MIGRATION AND URBANISATION IN THAILAND, 1980 :

THE URBAN-RURAL CONTINUUM ANALYSIS

KRITAYA ARCHAVANITKUL

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Kritaya Archavanitkul

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MIGRATION AND URBANISATION IN THAILAND, 1980 : THE URBAN-RURAL CONTINUUM ANALYSIS

1. INTRODUCTION

The movements of people within the nation are the most important demographic process influencing changes in the size and composition of the population. Countries all over the world are now becoming aware of the salient impact of population distribution and movements on the achievement of national goals. According to the Fourth Population Inquiry in 1978, the United Nations found that 139 out of 158 countries stated internal migration as a serious problem (ESCAP, 1979:4). Internal migration and urbanisation in Thailand, as in most nations, have increasingly become potentially the most difficult among contemporary population problems, particularly the continuous influx of migrants into the capital city, Bangkok.

The awareness of problems of population redistribution in Thailand was first clearly seen in the Fourth National Plan (1977-81). The policies implemented in the Fourth Plan tried to redirect migrants from Bangkok metropolis to intermediate-size towns based on the growth-pole strategy; however, the evaluation of this programme indicated that it had little impact on the volume of migration to Bangkok (Ac Hoc Sub-Committee on Population, 1981). Additionally, during 1965-80, among the 11 regional growth centres, seven centres had net in-migration (more in-migrants than out-migrants) (Prasith-rathsint, 1986).

The Fifth Development Plan (1982-86) strongly emphasised decentralised urbanisation, or regional development, and rural development in order to achieve more balanced population redistribution and human settlement in relation to economic conditions. However, even if decentralised urbanisation was a sound policy, it would not automatically deter or divert rural-urban migration especially of young and single migrants to Bangkok (Vichit-Vadakarn, 1983). This is supported by the most recent study on migration to the capital city and its vicinity, indicating the continuously growing number of migrants from 132,693 in 1983 to 141,302 and 151,729 in 1984 and 1985 respectively; 80% of the migrants were from villages (NSO, 1987). So the regional development and decentralised urbanisation policies have not been able to reverse or slow mass migration to the capital city.

Migration studies in Thailand commenced in the early 1950s (Tirasawat, 1982a:36); the research done on this area has been dominated by studies of migration to Bangkok and large urban centres, and little attention has been given to migration to small towns and rural areas. This paper attempts to fill this gap by examining migration into small urban centres and the countryside in the national migration system. In doing so, the 1980 census data will be used and the destinations of Thai migrants will be divided into seven categories from the most urbanised (the metropolis) to the least urbanised (the villages). The details of the seven residence categories will be discussed in the next section.

2. THE THAI "URBAN HIERARCHY" : DOES IT REFLECT THE URBAN-RURAL CONTINUUM ?

Although urban-rural differences exist in varying degrees in practically every nation today, a simple urban-rural dichotomy is sometimes invalid or fails to examine reality (McGee, 1971:35-63). If possible, it is recommended that urban character be measured comparatively along an urban-rural continuum because urbanisation levels generally follow such a continuum (Goldstein and Sly, 1975). This is true in Thailand's case : the categories of metropolis, municipalities, sanitary districts and villages, show different degrees of urbanisation, from the urban extreme to the rural extreme.

Urbanisation is usually measured as the proportion of the total population living in urban areas. Therefore, the level of urbanisation is strongly influenced by the definition of urban areas that is used. To understand the Thai "urban hierarchy", the definition used for urban places should first be discussed. In Thailand, there is no official definition of urban population; this has sometimes led to difficulties in examining population distribution and population movement within the nation. "A municipal area" has long been formally used to denote a non-rural area by the Ministry of Interior. This has also been reported as equivalent to an urban place in all censuses.

The municipal areas (or MAs) are established for administrative purposes under the Municipal Act of 1953. There are three classes of municipalities : **nakhon** (city); **muang** (town); and **tambon** (small town). An area which has a total of 50,000 or more inhabitants, with a population density of not less than 3,000 inhabitants per square kilometre, can achieve the status of **nakhon** municipality. The **muang** municipality requires a minimum of 10,000 inhabitants and the same population density as a **nakhon** municipality. But a place which is

the seat of the provincial administration, regardless of whether it has a population size or density larger than the minimum required for a **muang** municipality, is required by law to be a **muang** municipality. The status of **tambon** municipality has no specific numerical criteria. It is established wherever it is considered appropriate through official decrees prepared by the Ministry of Interior (Prachuabmoh et al., 1972:87-88).

The number of MAs has increased slightly from 117 at the time of the 1947 census to 119 in the 1980 census. Since 1972, two **nakhon** municipalities (Bangkok and Thonburi) have been designated as Bangkok Metropolis. By November 1986, there were 126 MAs; consisting of one **nakhon** (in Chiengmai),[1] 84 **muang** and 41 **tambon**. Of the 84 **muang**, 71 were provincial capital cities and 13 were bigger district towns. The small increase in the number of MAs during the last 4 decades suggests that the criteria have not been followed, though many places must have passed the size and density thresholds for designation as **nakhon** or **muang**.

It should be mentioned that Pattaya District in Cholburi Province, the most famous tourist place in the Eastern region, has been upgraded to become the "City of Pattaya" by the City of Pattaya Act of 1978, but there is no indications as to which category of MA it should be in.[2]

Problems with the level of urbanisation in Thailand arise if one expects that all non-municipal areas are geographically and functionally villages. Figure 1 indicates that localities, namely "sanitary districts" (or SDs), are not rural, at least administratively. An argument that SDs are generally more developed than rural places and should be examined apart from villages is particularly worthy of discussion in the context of this paper. Whenever the urban-rural dichotomy is used, SDs are usually treated as rural, though many SDs have actually achieved the urban characteristics to qualify as a municipality. For example, in 1980, the biggest SD, Prapradang SD in Samutprakarn, a satellite city of Bangkok, had a population of 102,986, and 76 SDs had a population of more than 10,000. These SDs have not been considered for

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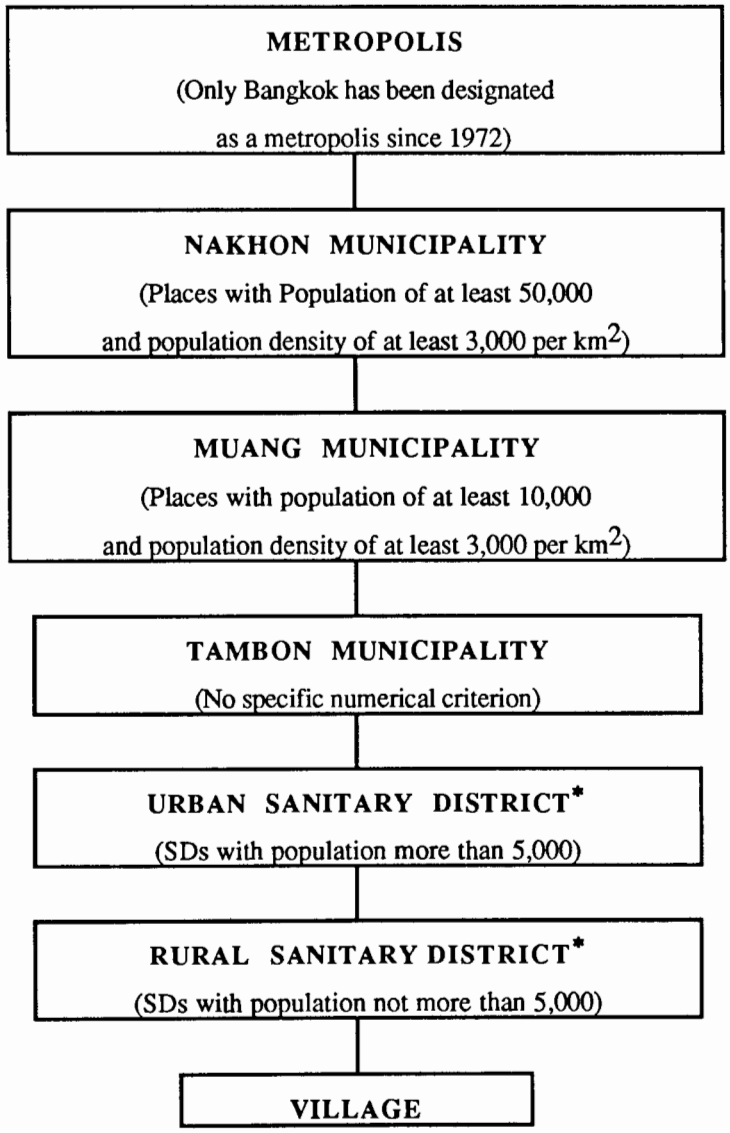
[1] This paper intends to observe the **nakhon** municipality in Chiengmai separately instead of grouping it into the **muang** municipalities because the characteristics of the provincial town of Chiengmai are quite distinct from other provincial centres.

[2] Surprisingly, there is no data on Pattaya City recorded on the subset of 1% tape which is used to obtain tabulations in this paper.

upgrading partly because of the added costs of services needed to be provided to a municipality (Goldstein, 1977:58). Political reasons may also be important.

FIGURE 1 : URBAN HIERARCHY IN THAILAND



* Urban and rural SDs are terms used by the National Statistical Office in the 1980 census report.

Based on the SD Act of 1952, amended in 1985, SDs are governed by an executive board of 3 ex-officio and 9 popularly elected members. The district officer is appointed by law as a chairperson of the board. In practice, the ex-officio members have much more power than the elected members in determining policies implemented in SDs. Furthermore, SDs are, by law, strongly under the superintendent of the provincial governor.[3] There are also 7 district officers appointed to handle administrative functions of SDs. They receive a special salary in proportion to the income of the SD, according to the Ministry of Interior Proclamation on January 31, 1963. For instance, the district officer would receive 2,000 baht per month, if a SD has an income of more than 2 million baht per annum. In fact, the money is not as important as the power which can also be used to generate more money. In contrast to SDs, the Municipal Government, which derives its basic concepts from the Western system of local government, is popularly elected (Dhiravegin, 1984). If a SD is promoted to be a MA, district officers will certainly lose their grip in running a local government at district level.

SDs are legal units of Thai communities; they are generally established as the centre of government for a district within the provinces. A place which can achieve the status of SD is : (a) any **tambon** (subdivision of district) which is a seat of **amphur** (district) headquarters, if it is not assessed as a **muang** municipality; or (b) any place having one or more specific features, including : a total income of not less than 50,000-60,000 baht per year; an area of at least 4-5 square kilometres; not less than 100 dwelling units; not less than 1,500 total population (Prachaubmoh et al., 1972:12).

As of 1960, 439 localities had been designated sanitary districts and their number had increased to 761 by 1986. The increasing number of SDs has been mainly the result of the upgrading of once-developed subdistrict to become the district headquarters which will then automatically achieve the status of SD. In 1980, 72% of all SDs were district towns and the rest were SDs without administrative units which usually consist of four or five of the relatively more developed villages. SDs can be divided into two types : urban and rural SDs, according to the 1980 population census report (National Statistical Office (NSO), 1983). "Urban SDs" are defined as SDs with a population of more than 5,000, and "rural SDs" are, therefore, SDs with less than 5,000 inhabitants.

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[3] The governor of every province in Thailand, except Bangkok, is appointed by the central government.

Consequently, SDs generally contain administrative services at district level, a small hospital, elementary and secondary schools, a police station, bus services, a variety of shops, small factories, and a post office, while some SDs even have banks, petrol stations, a cinema, hotels, a train station, and some types of vocational and higher educational institutions. SDs usually function as marketing centres where agricultural products of nearby villages are sold or exchanged for necessary goods. In addition, they are conducive to the types of commercial and industrial activities that have a limited number of customers who live within easy reach by foot, bicycle, or other forms of local transportation. This role supports the concept that towns in the developing world with a population as small as 2,000 or as large as 100,000 or more, expect to supply basic services and functions for the people living in surrounding villages (Rondinelli, 1983:381-395).

Thai settlement was first reclassified along the urban-rural continuum into five categories : three types of MAs, SDs and rural places by using the 1970 census data (Goldstein and Goldstein, 1978). Goldstein and Goldstein pointed out that a clear picture of the urban-rural continuum emerged when migration and fertility were observed. A similar study based on the same source of data was carried out by Sermsri (1980) on the topic of differentials in urban-rural demographic behavior and events in Thailand. It was found that at the national level, demographic behaviour and events varied directly with degree of urbanisation and level of socioeconomic status. Hence, not only can the urban-rural continuum reflect the real structure of Thai residence, but it can also provide a more meaningful picture of the interaction between demographic events and urbanisation.

Both the work done by Goldstein and Goldstein (1978) and Sermsri (1980) corroborated the argument that characteristics of SDs, such as migration and fertility patterns, were different from those of rural people, or rather resembled the **tambon** municipalities. A report of a socioeconomic survey in 1979/80 conducted in the northeast region also indicated that average monthly household income in SDs was between that of MAs and the countryside; that is 4,040 baht in MAs, 1,987 baht in SDs and 1,140 baht in villages (NSO, 1984). It can be concluded that SDs appear to be less rural when sociodemographic and economic characteristics were considered. This is why Romm (1972) termed SDs as "semi-urban areas".

Regarding the population distribution among the different urbanised places, the 1970 census showed that 13.2% of Thailand's population lived in MAs (7.5% in **nakhon**, 4.7% in **muang** and 1% in **tambon**). Of the 86.8% living in non-MAs, 9.5% lived in SDs and 77.3%

in rural areas (Goldstein and Goldstein, 1978). According to data from the 1980 census, the first census in which SDs were divided into urban and rural SDs, 74% of the total population lived in villages, 16% in cities (10.5% in Bangkok and 5.5% in all MAs), 7% in urban SDs and 3% in rural SDs (NSO, 1983).

3. MIGRATION AND URBANISATION IN THAILAND

Urban growth or the increase of the urban population is generally the result of three factors : natural increase of the urban population itself (the difference between births and deaths in the urban population); rural to urban migration and area annexation or reclassification of once-rural areas as urban areas. It is evident that the growth of cities in most cases could be attributed more to rural-urban migration at the early stages of urbanisation (McGee, 1971). It has also been recognised that other factors, not mentioned above, can indirectly influence urban growth. As Jones (1986) remarked, "with the decline of natural increase in many South-East Asian countries, if rural-urban income disparities persist and if economic growth is rapid, the relative contribution of rural-urban migration to the growth of cities will increase."

Thailand has experienced a modest increase in urbanisation in the past quarter-century (Jones, 1983:7). If the definition of urban places is restricted to MAs, the proportion of urban population slowly increased from 10.5% in 1950 to 12.5%, 14.7% and 17.3% of the total population in 1960, 1970 and 1980 respectively. Many scholars have argued that since the estimates were based on MA residents only, they have considerably underestimated the real urban population in Thailand (see for example Robinson, 1976; Goldstein and Goldstein, 1978; Robinson and Wongbuddha, 1980) Comparison with other countries, such as Taiwan and the Philippines, confirmed the understatement of urbanisation level in Thailand (Jones, 1983). Furthermore, the boundaries of the metropolis as well as many large provincial municipal centres, such as Chiengmai, Cholburi and Nakhonrajsima, have not been sufficiently extended to cover the recent spatial expansion of these cities (Tirasawat, 1982b).

The refined classification of urban, including large SDs with a population of at least 5,000 and a minimum average density of 1,000 persons per square kilometre, was first used by Robinson (1976 cited in Goldstein and Goldstein, 1978:244). Robinson used registration data in 1970 and found that according to the refined classification of urban areas the corrected urban population of Thailand was 7 million, not 5 million; or 21% of the total 35.5 million population, not 15%. By this definition, 24.9% of the Thai population in 1984 resided in urban

areas (National economic and Social Development Board (NESDB), 1984), and during the period 1981-84, the rate of urban growth at the national level was 2.3% per annum (Prasith-rathsint, 1986).

However, the recent study conducted by the staff of NESDB to modify the definition used for urbanisation in Thailand suggested the inclusion of SDs as urban places if the SDs could provide three following public services : electricity, a health centre and a secondary school, and achieved either (a) having a population of more than 5,000 or (b) having a population density of at least 1,000 per square kilometre regardless of their population size (Wongbuddha et al., 1981).

Alternatively, another measure of "urban" is to base it on population distribution in different sizes of localities. It is argued that this measurement can give a better comparison historically and internationally (Bose, 1975; Arriaga, 1975). Table 1 shows numbers and percentage distribution of the Thai population living in various sizes of locality. The most densely population area, the Bangkok Metropolis, contained 10.5% of the total population. If places with at least 5,000 people are considered, only 18.4% of all Thais in 1980 resided in these localities. This proportion is quite low compared to 23% of the 1980 population living in Bangkok, all MAs and urban SDs, as discussed above. It is probably because some MAs may be geographically extensive with a population more rural than urban. As London (1980:32) commented that MAs are formally - rather than functionally - defined urban places. Nearly three quarters of the total population lived in areas with less than 2,000 people.

Turning to the role of migration in the growth of towns, evidence has suggested that migration in Thailand has significantly contributed to increase in population both in the metropolis and municipalities. It was estimated that during the 1950s the growth of all MAs could be equally attributed to natural increase and migration (Goldstein, 1980:50). An examination of the growth of all municipalities between 1960-80 showed that without making any adjustment for Bangkok and Thonburi as Bangkok Metropolis in 1972, nearly half of the total population growth in MAs (44%) in both decades could be attributed to net migration (Tirasawat, 1982b). Goldstein et al. (1976:144) emphasized that 70% of all male household heads living in MAs in 1970 were born outside their place of current residence, and a large proportion of these were born in rural places. In the case of the metropolis, during the 1970s, 64% of the total increase of Bangkok's population resulted from net migration whereas natural increase contributed only 36% of the total growth (Boonperm, 1986). At the national level,

rural-urban migration can be observed from the last two censuses conducted in 1970 and 1980. The volume of this migration stream increased from 10.5 % between 1965-70 to 14.3% between 1975-80, reflecting the increasing role of rural-urban migration in urbanisation (Arnold and Boonprathuang, 1976; Pejaranonda et al., 1984).

TABLE 1 : DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION IN THAILAND IN DIFFERENT SIZES OF LOCALITY, 1980

Size of Locality	Number of Locality	Population (in 000)	% of Total Population	Sex Ratio
500,000	1*	4697.1	10.5	95.3
100,000-499,999	1**	101.6	0.2	95.8
50,000-99,999	9	648.5	1.5	99.1
20,000-49,999	44	1357.6	3.0	98.5
10,000-19,999	55	768.9	1.7	97.3
5,000-9,999	117	680.0	1.5	99.3
2,000-4,999	1398	3556.5	7.9	102.4
1,000-1,999	8552	11184.6	25.0	100.6
500-999	20988	14832.7	33.1	99.3
<500	20878	6961.1	15.6	98.7
Total	52043	44824.7	100.0	99.3

Source : United Nations, 1985 (Table 35, p.901).

* Bangkok Metropolis

** The Nakhon Municipality in Chiengmai

Recently, there was an effort to forecast four cases of migration projections from 1980 to 2005 by using the 1980 population as a base population (Sussangkarn et al., 1986). The first case assumed the persistence of current growth rate trends, wage and unemployment rates as a "base case". With no other changes to the base case, the other three cases were : a "low agricultural price case" or reduces rural wages case (case 2), a high unemployment in Bangkok case (case 3), and decentralisation case which assumed narrowing wage differentials between Bangkok and all regions (or case 4). The projections presented in Table 2 are useful to development planners in formulating policies which can raise the income of rural people on the one hand, and sincerely implementing policies for decentralised urbanisation on the other hand. These together may reduce the number of potential movers in villages and deter rural-urban migration from Bangkok to other towns.

TABLE 2 : FOUR CASES OF MIGRATION PROJECTIONS FOR THE PERIOD 1980-2005

Population	Case 1	Case 2	Case 3	Case 4
Percentage of Population Growth (1980-2005)				
Non-MA Population	38	34	42	39
MA Population	96	119	100	107
Bangkok Population	76	86	72	65
Total Population At Year 2005 (in 000)				
Population of Non-MAs	53683	52143	54892	53943
Population of MAs	6008	6709	6104	6327
Population of Bangkok	8579	9046	8383	8037

Source : Sussangkarn et al., 1986 p.3

4. SOURCE OF DATA

Data used in this paper are from the 1980 census, which is the third census that obtained migration information. However, all SDs were not coded as urban or rural SDs. They can be classified as urban or rural SDs according to their total population as recorded on the printouts which were derived from the 100% tape of the 1980 census data. With the permission of the NSO, I gained access to these data. Of the 704 SDs, 289 were classified as urban and 415 as rural SDs. I entered these data to the computer and asked a programmer to merge them with the 1% tape of the 1980 population census data.

All tabulations in the next section are obtained from the data tape of the subset of recent migrants from the 1% tape of the 1980 census. The term "recent migrants" in this paper refers only to persons aged 5 years and over who had changed their place of residence within the five year period preceding the census date. More precisely, recent migrants were persons aged 5 years and over whose answer to the duration of residence question ("How long have you been living in this village (or this municipality) ?), was less than 5 years. Accordingly, one should bear in mind that census data were likely to undercount persons who were return, repeat, circular or seasonal migrants. The proportion of recent migrants was only 6.5% of the total population in 1980, or about 2.9 million persons of the total 44.8 million persons (Pejaranonda et al., 1984).

In this study, migration to various destinations in Thailand will be examined comparatively along the urban-rural continuum. Seven residence categories : the metropolis, the **nakhon**, the **muang**, the **tambon**, the urban SDs, the rural SDs and the villages, as described in Figure 1, will be used to represent the urban-rural continuum in Thailand. This is the first study where SDs are split according to their population size, and are simultaneously observed and compared with other urban areas. With the limits of the analysis in this paper, it is hoped that the results may add some new aspects of migration and urbanisation in Thailand context and also throw some light on how and why the differentials in the degrees of urbanisation could induce migration.

5. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

5.1 Migration Pattern

Thailand is still primarily a rural country, with approximately three-quarters of Thai people living in rural areas. Therefore, it is not surprising to find that more than half (55%) of the total migrants moved to villages (Table 3), and a substantial number of recent migrants (slightly above 70% for both sexes) came from non-MAs. About 20% of all migrants moved to Bangkok, followed by 15% to all types of MAs, and 11% to urban and rural SDs. Interestingly, the proportion of migrants to urban SDs (8%) was rather high compared to the proportion to the **tambon** (1%). This might be due to the greater number of urban SDs than the number of **tambon**.

Migrants who came from MAs constituted a little over a quarter of all migrants (29%). They were more likely to move to urban places. There were three major destinations of these migrants: Bangkok (12%), **muang** (6%) and rural destinations (7%). Those who moved from MAs to villages might include a large number of return migrants who either found life in the cities unsatisfactory, or who were visiting their families, since the census date (1st of April) was close to the Thai Traditional New Year Week (10th-15th of April), the occasion for family members to get together. However, the major stream of the 1975-80 migration was the movement from non-MAs to other rural areas (48%). Of the 24% rural (non-MAs) to urban migration, the proportion moving to Bangkok was the same as that to all types of MAs (8%), 6% moved to urban SDs and 2% to rural SDs. It appears that the more urbanised the destination, the higher the proportion of migrants from MAs.

TABLE 3 : THE PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF RECENT MIGRANTS AGED 5 AND OVER, BY CURRENT PLACE AND PREVIOUS PLACE OF RESIDENCE AND SEX : THAILAND, 1980

Previous Place of Residence	Current Place of Residence							Total (%)
	MAs				SDs			
	Bangkok	Nakhon	Muang	Tambon	Urban	Rural	Villages	
Males								
MAs	10.7	0.3	5.7	0.6	2.2	0.9	7.3	27.7
Non-MAs	6.9	0.1	5.9	0.8	5.4	2.3	50.9	72.3
Both Places	17.6	0.4	11.6	1.4	7.6	3.2	58.2	100.0
Total('000)	239.0	5.0	157.8	18.1	103.4	43.6	791.1	1358.0
Females								
MAs	12.5	0.8	6.3	0.5	2.3	1.0	6.2	29.6
Non-MAs	9.1	0.6	6.8	0.8	6.1	2.4	44.6	70.4
Both Places	21.6	1.4	13.1	1.3	8.4	3.4	50.8	100.0
Total('000)	269.9	17.0	164.1	15.9	104.5	42.7	634.3	1248.4
Both Sexes								
MAs	11.5	0.5	6.0	0.5	2.3	1.0	6.8	28.6
Non-MAs	8.0	0.3	6.4	0.8	5.7	2.3	47.9	71.4
Both Places	19.5	0.8	12.4	1.3	8.0	3.3	54.7	100.0
Total('000)	508.9	22.0	321.9	34.0	207.9	86.3	1425.4	2606.4

Note : Excluding persons who did not report whether their previous place of residence was MAs or non-MAs.

The predominant movement to all destinations was obviously intra-regional migration; the proportion of this flow seemed to increase with the decrease of urbanisation level (Table 4). The opposite pattern was found for the long distance movement, viz inter-regional migration which represented less than 26% of all migrants to destinations from the **muang** downwards to villages. This results from the definition used for recent migrants which covered persons moving within the same province of 1980 residence. If migrants who moved within the same province are excluded, the 1980 census data is the first census which showed a smaller number of intra-regional migrants than inter-regional migrants (Goldstein and Goldstein, 1985).

TABLE 4 : PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF RECENT MIGRANTS AGED 5 AND OVER, BY CURRENT PLACE OF RESIDENCE, BY TYPE OF MIGRATION AND SEX : THAILAND, 1980

Type of Migration	Current Place of Residence						
		MAs			SDs		
	Bangkok	Nakhon	Muang	Tambon	Urban	Rural	Villages
Males							
Intra-regional	60	60	67	73	74	76	75
(within province)	(37)	(40)	(27)	(34)	(36)	(44)	(44)
(between provinces)	(23)	(20)	(40)	(39)	(38)	(32)	(31)
Inter-regional	33	38	25	21	19	16	13
International	1	2	-	0	1	0	1
Unknown Types	6	-	8	6	6	7	10
Total: percent*	100	100	100	100	100	99	99
thousands	276.8	5.9	174.9	20.2	110.4	49.5	893.0
Females							
Intra-regional	59	53	69	73	74	78	77
(within province)	(35)	(21)	(29)	(36)	(34)	(45)	(45)
(between provinces)	(24)	(32)	(40)	(37)	(40)	(33)	(32)
Inter-regional	34	47	23	21	19	15	13
International	1	-	-	0	-	-	1
Unknown Types	6	-	8	6	6	7	9
Total:percent*	100	100	100	100	99	100	100
thousands	311.0	18.0	181.2	17.6	112.7	47.7	712.4

- Line indicates below 0.5%.
* The total may not add to 100 due to rounding.

The **nakhon** gained a large number of female migrants from other regions (47%); the proportion of male migrants moving within Chiengmai province (40%) was double that of female migrants (21%). It should be noted that data on **nakhon** municipality in Chiengmai show somewhat divergent results, reflecting the nature of Chiengmai's provincial centre itself. For example, the total number of female migrants (17,970) is three times that of male migrants (5,910). It is believed that the figures for the **nakhon** are quite reliable and give a broad picture of recent migration to the provincial town of Chiengmai.

The pattern of migration to urban SDs was similar to that to **tambon**, and the pattern of migration to rural SDs was close to that to rural places. In sum, it is clear that migration to

the less urbanised places was mainly short distance movement. In other words, the more urbanised a place, the stronger its power in drawing people from a longer distance. This pattern was also observed in other developing nations (McGee, 1971).

5.2 Characteristics of Migrants

Characteristics of migrants can vary by size of destination as well as by urban-rural status of origin (Tirasawat, 1982b). Comparisons of characteristics of migrants in this section begin with an examination of sociodemographic and economic characteristics: age, marital status, educational attainment, and labour force status.

TABLE 5 : PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF RECENT MIGRANTS AGED 5 AND OVER, BY CURRENT PLACE OF RESIDENCE, BY AGE AND SEX : THAILAND, 1980

Sex and Age (years)	Current Place of Residence						
		MAs			SDs		
	Bangkok	Nakhon	Muang	Tambon	Urban	Rural	Villages
Males							
5-14	16	18	19	21	19	21	22
15-24	41	27	34	33	30	31	31
25-34	26	35	27	29	30	26	27
35-44	10	12	11	9	12	14	11
45 or over	7	8	9	8	9	8	9
Total:percent	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
thousands	276.8	5.9	174.9	20.2	110.4	49.5	893.0
Median Age	**22.9**	**25.0**	**23.7**	**23.5**	**24.7**	**24.1**	**23.9**
Females							
5-14	16	5	16	20	19	26	25
15-24	47	72	45	42	40	37	36
25-34	22	16	23	21	24	21	9
35-44	8	3	9	9	8	10	9
45 or over	7	4	7	8	9	6	10
Total:percent	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
thousands	311.0	18.0	181.2	17.6	112.7	47.7	712.4
Median Age	**21.4**	**21.1**	**21.9**	**22.0**	**22.5**	**21.8**	**21.9**
Sex Ratio	**90**	**33**	**97**	**115**	**98**	**104**	**125**

Most migrants were young adults (Table 5). The median ages of migrants in the seven residence categories were slightly different, ranging from 21.1 (female migrants in **nakhon**) to 25.0 years (male migrants in **nakhon**). Females migrants were on average younger than male migrants. About 16% to 26% of migrants to all places were in the 5-14 age group, but only 5% of female migrants to **nakhon** fell in this age group. The highest proportion of migrants were aged 15-24, with a peak among female migrants in **nakhon** (72%). This is because a large number of females migrated to the provincial town of Chiengmai to continue their education (see Table 11). Without considering the **nakhon** , the proportion of migrants aged 15-24 tended to increase the more urban the destination. The proportion of migrants in the two older age groups (35-44 and 45 or over) were around 10% and 8% respectively.

Differences in sex ratio can be seen across the seven categories of migration destinations. The sex ratio of migrants was sharply different between the most urbanised place (Bangkok) and the least urbanised place (villages), that is 90 compared to 125. Given the pattern of migration in Thailand, the bigger the size of the town, the higher the proportion of female migrants to the place.

Migrants to the seven urban-rural residence categories also differ in terms of marital status (Table 6). The proportion of single persons apparently decreased with more urban places and the proportion of currently married migrants gradually increased from the metropolis to the villages. The proportion of widowed, divorced and separated did not vary along the urban-rural continuum, but it varied with gender. As women usually live longer than men, there were more widowed females (5% to 8%) than widowed males (2% to 6%). The proportion of married migrants in the younger age group (15-24) decreased progressively from rural to urban destinations (20% to 0% for males and 32% to 4% for females). This is primarily because employment opportunities in Bangkok and in the larger cities are more attractive and appropriate to single migrants than to married migrants, and partly because rural people generally marry younger than people in the less rural areas.

It is clear that educational level of migrants to urban areas is much higher than that of migrants to rural areas(Table 7). More than half of migrants to all destinations (50% to 88%) had only primary level or lower, except for one major divergence: among female migrants in **nakhon**, the proportion with university education was highest (57%). The educational facilities in Chiengmai (its number of tertiary institutions is the second highest in the nation) must have some relation to educational attainment of migrants. Only female migrants in the

TABLE 6 : PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF RECENT MIGRANTS AGED 15 AND OVER, BY CURRENT PLACE OF RESIDENCE, BY MARITAL STATUS, BY AGE AND SEX : THAILAND,1980

Marital Status Sex and Age Group (years)	Current Place of Residence						
		MAs			SDs		
	Bangkok	Nakhon	Muang	Tambon	Urban	Rural	Villages
Males							
Never Married	54	40	41	35	34	34	24
15-24	41	30	31	27	25	26	20
25-44	13	7	9	7	9	8	4
45 or over	-	3	1	1	-	-	-
Currently Married	43	54	56	60	63	62	74
15-24	7	0	8	14	11	12	20
25-44	29	47	38	38	42	43	44
45 or over	7	7	10	8	10	7	10
Widowed/divorced/	2	6	2	5	3	3	2
Separated 15-24	-	3	-	0	-	0	-
25-44	1	3	1	3	2	2	1
45 or over	1	0	1	2	1	1	1
Total: percent*	99	100	99	100	100	99	100
thousands	230.0	4.8	135.3	15.8	85.6	37.9	662.8
Females							
Never Married	50	76	41	27	35	25	17
15-24	40	71	33	23	27	20	15
25-44	9	5	8	3	8	5	2
45 or over	1	0	-	1	-	-	-
Currently Married	43	19	51	67	57	69	75
15-24	15	4	19	29	21	30	32
25-44	24	12	27	33	29	35	36
45 or over	4	3	5	5	7	4	7
Widowed/Divorced/	7	5	8	6	8	6	8
Separated 15-24	1	0	1	1	1	-	1
25-44	2	3	3	2	3	3	2
45 or over	4	2	4	3	4	3	5
Total: percent*	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
thousands	261.6	17.0	151.7	13.9	90.0	34.9	532.7

Note : Excluding persons who did not report their marital status and who were priests or nuns.

-,* Same as Table 4.

nakhon were more educated than male migrants, especially at tertiary level. More than half of this group (52%) were living in collective households, or dormitories, at the time of the

census.[4] It is not unusual in Thailand today that a greater number of women than men are studying in universities.

TABLE 7 : PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF RECENT MIGRANTS AGED 15 AND OVER, BY CURRENT PLACE OF RESIDENCE, BY EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT AND SEX : THAILAND, 1980

Educational Attainment	Current Place of Residence						
		MAs			SDs		
	Bangkok	Nakhon	Muang	Tambon	Urban	Rural	Villages
				Males			
None	4	5	2	6	4	5	7
Primary	51	45	51	48	57	46	74
Secondary	31	38	32	36	29	37	14
Tertiary	13	13	13	10	10	11	4
Other	1	0	2	0	0	1	1
Total: percent*	100	101	100	100	100	100	100
thousands	227.9	4.8	139.8	15.9	88.7	38.3	691.9
				Females			
None	8	5	7	10	9	6	15
Primary	60	27	56	64	70	67	73
Secondary	23	11	27	22	16	17	8
Tertiary	9	57	10	3	6	10	4
Other	-	0	0	0	-	0	-
Total: percent*	100	100	100	99	101	100	100
thousands	257.5	17.1	151.9	13.9	89.2	35.1	532.3

Note: Excluding persons who did not report their educational level.
-,* Same as Table 4.

The percentage distribution by educational level among migrants to the six urban destinations (from rural SDs upwards) was not much different. Surprisingly, not only was educational attainment of male migrants in rural SDs similar to that in other urban areas, but the proportion of female migrants with tertiary education (10%) was also a little higher than that

[4] Derived from data on relationship with household head.

in the **muang** and the metropolis (9%). Male migrants were on average more educated than females within each destination category, except in the **nakhon**, but across the destination categories, female migrants in urban places clearly were more educated than male migrants in villages.

A larger proportion of male than female migrants participated in the work force (Table 8). The data show that recent migrants (for both sexes) had a low unemployment rate (4% or lower). But one exception emerged in **nakhon** where 10% of male migrants were looking for a job while none of the females were unemployed. Among the unemployed migrants, a substantial number were new workers or had never worked previously. Those who were experienced workers accounted for only 1% or less. Sixteen percent of male migrants and 12% of female migrants living in villages were seasonally unemployed.

It is appropriate to note at this point that the census was conducted in the Thai summer (the 1st of April) when students had just completed their school calendar year. Therefore, many of them had just entered the work force. Also, this is slack season for farmers and many of them migrate temporarily to earn money. In 1980, the rate of unemployment was 5% in Bangkok, 7% in MAs and 3% in Non-MAs (Boonperm, 1986; and NSO,1983). So this finding supports the conclusions of previous studies that migrants tend not to create unemployment problems in either urban or rural areas (Tirasawat, 1982c).

Migrants who did not participate in the labour force were largely students or housekeepers. Comparisons of these two activities across the destination categories indicate that the proportion of students was higher in bigger cities. The low proportion of female migrants in villages who were housekeepers (23%) is because women in rural areas are usually classified as employed persons, although they are responsible for both farmwork and domestic work.

The percentage distribution of employed migrants according to occupation is shown in Table 9. Again, striking differences in occupation existed only between migrants to the six urban categories and the villages. Only one-tenth of migrants (both sexes) in villages were white-collar workers whilst in urban areas, the percentage of white-collar workers was lowest in **tambon** (slightly above 20% for both sexes) and highest in **nakhon** (55% for males and 42% for females). Similar patterns were found for manual and service sectors, but male migrants living in urban areas were largely employed in manual work whereas female migrants were largely engaged in the service sector. In Thailand, domestic servants and peddlers are mainly

women because of the belief that these types of work are not men's jobs. The high proportion of domestic servants among female migrants in bigger urban areas (22% in Bangkok and 19% in nakhon) was primarily due to the growing demand from middle-class families, among whom both husband and wife typically participate in the work force.

TABLE 8 : PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF RECENT MIGRANTS AGED 15 AND OVER, BY CURRENT PLACE OF RESIDENCE, BY LABOUR FORCE STATUS AND SEX : THAILAND,1980

Labour Force Status[a]	Current Place of Residence						
		MAs			SDs		
	Bangkok	Nakhon	Muang	Tambon	Urban	Rural	Villages
Males							
Employed	77	72	77	87	79	81	69
Unemployed	4	10	4	0	4	2	2
(experienced workers)	(-)	(0)	(1)	(0)	(1)	(1)	(1)
(new workers)	(4)	(10)	(3)	(0)	(3)	(1)	(1)
Waiting for Farm Season	-	0	-	1	4	5	19
Housekeepers	-	8	1	1	1	1	2
Students	15	10	9	10	6	8	2
Unable to Work[b]	3	0	8	1	5	3	6
Other	1	0	1	0	1	0	-
Total: percent	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
thousands	230.7	4.8	139.6	15.9	88.3	37.5	686.6
Females							
Employed	52	25	52	43	55	52	53
Unemployed	3	0	3	1	3	2	2
(experienced workers)	(-)	(0)	(-)	(0)	(-)	(0)	(1)
(new workers)	(3)	(0)	(3)	(1)	(3)	(2)	(1)
Waiting for Farm Season	-	0	-	1	3	2	13
Housekeepers	25	11	29	49	29	36	25
Students	14	56	13	3	5	5	2
Unable to Work[b]	4	1	3	2	4	3	4
Other	2	7	1	0	1	1	1
Total: percent[*]	100	100	99	99	100	101	100
thousands	287.2	17.2	162.4	14.7	98.1	40.1	613.0

[a] According to activities done during 7 days preceding the census date.

[b] Including disabled, elderly, sick people, priests and nuns.

[*] Same as Table 4.

TABLE 9 : PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF RECENT MIGRANTS AGED 15 AND OVER, BY CURRENT PLACE OF RESIDENCE, BY OCCUPATION AND SEX : THAILAND, 1980

Occupation	Current Place of Residence						
		MAs			SDs		
	Bangkok	Nakhon	Muang	Tambon	Urban	Rural	Villages
Males							
White-Collar Workers	31	55	37	22	28	25	10
Professional	7	14	7	5	7	11	4
Administrative	7	3	14	7	7	10	3
Clerical	7	7	7	7	6	5	1
Sales	10	31	9	3	8	9	2
Agriculture & Mining	3	0	7	13	19	16	68
Manual Workers	51	24	39	46	38	31	16
Transport	8	7	12	9	9	6	3
Manual	44	17	27	37	29	25	13
Service Workers	13	20	18	19	15	18	5
Service	8	10	13	12	10	15	3
Domestic Servants	1	0	-	0	-	0	-
Peddlers	4	10	5	7	5	3	2
Unclassified	1	0	-	0	-	0	-
Total: percent*	100	99	101	100	100	100	99
thousands	178.5	3.5	110.7	14.0	76.3	34.2	632.3
Females							
White-Collar Workers	29	42	39	25	26	40	11
Professional	9	17	16	7	11	19	6
Administrative	2	0	3	2	1	2	-
Clerical	9	8	6	10	4	4	1
Sales	9	17	14	6	11	15	4
Agriculture & Mining	2	0	5	17	22	27	76
Manual Workers	28	6	18	24	32	16	8
Transport	-	0	1	0	-	0	-
Manual	28	6	17	24	32	16	8
Service Workers	39	52	37	34	19	17	5
Service	10	25	18	13	6	8	1
Domestic Servants	22	19	7	10	3	5	1
Peddlers	7	8	12	11	10	4	3
Unclassified	2	0	-	0	-	0	0
Total: percent*	100	100	99	100	100	100	100
thousands	138.4	4.3	81.3	6.2	54.4	21.4	426.2

Note : Excluding persons who did not report their occupation.

-,* Same as Table 4.

A different pattern emerged in the primary sector. The highest proportion of migrants in rural areas, of course, were agricultural workers (68% for males and 76% for females). The proportion of farm workers decreased sharply in rural SDs (16% for males and 27% for females), and even more so in the **muang** and more urban places (below 8% for both sexes).

The employment status of recent migrants (Table 10) indicates that in the urban labour force, most migrants worked in the private sector or in government. In the rural work force, male migrants were largely self-employed (39%), but female migrants were largely unpaid family workers (67%). It is most likely that farm owners generally regarded themselves as self-

TABLE 10: PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF RECENT MIGRANTS AGED 15 AND OVER, BY CURRENT PLACE OF RESIDENCE, BY WORK STATUS AND SEX : THAILAND, 1980

Work Status	Current Place of Residence						
		MAs			SDs		
	Bangkok	Nakhon	Muang	Tambon	Urban	Rural	Villages
Males							
Employers	1	0	1	0	-	1	-
Self-employed Workers	12	31	20	19	24	19	39
Government Employees[a]	19	24	35	35	25	40	14
Private Employees	63	45	40	39	39	28	19
Unpaid Family Workers	5	0	4	7	11	12	28
Unknown	-	0	-	0	-	-	-
Total: percent*	100	100	100	100	99	100	100
thousands	178.5	3.5	110.7	14.0	76.3	34.2	632.3
Females							
Employers	0	0	-	0	-	0	-
Self-employed Workers	13	6	19	21	15	15	10
Government Employees[a]	12	16	22	8	15	25	7
Private Employee	63	47	38	49	37	22	16
Unpaid Family Workers	11	31	20	23	32	38	67
Unknown	2	0	1	0	-	0	-
Total: percent*	101	100	100	101	99	100	99
thousands	138.4	4.3	81.3	6.2	54.4	21.4	426.2

[a] Including government enterprise employees.

-,* Same as Table 4.

employed (Goldstein and Goldstein, 1978). The proportion of migrants who were classified as private employees was highest in the capital city (63% for both sexes) and lowest in the villages (16% for females and 19% for males). Opportunities for migrants to join private companies in the capital city are great because private factories, trade and other personal services have long been concentrated in Bangkok and the provinces in its vicinity. Also, migrants tend to accept types of jobs at wage levels which non-migrants may be unwilling to accept (Tirasawat, 1982b).

The lower proportion of government employees among migrants in Bangkok than in the other five urban places might be due to official transfer of government employees to other urban and rural areas (see Table 11). As Stone (1974:203-210) noted, in some countries, transfer of government officials can significantly affect migration data in certain places.

Very few male migrants in urban areas were unpaid family workers (0% to 12%), but this category rose to 28% for male migrants in the countryside. By contrast, the proportion of unpaid workers among female migrants ranged from 20% in **muang** to 38% in rural SDs and up to 67% in villages. This means that female migrants to the urban areas were likely to be wage labourers and more independent than female migrants to rural places.

5.3 Reasons for Moving

Reasons for migration are examined according to whether migrants were from MAs or non-MAs (Table 11). In general, the data show that reasons for migration were related to place of origin and place of destination. Most male migrants were motivated by economic reasons whereas most females stated family-related reasons for migration. Economic motives were more frequently given by migrants (both sexes) from non-MAs than by those from MAs. Job opportunities are generally great in the more urbanised places so that the percentage of job-related reasons was highest among migrants to Bangkok and lowest among those to villages. Official transfers were common among male migrants to **nakhon** and smaller urban places, in particular those going to rural SDs (48%). Migrants (both sexes) who moved because of career obligations were more likely to be from MAs than from non-MAs.

TABLE 11 : PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF RECENT MIGRANTS AGED 15 AND OVER, BY CURRENT PLACE OF RESIDENCE, BY REASONS FOR MOVING, BY PREVIOUS PLACE AS MAs OR NON-MAs AND SEX : THAILAND, 1980

Previous Place of Residence and Reasons for Moving	Current Place of Residence						
		MAs			SDs		
	Bangkok	Nakhon	Muang	Tambon	Urban	Rural	Villages
Males							
MAs							
Economic	36	29	38	31	33	21	29
Official transfer	10	21	33	34	24	48	27
Family	23	21	17	33	31	22	35
Education	13	7	6	0	1	1	3
Other	18	12	6	2	11	8	6
Total: percent*	100	100	100	101	100	100	100
thousands	114.2	2.3	57.2	5.5	23.9	10.7	76.9
Non-MAs							
Economic	72	50	55	68	49	41	38
Official transfer	9	0	13	10	13	21	7
Family	9	25	15	19	24	27	47
Education	11	0	11	3	4	5	2
Other	2	25	6	0	9	5	6
Total: percent*	100	100	100	100	99	99	99
thousands	80.6	1.4	60.6	8.5	58.3	23.7	524.3
Females							
MAs							
Economic	24	10	24	19	20	9	14
Official transfer	1	4	9	0	8	19	8
Family	55	20	58	81	66	68	73
Education	13	64	7	0	2	1	2
Other	8	2	1	0	4	3	3
Total:percent*	101	99	99	100	100	100	100
thousands	126.2	9.3	63.0	4.9	21.5	8.7	59.5
Non-MAs							
Economic	58	25	37	36	44	24	19
Official transfer	1	2	4	3	4	6	2
Family	30	5	41	59	47	62	77
Education	10	66	16	2	2	5	1
Other	1	2	2	-	2	2	1
Total: percent*	100	100	100	100	99	100	100
thousands	95.9	6.7	72.2	7.4	60.8	22.1	408.6

* Same as Table 4.

Family-related reasons were not as frequently reported by those moving from non-MAs as those moving from MAs. However, these reasons were much more important among migrants living in villages, whether they were from MAs (35% for males and 73% for females) or non-MAs (47% for males and 77% for females), indicating that there were more family recent migration to rural areas than to urban places. In contrast, family motives were less important for female migrants to Bangkok and to **nakhon**. More than half of female migrants from non-MAs to the capital city (58%) were motivated by economic reasons, and about 65% of females both from MAs and non-MAs to **nakhon** migrated because of education.

The next important reason was education, which generally appeared to be more significant among migrants to **nakhon** and to Bangkok than to other destinations. In particular to the provincial town of Chiengmai, around 65% of female migrants gave education as a main reason for moving to this town. More females moving to Bangkok from MAs (13%) than from non-MAs (10%) migrated because of education. The opposite pattern was observed among female migration to other destinations. The educational environment in **muang** also attracted a larger proportion of female migrants from non-MAs (16%) than from MAs (7%).

When migrants are examined according to their age group (data not shown), migrants who reported job-related reasons as a motive for migration were mainly men aged 25-44 and women aged 15-24, indicating that women migrated to look for a job at younger ages than men. Family-related reasons were given by more women aged 25 and over than men in the same age groups. It is usual to find that almost all migrants who moved because of education were young adults aged 15-24.

In conclusion, the findings indicate that the characteristics of persons who migrated during the period 1975-80 differed by destination of migration. The sharp contrast between migration patterns to the most urbanised and the least urbanised places can be observed in all aspects. The differences in migration patterns are also observed along the urban-rural continuum.

Bangkok Metropolis, as one of the largest primate cities in the world, attracted people from both urban and rural areas. Migrants to the capital city were largely young, single and educated. The phrase "Bangkok is Thailand" has long been justified by the fact that it has historically been the centre of almost all vital issues of the nation. Undoubtedly, the Thais do realise that they can gain opportunities or experiences which are lacking in their hometowns by migrating to Bangkok.

The **muang** municipalities, or the provincial centres and the bigger district towns, tend to attract migrants within the regions. Migration to urban SDs appears to resemble the pattern of migration to **tambon.** But some characteristics of migrants to urban SDs are similar to those of migrants to **muang** rather than those of migrants to **tambon**, such as labour force status. These results certainly suggest that large SDs can be classified as urban places. The composition of migrants to rural SDs is different from that of migrants to villages or to urban SDs and other urban places, supporting the validity of dividing SDs into urban and rural SDs and considering SDs separately from rural areas.

6. SOME RESEARCH ISSUES AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The analysis in this paper has focused on migration patterns according to the urban-rural continuum, using the 1980 census data. The large volume of migration to the capital city (20%) as compared with the flows to other urban places, (15% to 119 MAs and 11% to 704 SDs), indicates that migration is one of the demographic processes contributing to the fast growth of the primate city and the stagnation of the medium-sized cities and small towns.

Until now, the role of migration and rural development in the growth of MAs and SDs has rarely been investigated. An examination of population growth rate by size and location can be observed by using the annual registration data. To fully understand the highly uneven spatial distribution of population among MAs and SDs compared to the metropolis, additional knowledge about factors underlying the growth and the stagnation in these urban places is needed. Moreover, special attention should be given to a study of the role of SDs in serving the rural populations surrounding them. It would be useful to know to what extent SDs have promoted the growth of rural industries based on the processing of farm products for exports. In fact, a dispersed urbanisation strategy based on SDs could provide nonagricultural employment and serve rural development needs. It is believed that this role might reduce rural outmigration to primate or regional cities (Findley, 1977; and Fawcett et al., 1980).

The last point that should be stressed is that demographers often do not mention the political and administrative issues involved in a decentralised urbanisation policy. Even though this policy is a comprehensive one, effective decentralisation has still to be seen. It will not be a real pattern of decentralisation if it does not decentralise power to local people and their institutions. Participation of local people and their organisations in matters which concern them most is the most suitable form of decentralisation. The so-called decentralised power today

is exercised not by the local people but by government employees creating a vacuum in the ideology and practice of decentralisation.

In Thailand, local administration from the provincial level downwards has been acting as local government (Dhiravegin, 1984). Moreover, the types and functions of the provincial councils, MAs' councils, SDs' committees and subdistrict committees are intensely controlled by the Ministry of Interior. This is seen as centralised administration and is called development as social control (London, 1980:120), without enlisting and promoting local political participation. It is time that a genuine local government from the grassroots level should be established. Full autonomy will bring about a more realistic policy and strategy in combating the real day to day problems.

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