

field of research, a meritorious thing, since from a certain point onwards prevailing opinions tend to become stereotypes.

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FRIEDHELM BETKE, MATHIAS GRUNEWALD, JOHANNES WEITEKÄMPER:  
Partner, Pläne, Projekte. Die personelle Hilfe der Bundesrepublik in West Malaysia. (Bielefelder Studien zur Entwicklungssoziologie). Saarbrücken: Verlag Breitenbach, 1978, 433 pp., DM 45.-

The subtitle of this comprehensive study indicates what the rather plain title itself conceals: research into a central aspect of West German development aid. This work is the result of a research project on the practical aspects of development planning and policies carried out in West Malaysia in 1976 by three sociologists in the Dept. of Sociology at the University of Bielefeld. The authors have used a very broad approach, ranging from Dependence Theory through social psychology to efficiency evaluations of technical aid. It is a particular merit of this study that technical aid is treated within the framework of development aid, and, further, that the effectiveness of development aid is assessed not - as is usual - in terms of efficiency but as an element within the system of international relations. Accordingly, the authors resort to Galtung's centre-periphery model and Senghaas's Theory of Peripheral Capitalism, both of which focus on the effects of capitalistic penetration into the Third World.

There is a detailed account of the systematic development of Malaysia's structural dependence upon the West. This runs from the beginning of Portuguese and British "indirect rule" to the export dependency in this century of certain products such as tin and rubber (1935: 60 % of cultivated land). In the section "Ethnoplurality and Social Stratification" the authors analyse the conditions which allow "strategic groups" (elites) to draw together while perpetuating the heterogeneity of the "oppressed groups", a phenomenon which has favoured far-reaching dependency upon the outside world even in the fields of export substitution, manufacturing and processing. The decision of 20 West German firms to transfer their activities to Malaysia plays no small part in this respect.

The next section discusses the effects of German projects and the functions of German technical aid workers within this system of dependence (included are both personnel from both the German Agency for Technical Co-operation (GTZ) and the German Volunteer Service (DED). There is also a survey of 35 of the 47 (74 %) )

German technical workers active in West Malaysia at the time of the project. Betke et al. present some effects of projects under headings such as "export promotion", "technical dependence", "propping up the bureaucracy" and "subsumption under capital" (p. 198-239). They confront the reader with contradictions in which local planning and German development aid agencies have found themselves as a consequence of supporting projects which run counter to proclaimed criteria (p. 240).

There are many new useful data for the discussion on the criticism of experts. Of the 20 experts of the GTZ interviewed only 45 % (9) had attended training courses; these were conducted at the Area Orientation Centre of the German Foundation for International Development (DSE) in Bad Honnef.

According to the departmental head of the DSE, Oldenbruch, the training concentrates on language, knowledge of country, and development policies (p. 144); however, the development experts - of whom the system demands far too much - seemed to miss much. "It is no secret that many experts - in Bad Honnef to prepare for their future duties - are more interested in security and income than in their work. The low rate of taxation is more important than the lecture of some foreigner." (p. 144) One expert willingly confirmed in 1976 that "during training it was considered smart not to pay attention to and to deride tutors who discussed problems of underdevelopment". One had the feeling than one "was already half there" (p. 144). Hence, it is no coincidence that only 45 % of the GTZ experts spoke the local language - Bahasa Malaysia - whereas 60 % of the DED volunteers could.

In conclusion the authors develop an alternative concept of development based on a critical attitude to industrialization (p. 377).

This important study is very instructive both for experts and for the layman.

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