As a matter of fact, there are various kinds of businesses among the Minangkabau migrants, such as clothes shops, sport article shops, book stores, tiny sundry shop etc..

Based on above figure, I would argue that the Minangkabau aim at pursuing economic adjustment in the city of settlement. Basic process of entrepreneurship among the Minangkabau firstly undertakes in family. A few of Minangkabau entrepreneurs the city of settlement transfer business habit among family members as one of economic adjustment in the city. By doing so, they can maintain the connection of migration to other members of family in the village of origin.

An informant in Pekanbaru city told in his life history that he does the business in the city of settlement because of his oldest brother's influence. He opens a sport article shop because his oldest brother runs previously this kind of shop for many years. His brother was also initially capitalizing his business. Now he runs the shop individually, meanwhile his wife sometimes helps him outside her household duty. Another informant told that he run the business in furniture because he was stimulated by entrepreneurial circumstances in his villages and village fellows' entrepreneurships in the city of settlement. Then, he initially found himself as individual entrepreneur and regarded to be entrepreneur as the answer why he migrated. Why he did choose furniture business rather than food shop or else, because he tried to fill a business gap in the city and especially among the Minangkabau migrants.

Sundanese

Sundanese is one of ethnic groups in Indonesia who have not adequate story of long tradition of migration so far. But, in regard to being one of ethnic groups that is also closed to entrepreneurial character, Sundanese is quite enough reasons to be said so. At least, their famous involvement as rotating micro credit vendor (*tukang kredit keliling*) who is highly mobile to find new customers into all corners of small villages in all over region in Indonesia, is a kind of icon of their high struggle for doing a tiny business in the



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city of settlement. Like Javanese entrepreneurs, they have relatively a similar strategy of doing enterprises. In the city of settlement they find themselves into a form of small social compound, but they live separately in rent tiny houses. But, unlike the Javanese migrants, these Sundanese migrant entrepreneurs establish a kind of 'holding' enterprise that connects them to each other. Helping each others in respect to economic as well as social matters, such as capitalizing, strategy of business, human power assistance and family watching, is their entrepreneurial habit in order to adjust themselves in social and economic challenges in the city of settlement.

Outside their general entrepreneurial character above, reasons to cope with city situation, Sundanese migrants have also different stories.

One story is experienced by one informant. He was asked by his friend in the city of settlement for going to migrate, because this friend needed him an assistant and as a trusted employee in his long standing enterprise. His friend was also required someone who can develop the enterprise in the future. After two years migrating, living and helping business of his friend, the informant got experiences and then decided being self-employed by opening a small food shop of Bandung vegetable meat ball noodle (*bakso sayur Bandung*). Another story is an informant who migrates and then does business due to his old brother's influence. Before migrating he had not an imagination to be a tiny entrepreneur. He just wanted to follow his old brother who had migrated previously for years. He just wanted to experience life far away from his parents and village circumstances. After few months living with his old brother family, he has founded himself just helping his old brother's enterprise as tiny creditor for household utensils. Based on this experience, then he decided to do also this kind of enterprise. He is self-employed by incidence. Another story is an informant who migrates because of seeking for a better economic life. As he has arrived in the city he found his friend house to live in. After a few weeks he stayed with his friend he has done nothing economically. Then, he decided to move out and lived in a small rent room in a house belong to a Minangkabau family. He decided to be self-employment by working whatever he could in order to survive. At first he worked for a building worker for few months. After having relatively enough capital from the saving he had done, then he opened a food tent that sell Bandung nut sauce vegetable (*somay Bandung*) near a high school building. His customers were consequently mostly students. With this business, then he can maintain his life with his wife and two children in the city of settlement. He also got married with a Minangkabau girl. Even though his family represents a mixed ethnic group background, he keeps his relationships with own ethnic members by actively involving in an ethnic association (*paguyuban*) in the city of settlement.

Batak

The Batak has not a long tradition story of migration like the Minangkabau. Brunner has ever studied the Batak migration in the Medan and Bandung (1979). He focused on comparative study on form of social relationship among Batak migrants in these two cities. The main result of his study is that the Batak developed more social cohesiveness



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in the cities than in their own village of origin. It was indicated by mushrooming ethnic associations in the city. On the contrary, such association was not common in own village.

The Batak migrants usually characterize themselves more individually than collectively either in social life or economic activities. The Batak go to migrate generally due to pursuing a better economic life, and therefore migration is then regarded as individual motivation rather than social representation. By so doing, the Batak mostly try to involve in any job as soon as possible as they arrived in the city. It is also quite interesting that their involvement in every economic activity is always motivated by generating money. Therefore, it might be the Batak migrants are familiar with money lending enterprise. They usually do business individually without involving their village fellows or any ethnic members. In addition to it, most of them can adapt to jobs that use a physical power. Therefore, the Batak are also well famous with works of a tire fixing (*tambal ban*), or a public bus conductor (*kenek bus*).

To some extent, kinship relationship or even fictive kinship is still playing an important role to cope with social and economic challenges in the city among the Batak migrants. The important point that can make them survive, wherever they are, is their feeling of 'imagined' family. As a patrilineal society, the Batak strongly hold their lineage tie (*marga*) wherever they go. Every lineage has particular name and it is attached on individual's name. Lineage name is a family name. If a single Batak migrates to the city and he has no any relative there, for seeking for help or anything else, he can find his lineage member by indicating lineage name as his. If he could meet his lineage member, even though they have never met or known to each other, they can usually show a high social solidarity. The feeling of lineage ties is an advantage social structure among the Batak migrants that make them can survive to find self-employment.

Chinese

Chinese migrants is indubitably well known as entrepreneur society. Sometimes the Minangkabau are compared to their entrepreneurial characters. The existence of Chinese migrants, wherever they are, is not local but also global issue. They overwhelm local, national as well as global economic spheres in the world. In Indonesia, even though they are regarded as a minority in the whole Indonesian society, but they are regarded as a majority in respect to their economic possession from small until big scale of enterprises. Chinese entrepreneurs have a long tradition of building enterprises on a family basis and on strong ethnic networks.²⁴ In the city researched, Chinese migrants are categorized as native-born Chinese (*Cina peranakan*) and they have already been in the third generation. Their ancestors have undergone the flow of migration to Indonesia. Their involvements in enterprises are mostly derived from family legacy. Family is the source of establishing a particular enterprise in relation to economic capital as well as social capital. Based on this family legacy in business, the Chinese migrants have no big deal to be involved in any self-employment.

²⁴ Case of Chinese enterprises in the Asian context see Rutten (2003), Bonnel and Gold (2002), Berger (2002), Wee (2002), in European countries see Kloosterman and Rath eds (2003).



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Although business preferences is mainly family member of their own, among informants interviewed show an open business networks that is not only among their own ethnic group members, but also other ethnic entrepreneurs, such as the Minangkabau. They don't only provide their works and commodities for their own ethnic members but also common people in the city of settlement. They serve business for everyone. The uniqueness of their enterprises is what they sell can attract all people to buy, for example Chinese coffee shop and restaurant. Chinese coffee shop is always interesting for everyone in the host society. Most of Chinese coffee shops become a meeting point of prominent people in the city. Ideas, rumors, political issues and even strategic decision can takes place in a Chinese coffee shop. In addition to it, most Chinese enterprises recruit employees from different ethnic backgrounds. They are not exclusive to take someone to be their employee. They mostly argue that the main requirement of employment is honest and diligent.

D. Ethnicity in the Ethnic Entrepreneur Context

On daily basis, ethnicity²⁵ is mostly indicated by language and, not always, by lineage name. The latter occurs, for instance, among the Batak, Bugis, the Minangkabau (in some cases), the Bugis. Unlike among Singaporean or Malaysian, ethnicity in Indonesia is not common as favorite discourse in daily life. In political discourse, even, the term 'ethnicity' is somewhat 'cautious or ineffable' to be articulated. In administrative matter, it is not surprised that ethnic category is disregarded. Someone cannot find it in national statistical data, personal identity card, or any formal document. The latest population census that included ethnic criteria was only done by the Dutch colonial government in 1930 and at least 137 ethnic groups were registered (van Klinken, 2003: 68).²⁶ Up to present, we cannot find this ethnic criterion in Indonesian population census, consequently we cannot find their account.²⁷ Hence, it would be said that ethnicity is heavily taken for granted.

In spite of lack of such identifications, ethnicity plays mainly an important role of differentiating cultural articulation, social identity and social structure among Indonesian. These distinctions consist of system of local knowledge, culture area, material traits or tangible culture, art and tradition. It is somewhat different of what have been argued that identification of ethnicity is simplified located in the political arena (van Klinken 2003: 73). Ethnicity was derived from politics and not politics from ethnicity. Van Klinken defined ethnicity as an essentially defensive ideology, as he also additionally defines: "ethnicity is interpreted here as an ideology which individuals employ to resolve the insecurities arising from the power structures within which they are located". In the case of Malaysian politics, ethnicity, together with the concept of class and race, as the decisive national political ideology is quite obvious implied (Goh Beng Lan, 2002, Leong

²⁵ A concept of ethnic group in Indonesian is called *suku bangsa*. This concept refers also to identify social diversity among kin-based society.

²⁶ In that census, only seven biggest ethnic group were registered that are Java, Sunda, Madura, Minangkabau, Bugis, Batak and Bali.

²⁷ The lack of ethnic criterion in Indonesian population census represents also a sensitive political situation. Van Klinken says it as part of Indonesian public policy problems (van Klinken, 2003: 73).



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H. Liew, 2003). Indonesian government concerns with ethnicity only as part of epiphenomena in the political discourse in spite of people consciously live in pluralistic social form as Furnival has ever proposed concept of the plural society (see also van Klinken 2003).²⁸ It is then perhaps logic that ethnic category is then not incorporated into the formal discourse.

Among hundreds of ethnic groups in Indonesia, the most populous ethnic group is allegedly Java. They live in the central and eastern part of the volcanic Island of Java. This island consists of just three main groups, Javanese, Sundanese and Madurese. Ethnic Sundanese (*orang Sunda*) inhabit the west part of Java, meanwhile Madurese live on Madura Island located in the east of Java Island nearby Bali Island. Outside of these ethnic groups there are still a big number of less populous ethnic groups than Java, such as the Minangkabau, Batak, Dayak, Bugis, Bali, Asmat etc.

As mentioned above the research has observed migrants who derive from ethnic groups of Minangkabau, Sundanese, Javanese, Batak, and Chinese.²⁹ These five ethnic groups were purposively selected by reason of their dominances in practicing small-middle scale of businesses in researched cities. With regard to this activity, they are identified as main actors who contribute much on social and economic dynamics of cities. They are also frequently talked about in daily discourses as migrants who mostly crowd markets in the city. Some of their enterprises are well-known in public opinion such as “Minangkabau food shop”, “Madura grilled meat (*sate madura*)”, “Javanese noodle meat ball” (*bakso*), “Sundanese chicken porridge (*bubur ayam*)”, and so on. These enterprises create also a kind of ethnic symbolism.

E. Conclusion

Although in anthropological studies phenomena of ethnic entrepreneurs are quite classical, but in relation to ethnic identity due to globalized penetration these studies in the Indonesian context still need for further actions because of scarce number of researches. The latest article on this theme is written by Marthen L. nDoen et al. (2004) “Migrant Entrepreneurs in East Indonesia”. Unlike to my research that does not find any ethnic conflict in these cities, this article starts with an assumption of ethnic and religious conflicts that overwhelm the context of study. The result of this study that:

“most of migrant entrepreneurs in East Indonesia still want to longer stay in the region rather than to move out. All the economic and socio-cultural variables have a significant effect on migrant’s propensity to stay in the current region. However, accessibility to the marketplace, local tolerance and supporting networks are the three most important factors in determining a favorable climates”. (p. 203)

²⁸ As it has been mentioned earlier, Indonesia is categorized as a plural society and has hundreds of ethnic groups scattered in the entire archipelago.

²⁹ Chinese is also one of famous immigrant in Indonesia. Their existence has been linked with the Indonesian history since the 18th century. Even though they are regarded as a minority, but they are a majority in respect to economy (see van Klinken 2003). They have successfully built own communities in most cities in Indonesia that well know as Chinese town (*pecinaan* or *kampong cina*).



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My research provides basic idea of ethnic entrepreneur including their type of enterprises. This idea is very important to understand because the research has found the importance of ethnic reasons in terms of migration, setting-up business, maintaining social and economic life in the city of settlement in dealing with globalization process. These factors become part of urban and globalization symbols .

By starting with migration issue and assumption of existing globalized penetration in cities, my paper still pays an attention to social mobilization among villagers as important part of the emergence of ethnic enterprise in cities. Resource of mobilization varies from a number of members of particular ethnic group to another. The prominent factors that influence this mobilization are kinship and friendship networks and vacancies of self-employment job in the city of settlement. After migration, migrants encounter the decision to have a job that make them sustainable dealing with economic challenges. Self employment and articulating its ethnic attributes in it give them a secure way to involve in particular enterprise in the city. Only small and middle scale enterprises are possible to migrants to get access to business ownership. Therefore, a major type of enterprises a petty proprietorship. Their position of doing business is not longer in ethnic market but has been expanded into the open market. In this sense, their position as middlemen minority in the city of settlement is quite strong practiced. In the midst of doing business, ethnic entrepreneurs still concern with their original ethnic background by maintaining language and other cultural attributes. This concernedness depicts a migrant's cultural root is not simply dilapidated dealing with migration and living in the newly circumstances where communities are more heterogeneous than in the village of origin.

By doing business in the midst of increasing market competition over time, various ethnic entrepreneurs develop elements of enterprise norm that are derived from various principles, such as religion, customary law, practical business law, family principle and situational condition.

In nut shell, I end my conclusion that there are still two missing factors in the understanding of ethnic entrepreneurs in Indonesia that are (1) fully state function in providing, securing and maintaining the existence of ethnic entrepreneurship, and (2) national formal economic structure that gives an access to ethnic entrepreneurship to be integral part of national economic development. Because of lack of these factors, ethnic entrepreneurship or entrepreneurs in the Indonesian context is strongly pictured as cultural and local economic realms rather than national political realms, but still in the global frame.

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