LABOUR AND SOCIAL INSECURITY

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Intisari

Di tiap negara baik negara maju maupun berkembang terdapat kelompok-kelompok lemah yang berada pada posisi "insecure". Mereka memiliki keterbatasan akses untuk memperoleh atau meningkatkan kondisi hidupnya. Pada kelompok-kelompok tersebut diperlukan adanya mekanisme lain yang memungkinkan mereka menjadi lebih "secure". Tulisan ini mencoba memberikan pemahaman tentang peran dan mekanisme "social security" sebagai salah satu sistem yang penting bagi kelompok lemah. Menurut penulis, berbagai strategi dilakukan oleh kelompok buruh baik secara individual maupun kelompok untuk mengatasi kondisi mereka yang penuh risiko dan memiliki keterbatasan dalam berbagai hal. Untuk menjelaskan hal itu, penulis sangat menekankan penggunaan konsep "insecure" sebagai titik tolak pembahasan "social insecurity" di negara-negara sedang berkembang.

If relative comes to you in need of food, money, care or whatever, you have to help him with all you can give. If possible, the gifts will be paid back. If not, it is not really a problem." [...] However, things are changing nowadays. In case of building a traditional house, for instance, the neighbourhood will provide still the labour. But more and more houses of the lowland type are built. You know, those timber houses with iron roofs. And for those houses, the old customs do not apply while no new rules for labour help are made. Some organise meals, others pay wages, although most of the people build their house piece for piece alone. Every time when they have money, or time, they add some new parts to the house. [...] The poor stand more and more alone." (A poor farmer)**

The statement of this farmer is a good introduction to the topic of changing social security in Java. In his opinion social and economic growth leads to less mutual help in the village and to more individualism. In his perception, economic growth did not lead to more social security, rather to the reverse. He indicates that old forms of morality are changing and that the less well off in society have difficulties in keeping up.

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**   Field notes 10-1993, Philippines, my translation.

In this article, I will explore the theme of social security as a field of study in Java. In this article, I will relate social security mainly to issues of labour in rural areas. However, concepts and issues, can easilly applied in other settings and on other issues too.

Introduction

For many people in developing countries, survival is problematic and life means a constant fight to secure access to resources. Life is insecure, the future unpredictable and social organisation and opportunities are changing fast within the dynamics of the society. For survival, a minimum of basic needs has to be secured. Satisfaction of basic needs is unsure for many people in the world. You could say that insecurity and risk are some of the main characteristics of human existence.

F. Von Benda-Beckmann, who did research on Sumatra and the Molucca's, gives the following description of social security: "All over the world, social, and economic conditions are such that a multitude of people suffer from insecurity: from uncertainty whether they will have to eat or to be fed, whether they have a roof over their head, be cared for when they are ill, be helped when they are young and old, have no money to support themselves when they have no means to earn it, and so forth. In the most general sense, social security thus refers to the efforts of individuals, groups of individuals or organisations to overcome these insecurities" (Von Benda-Beckmann, 1988:10). Social security has different aspects. In the first place, it has to do

with access to basic needs which are needed for survival; means to achieve this are usually access to land, labour and income. Social security deals with entitlements to these crucial resources and the maintenance of these entitlements. 2) Social security is pluriform; individuals might try to secure their insecurities in many ways. Individuals and groups create and experience a social security mix. 3) Social security is linked through people's actions and by social relations and networks. For instance old and disabled can still have access to resources by the labour of others. 4) Social security has to do with redistribution and functions in a normative context. Being member of a certain social group or society gives individuals usually a 'right' to survive (*Cf.* Scott, 1976). And at last, social security is coloured by the specific institutional, political, ecological and economic landscape; it is context specific.

A Brief Overview of Literature on Social Security

In the scientific literature under the heading of social security, a lot of attention is given to social welfare and social security or welfare policies, as realised in Western countries. Much less is written about social security in development countries and hardly anything about non-state organised social security. Partly because in the non western world, usually state organised social security is less extended. While also, hardly any research on those topics is conducted. It is only recently that the study of social

security in development countries has come under attention of scholars and policy makers. Last years UN conference on welfare in Copenhagen asked attention for the social security situation of the urban and rural poor in development countries. And social security and labour issues are still on the agenda in debates within the WTO. Among other reasons, the negative social consequences of the structural adjustment programmes have certainly contributed to this attention. To avoid social tensions, governments of young states ask for more attention to social policies. The call for social security seems often to stem from a wish to soften the social pains of restructuring programmes and to protect the weak young states from too high internal conflicts. Abram de Swaan (1989) signals for the Western states that most of the quests for social security stems from the wish of the elite to keep the poor silent. Out of fear of unrest, social laws and rights were distributed. Most of the social security literature oriented upon development countries is about these western influenced, state organised models of social security. These include pension schemes, labour laws, national (health) insurance schemes and social policy. In many development countries these laws and programmes exist. However, the benefits are mainly limited to governmental employees and the workers of international companies. It is generally acknowledged that the bulk of the population is hardly reached and has to rely on 'self-help' social security and faces severe insecurities in the provision of basic needs. Examples of

writings about the official western style social security regulations in development countries, can be found in the work of UN organisations and the ILO. Some examples of writers are: among others, S. Schmidt, J. Dixon and S.I. Getubig. An important portion of this literature is mainly economic, while another part is sociological, normative and/or political. Another, much smaller part of the literature about social security, forms the often neglected local level organised social security, or non-state organised social security. Examples of these forms of social security are: mutual help arrangements, reciprocal relations, elderly care within households or social groups, exchange labour and mutual cooperation. Scientists working on these topics of community and 'self-help social security' are among others: F. & K. von Benda-Beckmann (Indonesia), F. Hirtz (Philippines), Ahmad, Dreze, Sen (India), J.P. Platteau (Sri Lanka), H. van Dijk & M. de Bruin (Mali), S. Hills and A. Bossert (Tanzania). Besides people working especially on the topic of social security, there is a range of literature about reciprocity, solidarity, survival strategies, coping strategies, livelihood strategies, community and peasant studies which are often anthropological of nature and which do not use the term social security at all. However, these studies are closely related to the paradigms and methods used in the second group mentioned above and findings can easily be combined. The study of social security has proved to offer a wider analytical framework which can help to get better insight into

the interrelation of many social phenomena.

Concepts, Background and Debates in Social Security Studies

Labour and work are important for social security because they are one of the mechanisms to provide access to income and a certain (status) position in society. Access to labour is for many groups of people crucial for their survival, especially for those who have little other means to earn a living. In the context of rural Java, these people can be landless labourers, petty producers, petty traders, wage labourers and so forth.

In my view, labour functions as a means in the struggle for security and at the same time labour is a resource in itself. Access to paid work, in cash or in kind, is for many unsure and the continuity of work can be constantly at risk. Like the risk of unemployment, unableness to work, low payment and work related health risks. It is interesting to study the function and meaning of work and labour in providing social security for rural villagers and the insecurities in work and labour itself.

In rural Java, important changes have taken place during the last few decades. The Green Revolution lead to a dramatic increase in rice production and to an increase in average income in rural areas (Edmundson, 1994). Edmundson states in the same article that on an average, inequalities in the distribution of wealth in the rural areas did not increase. While incomes of larger landowners increased, also labour wages increased slowly (while

still being among the lowest of Asia) (White, 1989: 81) On the other hand harvest shares (wages in kind (*bawon*)) diminished (Hüsken & White, 1989). On these matters of wages and equality different opinions exist. Many studies also show that the amount of people working in agriculture has decreased. Much more research is needed to study issues of labour in an agrarian community because too little is known about the social security impact of these changes in the lives of rural labourers. While a few decennia ago most of the rural petty producers and landless population had access to agricultural labour, nowadays many are excluded from agricultural labour. Insecurity in access to labour is likely to have been increased for some social categories who were formerly totally dependent on agricultural labour. Since the wave of agricultural (labour) studies around the Green Revolution in de seventies and early eighties (Husken, Breman, White, Hart, etc.) only a few studies on rural labour have been published anymore. The above mentioned researchers showed that due to changing agricultural practices access to agricultural labour has become problematic for many people. There has not been much recent rasearch on the effects of the Green Revolution on thase groups of labour in the rural areas. Most attention now focuses on non-agricultural employment or on the cultural aspects of development. The study of labour in a rural setting can be a window to study general changes in the social security situation of villagers and to study agricultural and non-agricultural linkages at various levels. At the individual level, the

household level and beyond. A study of labour also links different levels of social life where social security plays a role. Von Benda-Beckmann (*et al* 1988:10) describe three levels: The level of practice, of collective and individual action. Where individuals or groups work together and share benefits. At the level of institutions, like village institutions, religious institutions, KUD, NGO's and so forth. And finally at the level of values, ideals, ideologies and in a more concrete form policy objectives.

The relation between labour and social security in Java is complex and interwoven. There are many different types of labour and the function and meaning of labour is often regional, ecological and cultural influenced. Hefner writes for instance: "Highlanders refer regularly to the importance of cooperation (*gotong royong*) and reciprocal labour in their lives. They cite its prevalence as a key point of contrast with lowland society. Whatever its moral value as a symbol of upland communalism, however, in practise its role in agriculture is minor. Most agricultural work is done by household labour" (Hefner:145). The importance of the wage for social security might be clear, but the non-monetary functions might be as important as well. Hefner writes for instance about the advantages of long lasting labour relations: "The social implications for the labor relationship are real. The employer-become-patron assumes responsibilities beyond those of the wages he pays. He provides new sets of clothes each year, gives bonuses when his worker has a ritual festival,

and allows time off with pay if the worker has family problems. Most important, the patron provides a significant measure of social insurance by advancing interest-free loans during difficult times. In the long run, these loans may not be repaid even if the employee severs ties with the employer". (*ibid*:151) The changes in labour relations during and after the Green Revolution are in the mountain areas rather radical. The example of Hefner shows that reactions of labourers can be different in different contexts. "Rather than accepting subordination and seeking the 'subsistence guarantees' of patron lords (Scott) the poorest of the poor here are driven to aggressive entrepreneurism" (*ibid*: 129) Not only labour, but access to land is also important of the study of social security. "Sharecropping is usually an arrangement whereby the affluent help their relatives, rather than a mechanism of 'economic interdependence between agrarian classes'. [...] "In the future, those who fall out of the protective net of landowning will find it more difficult to get back in.[...] Prior to the expansion of commercial agriculture before 1910-1929 the most common way of mobilizing extra household labour was through one or more forms of cooperative labour. Most of these are still used in the highlands today. Their incidence and social importance has fluctuated greatly over the years, however, largely as a result of the waxing and waning of commercial intensification in the decades since 1920". (*ibid*:134)

Conceptual Framework

A study of insecurities and changes in labour will offer a window for the study of 'self-help' social security at large. A study of self-help social security implies research oriented on the actual perceptions of insecurity of people or groups of people and their strategies to cope with these insecurities. In my approach, social security is thus not regarded as a static body of state organised laws and regulations, but as a dynamic field of constantly changing opportunities, perceptions, insecurities, risks, strategies and social security arrangements. The fluid nature of social security calls for a study in time-perspective; of changes and dynamics, rather than a static analysis of a social security situation.

To understand diversity, the actions and interactions (strategies) of local people within structural conditions of behaviour. These structural conditions for action form the coutext for action, which might be constraining and enabling (Cf. Giddens and Bourdieu). These strategies can be both conscious and habitual. Examples of these structural conditions are the normative, cultural, political, economic, historical and ecological landscape as formed for instance by the green revolution, plantares, etc.

Social security is a misleading and a hard to define term. For many people, it has the connotation of state legal systems and organised social policy (the social welfare system). Others refer to the American interpretation of social security, which understands social security as pension, or retirement payments (Hirtz, 1995). Others state that social security is a *contradiction in terminus*, because societies and social mechanisms are never secure. The term social security does therefore in practice not deal with security but with the (limited) possbilities to cope with insecurity. For this reason, I think a study of social security should start with the study of insecurities. Insecurities about survival are anyway a basic feature in human life. And some writers suggest rightly that it might be better to use the term social insecurity than social security (Meereboer, 1994). Conceptually, social security can also be viewed the other way round: "*Social security* suggests the efforts of people to organize their perceptions of security socially" (Hirtz, 1995).

An orientation in the field of social security starts with risk and uncertainty. In every situation and for every person the specific insecurities and risks will be different and differently perceived. Although most threats and dangers will be for all people the same, like the risk of illness, death, lack of food, housing, education, jobs and so on, rich face usually less risks and insecurities than poor in terms of basic needs. This counts especially in the case of labour rural Java, where poor peasants and landless labourers face major difficulties in finding and securing access to income out of wage labour. This does not mean that the richer members of society experience less insecurities, however, these are different in nature. Also the strategies to overcome threats may differ between richer and poorer people and even between people in the same circumstances. There is pluriformity in

the interpretation of dangers and threats. The interpretation can lead to action, insurance strategies, to negation, avoidance or even deliberately taking of risks. Processes of interpretation or calculation can lead to different perceptions of uncertainty and risk about the future. In the research I chose to focus mainly on those social categories who only have to offer labour power. And the role of their labour in securing access to resources for others who are not employed or who are not (anymore) able to work.

There is a difference between risks and insecurities. Risks can be calculated and can be taken or avoided, insecurities appear and are experienced, they overcome to a certain extent people. Risks are calculated and therefore connected with gambling, risk-taking, investment, insurance and experimenting, while insecurities have to do with a lack of support or unreliabilities of support. Risks are conscious perceived; while insecurities 'overcome' people. Different types of labour, for instance, can bear different risk. So is migrant labour usually regarded as more risky than patron client relations, plantation work, or fixed contracts. Not the risks themselves, but the perceptions of the risks and treats are important for the social outcome of risk avoidance. Many psychologists and other researchers pointed to the fact that people often are not able to calculate risks rightly or do not act conform calculated risks. People are not able to deal with probability expectations. They tend to concentrate on a few obvious risks and tend to neglect others. (Heimer, 1988, Beck, 1982) So is the risk of a deadly accident

during flights less than by taking part in daily traffic. Still people are taking part in daily traffic without thinking about the risks they take. I do not sec humans as rational agents who always make rational decisions on basis of the available knowledge. On the other hand, human beings have *agency* which is crucial to recognise. Actors have the capacity, to a certain extend, to deal with dangers and insecurities in life. 'Agency' is: "the capacity to process social experience and to devise ways of coping with life, even under the most extreme conditions of coercion. [...] Agency is composed of social relations and can only become effective through them" (Long, 1992).

The word risk is relatively new in the European languages. It came up with the rise of sea trade in the 16th century and maybe comes from Portuguese or Arabian languages. By means of statistics and new mathematical methods risks could be calculated. From this time on, the first insurance companies were established. Risk in daily conversation and risk studies seem to be in fashion nowadays. Economists make a distinction between objective risks and subjective risks. Objective risks are in their opinion for a clear defined group and the risk itself can be clearly defined and in that way insured. Risks can be insured by pooling, portfolio diversification, saving, risk sharing or dismissal.

In the following I will speak of risk and uncertainty together. With risk I mean the more conscious and calculateble perceptions of danger. When people know more or less the probability of an action. While with insecurity I mean the feelings and

perceptions of actors related to unsure results of actions. It is also possible to distinguish in knowable and unknowable insecurities.In many economic and political economy literature about peasant societies, peasants and human beings are generally depicted as risk avoiding. This might have some explanatory value of peasant action at the edge of subsistence, but often people are consciously taking risks or managing and maintaining a certain level of insecurity. Peasants at the edge of subsistence might well join into gambling, drinking and cock fights. A life without risks is for most people not an enjoyable forecast. While on the other hand, security is needed to be able to take risks. It is interesting to study these complexities of perception, dealings, avoidance and risk taking strategies from an anthropological viewpoint.

Strategies of risk avoidance are often not solely individual, in securing risks people have to co-operate. In the collective insurance against risks, or in the collective reduction of insecurity, trust and solidarity plays an important role. Giddens writes about risk and security: "We may define 'security' as a situation in which a specific set of dangers is counteracted or minimised. The experience of security usually rests upon a balance of trust and acceptable risk. In both its factual and its experiential sense, security may refer to large aggregates or collectivities of people - up to global security - or to individuals" (Giddens, 1994: 36). The forms of co-operation can range from a few people, a household, kinship, wider networks or nationwide insurance systems based on solidarity and reciprocity. However, the outcome of social security strategies remains unsure and limited. Not all members of society are able to survive or to secure an acceptable way of living. These processes of coping with insecurity and risk can not simply be understood in terms of rational behaviour, as is often done in literature influenced by rational choice theorists. Even man made risks and catastrophes that we face are not a system out of control, but rather a consequence of a complicated mix of intended and unintended consequences of human action which needs to be unravelled.

Individuals usually take part in different layers of social security to cope with risks, threats and insecurities. Like social security based on kinship, savings, political networks, church membership, labour unions, mechanisms which guarantee access to resources and so forth. This can be called social security pluralism.

In the context of labour it is interesting to study the organisation of different labour tasks dealing with risks by for instance fluctuations in demand, harvest, and so forth.

The Time and Space Dimensions of Social Security

Social security has a time dimension. The time of incurrence and the nature of adversities is never sure. Social security implies orientedness on the future. People try to cover insecurities about the future by long term investments in social relations, the community, in long lasting friendships or family ties. Different reciprocal

relations reflect this time dimension. For instance reciprocity forms within the household, in solidarity networks, and in patron-client relations. People follow strategies to cope with insecurity and are at the same time part of social security arrangements which can offer security. In the Philippine village where I carried out research previously (Nooteboom, 1995), generally, people invested and tried to maintain their relationships with other villagers to be a respected member of the village. They had to help others in times of necd, to be a 'good villager'. While being a good villager would mean being a member of the community which offers the security that the community will provide the same help if needed. These institutional forms of social security are at the same time enabling, demanding and limiting. The tremendous migration out of the Ifugao village, where I did research, can be partly explained by exclusion mechanisms of the community. The community's survival would be threatened if every new member had to be fed by the same resources. The community, or at least most of the families, are not able to bear the costs of keeping all their children in the village. The pressure on the available resources would have been to high. Relatives even saved for young families to offer them a chance to migrate to a relative and so to lessen the pressure on the family resources. The same processes could be observed in rural Ireland in the 19th century. To reduce the pressure on the ground, families saved for a child to migrate to America. If he or she could migrate, he or she should repay the loan by paying the costs of the second child to migrate.

In this way of chain migration, most of the children of the poorer families could go to America at the same time exchanging the support network of the family members staying in Ireland and lessening the burden on the limited resources.

Networks of support systems can extend over time and space. Very often friends and relatives in the home village play a crucial role in providing security for (labour) migrants. This process also functions vice versa when migrants offer a crucial role in securing a livelihood for the home stayers. (*cf* Bossert, 1984, Breman, 1995). Social security has to do with individual and group strategies and structural support systems to make up against social, economic, political and ecological insecurities (Platteau, 1989) which extends time and space dimensions. Sources of social security and labour opportunities exceed village borders. Specific time and space dimensions should be included in any study of social security.

Social Security as a Social Dilemma

Social security can be seen as a social dilemma in which the individual is connected to the collective. The individual can choose not to invest in social relations and not to contribute to the collective which means advantage on the short run. However, on the same time this means he or she can not reckon on help in times of need. If the individual contributes to the collective and succecds in working together he might improve his future social security, although he or she has to bear costs now. If the collective should break

down in the future, his investments will be lost. The social investments are never sure and consequences will be unknown.

In the literature, often a distinction is made between individual and collective strategies to cope with insecurities. This distinction between individual and collective is artificial. It is not a duality; collective and individual are not two poles, but an interrelated set of aspects of social action. It is important for understanding rural societies to overcome this dichotomy. Social security research offers many opportunities to do this. In strategies of insurance, boundaries between group and individual strategies are fluid and changing. An advantage of the concept of social security is that the total dynamic picture can be taken into account. Individuals are part of a collective, and groups are build by individuals. For a proper understanding of the interrelationships between more individual and collective notions of behaviour, actor-structure theories might offer clarification. For the theoretical analysis of the interrelationship of action and structure in the field of social security, I propose to use the concepts of the structuration theory of Giddens and theoretical elements out of the work of Bourdieu when he is talking about practice, habitus and fields. His concepts of habitual actions and structuration theories might help during research to look more at the interrelations between wholes and parts as to the parts alone.

The individual stands in case of adversity of another person for the choice to assist, which costs money, time or prestige, or to ignore the other and use the time or money for oneself. Social assistance means investment in a social relation, or consolidation of these relations. If is opted for social assistance, it means a contribution to the general social security system. The above mentioned dilemma's are of course a bit artificial. In practice, internal conflicts will not always be felt so consious. Being a member of a group means sharing certain norms and values which simply guides behaviour. Problems with normative fremeworks usually occur in contexts of rapid social and economic change. The group, or individual, can also try to neglect the claim, to explain the claim as not legitimate or to exclude the claimer out of the community. It is very interesting and important to study these social dilemmas and conflicting interests. How are for instance exchange labour arrangements or labour groups organised and how are they changing. How are the returns earned by labour of one or more members of a solidarity group redistributed to other members who are not able to work (anymore) as children, old, sick and heavily pregnant. And what are their functions in enabling others to work by for instance baby sitting, cooking, house keeping, family and labour reproduction tasks?

Context and Other Issues

Social security is also connected to issues concerning class, power and politics. It is obvious that in the Indonesian context the role of the state in the field of social security will be

significant. Many villagers will benefit in some way or another from state provisions, while others might be excluded. Relatively rich members of a community often play a crucial role in the redistribution of welfare. By assisting relatives, clients, godchildren or needy friends, they can function as social security agents. Also employers and patrons might serve as social security agents in offering labour security or access to labour for some. The help can be moral driven or enforced, or take the form of grants, sharing meals, parties, loans etc. Usually this social assistance is not free, but demands services in return as labour duties, (political) loyalty, prestige, and so forth. The richer echelons of society often try to exclude themselves from the community or needy people to avoid too much claims. (See for instance Scott, 1985, 1990). These relatively rich living in a small rural village are often victim of fellow villagers claiming favours, or repeatedly pointing to their responsibility to co-operate with the village and distribute part of their wealth. They might try to exclude themselves from the community or pay off their responsibility with symbolic payments as conspicuous gifts to the village community. As Hefner (1990, 216) writes about the Tenger Highlands following Scott (1985, 177, 314) "The affluent are less concerned to show off and make a big name in the village because they spend more of their political and economic lives elsewhere".

The social assistance of the more affluent can lead to increasing forms of dependence of the poor which can evan be manipulated to strengthen the rich's economic and social position. They might also use ideologies or their power/influence to legitimise their wealth. This shows that the study of social security never should be limited to the needy and poorer echelons of society alone, but employers should be included in the research. A proper study of social security takes problems of power into account. This means that the diverse relations with employers should be studied. How are people maintaining and organizing relations with (potential) employers or brokers?

Religion also plays an important part in the study of social security. It is usually one of the most important pillars of the normative framework in a society. Institutions as *zakat* (elmsgiving) and the role of religious leaders in the redistribution of wealth are important. Religion plays a role in shaping social security strategies. Religion can also play a role in diminishing feelings and perceptions of risk and insecurity. It might fulfil a role in relativizing needs and legitimizing existing power and hierarchical relations.

Religion can also fulfil a role in offering security in a rapidly changing world. Children nowadays are growing up in a society totally different from wherein their parents grew up. This might lead to increased feelings of insecurities and call for stability. Religion might well fulfil a function in the search for stability and security.

Values and norms in general form an important framework wherein social security functions. Social security always takes place in a normative context. Scott (1976) for instance writes about the moral economy and the right

of subsistence for members of the rural villagers.

Social security and poverty studies have much in common. Some critics of social security studies state that the term social security is little more than a tactical and political sensitive formulation of poverty studies. However, social security studies are different from poverty studies in the sense that social security gives way to a much wider and dynamic analysis. Poverty or wealth refers to the economic condition measured by lack of ownership or command over resources and monetary incomes. Social security refers to the conversion of resources into actually (un)fulfilled social security needs" (F. & K von Benda-Beckmann, 1994). What makes the difference is whether one is excluded from, or is a member of systems of redistribution which have the potential of offering (some) security. Being poor, but having access to redistribution mechanisms can make a huge difference from poor who have no access. Amartya Sen, who did many poverty studies is able to solve part of this limitation of poverty studies to introduce the concept of entitlement. (Sen, 1969, 1995) It is not the actual possession of material wealth which make people poor, but the lack of entitlements to resources. Social security studies are broader and much more dynamic than poverty studies in the sense that they study not only the material possessions of people, but their socially secured (potential) access to resources too. These mechanisms for securing access are pluriform and subject of constant changes.

Concluding Remarks

Java has long been thought of as a classic example of a relatively undifferentiated rural society consisting mainly of millions of extremely small largely family-labour subsistence farms. (White, 1989) The view of Java as an egalitarian and stagnating society has been left after many criticisms on this concept. Although still is maintained that the Green Revolution have had an impact on inequality (see introduction). Palmer (1976:24 in Husken & White, 1989) concluded: That commercial and technological innovations in Javanese rice production had 'provoked new forms of social differentiation resulting in schisms in relations between a) farmers, on the one hand, and landless labourers and very small owner-cultivators on the other, and b) between those landless labourers who are offered the limited work at any time and those who are unable to share in job opportunities. Many researchers consider theses developments as proof that the conventional view of Java as a relatively egalitarian and homo-geneous society is no longer valid. I wonder if Javanese society has ever been that egalitarian, see for instance Husken (1989) who proves in his thesis that in village societies on Java different classes existed for a long time. Husken & White reject the egalitarian view on Java's rural society (pp.236-237) and state: "Against this view, a counter current has (in our view, more correctly) seen Javanese society as historically divided into agrarian classes based primary on differential access to land and characterized by a

long but uneven history of commercialization, so that in turn the changes associated with the recent Green Revolution are better seen as the continuation, crystallization, or reemergence of trends set in motion long ago." Although changes in rural societies and labour relations will have been enhanced, the Green Revolution not been seen as a breaking point in history. A study form a social security perspective will certainly offer new and interesting insights for these debates.

The relation between social security and labour is important but complex. Von Benda-Beckmann, 1993, warns for the unholy alliance between work and welfare* which seems to exist in policy circles. In policy writings, often social security in the form of insurances, is tied to paid labour. This model for state organised social security is mainly based on the social security model of western countries where employers and labourers pay social premiums. Von Benda-Beckmann describes there is a tendency to make this the general model for the whole population in development countries too. He mentions for Indonesia the example of Jamsostek, Jaminan Sosial Tenaga Kerja (Workers' Social Security Act) which was enacted in 1992. The problem with these schemes is that it does not reach all the people and especially not those who need social assistance most. "The scheme is not leading to any effective redistribution between richer employers and poorer workers"(*ibid.* 1993). The relation between social

security and work is also problematic because it runs the risk of narrowing the focus only on those who have work. Often, behind the attention for work implies an assumption that money and benefits trickle down to others who are dependent, like (grand) parents who are not able to work, to members of the different gender, to sick, needy relatives etc. Behind this lies the assumption of the household as being a sharing entity, wherein incomes are shared and distributed freely for common needs. There seems to exist, for conveniency, a romantic picture of the household and family as a place where needs and funds are equally shared. In practise, however, often husband, children and mothers don't know from each other what they earn and how they spend it. (*cf.* Saptari) On the other hand, members of households or social groups are able to cooperate and by combining different occupations able to face difficulties in life. Often within the household, different hierarchical and exchange relations exist. How this takes place and what the function is of labour on group level for securing the social security can be further researched.

Some Methodological Considerations

In my opinion, it is very difficult to construct a formal definition of social security and it doesn't make much sense either to construct an exact definition. Social security is a relational and interpretative concept. It is more a field of study than a conceptual framework. The definitions given by

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* He derives the idea of unholy alliance from Macarov. See Macarov (1980), *Work ad welfare, the unholy alliance.*

the Von Benda-Beckmanns are useful to demarcate the field of study. However, still the question remains, how do we have to analyze social security and what is the function and meaning of labour in this field? In the following paragraph I try to come to a way to study social security and the formulate some research questions.

Several authors have mentioned that the term social security runs the risk to be interpreted to broad and to narrow. (Benda-Beckmann, F.& K. and F. Hirtz) Social security can be defined too general or too specific. Usually in the literature, the terms social security and social welfare include the goals and means to secure living standards. Social security is in that interpretation the set of arrangements which assist people in times of adversity, and which offer a certain guarantee of security. This institutional approach is a rather general and narrow definition at the same time. It is general because it includes both state organised and self-help social security and too narrow because it is limited to institutions.

I think that the analysis of social security includes the actual behaviour and (in)security perceptions of actors themselves. This approach, however, runs the risk to be to broad. It is impossible to study all security strategies and insecurity perceptions of a group of people in one year fieldwork. The question might arise which part of human action then has nothing to do with social security. For particular this reason I chose to study the function and meaning of labour, because labour can be studied as a window to the wider social security system.

Franz and Keebet von Benda-Beckmann (Focaal, 1994) argue to use a functional approach for the analysis of social security. They state that it is most interesting to look at which social relations and institutions are able to fulfil a function in case of an adversity. This offers a useful concept for fieldwork, but makes it very difficult to compare or theorize about social security. Following such a functional approach, in my opinion, runs the risk of staying descriptive and losing sight of the meaning of social security for individuals and groups. The problem with a functional approach is where does it stop? A functional approach runs the risk of seeing in any social action or institution a social security function. The question is who decides on the function? I think it is important that local people should indicate which arrangement has a social security function for them, while at the same time the researchers task is to analyze their actions in social security terms. So far I have not found any clue in the work of the Von Benda-Beckmann's about criteria how to analyze social security functions.

Social security refers to different kinds of social phenomena, like defined in Von Benda-Beckmann (1988): 1) ideology, philosophy, values and policy programmes, 2) the economic and social position of people, 3) human interaction in which goods and services are transferred for social security, and 4) social relationships and institutions.

It would be a solution to the containment problem to orient on one or more of these social phenomena and study the social security aspects of these. However, in my opinion the

study of social security starts with the study of insecurity and risk. After that, the ways people deal or not deal with these insecurities has to be studied. I formulate social security as the whole set of strategies and constructed and reproduced human relations, functioning within a context of normative conceptions and institutions which assure, or at least provide a better change to and access for individuals to different sources of basic needs in times of insecurity.

Social security research is not only scientifically relevant, but also socially and for policy purposes. A social security study tries to get insight in the dynamics of local people avoiding and coping with risks and insecurities. It contributes to:

· increased knowledge about strategies and arrangements of people to cope with insecurities and risks
· to the methodological and scientific discussions in the field of social security relations and more specifically on development countries and Indonesia specifically

· to the formulation of a theory of social security and human action in relation to risk and insecurity
· to contribute to the knowledge about local level effects and dynamics of social and development policy
· knowledge which might serve better policies to facilitate the survival of people in poorer echelons of the society.

The study of social security as a combination and interaction between actors' strategies and normative, community based social security is not usual. It offers the opportunity to have both attention for individuals and households strategies in relation to village-wide or even (inter)national changes. In fact, actors strategies and structural conditions of action are inherent to social action and cannot be separated, but must be studied as a whole. This combination makes it also possible to compare with more developmental and anthropological literature and put the study in the context of ongoing debates about development, rural transformations, policy and global change.

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