

only an introduction to country studies but also an independent handy reference to respective fields. And to provide perspective for coming studies, the conclusions and recommendations of the case studies are discussed before their presentation.

As mentioned, the United Kingdom was deeply involved in the development of these three countries, through aid to recurrent expenditure as well as capital. Irrespective of that, U.K. aid was not as effective as expected in terms of restructuring BLS economies in line with the favored development strategy. Along the lines posed by this argument, one should be skeptical of the general effect of aid which a donor country has either marginal or less dominant.

This book will make the reader ask himself what meaning aid has after all in development and, in this sense, it is recommended to students seriously concerned with development issues.

(Takashi Aoki)

*Farmer and Village in West Malaysia* by T. Ōuchi, N. Saeki, A. Takahashi, K. Horii, and M. Tanaka, Tokyo, Faculty of Economics, University of Tokyo, 1977, xiii + 198 pp.

This monograph *Farmer and Village in West Malaysia* is the English version of the final report in Japanese prepared by the Asian Agricultural Research Team of the Faculty of Economics, University of Tokyo. The study, undertaken over July–October 1975, focusses on the processes of change in West Malaysian padi-growing villages as perceived by an all-Japanese team comprising four economists and two agricultural economists from Tokyo University, Sophia University, and the Institute of Developing Economies.

As indicated in the preface (p. v), the objective of the research project is to survey "...recent developments in paddy farming in Peninsular Malaysia as well as changes in village life brought about by technological innovation and government projects and to analyse various aspects of interrelations between them and the national economy of Malaysia." The approach adopted is to place the agricultural economy, and particularly the padi-producing subsector, within the context of the Malaysian economy and its structural dimensions. This forms a backdrop, doubtlessly useful to those readers unacquainted with the Malaysian economy and its developmental trends, for the three detailed village studies which assess the micro-level changes in society and its economic underpinnings as a consequence of technological innovations in padi production.

Approximately fifty pages (pp. 7–55) are devoted to Part I of the monograph providing a bird's eye view of the Malaysian economy and the role of padi production in Malaysian agriculture. To say that the overview does justice to the ramifications of the Malaysian economy would be in the nature of an exaggeration although the writers identify some of its more important structural dimensions especially as they relate to agriculture and padi growing. The central argument that develops (or that

becomes apparent after several readings) is that: (1) The role of food production, and particularly rice which is a staple food for most Malaysians, is crucial within the context of high population growth. However, it would be a false impression that the population growth-food production equation assumes the stark dimensions that would be applicable to Bangladesh, for instance; for one thing, population growth is declining (and is less than the 2.9 per cent that the authors' cite), and, secondly, the country is financially quite capable of importing part of its requirements and exploit its comparative advantage in the production of other agricultural products; (2) Agriculture provides an important, if declining, source of employment to Malaysians although there appears to be some racial affinities to both the type of product cultivated (export and non-export crops) and mode of production (capitalistic versus semi-subsistence, smallholding operations). Further, the industrial structure of the country shows a sharp (at least to the researchers) distinction between a Malay concentration in primary industry and a Chinese domination of secondary and tertiary industries. However, the leap from this to the following statement is more in the nature of an emotive rather than a rational, academic conclusion. "It is easy to see that there is a pattern in the rural sector that Malays engaging [*sic*] in farming and Chinese live off them as merchants or moneylenders" (p. 9). There are many non-Malays who are smallholders (particularly, in the rubber producing subsector) or dependent on rubber for wage employment (particularly on the estates). To some degree they, too, are dependent on middlemen of different racial backgrounds; (3) Malaysia's export trade reflects a "distorted" structure biased towards agricultural commodities, although the writers are mindful that Malaysian crude oil exports are fast becoming a significant foreign exchange earner.

After examining the distribution of income among races and between sectors (urban-rural differentials), the writers state that "...agricultural development is the vital political problem for Malaysia. It is indispensable for the achievement of a higher standard of national income and freedom from poverty, and for the improvement in the economic situation of Malays for which the government is striving, that agricultural productivity be raised. Thus, the agricultural problem is one of the central problems of the Malaysian economy" (p. 29). Not many observers would quarrel with this statement in general except that one could question, in the light of the New Economic Policy, whether poverty eradication is primarily directed at the Malay community alone (it isn't) and whether raising agricultural productivity alone would ensure equitable gains among all strata of the farming community.

The second section of Part I of the monograph dwells somewhat more satisfactorily on padi production in Malaysian agriculture by providing a quick analysis of several of its more important aspects. In discussing production and farm management, the smallholding nature of padi production is stressed as compared to rubber, oil palm, coconuts, and other crops. As padi is grown mainly for home consumption, the writers observe that measures to enhance rice production are pursued "...in the first place in order to improve the self-sufficiency rate of food and secondly to provide employment to Malay farmers or to improve their income level" (p. 32). It is uncertain whether these policy goals can be so sequenced particularly as rice self-sufficiency is more a short-term goal (and of relatively recent origin) as compared to resource

productivity and income-raising objectives. The authors digress on this issue by emphasizing the import-substituting nature of such measures thus suggesting "...the importance of paddy production from the standpoints of the Malaysian economy's recovering its independence and raising the status of the Malays" (p. 33). They seem to be quaintly and anachronistically committed to economic isolationism in an era of international economic interdependence. This aside, one fact that is overlooked is whether food self-sufficiency policies are merely a reflection of political contingencies or a rational assessment of the comparative advantages that Malaysia possesses in rice production relative to the production of other agricultural commodities.

Several other features of the padi economy are presented including production and yields, distribution of padi farms, farm practices, and technological problems faced by farmers and agricultural planners. Some observations that deserve examination are: (1) in regard to the potential new areas available for rice production, the authors should perhaps temper their optimism by considering the economic costs of creating new double cropping areas and the need, from an equity viewpoint, to rehabilitate (as is currently being done, with the assistance of a World Bank loan) small-scale irrigation schemes; (2) one is not as sure, unlike the researchers (p. 48, paragraph 3), about the extent of the dependence of padi farmers on the traditional system of padi marketing although evidence from personal research undertaken in Tanjong Karang is that farmers deal overwhelmingly with the Padi and Rice Authority (LPN); and (3) the figures for productivity and incomes (p. 49, Table II-22) would appear to be an underestimation, largely because of the small sample data on which they are based.

The authors conclude with a superficial account of Malaysian agricultural policy which should, in all reality, focus directly on padi policy. It could have been more meaningful to lay more stress on the output raising goals implicit in the irrigation schemes that form a large part of Malaysian rural development programs, the Guaranteed Minimum Price and Stockpile Scheme which is both a farm price as well as a controlled consumer price scheme, institutional developments within the padi growing sector and the failure of both the 1955 and 1967 legislation to regulate landlord-tenant relationships. Readers would have benefited by a coherent discussion of padi policy thus providing a contextual link to the village studies following subsequently.

The core of the book analyzes the impact of technological developments in three padi-growing villages selected for intensive field studies. These include Kampung Bongor Kudong and Kampung Beseri Dalam in Perlis and Kampung Tanjung Pahang Tua in Pahang. In common with other research projects carried out previously in West Malaysia, the cross-sectional profiles of the three villages selected attest to the *forte* of many Japanese researchers (not only sociologists and anthropologists) in patiently and meticulously undertaking village studies under less than ideal conditions.

The choice of the villages is largely determined by the need to bring into sharp relief the differential impact on their socioeconomic conditions related primarily to different levels in the sophistication of irrigation facilities available for padi cultivation. Kampung Bongor Kudong falls within the Muda Irrigation Scheme which has facilitated extensive double cropping; Kampung Beseri Dalam, while not enjoying the facilities of the Muda Irrigation Scheme, practices double cropping to some extent because

of the provision of off-season water supplies made possible by small-scale irrigation works; Kampung Tanjung Pahang Tua is a traditional single cropping area modified by some irrigation canals but suffering from periodic flooding.

On the basis of a survey of village households, field observations and discussions with extension officers servicing the villages, useful cross-sectional profiles are generated providing insights into the ecology of the area, the development of irrigation facilities, structure of farm households, and land tenure status. From these data, the socio-economic impact of developments in padi cultivation is evaluated, a summary of which is conveniently provided in Part III of the book. To this, the remainder of this review will be directed.

The authors repeatedly stress that the basis of farming developments in the areas investigated is the development and upgrading of irrigation facilities to provide better water control and enable the adoption of HYVs. The authors point out, moreover, that irrigation projects have tended to develop water supply more than deal with drainage problems; this must be viewed within the context that drainage problems are not uniformly severe as in Kampung Tanjung Pahang Tua, for example, and that in areas like Tanjung Karang, the key to tapping its rice growing potential was drainage of what previously was swampy land.

The full realization of the potential of HYVs is not confined to better water management. It is properly related to three factors: (1) Better water management at the farm level, a costly investment which must be accompanied by measures to consolidate and realign farm plots to accommodate the grid of irrigation and drainage canals. This can be called the technical package; (2) The agricultural services component which is directed to the extension and dissemination of the new technology and inputs coinciding, insofar as is practicable, with the soil and other agronomic conditions obtaining in specific farm localities (or, better still, in each farm); (3) The organization of farmers so as to facilitate the process of disseminating the modern rice technologies and, perhaps, more importantly in the long run, to develop a sense of self-reliance and dynamism characteristic of modernized farming communities.

For this last factor, the authors suggest the introduction of irrigation associations to contain farmer-irrigation authority conflicts and to provide a greater measure of decision-making by farmers themselves. Whether or not these irrigation associations (long an established feature in Japanese and Javanese agriculture) can be a viable basis for undertaking other economic activities is unclear. They should, moreover, be seen within the context of the existence and limited impact of farmers' cooperatives and farmers' associations present in the padi growing sector. The point made that farmers' associations can gainfully undertake padi marketing appears unrealistic when farm gate purchases of padi by LPN are efficiently undertaken. The only reason for farmers to sell to non-LPN outlets is if better prices can be obtained, as happens in the Muda area.

One impact of developments in the padi sector dealt with extensively in the village studies is the inroads of mechanization in padi farming, displacing animal plowing. The authors indicate several problems in the adoption of mechanization and, in decrying the fact that mechanization of transplanting and harvesting has not been speedily developed, raise the distinct impression that they are positively inclined to

greater mechanization of padi growing operations. While they do make a passing reference to the negative effects of this process in a labor surplus sector, more attention could have been given to the methods by which mechanization have been popularized. In manipulating with factor price ratios to make mechanization more attractive than employing farm labor, the rationality of such a policy should be questioned particularly where the labor absorptive capacity of other sectors is limited. The authors could be faulted in their analysis by drawing too much upon the positive experience of Japan in this respect (which has, in passing, resulted in overcapitalization in farm machinery).

A related fact that could have merited further analysis is why in Kampung Tanjung Pahang Tua, a single cropping area, mechanization has been introduced when the obvious time constraints and seasonal labor shortages associated with a double cropping regime do not arise. Furthermore, farm labor prices seem inordinately high; if this arises because of competing opportunities in the non-farm sector, then the Kampung cannot be realistically considered typical of a single cropping locality.

The authors note that the incidence of tenancy is quite high, land concentration is not prevalent while renting among relatives seems a common enough feature. These are all evidence of what have been identified before. However, to say that the relative absence of large landlords is due to tenancy legislation is to overestimate the efficacy of the 1955 and 1967 legislation. What is of greatest significance here is how the present land tenure situation is going to be affected or be the result of developments in rice farming technology. The authors make the statement that levels of rent and forms of tenure are bound to be affected by rising productivity levels and greater monetization of relationships. This phenomenon is also associated, we should notice, with the ascendance and popularity of hired labor in padi farming as compared to *berderau* or cultural labor. It is also closely linked with the breakdown of sex-specific occupations where traditionally transplanting was confined to women and harvesting undertaken by men. It also has contributed to the emergence of *syarikat* or work groups consisting of both men and women (especially young Malay women) where traditionally the latter were confined to household and family farm activities.

The phenomena noted above only indicate that the social impact of farm developments have been less rigorously analyzed as compared to its economic consequences. While the point is made that peasant indebtedness is diminishing because of larger cash incomes, some reference to the greater demand for cash reserves to pay for inputs, tractor services, hired labor et al. would not have been amiss. Further, the observed tendency among farmers to translate higher earnings into visible consumption expenditure should be viewed in the light of the prevalence of instalment buying for semi-consumer durables such as motorcycles, radios, and even TVs. It is also relevant to note that qualitative improvements in farm capital have taken place in the form of intermediate capital items like inputs and, less often, in small tractors.

An important observation is made that policymakers must anticipate the creation of a pool of labor because of developments in farming technology and the shortage of farm land. The determinants of this pool are, however, insufficiently delineated although it is implicit in the analysis that population growth exerts a large influence. To this must be added the facts that while double cropping, in the first analysis, leads to greater labor utilization, the picture is not as clear when mechanization of farm

operations begins. Secondly, mechanization is not neutral to scale and can be expected, if no policy interventions are forthcoming, to lead to larger operating farm sizes. This could conceivably lead to a displacement of small farmers and landless tenants.

The greatest advantage that a researcher gains in conducting village level studies of the type presented in the book is to study farm-level consequences of developments in new rice technologies. This forms, unfortunately, the greatest weakness of this book in that micro-level changes are assumed equal over all strata of Malay padi growing society. An analysis of the differential impact of the new rice technologies among classes of farmers, for example, small, medium, and large farmers, would have provided deeper and more meaningful dimensions to the processes of change. Just as irrigation infrastructure becomes meaningful when farmers can control inflows and outflows for his farm plot, the full impact of developments in Malaysia's padi growing sector can only be measured with reference to each farmer or to analytically coherent groups of farmers.

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