

spirit and the manifold restrictions of Hindu society, a cult which has since been re-brahmanized by this strong social group of priests (striking proof is the fact that the tribal outcastes are not allowed to go into the great temple of Puri).

Besides many other controversial issues between Weber, Rösel and the views of other scholars it should be noted that Rösel asserts the opposite of Weber's postulate, viz., that independent capitalism (in the modern sense) existed in principle in pre-colonial India. To support this Rösel refers to the 300 year-old Asian trade, the role of "Indian money-changers" and "of textile and agricultural capitalists" (p.81), but he has completely overlooked the fact that modern capitalism cannot emerge without the vigorous industrialization of a country. But the British colonialists implanted only enclave industries on Indian soil, and the Indians before the colonial period were not able to industrialize their country. The reasons for the absence of industrialization are indeed manifold, but it seems not to be wrong to describe them as an embarrassment in traditions which are characteristic of most of the non-European countries with the exception of Japan. To answer the question whether independent capitalism could have developed in India, further investigations are indispensable.

Besides all traditional obstacles to industrialization it should not be forgotten that the structure of the Indian subcontinent was largely that of an agricultural society, not a great commercial power.

Another flaw of this book is the author's tendency to lay stress on contradictions in terms like a mathematician (for instance, karman doctrine versus ancestry cult), thereby ignoring the fact that in a field like religion the greatest contradictions can exist side by side.

Klaus Rauwolf

EVA und RUDOLF RICHTER: *Selbsthilfe als Entwicklungsprinzip am Beispiel Sri Lankas*. (Sozialwissenschaftliche Schriften, Heft 9). Berlin: Duncker und Humblot, 1984. 83 pages. DM 48.-

This little brochure on "Self-help as a Principle of Development: The Case of Sri Lanka" is indeed a stimulus to reflect upon the idiosyncracies of the book-market. The (Austrian) authors collected their material during an obviously short visit to the island in 1977 (as students I suppose, since they were subsidized by an Institute from Vienna University), they wrote a preface in 1980 and the book itself was finally brought out in summer 1984. But it is not only the time-lag between "field-work" and publication of "data" that renders the study more or less useless; the information itself is utterly superficial even when judged by the standards of knowledge available in 1977. The authors had

talks with the leaders (only!) of fourteen non-governmental organizations operating in Sri Lanka (most of them relying on Western "aid") out of which they condensed short descriptions of the organizations and their performance, which I would not dare to recommend even as a hand-out for briefing a foreign delegation. Even more unsatisfactory is the "theoretical" chapter on p. 68 ff. where the development potential of self-help organizations is discussed within the wider framework of community development and cooperative systems. Here the authors rely on two studies from the late sixties to back up their generalizations. Our congratulations to the publishers for having printed a text which is certainly below the standard of an average MA-thesis. But they did it in Duncker and Humblot style, i. e. at the cost of nearly DM 0,60 per page whereas the five publications brought out in the same series of "Sozialwissenschaftliche Schriften" in 1983 figure at an average of DM 0,39 per page "only".

Detlef Kantowsky

VOLKER KASCH: Agrarpolitik in Malaysia - Zur Rolle des Staates im Entwicklungsprozeß. (Darstellungen zur internationalen Politik und Entwicklungspolitik, Vol. 13). Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, 1984. XVII, 300 pages; 54 tabs.; 5 graphs. DM 63.-

Book title and year of publication arouse expectations. One would like to learn more about a subject that presents a superabundance of pressing problems - opening up of new land, settlement, forest-destruction, rural exodus, scarcity of manpower to name only a few. Since the proclamation of the New Economic Policy (NEP) in 1971, revolutionary things have indeed taken place. We know, to be sure, a good deal about the objectives, institutions and means of this policy, less, however, about how it is put into practice and more or less nothing about the unwelcome side-effects. One thus hopes for new and reliable insights. That the author confines his study to the Malaysian peninsula is quite understandable - if it were to include the Borneo territories as well, it would doubtless come to conclusions that cannot easily be generalized. So far so good.

However, the study takes quite a different direction. It joins company with innumerable other such works that seek to champion a particular dogma. The "thesis" seems to be "... that underdevelopment (?) is reproduced in peripheral countries (!) through the existing class and power structures as reflected in the institution of the state" (p.2). We are, so it would seem, confronted with one of those fashionable global theories, applicable at random to all "underdeveloped countries" that are fundamentally open to criticism as long as they do not fulfill a - not clearly defined-egalitarian ideal.