

SVEN CEDERROTH: *Survival and Profit in Rural Java: The Case of an East Javanese Village*. (Nordic Institute of Asian Studies Monograph Series 63). Richmond: Curzon Press, 1995. XI, 301 pages. ISBN 0-7007-0294-6

To familiarize the reader with the setting of his research, Cederroth takes him on a bus ride from Surabaya to Malang, eventually reaching the village - called Bantur, a pseudonym - on a literary journey. This classical introduction is followed by an intensive and detailed discussion of what the villagers do to gain their livelihood in a Javanese village in the 1980s. It is one of the strengths of this book to demonstrate how complex are the strategies for survival and making profit in village Java today.

The research was originally conceived in 1982 as an interdisciplinary project - fieldwork was carried out mainly in 1987/88 - of historians and anthropologists focussing on "the landless people being excluded from agriculture in rural Java". State intervention in agriculture and the development of infrastructure and manufacturing had already deeply affected villages and rural people in Indonesia. Social change at the village level and the fate of the landless in the aftermath of agricultural intensification became prominent research questions. For example, were labor opportunities in agriculture shrinking for the poor? Were there alternative opportunities in the off-farm sector which could offset the losses? Cederroth's study provides answers to these and other questions regarding economic change in the case of Bantur - a village selected for factors favoring change, such as easy access to markets, uneven distribution of land, opportunities for off-farm employment.

The book is organized in three parts, preceded by an introduction to the geographical and political setting of the village. Part one is on agricultural employment, part two on off-field occupations, and part three on religious and spiritual orientations between Javanese syncretism and orthodox Islam.

The agricultural economy of Bantur is mainly based on the cultivation of irrigated rice. The largest part of the land is year-round irrigable *sawah* which is cultivated very intensively with new, high-yielding varieties of rice and various vegetable crops. Cederroth finds that the impact of agricultural growth - both in rice production and the cultivation of secondary crops for urban markets - on employment in Bantur has been positive contrary to early fears of massive rural unemployment, but in line with other village studies. Thus, the agricultural economy of Bantur is thriving - except for serious pest problems in rice cultivation - though of decreasing relative importance to the village population. Also, the potential for further agricultural expansion seems to be very limited. Because of the variability of yields, planting seasons and market prices, the author abandoned the plan to

estimate incomes from agriculture. Thus, the relative contribution of agriculture to the income of the villagers is an unknown variable. (p. 209) This is a substantial shortcoming in a study which tries to link non-farm occupations with the lack of opportunities in the farming sector, a lack which has stimulated the development of more "off-farm occupation".

Ownership of land has been subject to both processes of fragmentation and concentration since the 1960s when the colonial system of land rotation under communal control was abolished. The causes lie in population growth and frequent pawning on the one hand, and the financial power of a few individuals on the other hand.

45% of the households own irrigated land. Using local terms, Cederroth distinguishes three groups of owner-operators: first, "genuine" or "pure", modern and "moonshine" farmers. "Pure" farmers are traditional in their attitudes of basically keeping to the established crops - rice followed by secondary crops - and their seasonal rotation. Unlike "modern farmers", they are averse to risk. Farmers categorized as "modern" are keen to experiment, and try to fetch a premium price for cash crops by scheduling them according to anticipated price peaks even if this implies disregarding ecological requirements of the crops. Their cropping strategies sometimes resemble gambling - real gambling being also part of "money-making strategies" described in chapter nine. Finally, the term "moonshine farmer" refers to the fact that the farmers of this group are - to use a more common term - "absentee owners" who mostly have their land worked by sharecroppers or wage labor. Their occupations, e.g. in the civil service, distinguish them as members of a rural middle class.

356 (or 57%) of Banturese households do not own any land. However, many members of this group have access to income from agriculture through arrangements such as wage labor and sharecropping (chapter five). The majority (70%) of sharecroppers are found among landless peasants.

Almost half (43%) of the villagers have off-farm occupations of some kind, i.e. work which is not related to the farm as an agricultural production unit. Cederroth suggests replacing the term "off-farm" with "off-field" to prevent confusion about the off-farm work of non-farming households. Most definitions of "off-farm" activities have included any work carried out by rural households, whether or not these households were themselves farming.

Off-field occupations have become so widespread and important in Bantur as in many other villages in Java that they help create a "new type of Javanese village" as Cederroth puts it (p. 118). Given the wide range of occupations united under the label of "non-farming occupations" - including basket-plaiting, minibus transport, *kreték* production, construction con-

tracts - it is difficult to make generalizations about what the non-farming sector "does" to the village. It is certainly true to see non-farm activities both as a "safety valve" for the poor villagers and as a "spearhead of modernization", allowing for the accumulation of capital by a rural elite. More useful than generalizations are the description and analysis of particular branches of non-farming activities, the detailed case studies of most of the non-farm activities represented in Bantur and analyzed by Cederroth in part two. Trade, the most important among off-field occupations (chapter seven), is an example. For the two basic groups of traders, *juragan*, or big traders on the one hand, and the *bakul* or small traders on the other hand, a number of specific constraints and strategies emerge. For the small traders who operate with a minimum of capital it is essential to offset this disadvantage by establishing mutual relationships of trust with customers and suppliers. Various case studies reveal the processes of undercapitalization and accumulation. Chapter nine expands on this through a discussion of various credit and saving schemes, including the well-known *arisan*. The overview of "money-making strategies" highlights the importance of cash in the village economy: gambling is often a perfectly acceptable strategy in trying to establish capital stock.

It also becomes evident how the few who succeed in accumulating capital rapidly, establish themselves as patrons in village politics and economics. To find a patron is a necessity for any villager, and in particular for young people, who experience enormous difficulties in entering the job market or getting credit for a small business.

Part three tries to establish some links between the socio-economic and the ideological sphere. Has the focus on material well-being affected the villagers' relationship with the spiritual realm? Are syncretist beliefs and practices (*agami Jawi*, or the *abangan* stream of Javanese religion) on the decline? Has village stratification contributed to a stronger support of orthodox Islam?

Cederroth shows that the religious orientations of people in Bantur are still diverse. Javanist syncretism and orthodox Islam exist side by side, and the traditional cleavage between a modernist (Muhammadiyah) and a traditionalist (Nahdlatul Ulama) variant of Islam is also still strongly felt. Affiliation to one or the other is determined not merely by ideological, but also by social differences, as many recent settlers in the village are followers of Muhammadiyah. Orthodox Islam has gained in importance partly by active proselytizing, as well as by socio-cultural changes which made it a more attractive religion to certain members of the community (the poor, newcomers).

At the same time, collective rituals constitutive for syncretism were either discontinued (e.g. village cleansing rituals) or acquired a more individual character (e.g. *slametan*). The growth of two mysticist or *kebatinan* movements in the village is considered as evidence of the same process towards individualism. Thus a number of minor and major ideological revisions are observed with no clear trend toward either syncretism or orthodoxy ("Islamism"). From the outset, orthodoxy had much to offer seekers after an individualist religious outlook. However, even as the communal focus of village religion disappeared, the growth of *kebatinan* movements accommodated syncretist stances in the new context and the emergence of a Javanist alternative to orthodox Islam.

In sum, this study provides the reader with a fine picture of the economic situation of various strata in a contemporary rural setting of Java. One would, however, have welcomed a more extensive discussion of the village concept, as the author maintains that economically a "new type of Javanese village" has emerged. (p. 118)

In addition, the reader gets a glimpse of the numerous activities outside village borders. This creates difficulties in both analysis and representation. How can the complex web of interaction and interdependence between urban and rural areas, between farming and off-field activities, between attitudes called "traditional" and others considered "modern" be integrated into the framework of a village study? How can comparative research be linked with empirical data from one location? I finished reading this book with a wish to reverse the anthropologists' journey to the village and to follow the many villagers who leave their domiciles every day for a multitude of purposes.

Jürg Schneider

REINHARD WENDT: *Fiesta Filipina. Koloniale Kultur zwischen Imperialismus und neuer Identität*. (Rombach Wissenschaft: Reihe Historiae 10). Freiburg im Breisgau: Rombach Verlag, 1997. 449 pages, DM 148,-. ISBN 3-7930-9101-5

Celebrate fiestas, wrap them up attractively and colonize the Philippines. Such a simple idea could have been in the Spanish colonizers' minds as they set about conquering this Far Eastern archipelago for Crown and God at the end of the sixteenth century. This pattern of conquest, admittedly portrayed in simplified terms, could be taken from Reinhard Wendt's study *Fiesta Filipina: Colonial Culture between Imperialism and New Identity*. But how was it possible that the fiesta as an essential part of Spanish cul-