

important: the integration of increasing numbers of returnees and the adaptation of the labor-sending countries' economies to much lower remittances.

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Dietrich Kühne: *Vielvölkergesellschaft zwischen Dorf und Metropole. Fortentwicklung und neue Wege der Urbanisierung in Malaysia 1970-1980.* (Schriften des Instituts für Asienkunde, 47). Wiesbaden: Otto Harassowitz, 1986. XVIII + 538 pages, 44 maps, 18 coloured illustrations. DM 138.-

Kühne's study continues his earlier work on urbanization in Malaysia published more than a decade ago (*Urbanisation in Malaysia. Analyse eines Prozesses*, Wiesbaden 1976). While his previous book focussed on the whole urban history of Malaysia from its earliest (pre-historic) beginnings up to the year 1970, the recently published volume seeks to assess the dynamics of urbanization during the 1970-1980 period. Kühne's latest endeavor was greatly inspired by the drastic changes in Malaysia's development strategies following the May 1969 riots in Kuala Lumpur. Starting with the Second Malaysia Plan (1971-1975) the Malaysian Government had initiated its New Economic Policy (NEP) with the objective of restructuring Malaysian society. NEP basically followed a two-pronged approach – the eradication of poverty irrespective of race and the creation of a more equitable distribution of income and wealth through fostering a "viable and dynamic commercial and industrial community of Malays and other indigenous people." As pointed out by Kühne this implied a shift from a *laissez faire* to a technicistic development philosophy.

Briefly summarized, Kühne's voluminous study examines the following major issues: (a) the growth and distribution of Malaysia's population during the decade between 1970 and 1980; (b) the changes brought about by NEP in the country's socio-economic structure; and (c) the functional, social and spatial implications for the urbanization process.

Given the limited space, it is impossible here to do complete justice to the vast array of empirical material analyzed by Kühne. So I confine myself to highlighting some of the most salient findings of the study.

Although the eastern parts of Malaysia (the east coast plus the Borneo territories of Sabah and Sarawak) showed the most rapid population growth, there was no marked change in the population distribution between the east and the west. The majority of the Malaysian population still settles along the Peninsula's west coast.

Malayanization of urban centers continued. This phenomenon is not only due to the more rapid natural growth of Malays (who were less inclined to accept family planning measures) than the other ethnicities (Chinese and Indian), but also to their greater cityward mobility. In fact, rural-to-urban migration has clearly outpaced all other migratory movements. The "retreat from the paddy field" is, however not caused by pauperization in rural areas. Rather is it the result of strong "pull"-effects from booming urban economies. This is further underscored by the fact that although squatter settlements and other forms of makeshift housing were sprouting up in many cities, they rarely signified social degradation or proletarianization. Many of these settlements consolidated after a few years and, hand in hand with the gradual upgrading of their physical appearance, they changed into a lower middle class, "petty bourgeois" milieu. Rather than being "slums of despair" or the result of poverty, their emergence must be interpreted as a kind of "Klondike-effect". Throughout the decade, there was a trend in most Malaysian cities towards full employment and increasing real wages – unemployment and underemployment remained at very low levels.

While the cities grew further and the exodus from the traditional agricultural sector continued, government schemes for new town and agro-town development failed. In fact, as Kühne convincingly shows, the NEP strategy to "transplant the city to the countryside" as a means of improving the economic well-being of the Malays, had caused serious damage to the eco-system such as large-scale deforestation, soil erosion, upsetting of the hydrological balance, destruction of wildlife and unfavorable climatical changes. With the general trend towards urbanization, the newly established agro-towns were little more than an exercise in "pioneering without pioneers". Not "colonization", but "concentration" became the order of the day; a process that was even replicated in the case of Shah Alam and other new towns in the Kuala Lumpur/Klang Valley Region. Kühne concludes with the observation that there is a universal trend toward interdependence in Malayan society as a whole, coupled with individual specialization and a general widening of the income scale.

These findings are exemplified in Chapter III. Here Kühne presents a set of 18 systematical case studies ranging from peripheral settlement types to what he calls "relais centres" (an assortment of small towns and one intermediate city) to the Kuala Lumpur/Klang Valley conurbation. With the exception of a few squatter settlements in Petaling Jaya and Port Klang these are the same settlements that were investigated in his previous study.

Kühne's study must be considered a major contribution to the (however limited) stock of knowledge available on Malaysia in the Federal Republic of Germany. The wealth of data, maps and other material is hardly matched by any other study

known to the reviewer – including the English-language literature on Malaysia. The author must also be commended for his extraordinarily fine style in presenting his findings.

A major asset of the study is its longitudinal approach which permits the author to unravel the dynamics of population growth and socio-economic development patterns. Another noteworthy strength lies in the fact that urbanization is conceived in its interdependencies with the rural hinterland – an aspect frequently neglected in urbanization studies. Moreover, the book directs attention to the severe environmental hazards inherent in rapid modernization.

Contrary to what is frequently believed by technocrats and politicians in developing countries, the relationship between progress and environment is not an either – or one. One might agree with Kühne that a balance must be struck between development and the environment. Otherwise development will be achieved at unacceptably high political costs and with a serious decline in the quality of life.

If there are any weak points in Kühne's study one might regret that the analysis of NEP's implications in the cities remains somewhat vague. While NEP may have increased employment opportunities and income, there is increasing evidence that the main benefits were reaped by a small number of Malay businessmen-bureaucrat-cum-politicians. Moreover, although Kühne is correct in pointing out that Malaysia's economic boom during the seventies was mainly propelled by manufacturing, the reader would have expected a few more qualifying remarks on the nature of Malaysia's industrialization. As the early and mid-eighties have amply shown, export-oriented industrialization that is restricted to a few key sectors with relatively simple production stages such as micro-electronics and garments, is highly vulnerable to the vagaries of the world economy and may thus have serious repercussions on socio-economic development patterns in the country.

Finally, a few remarks on Kühne's criticism of what he terms "highly popular development theories". Kühne is certainly right in criticizing the "catch all" character of some of these theories and that Malaysia does not fit into many of them. However, one has to keep in mind that as a NIC Malaysia is a special case compared with many other developing countries. Hence, the theories that Kühne criticizes as being non-specific to the particular case may nevertheless hold true for a broad variety of other developing countries. Moreover, Kühne seems to overlook the fact that even those theories which he seems to attack – apparently Senhaas' dissociation theory – have been modified considerably over time. Senhaas' reader of 1974 (*Peripherer Kapitalismus – Analysen über Abhängigkeit und Unterentwicklung*, Frankfurt 1974) which he quotes in this connection definitely does not represent the latest state of this school of thought. Many of the global views presented there here been considerably refined and modified in subsequent publications (D. Senhaas, Von

Europa lernen, Frankfurt 1982; and, published in the same year as Kühne's book, U. Menzel/D. Senghaas, Europas Entwicklung und die Dritte Welt. Frankfurt 1986). Moreover, even though Kühne's plea for precise empirical research and continued refutation of existing theories deserves to be commended, he appears to ignore the fact that recent years have seen a return to the case study type of research. The era of grand theoretical designs and bold cross-national and cross-cultural generalizations has come to an end – at least for the time being.

However, these minor objections should not obscure the fact that with his recent study Kühne has produced another fine scholarly work. Without doubt the study is one of the major German contributions to development research on South-east Asia.

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Tai-chün Kuo/Ramon H. Myers: Understanding Communist China: Communist China Studies in the United States and the Republic of China 1949-1978. Stanford, Cal.: The Hoover Institution Press, 1986. XII + 172 pages, US Dollar 9.95

This book is not a bibliography as one might expect by a first glance at its title. The authors' aim is to analyse and classify in different typologies the attempts of China-experts in both the United States and the Republic of China (ROC) to understand events and development in Mainland China. It covers the thirty years between the founding of the People's Republic and the beginning of a new era which has been named postmaoist.

It is not surprising that *Chapter 1 "The Problem and Our Approach"* (p. 1-15) starts with the question: "How can the members of one society understand the behavior and interpret the events of another society which is different in culture, language, and history from their own?" (p. 1) It seems to be a good beginning to place the US and ROC efforts to understand Mainland China in the greater political and economic context after World War II. It is a pity, however, that the interests underlying official research activities in both countries remain isolated from the rest of the book, i.e. from the research results under discussion: to be aware of the danger of conscious or unconscious bias is an approach which should not be easily dismissed in a study evaluating the interpretations of members of one society by another.

From the different approaches listed by the authors "which might be used independently or in conjunction to understand behavior in foreign countries" viz. the "descriptive typology", the "narrative approach", the "social science theory", this book is committed to the so-called descriptive typology method.