

CHAPTER IV

THE DEVELOPMENT OF IMMIGRATION

§ 4.1. THE DEVELOPMENT OF IMMIGRATION FROM 1922 TO 1970

After the abolition of slavery and the repeal of state supervision — a decade during which the ex-slaves were obligated to work for the government as hired laborers — there existed a labor problem for the plantation owners.* The freed slaves were unwilling to remain on the plantations, for conditions there were not favorable to them (their rights and duties were spelled out in an official publication: *Gouvernementsblad no. 9*, dated April 16, 1863). Many left the plantations to settle elsewhere as small farmers, or to work in the forests as lumberjacks. Others went to Paramaribo, where they usually remained unemployed for extended periods. To ameliorate the labor problem on the plantations, an effort was begun to immigrate laborers from what was then British India. Between 1873 and 1916, 34,304 contract laborers were recruited there. Between 1890 and 1939, 32,954 laborers entered Surinam from the former Dutch East Indies. Some of the workers in these two groups, respectively 34 % and 32 %, returned to their homelands when their contract period was finished (*Koloniaal Verslag 1870-1949*; see also Ismael 1949: 94-96; de Klerk 1953: 77-78). Since the last Hindustani entered Surinam in 1916, the contract laborers from India fall outside of the parameters of this study. The Javanese migration lasted until 1939, thus, when contract laborers are mentioned in the following discussion, this term will refer exclusively to Javanese.

Even before the abolition of slavery some immigration took place, as with laborers from China and from the West Indies. However, only small numbers are involved, and generally these attempts must be interpreted as failures.

* For arguments in favor of the abolition of slavery, based upon ethical considerations, see Hoëvell 1854 and Wolbers 1970: 776 ff. For an evaluation which maintains that the institution was abolished at least in part for economic reasons, see Williams 1944. The latter work is not primarily involved with Surinam, but with the English-speaking Caribbean.

It needs to be emphasized that this chapter is concerned only with immigration and the remigration of Surinamers. A discussion of emigration is left for Chapter 5. The social structure of Surinam is the result of immigration (see also § 1.5.2). Knowledge about the genesis of this structure will give insight into the differential emigration of the ethnic groups.

In the description of immigration, three aspects will be distinguished: sex-ratio, ethnic composition, and age-distribution. For the nature of the material and its reliability, see § 1.4.3. For comparative purposes, this section will continue to employ the phase-division of the fertility and mortality discussions.

Table 47 shows that between 1923 and 1943 an average of 1029 persons per year settled in Surinam. During this period the actual numbers of immigrants declined steadily from 1586 in 1923 to 281 in 1943. This reduction, which clearly climaxed in 1932, was the result of the cessation of immigration by contract laborers. After 1932 only one group of such laborers entered Surinam, in 1939 as the suddenly swollen figures indicate. The yearly decline in immigrants is clear not only from their actual numbers, but from the relative immigration figures: in 1923 immigration accounted for 16.7 per thousand population, in 1943 for only 1.8. For the entire period, the average yearly immigration figure was 9.2 per 1000 population.

More than half of all immigrants — at least in the decade 1923-1932 — were Javanese. Before they left Indonesia they had signed a contract to work for five years in Surinam, which could be extended by at most ten years (de Waal Malefijt 1963: 27). Most of the other immigrants were Dutch officials who were transferred to Surinam for different periods.

As was noted in section § 1.4.3, migration data are available for only a few years of the next phase, 1943-1962. For the 1944-1949 period, it may be noted that the decline which began in 1932 continued for two years after 1943. Beginning with 1946, the number of immigrants began to increase again. For this short period, the average immigration per year was 601, which then accounted for 3.6 per 1000 inhabitants. Immigration thus was less important than in the previous phase. Most of the immigrants probably came from the Netherlands. Between 1946 and 1956, the number of people entering from there was 7421 (van der Kuyp *et al.* 1959: 154).

In the post-1962 period, immigration increased. In 1964 there were 1202 newcomers, and their yearly number rose to 1871 by 1970. This is

TABLE 47

Immigration by Sex, 1922-1970

Year	Total Immigration		Male Immigration		Female Immigration	
	#	per 1000	#	per 1000	#	per 1000
1922	2835	—	1745	—	1090	—
1923	1586	16.7	1043	21.8	543	11.5
1924	1991	20.4	1223	24.9	768	15.9
1925	2154	21.3	1086	21.4	1068	21.3
1926	2130	20.4	1131	21.6	999	19.2
1927	2325	21.6	1303	24.2	1022	19.0
1928	2751	24.8	1696	30.6	1055	19.1
1929	1786	15.7	1079	19.0	707	12.4
1930	988	8.5	576	9.9	412	7.1
1931	1082	9.1	669	11.3	413	6.9
1932	396	3.2	242	4.0	154	2.5
1933	319	2.5	184	3.0	135	2.1
1934	374	2.9	238	3.8	136	2.1
1935	240	1.8	147	2.3	93	1.4
1936	319	2.4	203	3.1	116	1.7
1937	320	2.4	182	2.7	138	2.0
1938	226	1.6	145	2.1	81	1.1
1939	1729	12.5	—	—	—	—
1940	181	1.2	94	1.3	87	1.2
1941	201	1.4	131	1.8	70	0.9
1942	233	1.5	143	1.9	90	1.2
1943	281	1.8	182	2.4	99	1.3
1944	124	0.8	55	0.7	69	0.8
1945	117	0.7	63	0.8	54	0.6
1946	767	4.8	457	5.8	310	3.8
1947	1516	9.3	774	9.6	742	8.9
1948	643	3.8	—	—	—	—
1949	763	4.4	407	4.8	356	4.1
1950—1963	—	—	—	—	—	—
1964	1202	4.0	629	4.2	573	3.8
1965	1354	4.4	692	4.5	662	4.3
1966	1580	5.0	791	5.0	789	4.9
1967	1834	5.6	944	5.8	890	5.4
1968	1825	5.4	921	5.5	904	5.4
1969	1834	5.3	955	5.6	879	5.1
1970	1871	5.3	924	5.3	947	5.4
1971 *	2149	6.0	—	—	—	—

* Provisional figure.

a yearly average of 1642. The increase is reflected in the relative figures: these amount to 4 per 1000 in 1964, and 5.3 per 1000 in 1970. No systematic investigation has been made of the composition of the immigrant population, or of their reasons for settling in Surinam. It is known from a recent study, however, that only a very small percentage of the Surinamers studying in the Netherlands are willing to return to Surinam "under the present circumstances" (Sedoc-Dahlberg 1971: 151-153).

§ 4.2. THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE IMMIGRANTS BY SEX,
ETHNIC GROUP, AND AGE CATEGORY

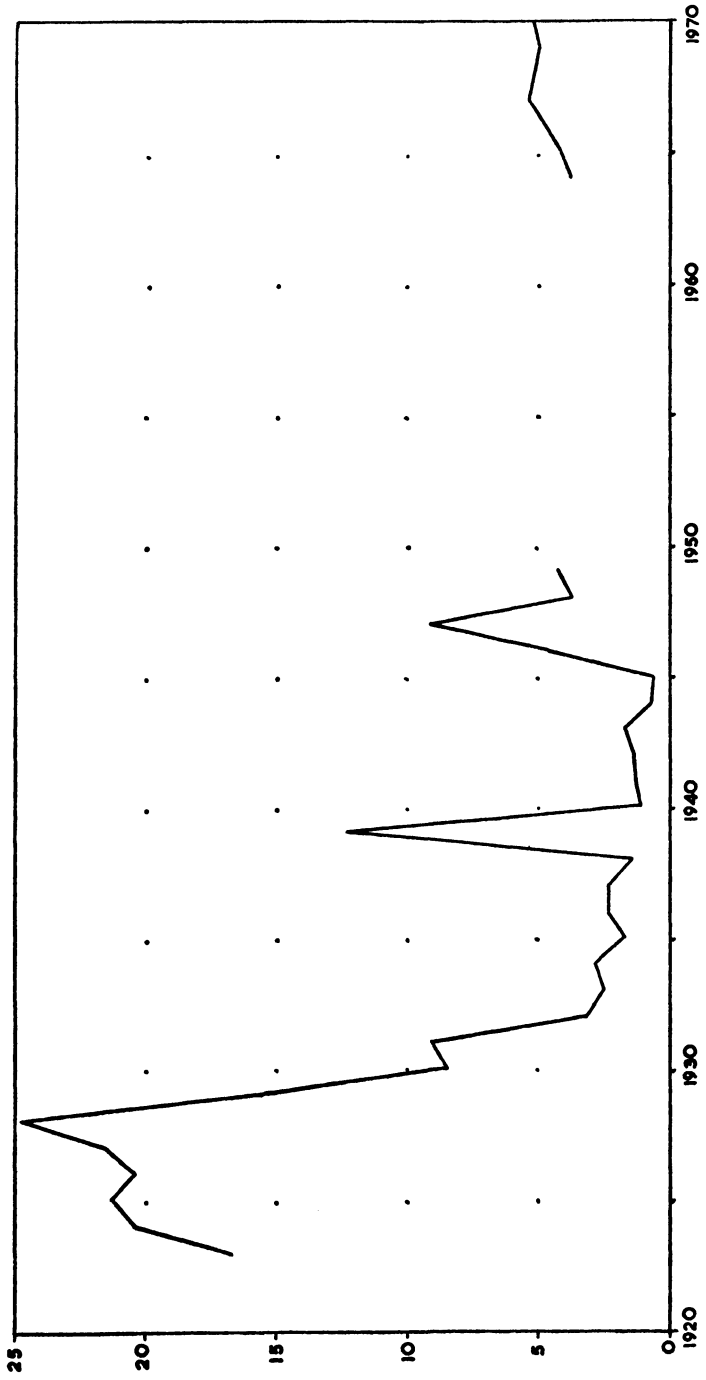
The number of immigrants between 1923 and 1943 declined both for men and for women. While on the average 585 men settled in Surinam each year during this period, only 411 women did so. The sex ratio for the year 1939 is unknown, and has been ignored in this computation. As a result, the average for the whole country differs somewhat from the sum of the averages for the two sexes. In relative terms also, the males had higher figures per year than the females: respectively 10.6 and 7.4 per 1000. This minor difference between the groups is related to the fact that the contract laborers from the Dutch Indies in the 'Thirties were primarily males.

During the next stage (1943-1962), as was explained in § 1.4.3, sex distribution data are available only for the years 1944 to 1949. An increase is noted since 1946 in both male and female immigrants.

This increase continued after 1962. For men, the number of immigrants rose from 629 in 1964 to 929 in 1970. The yearly average is 836 male and 806 female settlers: the male surplus is small. The relative figures also increased: for men, the ratio went from 4.2 per 1000 in 1964 to 5.3 per 1000 in 1970. For women, the equivalent numbers were 3.8 and 5.4. The yearly average immigration figure is 5.1 per 1000 for men, 4.9 per 1000 for women.

Another aspect of immigration concerns the ethnic composition of the immigrant groups. It is difficult to assess the representation of the different ethnicities for the period 1922-1943, because the only distinctions made were "Hindustani contract laborers", "Javanese contract laborers", and "Other immigrants". The latter category consisted primarily of Creoles and Dutchmen, however, the proportion of Creoles is unknown. Furthermore, during that period there were some Hindustani and Javanese who were not (or not any longer) contract laborers, especially in the Nineteen-Forties. Again, no numbers have been given

Figure 10
SURINAM IMMIGRATION RATES PER 1000 INHABITANTS, 1920-1970



for these groups. It is therefore not possible to determine how the differential immigration developed in that era.

For the same reasons, it is not possible to draw conclusions about the 1943-1962 period, insofar as the ethnicity of immigrants is concerned. Again, it is probable that the Creoles were dominant both numerically and relatively. This observation rests on the fact that the Creoles (as well as the Jews) were among the first Surinamers to go to the Netherlands for education (van Lier: 1971: 111; Sedoc-Dahlberg 1971: 82, 84). It follows that more Creoles than Hindustani or Javanese repatriated to Surinam.

The yearly increase in immigrants noted for the 1962-1970 period holds true for the three dominant ethnic groups. The number of Creole immigrants increased from 531 in 1964 to 683 in 1970; Hindustani rose from 71 to 311, and Javanese from 15 to 63 in the same time span. The mean number of immigrants for each of these groups per year was

TABLE 48

Immigration by Ethnic Group, in Numbers and per 1000 Inhabitants of Each Ethnic Group

Year	Creole		Hindustani		Javanese	
	Number	per 1000	Number	per 1000	Number	per 1000
1964	531	4.5	71	0.6	15	0.3
1965	648	5.4	92	0.7	15	0.2
1966	632	5.2	86	0.6	28	0.5
1967	633	5.1	159	1.2	48	0.9
1968	691	5.5	151	1.1	42	0.7
1969	707	5.7	257	1.8	40	0.7
1970	683	5.4	311	2.2	63	1.1

respectively 646, 161, and 35. The numerical dominance of the Creoles during these years is related to the fact that there are more Creoles among the Surinamers living in foreign parts: more students, laborers, and academicians. Their over-representation is demonstrated not only in numbers but in proportions. For the 1964-1970 period, the average number of Creole immigrants amounted to 5.2 per 1000 Creole inhabitants of Surinam; for the Hindustani and Javanese these numbers

were 1.1 and 0.6. It is notable (see Table 48) that the ethnic differences in these ratios decreased over time.

Finally we turn our attention to the age-distribution of the immigrants. For the first two phases of the research (1922-1943, 1943-1962) no statistics were kept on ages, nor were years differentiated.

TABLE 49

Immigration by Age Group, in Numbers and per 1000 Inhabitants of Each Age Group

Year	0-14		15-64		65 and Older	
	Number	per 1000	Number	per 1000	Number	per 1000
1964	343	2.4	823	6.0	31	2.7
1965	464	3.1	861	6.1	28	2.4
1966	513	3.3	1034	7.1	32	2.7
1967	539	3.4	1251	8.3	43	3.6
1968	501	3.0	1266	8.1	58	4.9
1969	518	3.1	1256	7.8	59	4.9
1970	527	3.1	1292	7.9	50	4.2

The age-distribution employed for the 1962-1970 period is the same as that used to analyze the effects of population growth on the age-pyramid, to be covered in a later chapter. For this period it is clear that the age category 0-14 years has increased among the immigrants. A greater increase is noted in the age 15-64 group, and even the 65 and over category has grown. The numbers for the 0-14 group rose from 343 in 1964 to 527 in 1970; the labor-productive category swelled from 823 to 1292; and the group over age 65 went from 31 in 1964 to 50 in 1970. On a yearly average, 486 people aged 0-14 went to Surinam, 1111 aged 15-64, and 43 aged 65 and over. What is more interesting: the average number of children settling in Surinam each year amounted to 3.0 per 1000 people aged 0-14; for the other two age brackets it was respectively 7.3 and 3.6. Furthermore, it appears that the immigration of the 0-14 group increased very little from year to year. The same holds true for the 15-64 category, but the 65 and over group almost doubled its number of immigrants. That the greatest percentage of immigrants belonged to the 15-64 category, is related to the fact that they con-

stituted the majority among the Surinamers who, over the years, emigrated to the Netherlands. This will be demonstrated more clearly in the following chapter.

The foregoing shows that the demographic influence of immigration on Surinam was not particularly important in the years between 1922 and 1970. The mean number of immigrants for the three phases of the research were respectively 9.2, 3.6, and 5.0 per 1000 inhabitants. This ignores the significant streams of immigrants from the former Dutch East Indies and British India, because most of the contract laborers arrived before 1922. Only after the Second World War did the number of immigrants begin to increase (again). This phenomenon is largely due to the return of former Suriname emigrants, and as such it is expected to continue because the number of Surinamers living in the Netherlands is considerable, and increasing steadily.