

to whom the philosophy of Buddhism also proves the decay of the pure doctrine (5.4.1). Nevertheless the book remains a challenge which future research cannot neglect.

Dieter Back

HANS-GEORG BOHLE: *Bewässerung und Gesellschaft im Cauvery-Delta (Süd-indien)*. (Erdkundliches Wissen, Heft 57). Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1981. 266 pp., 8 multicoloured maps, DM 68.-

Bohle shows in his excellent study that a wide ranging, inter-disciplinary approach, combining knowledge of India's political and agricultural history, social geography, irrigation technology, and applied statistics with a profound understanding of development theories of the recent past is necessary to gain elaborate knowledge about irrigation and its social implications in one of India's most prosperous agricultural areas.

The study is about the delta area of the Cauvery river situated 200 km south of Madras in Tanjore District (Tamil Nadu). The author gives an account of the history of this area emphasizing the difference that development and modernization had made during the last 350 years where the improvement of agricultural yields and the social welfare of the people is concerned. Bohle does not add theories to the many already existing about societies whose agriculture is predominantly based on irrigation, but gives four detailed case studies to show where he gets his theories from. This twofold approach, giving empirical data and being pretentious on a theoretical level is an advantage of this study.

The history of irrigation technologies and social stratification in this area show that inequality in the latter is closely connected with the conditions of the first. Through hundreds of years until the times of British Rule in India, life in the Cauvery delta was based on the inequality of the traditional caste system. There was poverty among the lower castes within the traditional security of inter-caste service relationship and traditional dependencies. The improvements in the hydraulic structure of the Cauvery delta area during British colonialism had a severe disintegrating effect on the medium peasantry and the great amount of smallholders in this area. The increasing agricultural yields gained by intensive modernization of agriculture (use of chemical manure, high-yielding varieties of crop, double cropping, governmental credit programs etc.) in British and post-colonial times mainly favoured the traditional rich landowning Brahmin castes, while small-holders were more and more pauperized and in many cases became landless labourers.

In his four case studies Bohle proves how modern development strategies contribute to the polarization of very few exceedingly rich landowners and the spreading of mass poverty. His study should be read as a classic of a development from inequality within traditional security to misery within abundance.

Klaus Seeland

WERNER RÖLL, ULRICH SCHOLZ, HARALD UHLIG (eds.): Symposium: "Wandel bäuerlicher Lebensformen in Südostasien". (Giessener Geographische Schriften, Heft 48). Giessen: Geographisches Institut der Justus Liebig-Universität, 1980. 168 pages, Summaries in English, DM 25.- (To be ordered from: Geographisches Institut, Justus Liebig-Universität, Senckenbergstr. 1, 6300 Gießen, West Germany)

The volume contains eleven papers read at a symposium in 1979. Eight of them focus on Indonesia (A. Bodenstedt, Ländliche Sozialstruktur und angepasste Agrartechnologie in Südostasien - das Beispiel Indonesien (Java); J. Metzner, Eigenständige Weiterentwicklung traditioneller Formen bäuerlicher Zusammenarbeit in ihrer Wirkung auf die Agrarstruktur - das Beispiel Adonara/Ost-Indonesien; S. Groeneveld, Agrarberatung und sozialökonomische Feldforschung am Beispiel der Agrarberatungszentren in Westjava - ein Plädoyer für Aktionsforschung; K. Horstmann, Die Erhöhung der Tragfähigkeit des ländlichen Java durch nichtbäuerliche Erwerbstätigkeit; W. Röll, Siedlung und Agrarwirtschaft von Pygmäen steinzeitlicher Kulturstufe im zentralen Bergland von Irian Jaya, Indonesien; G. R. Zimmermann, "Landwirtschaftliche Involution" in staatlich geplanten indonesischen Transmigrationsprojekten; G. Burger, Traditioneller Landbau und Regionalentwicklung im Konflikt: das Beispiel des Rawa Pening-Beckens in Zentral-Java; A. Leemann, Probleme der indonesischen Entwicklungsstrategie), one on Thailand (U. Scholz, Spontane Neulanderschließung in den Waldgebieten Südost-Thailands), and finally, two which have a wider geographical scope (A. Junghans, Entwicklungstendenzen landwirtschaftlicher Betriebssysteme im Malayischen Archipel; H. Uhlig, Innovationen im Reisbau als Träger der ländlichen Entwicklung in Südostasien).

Besides the variation in topics, the papers also differ considerably as regards their length and quality. As limitation of space prohibits a discussion of all articles, some comments on two of them may suffice.

Uhlig's paper - by far the longest of all - contains a wealth of technical information on changes in rice cultivation methods, putting them in their historical perspective, and is completed by an impressive bibliography. Unfortunately, the