

KLAUS-PETER NIKLAS: Singapore. Beispiel einer weltmarktorientierten Industrialisierungspolitik. (Ökonomische Studien, Bd. 24, Institut für Außenhandel und Überseewirtschaft der Universität Hamburg) Stuttgart/New York: Gustav Fischer Verlag, 1977, 376 p., DM 46.-

According to the author "the industrialization of Singapore from 1959 to 1969 was very successful". However, also according to the author's findings, "despite the fast growth there was relatively high unemployment which decreased only slowly". Thus, the central question of this study is the "analysis of the interdependence between economic policy, industrial development and employment". It becomes apparent that during the period studied by Niklas and within the respective branches of industry which Niklas selected for his study, the majority of industries subsidized directly or indirectly by the state were capital-intensive and could not offer sufficient job opportunities as had been the original goal of Singapore's planning efforts. Consequently, the unemployment rate in 1969 (6.7 %, according to official data!) was higher than in 1957 (4.9 %), at the time when this policy was mapped out.

Unfortunately, the period covered by this study stretches only from 1959-69 (though the book was published in 1977!) and this period admittedly was transitional within the scope of Singapore's industrialization. Only after the implementation of the notorious "Employment Act" of 1968 and the "Industrial Relations Act", which reduced real wages by about 30-40 %, did the labour-intensive phase of industrialization (electronics etc.) gain momentum. Therefore, it is difficult to understand why the author of this study, who obviously had access to more recent literature (according to his bibliography), did not take later developments into account, a step which would have made his study more substantial but also turned his findings upside down. In the following years, the government of Singapore was not so much concerned with "full employment" as with the problem of how to supply enough labour for the mushrooming multi-national corporations. As early as 1972 more than 80 000 "guest-workers" had to be imported in order to keep local wages low and lure more foreign investors into the city-state.

Another shortcoming of this study is that the author (who spent only four months in Singapore) accepted the data provided by government agencies at face-value without cross-checking them with independent sources. Even more serious is his bias (derived from governmental sources) against the formerly independent trade-unions, which he labels as "communists" (like Lee Kuan Yew did but in his case for reasons of state and internal power struggles!), and whose deregistration as "illegal organizations" he mentions without second thoughts. Furthermore, the costs of this industrialization policy to the country and the people are not mentioned at all and the author is content to describe only the "instruments" of this policy at great length.

To sum up: this study convincingly demonstrates the various limitations of an economic and one-dimensional approach to a very complex topic. Thus, it provides a "scientific" foundation to the myth that after the take-over of political power by the People's Action Party in 1959 a sort of success-story began despite the fact that not all problems (like full employment as the author claims) could be solved at once. Soon after 1969, where this study terminates, Singapore certainly became an "employer's dream" with the extinction of a genuine trade-union movement and decreasing real wages despite extended working hours. But the island-state also turned into an "employee's nightmare" quite close to other frightening examples like Hongkong, Taiwan and South Korea. It is regrettable that the author also did not care to touch on these consequences of world market-oriented industrialization policies. In order to balance the view a bit, the interested reader should have a close look at Wilhelm Holtgrave's study: *Gesellschaftliche Auswirkungen export-orientierter Industrialisierungsprozesse am Beispiel von Singapore und Hongkong* (Diplomarbeit, Marburg 1979), where the other side of the coin has been aptly described.

Hans U. Luther

THEODOR BERGMANN/DIETER EITEL: *Promotion of the Poorer Sections of the Indian Rural Population*. Saarbrücken: Breitenbach, 1976. 107 pages, DM 9. -

As in many 'developing countries', the majority of the poor people in India live in rural areas. Technocratic strategies to promote agricultural production - like the 'Green Revolution' - have helped the owner-cultivators of large and medium farms, but not the ones that most needed support. To promote the rural poor two agencies were created in India in 1970:

- the Small Farmers Development Agency (SFDA) and
- the Agency for Marginal Farmers and Landless Labourers (MFAL).

The target group of the SFDA were farmers with potentially viable holdings of 2.5-7.5 acres. These farmers benefitted from the scheme mostly by improved irrigation facilities financed by supervised credit. The MFAL target groups were farmers with holdings of up to 2.5 acres and landless agricultural labourers. The marginal farmers received mainly subsidized credit to improve their cultivation technique, while the landless could use the credit to raise livestock. Additionally the MFAL initiated new Rural Works Programmes to increase the employment opportunities for the landless.