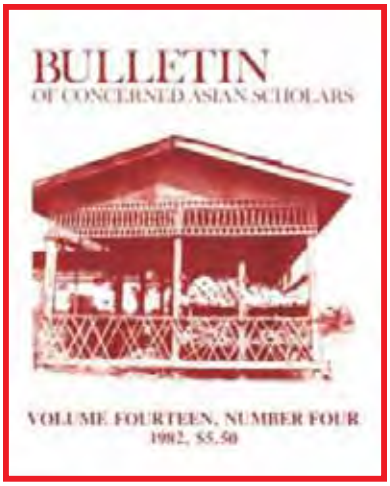

BULLETIN
OF CONCERNED ASIAN SCHOLARS

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Vol. 14, No. 4: October–December 1982

BCAS/*Critical Asian Studies*
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CCAS Statement of Purpose

Critical Asian Studies *continues to be inspired by the statement of purpose formulated in 1969 by its parent organization, the Committee of Concerned Asian Scholars (CCAS). CCAS ceased to exist as an organization in 1979, but the BCAS board decided in 1993 that the CCAS Statement of Purpose should be published in our journal at least once a year.*

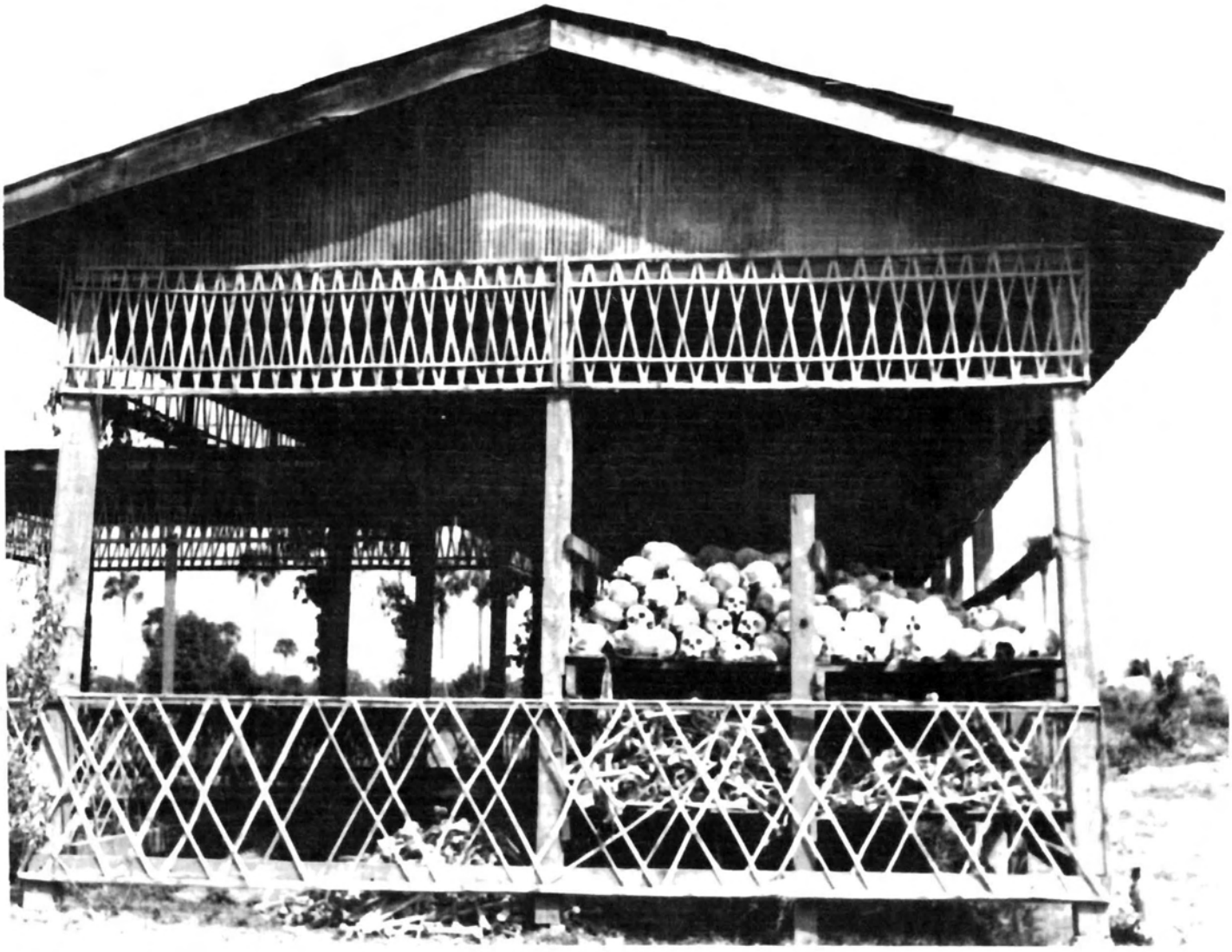
We first came together in opposition to the brutal aggression of the United States in Vietnam and to the complicity or silence of our profession with regard to that policy. Those in the field of Asian studies bear responsibility for the consequences of their research and the political posture of their profession. We are concerned about the present unwillingness of specialists to speak out against the implications of an Asian policy committed to ensuring American domination of much of Asia. We reject the legitimacy of this aim, and attempt to change this policy. We recognize that the present structure of the profession has often perverted scholarship and alienated many people in the field.

The Committee of Concerned Asian Scholars seeks to develop a humane and knowledgeable understanding of Asian societies and their efforts to maintain cultural integrity and to confront such problems as poverty, oppression, and imperialism. We realize that to be students of other peoples, we must first understand our relations to them.

CCAS wishes to create alternatives to the prevailing trends in scholarship on Asia, which too often spring from a parochial cultural perspective and serve selfish interests and expansionism. Our organization is designed to function as a catalyst, a communications network for both Asian and Western scholars, a provider of central resources for local chapters, and a community for the development of anti-imperialist research.

Passed, 28–30 March 1969
Boston, Massachusetts

BULLETIN
OF CONCERNED ASIAN SCHOLARS



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Martial Law in a Nueva Ecija Village, the Philippines

by Benedict J. Kerkvliet

When I returned to the United States in fall 1979, I was surprised to hear well-informed Filipino and American friends contend that martial law would soon be toppled. After being in the Philippines for 17 months (January 1978–May 1979) I had the impression that Ferdinand Marcos and his government were going to be around for several more years—barring his death or a palace *coup*.

My friends based their prediction on what they perceived as rapidly growing opposition to martial law; they cited as evidence various anti-martial law publications and the anti-Marcos feeling that seemed to be strong in metro-Manila during the 1978 election of interim *Batasang Pambansa* (National Assembly) members. Even *Time* magazine had called the country the "powder keg of the Pacific."[1] My assessment, however, was based largely on living for a year in a village in Nueva Ecija, where people were not especially critical of martial law and where, in a sense, martial law was insignificant.

Perhaps because my friends have a national or international perspective, their predictions will be more accurate. My understanding may be excessively influenced by what I learned in one tiny part. On the other hand, if much of the countryside is similar to this place, then the larger perspective is perhaps flawed. This raises an analytical problem important to activism and scholarship and is the context in which I offer an interpretation of the meaning of martial law for people in a barrio in central Luzon.*

Since Marcos declared martial law in 1972, analysts have looked differently on the Philippines and its government. We (I include myself) have treated the change as significant; our adjectives for the country or its government became "authoritarian" and "dictatorial" to distinguish the "martial law period" from the "pre-martial law period" of "democracy" and a "free and open society." Defenders of Marcos praise what they see as astonishing improvements "brought by martial law." Critics, including myself, also point to major changes—for the worse: repression, increased power for the military, tremendous wealth and power for those close to the President and his family, and copious opportunities for foreign investors to exploit the country's resources.

Many of these claims, whether complimentary or derogatory, have been made about "the Philippines," glossing over geographical, historical, and other diversities in the country. Yet research on Southeast Asia during the last two decades compels us to ask for more specificity. That literature warns that an event or a "period" that appears in the commercial and governmental center to have nationwide significance can turn out to have a different impact, maybe none at all, when seen from towns and villages. We are learning, for instance, that the revolutions for independence in Indonesia and the Philippines had meanings to people in Bandung and central Luzon that not only were different from but in a sense were antithetical to what the "nationalist leadership" advocated.[2] Because of research on provincial and sub-provincial histories, students of the Philippines now realize the difficulties of generalizing about the impact of Spanish, American, and Japanese colonial regions on "the Philippines."[3]

What applies to the distant past applies no less to recent years. We cannot speak with confidence about

* I wish to thank several people and institutions who have helped me write this article, although they do not necessarily endorse the argument: Melinda Tria Kerkvliet, the University of Hawaii, National Endowment for the Humanities, Institute of Philippine Culture at Ateneo de Manila University, College of Public Administration at the University of the Philippines, the Philippine Studies Program at the University of Hawaii, Michael Adas, Bryant Avery, Bob Marks, Joe Moore, Joel Rocamora, Jim Scott, Hiromitsu Umehara, Dave Wurfel, and Bob Youngblood.

1. "The Philippines: Powder Keg of the Pacific," *Time*, 24 September 1979, pp. 28-32.

2. See especially John R. W. Smail, *Bandung in the Early Revolution, 1954-1946* (Ithaca, New York: Modern Indonesia Project, Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University, 1964); Reynaldo Clemeña Ileto, *Pasyon and Revolution* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1979).

3. For an overview of this growing literature, see Bruce Cruikshank, "Twenty-two Years of Work in Philippine Historiography: Accomplishment and Promise, 1955-76," in Donn V. Hart, (ed.), *Philippine Studies: History, Sociology, Mass Media, and Bibliography* (DeKalb: Occasional Paper No. 6, Center for Southeast Asia Studies, Northern Illinois University, 1978), pp. 1-97. For a concise argument that influenced many local studies, see John A. Larkin, "The Place of Local History in Philippine Historiography," *Journal of Southeast Asian History*, 8 (September 1967): 306-317.

"martial law in the Philippines" without understanding its meaning for peasants, laborers, craftsmen, vendors, hunters and gatherers, and others in the villages and towns throughout the archipelago.

A little information about martial law at local levels is available. Most of it concerns localities where there is or has been unrest and rebellion. Because many of the publications are brief, details are sketchy and analysis limited. Yet taken cumulatively, these materials do provide some sense of martial law's consequences for certain localities and for people struggling against repression and for a better social order. Many of these opponents have been captured and have suffered unimaginable torture; still others have been killed in battle and in captivity.[4]

Without detracting from these materials nor from those who are fighting, I see two difficulties with the reporting thus far. First, the accounts tend to categorize all signs of resistance and struggle as opposition to the Marcos government and martial law generally. Maybe this is justified in the case of the movements in Muslim-dominated areas of Mindanao and Sulu or in the apparently strong and vehemently anti-government organizations among mountain people in northern Luzon who are threatened with extinction by the Chico River Dam project.[5] But I wonder about labor strikes in Manila and other cities; sugar workers' strikes in Negros; resistance by peasants facing eviction from lands in Palawan, Davao, and elsewhere; and the fighting in Samar between villagers and government soldiers. Are these manifestations of opposition to authoritarianism, martial law, and Marcos? Are they, as many anti-martial law writers and advocates have claimed, part of the nationalist struggle to end imperialism and establish a democratic and socialist society? Perhaps. Lacking, however, is information about the strikers' and rebels' perceptions and understanding that would allow us to say with much confidence what is the case.

Husband and wife thresh palay *grown on land farmed by the man's father, who is a tenant. Photo: B. Kerkvliet*

Writing sixteen years ago about Southeast Asian historiography, Harry Benda observed that peasants, if not totally ignored by scholars, were often appropriated by one side or another in the debate over colonialism. If peasant unrest occurred, the " 'colonial' historians" dismissed it as an exception to the rule of rural placidity, but the "nationalist writers as well as pro-nationalist authors abroad" would "annex it . . . to the mainstream of rising anti-colonialism and nationalism." Benda complained that "these interpretations are only variations on a dichotomous theme which transposes one historian's rebel into another's hero, without necessarily coming to grips with the specific nature and problems of the peasantry.[6] He continued:

> *The tendency to equate peasant movements with nationalist movements is as prevalent as it is easily explained: those writing national history will clutch to any sign of antigovernmental protest in colonial times to establish the case of the rising tide of Southeast Asian nationalism. But it may be suggested that the equation of the two categories of protest rests on very slender roots.*[7]

This concern is relevant today. Nationalists in formally independent countries struggle to end neo-colonialism and oppose authoritarian regimes that lean heavily on foreign investors, lenders, and governments. Each side wants to bolster its position with evidence that its following is growing. They may, however, be building their argument and cause on what appears to be opposition or support while

4. Two publications about imprisonment, torture, and killing are particularly moving and poignant: *Political Detainees of the Philippines, Book 3* (Metro-Manila: Task Force Detainees of the Philippines, Association of Major Religious Superiors in the Philippines, 1978); *Pintig: Poems and Letters From Philippine Prisons* (Hong Kong: Resource Centre for Philippine Concerns, 1979). For useful accounts of conditions and struggles in particular areas, see, for instance, *Preparing for Revolution: The United Front in the Philippines,* published as issue number 62 (May-June 1978) of the *Southeast Asia Chronical; Conditions of the Filipino People Under Martial Law* (San Francisco: Anti-Martial Law Coalition and Friends of the Filipino People, (1979); *Human Rights in the Philippines* (Hong Kong: Resource Centre for Philippine Concerns, 1979). An unpublished paper by Willem G. Wolters is the best account I have read of conditions in a village where NPA and government soldiers come and go. Its strengths include detail and an interpretation for why differentiations exist among villagers and why lines of support or opposition to the two contending armed groups are unclear and inconsistent: "Epilogue," (1980), in Wolter's manuscript entitled "Class and Politics In a Philippine Village," which is a translated and revised version of his dissertation, "Klasseverhoudingen en politieke porcessen in Central Luzon, Filippijnen," (University of Amsterdam, 1975).

5. Among the more perceptive and informative accounts of these movements are the following: Lela Garner Noble, "The Moro National Liberation Front in the Philippines," *Pacific Affairs,* 49 (Fall 1976): 405-424; Peter Gordon Gowing, *Muslim Filipinos: Heritage and Horizon* (Quezon City: New Day, 1979), pp. 199-251; *Tribal People and the Marcos Regime,* issue number 67 (October 1979) of the *Southeast Asia Chronicle;* Francisco Claver, *The Stone Will Cry Out* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis books, 1978), pp. 135-145; Letter to President Ferdinand Marcos, from Bishop Francisco Claver, 20 August 1980, mimeographed, 3 pp.

6. Harry J. Benda, "Peasant Movements in Colonial Southeast Asia," *Asian Studies,* 3 (December 1965): 420-421.

7. Ibid., 423.

actually the "opponents" and "supporters" have nothing of the sort in mind.

A second limitation with published materials about martial law at local levels is that they emphasize those areas with unrest and rebellion. Although numerous, such localities constitute only a fraction of the Philippines. What is happening in the rest of the countryside? Does "silence" mean, as the government and defenders of the regime say, contentment or even strong endorsement of martial law? Or is it a calm before the storm of widespread unrest and martial law?

Two studies I am aware of suggest that the answers to such questions are difficult. Both studies, coincidentally, are about Bukidnon, a province in central Mindanao. Conflict and even increased violence has characterized the province during martial law, according to Ronald Edgerton.[8] The explanations include tension among recent settlers and among settlers, ranchers, and tribal minorities, all aggravated by policies of and personalities in the Marcos government. Moreover, several religious groups have been colliding with each other. One theme, which Edgerton discusses and Dennis Shoesmith elaborates, is that the *Rizalista* religious organizations, during their efforts to establish autonomous communities and perpetuate other aspects of their beliefs, have clashed—sometimes in gunbattles—with other groups, government and non-governmental alike.[9] By their every example, the two studies are arguments for the necessity of local level analysis. What is remarkable about the situation in Bukidnon is its complexity, including considerable local initiatives and problems that would remain unknown were one to focus on the national level or concentrate only on areas where unrest appears to be linked to the New People's Army (NPA) and Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) or insist on placing the various groups in the province on one side or the other of martial law.

Hopefully the following discussion of a village society hundreds of kilometers and several islands north of Bukidnon will also enlighten us about martial law and illustrate the importance of micro-studies.

Background

The village is in a municipality about twenty-five kilometers northwest of Cabanatuan City, the capital of Nueva Ecija province. Because it sits in a vast expanse of rice land, the name I shall give the village or barrio (*baryo, nayon*) is Bukiran, meaning "place where fields are." Although not isolated, neither is Bukiran in the mainstream of provincial and national traffic, communications, and marketing. It straddles an unpaved national highway and has no electricity or marketplace.[10]

A century ago the area was sparsely populated by people growing rice, vegetables, and fruits on plots painstakingly cleared of trees and grasses. By the 1930s virtually all the land had been claimed and titled by a small number of homesteaders and a handful of large landowners who had tenants to share-crop what were becoming well-developed, rain fed rice—*palay*—fields.[11] These tenants had migrated from near and far in search of better land and tenancy conditions.

Today the population is about 1,400 people living in 230 houses. Nearby are five smaller villages. About forty-five percent of Bukiran's households farm some land, usually less than two hectares. *Palay* is the dominant crop although a few people occasionally plant vegetables, *mongo*, garlic, and cotton. About two-thirds of those who farm are entitled to "Certificates of Land Transfer" from the government's agrarian reform program. Holders of CLTs can become owners of their land by making annual amortization payments for fifteen years. About one-fourth of those cultivating lands are owners; another eight percent both own and lease land. The remaining fraction (about two percent) have land on other, usually temporary bases. Most landholding families have other means of livelihood ranging from seasonal work to more-or-less steady employment outside the village (typically in construction) to selling vegetables, clothing, and other wares.

Another fifty-two percent of all households also have more than one means of livelihood, but they have no land. Nearly all rely on seasonal work, such as planting, weeding, and harvesting *palay*, while some households manage to have a member or two with other work, also usually seasonal, outside the village. The poorest here, like the poorest among the landholders, supplement their small earnings with edible plants, frogs, and the like, foraged in fields and irrigation canals. Some of the village's most prosperous families are also found among this non-landholding group; they have steady income usually from desk-type or professional jobs (e.g., school teachers, government clerks).

The other rather wealthy households (about three percent of the village) are landowners who have tenants and hired laborers. These families also have other sources of income such as *palay* and rice marketing and salaried positions.

Living outside the village, in the nearest town (*bayan*), the provincial capital, and metro-Manila, are most of the owners of tenanted land in Bukiran and vicinity as well as others who are important to Bukiran politically and economically because they are employers (e.g., owners of construction companies hiring from Bukiran), rural bankers, and government officials.

I chose Bukiran partly because I knew a few people there, thus making "entry" easier, but mainly because, based on casual observation of other parts of central Luzon and on what has been written about the region, I consider it a fair example of what life has been like for villagers in the region. It experienced, for instance, the peasant-based

8. Ronald K. Edgerton, "Bukidnon and the Bukidnons Under Martial Law," unpublished paper, 1980.

9. Dennis Shoesmith, "The Glorious Religion of Jose Rizal," in D. B. Miller (ed.), *Peasants and Politics* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1979), pp. 149-179.

10. When I talk about Bukiran in the present tense, I refer to 1978-79. Since then electricity has been brought to the area by the government, although letters suggest that many households cannot afford to use the power lines.

11. In the remainder of the article, I shall use the Tagalog term *palay* to refer to the rice growing in the fields and to grain that still has hulls. "Rice" in the text will refer to what Tagalogs call *bigas* (hulled palay ready to be cooked) and *kanin* (cooked bigas).

Hukbalahap resistance to the Japanese occupation, the *Huk* rebellion (circa 1946–1953), "rural development" and "agrarian reform" programs emanating from the central government, and the "green revolution"—all major events in the region since the 1940s.

While there I investigated two broad questions: what have been the political and economic conditions in the vicinity during the last quarter century, and how have people perceived and coped with those conditions. In the context of this broader inquiry I gradually learned about the meaning of martial law.

My wife—A Filipina—and I lived in Bukiran for a year (June 1978–May 1979). Our host was a farming family consisting of a middle-aged couple owning 1.5 hectares and their son and his wife and baby. The son shared a leased hectare with one of his married brothers and worked intermittently as a bulldozer operator at a distant construction site. Economically speaking, this household was somewhere in the middle of the spectrum found in the village.

To learn about the barrio and the larger political-economic context, my wife and I relied heavily on two types of sources: printed materials (principally newspapers and government and non-government documents and statistics) and conversation and observation. We had discussions with over 170 men and women, most of whom live in or around Bukiran and about a dozen of whom live well beyond Bukiran yet are important to the area. The conversations were wide-ranging, with each person's family history and socioeconomic and political conditions being central. Many discussions occurred in people's homes but nearly as many were in front of stores, along the roads, and in the fields (where we many times helped with the work). Both my wife and I tried to be informal, personal, and close to the people.

I never conducted a survey about martial law, nor did I usually ask directly about martial law. I generally waited for people to raise the subject, which they often did while discussing such topics as elections, government, local problems, economic conditions, and village history. We also observed people's reactions to officials and others associated with the government, and listened as they talked among themselves about their problems and what they thought could be done. From this experience, it gradually dawned on me that martial law for most people has not been a major threshold.

In order to elaborate this understanding, I shall discuss the limited expectations people have of government generally. As was true prior to martial law, the government since 1972 has done little for the barrio. At the same time, people typically see that the government favors, as before, the wealthy. Nevertheless, they have conditionally accepted the government as legitimate. During martial law, these conditions—peace, only moderate demands on people's resources, and tolerable economic circumstances—are met.

One further note. People use the term "martial law" to refer to two things.[12] It symbolizes a form of government centered even more than prior to 1972 in the office of President Marcos with a few other individuals having tremendous influence. This government has stopped regular elections and has given more power to the military. Second, martial law refers to the period beginning with the declaration in September 1972 until the present (late 1979). Martial law in this sense constitutes more than a form of government; it includes the government's programs and policies as well as general social, political, and economic conditions. The two references are not mutually exclusive; people shift from one to the other. I shall do the same as I try to interpret people's assessments of martial law, the extent to which martial law is different from pre-martial law, and whether such differences are beneficial or detrimental and to whom.

Under martial law, the government has made demands on people's time, labor, and money. But to most people, the claims have been moderate, frequently flexible, comparable to pre-martial law, and far less than what was required by government officials, soldiers, and armed men of the well-to-do in the 1940s.

Perceptions of Government in General

Although I risk over-generalizing, I think that Bukiran people, regardless of socioeconomic class, have viewed government over the last three or four decades in two somewhat conflicting ways. The first perceives government be it at the municipal or national level, as dominated by and largely benefitting the more wealthy sectors of society. Even when certain laws and policies were supposed to assist peasants, workers, and other people of modest means and power, the better off have frequently influenced implementation to their favor. Most Bukiran residents avoid interacting with government officials because such occasions typically mean either negative consequences or, even when some benefits are derived, a degree of humiliation and embarrassment as they stand before more powerful and prestigious people. The exceptions are those who are relatively well off financially and/or enjoy some prestige (e.g., barrio captain, school teacher, school principal, and clergy).

The other view is that the government can potentially help peasants, workers, and other hard-up people (*mga mahirap*). Such assistance might be at the expense of the well-to-do minority. Avenues for soliciting these benefits include personal appeals, patron-client connections, and pressure. How far back in Bukiran's history this view goes, I do not know, but at least to the 1930s or 1940s when peasants, especially organized tenant farmers, increasingly pressured government agencies and officials to address problems they had with landlords.

12. The vocabulary people use is frequently the English "martial law," those words being often heard on Tagalog radio programs. Some people use the Tagalog translation, "*batas militar*." The other term sometimes used, I think interchangeably with martial law and *batas militar*, is *bagong lipunan* (new society), taken from a slogan the government has popularized to contrast pre-martial law (which governmental sources call "*lumang lipunan*," or "old society") with martial law.

A peasant woman describes some damage to her and her husband's palay *field. Photo: B. Kerkvliet*

These two views, often held simultaneously by the same person, are illustrated in a struggle during the 1960s between about twenty-five tenants and their landowner. The issue was whether the landlord could lawfully evict the tenants in order to convert to mechanized methods of growing *palay*. The landlord claimed a right to do this by virtue of his ownership, laws regarding landlord-tenant relationships, and the government's desire for increased rice production. Tenants argued, on the other hand, that they had a right to livelihood, which would be impossible were they booted off the land, and that laws protected this right. Furthermore, they contended, mechanization was no more productive than the tenancy system. Tenants involved knew that the landlord, because he was wealthy and from a prominent Nueva Ecija family, had considerable clout (*malakas*) in government circles, and consequently winning their case would be difficult. For this reason, several eventually retreated from a confrontation, reached settlements with the landlord, and left. Others, however, pushed ahead, hoping or believing that the courts would favor them.

Evidence for their guarded optimism, several noted, included the fact that the attorneys representing them were employed by a government office overseeing tenancy conditions. Except for one, the half dozen lawyers involved in their cases during the decade were, according to the tenants, intelligent, conscientious, and on their side. Their service was itself the result of central Luzon peasant organizations' efforts earlier to get government protection against landlord harassment. While waiting for the courts to decide the eviction issue, these tenants won small victories involving irrigation fees and ratios for sharing costs and yields. These victories gave them additional reason to be hopeful.

The landlord, meanwhile, figured the law was on his side—at least for the time being. But he was irritated that he had been prevented from immediately evicting the tenants. To him the government was meddling in landlord-tenant affairs. Indeed, his fear that eventually a sweeping agrarian reform would stop all evictions and require landlords to give their lands to tenants was a major reason why he had decided to switch to mechanized farming.

The final decision from the court of appeals came in 1970. The tenants lost. Angry but helpless to oppose any further, they tried to explain their defeat. Some concluded that the landlord had bribed judges along the way; others believed he had bought off one of their attorneys. Yet even with the bitterness that still lingers as they recall how they eventually packed their belongings and moved their houses—some forced to quit farming forever and scratch out a living doing odd jobs and foraging for food—they take solace in pointing out that two years afterwards, during martial law, the government stopped all evictions. "Our case," contended one of the tenants, "helped other peasants even though we ourselves didn't benefit. I hope they appreciate this."

This episode also illustrates—and here is another generalization—that people from various socioeconomic classes tend to believe that the government in the last two or three decades has become slightly more beneficial and responsive to poorer members of society. The shift certainly has been slow. It may even be imperceptible to those whose memories go back only a few years. But for many in Bukiran, peasants have become, partly as a result of the *Huk* rebellion, more nearly equal in the eyes of the goverment to landlords and other well-to-do and influential people. Equality in this regard has not yet been achieved on the eve of martial law, but the trend was in that direction.

Martial Law in Comparison

To most living in Bukiran or otherwise involved in the vicinity's politics and economy, martial law has been consistent with the above generalizations. This is central to why martial law has not meant a sharp departure from the recent past.

Agrarian reform is one policy people associate with martial law. Three landowners, each with more than 100 hectares (only some of it in Bukiran), object to martial law precisely because of agrarian reform. They protest that the government is "unconstitutionally" forcing them to sell land they want to keep; even if they are willing to sell, they are not getting the price they deserve. Underlying such remarks is their argument that the government is "giving too much to the peasants at our expense" and such policies are "unjust" and "untenable in an economic system based on private property." One landowner who has "lost" a few hundred hectares because of land reform predicted that "the moment Marcos bows out or for some reason disappears, landowners are going to question the martial law land reform. I myself am going to challenge it and try to get my land back."

Meanwhile, most intended beneficiaries of the reform favor it as well as martial law because, as one middle-aged tenant stated, "without martial law there would have been no land reform." To tenants, the current agrarian reform means evictions are now outlawed and/or tenants may buy the land they farm. "Only now, since martial law, is it

illegal for a landowner to evict tenants," emphasized a Bukiran tenant. Others amend this by saying that although possible before, it was extremely difficult to prevent evictions. Now it is difficult for the landlord to evict tenants because the laws are clearer and the government supports the tenants. Those who lost the case I described earlier remarked that had martial law started earlier or had their case been prolonged, they would not have been evicted. In fact, three tenants for that same landlord were "saved," as they put it, from eviction because of land reform under martial law. They were the landlord's last tenants, whom he would have removed had martial law not occurred.

Besides land reform, according to many Bukiran residents, the martial law government has done other things to help peasants—"more than during any previous period" is the way some villagers summarize their view. Loans requiring no collateral (the *Masagana-99* program), expansion of irrigation that makes two crops per year now routine, and recognition of the *Hukbalahap* are policies small landholders and landless villagers alike readily cite. The latter perhaps stands next in importance to land reform.

Bukiran's experience suggests that the system—government, regime, society—has changed little because of martial law. Simply removing martial law will not markedly improve Bukiran society.

Following the Japanese occupation, the *Hukbalahap* was never officially recognized as an anti-Japanese guerrilla organization. Indeed, many former *Huk* guerrillas and supporters were arrested and accused of being communists. It was a bitter period for many in Bukiran and vicinity. Ferdinand and Imelda Marcos, therefore, favorably impressed former *Hukbalahap* families in Bukiran when they dramatically announced in 1977 that, in the words of one Bukiran *Huk* veteran, "if any guerrilla group vigilantly resisted the Japanese, it was the *Hukbalahap*."[13] Consequently, veterans of the *Hukbalahap* are technically entitled to limited medical and educational benefits, but those in Bukiran do not expect much of either one—"I'll probably be dead before the application forms are even ready," mocked one veteran. But no matter, he said, "What's important is simply the recognition, which we deserve, for what we did during the Japanese time."

Government officials and agencies—usually local branches of national ministries but also the municipal mayor, provincial governor, and their respective offices—continue as before martial law to assist individuals and the barrio on a "need" basis. During the half dozen years prior to martial law, for example, Bukiran received modest amounts of money, equipment, and materials to enlarge the elementary school, add a small high school (that serv-

13. Marcos formally recognized the *Hukbalahap* in Presidential Decree 1207, 7 October 1977.

ices nearby barrios as well), and pour a large concrete slab that serves as a place to dry *palay* and to play basketball. Since 1972, the barrio has received some government funds for additional classrooms and a stage and water tower for the school. After a hurricane in October 1978 had seriously damaged or destroyed fifty percent of Bukiran's houses, the local government officials (including the mayor and the municipal office of the Ministry of Local Government and Community Development, MLGCD) gave money and material to about thirty families to help them repair and rebuild their homes. Although the aid was small, ranging from 25 to 100 pesos per family and in no case large enough to cover all reconstruction costs, recipients were pleased because few people expected any relief from the government.

Assistance typically does not come without effort on the part of an individual or group. That was true before martial law and remains so now. Usually it is the barrio captain who must travel to this or that municipal, provincial, and sometimes national official in order to petition for school buildings, school supplies, road improvements, etc. Even when the money requested is from a fund earmarked for Bukiran (a percentage of municipality land tax revenues), the barrio captain has to complete countless forms, see numerous officials, and often spends his own money for these journeys. "It's frustrating, time consuming, and exhausting," the current barrio captain complained. The process is no easier now than before martial law; indeed, he said, "it's probably worse."

In the case of storm relief in later 1978, several groups of six to ten people each went to the municipal mayor, MLGCD officials, and even the governor asking that they, too, be given help. This was after they had heard that the government was going to assist only ten families in each barrio. Bukiran's captain picked ten needy families but others justifiably felt equally eligible. "Never mind if the government doesn't want to help. I wasn't expecting any in the first place," commented one landless laborer whose bamboo house had been crushed by the storm. "But if the government is going to help, then it should help all of who are hard up, not just a few." This was the rationale many used in front of officials, who eventually were persuaded and assisted another twenty families in Bukiran.

Agrarian programs, assistance to village infrastructure, and hurricane relief conform to the view that government can be helpful to the common villager. Martial law has reinforced that. At the same time, such assistance remains, as before martial law, small, infrequent, and flawed. For example, although people credit martial law with year-around irrigation that enables two annual *palay* crops rather than one, they wonder if they are better off. Farming expenses have increased tremendously; double cropping forces a landholder to meet those expenses twice each year rather than just once. The government-backed credit program, *Masagana-99*, to take another example, is a nice idea, all peasants agree. And twenty to thirty landholders in Bukiran were able to borrow during its first years. But now only eight to twelve are permitted to borrow. The others, having defaulted, are no longer qualified.

Land reform promises that tenants can eventually own their land, yet many who happily anticipate that possibility also worry that they will be unable to make the required fifteen annual amortization payments to the government. And should they fail, the government might confiscate their land. Many predict, half jokingly and half seriously, that land reform is really a long-range scheme to turn the Philippines into a "communist country" because eventually the government will own all the land.

The selling price of *palay* is supposed to be fixed by the National Grains Authority so as to boost peasants' income, but implementation is weak. Few peasants can transport their grain to NGA granaries and get that price. Instead they must sell to private dealers who, for instance in April-May 1979 when *palay* harvest was rather good, paid much lower prices. Villagers became furious, especially becaus many were trying to recoup losses suffered the previous harvest after that hurricane had heavily damaged the nearly ripe crop. They blamed the *palay* buyers and the government, making such comments as "Marcos says the government is helping the peasants, but how can that be when we have to sell *palay* for less than a peso a kilo?" "That [guaranteed *palay* price] is worthless; the government is still wanting."

Martial law also conforms to the view that government is largely controlled by and for better-off people. While the average family receives some benefits—maybe even more than before martial law—the wealthy and powerful continue to run the government and gain the most from it.

Even those large landowners who argue that government is more partial to peasants now than previously acknowledge that they remain influential and have access to officials. One landowner, for instance, recounted how he and several large landowners urged the Minister of Agrarian Reform to disregard the formula for pricing land that the original agrarian reform decree stipulated.[14] Eventually the Ministry agreed, authorizing landowners and tenants to negotiate land prices. Since then the price for land undergoing reform in the Bukiran area has been between 9 and 11 thousand pesos per hectare—close to what landowners originally demanded, but more than double what tenants wanted to pay and triple what the price would have been according to the formula.

Bribery and personal contacts remain important ways to influence or gain access to the government. Peasants and workers do this, but their means are meager compared to the more well-to-do and "connected." They can scrape together five, ten, even fifty pesos if absolutely necessary in order to bribe a government clerk or a Philippine Constabulary sergeant. Meanwhile, the better off can do the same but not miss the money. Moreover, the wealthy can readily come up with more money to elicit action that makes possible large returns. For instance, one Bukiran resident who sometimes drive a logging truck for a sawmill has to pay three or four pesos to every Constabulary (PC) "checkpoint" along a several hundred kilometer route just to keep his truck rolling and thereby earn twenty or thirty pesos a run. The owner of the company, however, occasionally pays high ranking PC officers several hundred, sometimes thousands of pesos in order to stay in business.

14. The formula was "two and one half times the average harvest of three normal crop years immediately preceding the promulgation of this Decree," (Presidential Decree 27, 21 October 1972).

A tenant who has farmed more than thirty years said, "It's true, we plant and harvest more *palay* than we used to, but we don't become any less poor. The more we grow, the more capital we need, which means the more we have to borrow. One bad crop, one heavy storm, or an army of rats, and we're neck deep in debt for a long time. About the time we get even again, another disaster falls on us."

Harvesters and tenant farmer (third from left) measuring and dividing the threshed palay. *Photo: B. Kerkvliet*

But his earnings are lucrative, as evidenced by his company worth several million pesos, Mercedes Benz cars, and fashionable houses in Bulacan and Manila.

Peasants wanting to sell *palay* at the "guaranteed" government price must pay someone to haul their grain to the nearest National Grains Authority granary (several kilometers from Bukiran), wait in line for a day or more, and slip money to NGA employees who weigh and grade the *palay*. Few in Bukiran can afford this. Meanwhile one of the barrio's richest families, owning twenty-five hectares farmed with machinery and hired labor, has a close relative who manages an NGA station in a neighboring municipality. After the April-May 1979 harvest the family had the relative send an NGA truck to Bukiran, its several hundred sacks of *palay* were loaded and taken to the NGA granary, and the family was paid the top price.

The Rural Bank in the town closest to Bukiran appears to be making money on the government's *Masagana-99* loan program by virtue of the interest and fees charged to peasant borrowers.[15] Moreover, the bank's owners, principally two wealthy, local elite families, apparently benefit in another way.

When a peasant qualifies for a *Masagana-99* loan, he or she is given some cash and the remainder in "chits," documents signed and stamped by the bank clerk. The peasant uses these to buy fertilizer, herbicides, and pesticides from the dealer noted on the paper. The dealer, in turn, exchanges the chits at the bank for cash.

The dealer named on chits from this particular bank is usually the one owned by the families controlling the bank, even though, according to *Masagana-99* regulations, such interlocking (*sabwat, kabit*) is illegal. Whether it continues because officials are bribed or because the families involved have powerful connections or because the government does not investigate or enforce the rules, I could not learn. All three are possible.

Peasants and workers know such inequities and shady deals continue during martial law. My wife and I first heard about the Rural Bank–fertilizer dealer connection, for instance, from several tenant farmers milling around the dealer's store waiting for the fertilizers they had ordered. (Confirming their account later were Bureau of Plant Industry employees attached to the Rural Bank to help with the paperwork for *Masagana-99* loans.)[16] Of the dozen men and women we talked to that day, several were cursing out of earshot of those minding the store. They were not angry, however, about this illegal connection but about the delay. Several had been waiting for hours. A couple of men sug-

15. This remark is based on conversations with two officials in the Rural Bank and on the bank's "Income-Expense Statements." During the three years (1970–1972) prior to *Masagana-99*, "net income" relative to "total income" for the bank ranged from 28 percent to 35 percent. *Masagana-99* started the second half of 1973; that year net income was 25 percent of total income and interest earnings from *Masagana-99* loans constituted 6 percent of total income. From 1974 through 1976, net earnings ranged from 25 to 43 percent of total earnings; earnings from *Masagana-99* rose from 18 percent of total earnings in 1974, to 28 percent in 1975, then to 32 percent in 1976. (Comparable figures for 1977–1978 cannot be calculated because the statements no longer report *Masagana-99* earnings separately; they are lumped with a new category called "agrarian reform loans.")

Cumulative figures for all Rural Banks in Nueva Ecija show earnings from *Masagana-99* increased from 25 percent of gross income in 1974, to 37 percent in 1975, and to 41 percent in 1976. (Calculated from the following: Philippines, Central Bank, Department of Rural Banks and Savings and Loans Associations, Statistics and Research Office, "Worksheets for Statement of Income and Expense, by Province.")

16. For evidence that such interlocking has occurred in other Rural Banks in Nueva Ecija, see William H. Rusch, "Final Report of an Evaluation of the Integrated Development Program for Nueva Ecija, Philippines," prepared for the IDP/NE Coordinating Group, American Technical Assistance Corporation, General Research Corporation, Westgate Research Park, McLean, Virginia, July 1975, pp. 33-35.

New applications for a government-sponsored barrio association (Samahang Nayon) *listen to orientation speeches. Photo: B. Kerkvliet*

gested, though, that someone, maybe *Samahang Nayon* officers, should complain about the illegality.[17] "Naw," another mumbled, "*Samahang Nayon* is weak. And besides, eventually Mrs. Bulos [the bank manager] would find out who initiated the complaint and then the next time refuse to approve those guys' loan applications." Another fellow with a smile creeping across his narrow face, entertained everyone with a pun. "It's not *Samahang Nayon*. It's *masama ngayon*" (a bad time now).

Pursuing this discussion on the Rural Bank and the meaning of "*masama ngayon,*" I learned that these tenants were not upset about the interlocking becaue "that's the way the government and wealthy are." In this respect, the "New Society" is "not new." That the situation is "*masama*" (bad) is also nothing new.

Discussion

The episode illustrates many conversations and observations I have tried to understand. Do people's reactions indicate acceptance in the sense of embracing the present government and the martial law period generally? I think not because many—and I'm thinking particularly of the poorer two-thirds in and around Bukiran—do not especially like present conditions. The pun noted earlier indicates this. They would prefer to have more money, eat better, be able to send their children to high school and college, more this and more that. But, they say, achieving these is difficult, maybe impossible—at least for everyone. Only some manage to "rise up" (*umasenso*) the socio-economic ladder. Those unable do not necessarily blame others; certainly they do not automatically blame the government or the wealthy. Many, in fact, blame themselves or simply bad luck.[18]

Do intimidation and fear keep them from showing opposition? Surely this is an aspect, as comments by those waiting at the fertilizer dealer indicate. While in Bukiran I heard many complaints about the low price of *palay* and that the government should assure higher prices. But when someone once suggested they send a delegation to a government office in Cabanatuan and complain, others declined, expressing fear that government officials might see it as a protest and arrest the complainers. People know that several in Nueva Ecija were imprisoned right after martial law was declared because of their involvement in *Masaka,* a peasant-based organization, which advocated certain land reforms.[19]

Repression, however, is not new to people in Bukiran. Many in the vicinity, according to a former *Masaka* leader, refused to be active in that organization even when it was legal because they feared trouble with the government or their landlords. During the 1940s, repression from government and landlords was much worse. Indeed, it was one reason why many rebelled.[20]

On the other hand, people have not become completely docile during martial law. Those delegations that went to government officials to get storm relief are examples. Another illustration is the time a half dozen farmers went to the municipal office of the National Irrigation Administration and urged that a large break in the irriga-

17. *Samahang Nayon* refers to barrio organizations of farmers, especially tenants qualifying for the land reform program. At government insistence, most barrios in Nueva Ecija have, at least in name, a *Samahang Nayon*. The organization is supposed to establish marketing co-ops in each barrio. In Bukiran and the five barrios within a four kilometer radius, *Samahan Nayons* have made little progress toward that goal.

18. I elaborate this in "Classes and Class Relations in a Philippine Village," *Philippine Sociological Review,* forthcoming.

19. Most apparently were released after a few months, although a few, including one who lives in Bukiran, were incarcerated for a year or more.

20. Benedict J. Kerkvliet, *The Huk Rebellion* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), esp. chapters 3-5.

tion canal be repaired so that they could flood and prepare their land for planting. Although it took several such visits from affected farmers, some of whom became rather angry with NIA for doing nothing for too long, the canal was fixed.

I suspect that were conditions worse, people would show their anger, intimidation or not. Under such conditions the ones to blame would be clearer than they are now, and people would feel more justified to speak and act. As things stand now—and apparently have been since before martial law—the situation is not that critical.

Implied here is a conditional resignation to or acceptance of the government and the general situation. This rests in part on the limited expectations people have in the first place. They do not feel entitled to much. I cannot demonstrate this beyond the generalizations I have already made about perceptions of government; people in both middle and low socioeconomic classes said as much. Certainly this tentative conclusion requires more investigation. And even if it is accurate now, it does not mean that outlook will remain so indefinitely. Different circumstances could create alternative views and new expectations.

What I can do here is discuss the "conditional" aspects of this resignation: peace or the absence of turmoil, only moderate demands by the government and the better-off generally, and an economy that at least allows families subsistence and some hope for improvement.

Relative Peace

To understand the meaning of martial law to Bukiran, one must appreciate that, for most if not all people over forty years old, the Japanese occupation and the *Huk* rebellion are still vivid memories. Words frequently used to describe that period are turmoil and disorder (*gulo*), fighting and killing (*labanan, patayan*), and heavy and stringent (*mabigat, mabagsik*) demands on them by government officials, soldiers, and private armies. Most families, whether active in, supporters of, opposed to, or indifferent to the *Hukbalahap* (during the Japanese occupation) or the *Huk* movement afterwards, experienced the agony and hardship of being separated from close relatives, death and physical abuse of immediate family members, and uncertain and frequently risky ways of making a living. Many had to work without pay for the Japanese-controlled government, give food and clothing to soldiers and guerrillas, and obey (or surreptitiously ignore at the risk of one's life) government and *Huk* imposed rules and orders. While many today readily take pride in what the *Huks* did, they do not minimize the suffering and confusion during those dozen years. They and others contrast the period with the "peacetime" (often using the English word) that preceded and the relative calm and peacefulness (*tahimik, katahimikan*) that followed.

Martial law is nothing like those earlier times. It is more similar to the 1960s. Indeed, many in Bukiran say life is more peaceful under martial law than during the three or four years prior to it, when *gulo* was growing again. In 1970–71, two men were shot and killed in Bukiran, one in front of the Catholic church during Holy Week and a second by the municipal policeman assigned to Bukiran. In early 1972, a bomb exploded during a fiesta dance in the municipal plaza, killing six people, including two policemen. Between 1970 and 1972 at least ten families in Bukiran had one or more *carabao* stolen, some of them at gun point. One rustler group, according to several residents, was organized or protected by, if not the municipal mayor, then at least people close to him. This bunch was at odds with other rustlers, who allegedly were allied with the mayor's rivals. Their conflicts, according to Bukiran residents, resulted in gun battles and killings. There were also *"polis talahib"* (literally, police in the elephant grass). These were armed men hired by political and business rivals. Competition for municipal, provincial, and national elected offices became so intense by the late 1960s and early 1970s that opponents and political party leaders used *polis talahib* to intimidate voters, making election campaigns dangerous times.

Martial law drastically reduced the rising turmoil. "No more *polis talahib*"; "Marcos had all the guns rounded up"; "no one has had a *carabao* stolen during martial law." Elections also ceased. Many in Bukiran across the socioeconomic spectrum still say no elections is preferable to the previous situation. "I know that without elections," reasoned a tenant farmer, "it is hard to remove bad and incompetent officials. But if I have to choose between a peaceful barrio and elections that divide people and cause confusion and violence, I'll choose peace. Let Marcos pick the mayors and governors and even barrio captains." Such sentiments were also expressed in early 1979 when the rumor circulated that Marcos might call for elections of barrio and municipal officials. Even the few I heard who favored the elections worried that elections might again promote tension and violence. When Marcos finally decided against the elections, no one—so far as my wife and I are aware—was keenly disappointed.

Foregoing elections is not seen as abdicating democracy. It is instead a step toward a more peaceful barrio and away from a situation that was becoming reminiscent of earlier violent periods. I sense that people do not necessarily equate elections with democracy, just as they do not equate martial law with authoritarianism or dictatorship. The positive side of elections that people, especially in the bottom two-thirds of Bukiran society, recall are handouts from candidates and campaigners. A small landowner who had been a village leader for one of the two political parties said:

> *The people in the middle, those not identified as either Liberal or Nacionalista, used to promise to vote for this candidate in order to get money then turn around and promise the same to the opponent and get something else. It was fun for them until candidates—not for barrio offices but for mayor and so on—started using rough stuff instead of favors to get their votes.*

Limited Demands

Under martial law, the government has made demands on people's time, labor, and money. But to most people, the claims have been moderate, frequently flexible, comparable to pre-martial law, and far less than what was required by government officials, soldiers, and armed men of the well-to-do in the 1940s. The only individuals I know who would take exception to these comparisons are

those large landowners who claim the government is confiscating their lands.

An incident in March 1979 illustrates my point. People in Bukiran learned *that* every barrio was being asked by the Ministry of Local Government and Community Development (MLGCD) and ultimately by President Marcos himself to set up four *brigada* (brigades)—"defense," "emergency aid," "women's auxiliary," and "community service." Each one would consist of a couple dozen people who would undergo several days of training—seminars led by local MLGCD officials, meetings lasting way into the night, and marching and other drills. While the brigades were being formed and the village was buzzing with talk about the news, people were worried sick that they would be forced into a brigade and have to march around and attend those long seminars when, they felt, they did not have the ability, strength, or time for that. Rumors circulated that a man in a distant barrio actually died of exhaustion while marching. Other news was that anyone who refused to join a brigade would be punished by municipal authorities. Because the *brigadas* coincided with radio reports about war between Vietnam and China and because brigade training emphasized marching—"to teach discipline," they were told—people were reminded of the Japanese occupation and began to fear that the purpose of the brigades was to prepare for an invasion from "the communists in Vietnam or China." A few others believed the government would require brigades to drum up support for "Marcos, the First Lady, and martial law," and report to the authorities those who complained about any of these three.

Within a few days, however, most people's fears were allayed. No one was forced to join the brigades; some who did join later quit because they had to work or were tired of meeting and marching; and officials from MLGCD and the mayor's office scarcely put in an appearance. Many people, in fact, found themselves enjoying the whole affair. Brigade members felt they were learning a little bit (if only how to march in formation) and took some pride in their training as friendly competition developed among the groups. Other villagers, meanwhile, having some time on their hands because the season was that slow period between planting and harvesting, liked to congregate in the barrio's plaza, ostensibly to watch the brigades and their skits but more to socialize. For several nights the plaza became *the* place to be. There people clustered, smoking and talking while keeping an eye out for teams of youngsters playing games in the moonlight. Small stores in the area stayed open later than usual to sell snacks, candies, cigarettes, gin, and soft drinks. The atmosphere was, several people remarked, "like a fiesta."

After a few days, brigade leaders and the barrio captain convened a "graduation." It was another event attracting three or four hundred people who watched their relatives and friends, now dressed in their new T-shirts stenciled with the name of their brigada, parade in formation and ascend the stage to receive their "diplomas."

Now duly trained and graduated, the brigades proceeded to die. The *palay* harvest began in April, preoccupying nearly everyone. By May the brigades were all but forgotten. A couple of times, shortly after graduation, a few members of one brigade reported to the barrio captain about an illegal card game in progress. He reluctantly asked the gamblers to stop, which they did. A few days later, however, the regulars in the card game were playing in a neighboring barrio. Similarly, drinking buddies, who had disappeared from along the streets and in front of stores during the brigade training because "no drinking in public" was one of the laws the new groups were to enforce, eventually reappeared and could be heard singing well into the night.

The brigade experience was reminiscent of other projects that required villagers' time and labor. Earlier during martial law there were "barrio beautification projects," "barrio seminars," and "barrio patrols." Prior to martial law came "operation sanitation" and "operation nutrition." All originated, as people frequently put it, from "outside" or "higher up," meaning some agency of the government, operating through Bukiran's barrio council and captain.

Many people, although not all and certainly not without complaining, go along with these occasional claims. Possible benefit to the village is one reason, but probably more important are the opportunities to socialize, recreation, and obligations to relatives and friends who ask them to join. Fear is also a factor, as it initially was in the *brigada*. I was told, for instance, that several residents agreed to install concrete toilets in 1971 only when they heard that those who had refused might be put in jail.

That these projects are short-lived is an additional incentive for complying. People fairly quickly figured out that the brigades, for instance, would be inactive once the training was over. Beautification projects are one-shot affairs, requiring only a day or two. The "police" teams established early during martial law commenced with nightly patrols involving men in each neighborhood, but within a few weeks became irregular, and gradually developed into "the coffee patrol." After a quick walk around the vicinity, the patrolmen gathered at someone's house to talk, smoke, and drink coffee. Soon, the patrols ceased completely.

This brings me to what is, I think, a crucial quality that martial law shares with pre-martial law. Laws and demands outside are not strictly enforced; instead allowances are made. When the barrio captain excused many people from brigade training, apparently no higher official objected. After some villagers refused to participate in a beautification project in 1979, nothing happened to them other than slight ostracism from a few neighbors. In that sanitation program prior to martial law, no sanctions were taken against those who would not purchase the specified toilets.

Other examples are more significant. The land tax, which small and large owners alike acknowledge is modest, is, according to municipal tax office records, infrequently paid by owners in and around Bukiran. Many of those in arrears explain simply that they prefer to spend their money on more pressing needs. Those who pay do so not out of fear of government-imposed penalties, inasmuch as the tax office rarely goes after delinquent small landowners, but for other reasons.[21] Should they want to use their

21. That property tax has declined in importance as a source of revenue for municipal governments may help to explain why, in addition to other

land for collateral in order to apply for a bank loan, they need a document verifying paid-up taxes. Or in the event of a contested land title, the party with up to date tax receipts has an edge over the rival.

Many peasants owe money to the government or government-related agencies, but few are paying. Of the ten tenants I know who should now be making annual amortization payments (averaging about 1,000 pesos per hectare) to the government's Land Bank, only one is. Thus far the Land Bank sends no one to collect. About twenty peasant families each owe 500 or more pesos to the *Masagana 99* program (payable in most cases to a Rural Bank). Although no longer able to borrow from this fund, they have suffered no other consequence. A few are worried after hearing that the Rural Bank had taken a few peasants in other barrios to court. Most, however, express little concern, figuring the government realizes the delinquents are from the poor and besides, the government has insufficient time, money, and manpower to run after the thousands in Nueva Ecija and other provinces who have outstanding debts to *Masagana-99*.

The only government agency that regularly gets money owed to it by Bukiran residents is the National Irrigation Administration, whose collectors ask users for the fee after each harvest. Although users complain that the fee is excessive, most do pay. They value the irrigation water; moreover, it would be embarrassing to refuse the NIA collector when standing face to face with him.

Even NIA, though, shows what people call "consideration." The peasants who owe for three or more seasons but claim they simply cannot pay continue to get water. Another example is that following that severe crop-damaging hurricane in 1978, President Marcos announced that NIA would allow users to postpone irrigation payments for six months.

Finally with respect to demands, it is significant that the military and police are no more prominent in Bukiran in vicinity in the late 1970s than they were before martial law. Although a few residents think that uninformed officials are more cocky (*mayabang*) than before, in general villagers neither have more animosity toward nor feel more threatened by soldiers and police than they did previously.

Winnowing palay *with a gasoline engine-powered blower. The blower owner bends over the machine while the* palay*'s owner (a tenant farmer) stands on a carabao-drawn sled that he uses to transport the* palay. *Photo: B. Kerkvliet*

And, as before, the nation has no conscription. Those few are from the area who have joined the armed forces in recent years did so in hopes of escaping dismal economic prospects in Bukiran.

Economics

An overview of the last two decades shows a couple of major trends in the economy. One is continued commercialization of agriculture. Selling more *palay* for cash income and profit has been a theme in the area's history during the twentieth century. What is particularly notable about the last twenty years is that cash also has become increasingly important in order to grow *palay*. Previously tenants and landlords alike needed little capital in order to put in a crop. The principal exceptions were the few large landowners who began in the 1950s to mechanize, use chemical fertilizers, and invest in tractors, trucks, and combines. In recent years, practically all those farming have had to somehow get capital in order to farm.

Among the principal explanations are (1) the replacement of "old" *palay* seed with what Bukiran residents call "new seeds" (*bagong binhi*—almost exclusively originating from the International Rice Research Institute) and (2) the national government's effort to make the Philippines self-sufficient in rice. This latest phase in commercialization began in the mid-1960s, gathered momentum later that decade and early the next and, at least in the Bukiran area, accelerated during martial law with the completion of Pantabangan Dam in 1975. Because water from this huge dam is released in two cycles per year, *palay* growers must plant varieties that will mature within 80-120 days, thereby forcing virtually all to plant the new seeds.

The second trend, not unrelated to the first, includes changes in livelihood: a shift away from share tenancy to

reasons such as a weak bureaucracy for tax collection, local officials have not pressed tax collections. According to budgets I was able to see for the municipality of which Bukiran is a part, revenues from property tax decreased from 41 percent in fiscal year 1964–1965 to 12 percent in fiscal year 1971–1972. During the same period, however, money from the central government's "internal revenue allotment" increased from 6 percent to 10 percent, and continued to rise in subsequent years. In 1977 (the latest year for which I have information), the internal revenue allotment for the municipality's budget was expected to be 42 percent. (Because expected property tax revenues are not specifically isolated in the 1977 budget, I cannot calculate the percentage from that source but it must be substantially smaller than the allotment from the central government.) This trend is apparently nation-wide and explainable in part by new tax laws that entitle local governments to more from internal revenue collections, increased efficiency of the central government's tax collection bureaucracy, and continuing inefficient tax collecting by the local government. [For some evidence along these lines, see Angel Q. Yoingco and Vicente G. Quintos, *Philippine Tax System Under the New Society* (Manila: GIC Enterprises, 1979), chapter 6.] Paying income taxes may become a source of contention in the future, but as of 1979 it was not in Bukiran. Most villagers' income was less than what is taxable.

fixed leasehold tenancy and recently to amortizing tenancy; an increasing percentage of households that have no farm land and rely heavily on wage labor, usually seasonal, in agricultural and non-agricultural sectors; and a growing proportion of landed families with one or more members earning wages.

Although it is difficult to generalize well about their consequences, my effort to understand these trends leads me to think that conditions are onerous for the very poor, who have been that way for a decade if not a generation or two, but the situation has not deteriorated drastically (although there has been some decline) for most families and may be improving for some while continuing to hold out hope for the others.

One useful indicator of living conditions is that about two-thirds of Bukiran's households have only the bare necessities of food (a diet mainly of rice and vegetables), clothing (often only a few changes per person), and housing (small, crowded, inexpensively made homes) with little or nothing in reserve for education or emergencies. Many in this majority are seasonal agricultural laborers and construction workers, but they also include some small landholders. Having access to land is no guarantee against poverty.

The biggest problems for many in Bukiran are too little cash and too few jobs. The commonly heard assessment of people, whether those with poor or moderate living standards, landless worker or tenant farmer, is that economically people are "going around and around while going nowhere." An agricultural worker observed, for instance, that "daily pay has gone up in recent years, but so have prices, so you can't get ahead." A tenant who has farmed more than thirty years said, "It's true, we plant and harvest more *palay* than we used to, but we don't become any less poor. The more we grow, the more capital we need, which means the more we have to borrow. One bad crop, one heavy storm, or an army of rats, and we're neck deep in debt for a long time. About the time we get even again, another disaster falls on us." A man who works when he can as a carpenter and a harvester explained why he and his family continue to live practically hand to mouth: "Even though we harvest twice as often and maybe bring home twice as many sacks of *palay*, we don't live better because prices have increased so much. You can't buy more now than you could twenty years ago even though you have more money." These remarks conform to trends in wages, prices, and *palay* production expenses.

According to residents, pay for agricultural and non-agricultural work has been increasing since the mid-1960s; the same is suggested by central Luzon regional data for hired labor in *palay* cultivation. Roughly speaking, wages have increased two to three times between early or mid-1960s and 1978–79.[22] Such increases affected approximately half the households in Bukiran.

The price villagers get when selling *palay* is another indicator of their financial condition. Because both landholders and landless workers (who earn *palay* as payment for harvesting) have grain to sell, *palay* prices directly affect about three-fourths of the households in Bukiran. Of course, some sell hundreds of sacks while many sell only 5-20. The typical selling price for *palay* in the mid-1960s was between 13 and 15 pesos per *cavan* (usually about 44 kilograms each). By 1969–70 the price had increased slightly to between 15 and 17 pesos per *cavan*. By 1973 the price had jumped to the high 20s, and by 1975–76 each *cavan* (now usually weighing 50 kilograms) was about 45 pesos. In 1978–79, P50 per sack (or 1 pesos per kilogram) was the typical price most Bukiran sellers received. *Palay* prices, in short, rose about 330 percent between the mid-1960s and the late 1970s, nearly the same increase as reflected in *palay* prices for central Luzon.[23]

Increased earnings, however, have been consumed by higher prices. Summaries of what people recall about consumer prices for selected commodities frequently purchased by the poor two-thirds of Bukiran's households show a definite increase (Table 1). That and people's complaints about the climbing cost of living are compatible with the "consumers' price index" for central Luzon. The price index of all items (fuel, water, housing, clothing, food, and miscellaneous) rose from 100 in 1965 to 381 in 1978; for food only, the index went from 100 to 395.[24]

Table 1

Selected Prices Paid by Bukiran Residents

Rice	1969–70: P 0.63/kilo—0.75/kilo 1978–79: P 2.10—2.20/kilo
Fish paste (*bagoong*)	1963–64: P 0.20/can 1978–79: P 1.00/can
Fish sauce (*patis*)	1963–64: P 0.15/bottle 1978–79: P 1.00/bottle
Bread roll (*pandesal*)	1968 : P 0.10 each 1978–79: P 0.30 each
Thatching for roof	1966–67: P 70/two-room house 1979 : P 180/same two-room house
Cigarettes	1970 : P 0.30—0.50/pack 1978–79: P 1.00—1.20/pack
Matches	1969–70: P 0.05/box 1978–79: P 0.15/box

22. For example, pay to *palay* transplanters in Bukiran went from P2.50/day in the early or mid 1960s, P4.00/day a decade later, and to P7.00-8.00/day in 1978–1979. Carpenters earned P3.00-4.00/day in the mid-1960s, P10.00/day a decade earlier, and P18.00/day in 1978–1979. For some comparable figures for central Luzon as a whole, see Philippines, Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, *Farm Wages* (Manila: 1973 and three undated volumes) and *Average Daily Wage Rates of Farm Workers in the Philippines* (Quezon City: 1975–1976).

23. Philippines, Ministry of Agriculture, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, *Prices Received by Farmers* (Quezon City). This publication has several volumes, each with different time periods—e.g., 1959–1968, 1971–1972, and 1977.

24. Philippines, Central Bank, Department of Economic Research, "Consumers' Price Index of All Items by Region, 1957–1976," mimeographed. I calculated the 1978 figures by using "Consumers' Price Index for All Income Households in the Philippines, by Geographic Area," reported by month in the *Journal of Philippine Statistics*, 29, nos. 2-4 (1978), adjusting that data to the 1965 base year.

Table 2

Typical Expenses and Gross Returns to Bukiran Tenants in 1969-70 and 1978-79

Expense	1969-70	1978-79	Increase (Decrease)
Seed	0.8 *cavans*/ha.	2 *cavans*/ha.	2.5
Transplanting	P 45/ha.	P 130/ha.	2.9
Land preparation	P 40/ha.	P 200-300/ha.	5.0-7.5
Fertilizer	P 22/sack	P 70-80/sack	3.0-3.6
Pesticides, herbicides	—	P 40/bottle	
Hiring labor	P 4/day	P 8/day	2.0
Irrigation fee	P 24/ha.	P 137-227/ha.	5.7-9.5
Interest rates	25-50%/season	25-50%/season	zero
Harvesting	9% of gross	12.5% of gross	1.4
Rent	9-12 *cavans*/ha.	0.19 *cavans*/ha.	(infinity)-2.1
Gross Return			
Yield	50-60 *cavans*/ha.	60-80 *cavans*/ha.	1.2-1.6
Palay selling price	P 15/*cavan*	P 50/*cavan*	3.3

Another way to illustrate why higher earnings do not necessarily mean better livelihood is to examine briefly *palay* production and costs. During the last decade in Nueva Ecija, yields have increased. For example, the provincial average in the late 1960s was in the low 40s but by 1977–78 it was 62 *cavans* per hectare.[25] Although such statistics are not available for Bukiran and vicinity, peasants and local agricultural officials report the same trend—whereas in the 1960s a typical yield was 50 *cavans* per hectare; the frequent range now is 65-85 *cavans* per hectare.

Expenses, however, have also climbed. To illustrate, Table 2 compares typical expenses and gross returns for leasehold tenants (some of whom are today paying amortization) in 1969–70, when people were just becoming familiar with the new varieties, and in 1978–79, when all these *palay* growers are using the new varieties. The parcels of land are the same in both years. Although yields are now about 1.25 greater than they were 10 years ago and *palay* prices have tripled, costs to grow the crop have risen as fast (e.g., harvesting 1.39 times; fertilizer and transplanting about 3.0 times) if not faster (e.g., irrigation and land preparation each over 5.0 times).

Also indicative of the mixed economic consequences of new *palay*-growing methods are data from two groups of peasants, one farming in 1961–62 and the other in 1978–79 (Table 3). Even though the individuals in the two groups are different, I chose this comparison because the data for 1961–62 has the advantage of having been recorded in 1962 (when the tenants and their landlord were bringing cases against each other to court). Their land parcels were in the same vicinity as the parcels of those peasants in the 1978–79 group. Those in the second group plant two crops a year, producing more *palay* on parcels that, on the average, are physically smaller than those farmed by the first group. Average yields, too, are greater for the second, but so are the costs, leaving a return per hectare that is not substantially greater than the 1961–62 group had. Indeed, the net for some in the 1978-79 group is less than the lowest in the 1961-62 group. Most in the 1978-79 group are supposed to be paying rent or amortization but are not. Were they to pay, their costs would be even greater, making their net gains smaller, perhaps even less than what the 1961–62 tenants had. It seems possible that in good years, which 1961–62 apparently was in that the yield averaged higher than what people remember as typical in the early 1960s, peasants could do then almost as well planting old varieties once a year as they can today with typical yields of the new varieties. Yet in the early 1960s, *palay* growers did not need to worry as much as they do now about having considerable cash just to be able to put in a crop. And money they received from whatever *palay* they decided to sell probably had somewhat more purchasing power than now.

Economically speaking, most people in Bukiran are hard up. Virtually all say so, and evidence such as that just presented bears this out. Yet conditions are not necessarily worse during or because of martial law. This, too, people verbalize and the foregoing data can be interpreted along that line as well. On the average consumer prices and

25. Philippines, Ministry of Agriculture, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, Region III Office, incomplete *palay* production data for Nueva Ecija during the 1960s (San Fernando, Pampanga); and Bureau of Agricultural Economics, "Palay: Production of Irrigated and Rainfed Crops in the First

production costs exceed earnings from wages and selling *palay*. This situation, however, is not new. Many people in and round Bukiran have long lived precariously like this. Most people make do with little, some days and weeks being less difficult than others. They can imagine worse conditions and have not given up hope that their situation might improve—"if only I could be lucky"—even though some, the most impoverished, know their children are malnourished.

The running debate people have about the new methods of growing *palay* is, I think, indicative of their ambiguity about present conditions. The same person can be for and against new varieties, double cropping, hiring tractors, and related aspects of *palay* farming. The greater range in the Table 3's figures for gross, gross per hectare, return, and return per hectare in 1978–79 compared to 1961–62 helps to explain why. The lure to make more money is strong, if only one could stay on the high end of the production range while keeping in the middle or on the low end of the cost range. A few households have managed to do it—and to the envy of their neighbors, they build new homes (some even with indoor plumbing), buy appliances, invest in hand tractors, or send a child to college in Cabanatuan. Even landless workers can get excited this way, envisioning all the *palay* they and their family members could accumulate as harvesters if crops were bountiful several seasons in a row. "Then," as one such landless man said, "we could buy several piglets, raise and sell them at a good price, keep doing that until soon I would be the one lending money rather than the one borrowing." From the other side of the debate comes the fear of being left with no crop, yet deeply in debt. Some peasants who have suffered this strongly favor returning to the old varieties, which do not require "cash up front." Others are sympathetic, especially after a poor crop. But they are less certain, thinking still about the possible bountiful seasons and higher selling prices.[26]

Similar ambiguity is found among landless households. There are just enough examples of a few families who have "prospered"—by finding steady work with one of the goverment's irrigation and road building projects or by "making good money" selling shoes or other goods from village to village—to give hope to those whose miserable situation has stagnated. Such examples also lend credibility to conventional understandings in Bukiran that those who are poor are just unlucky or they have only their own mistakes and wrong ways to blame.

26. Were the irrigation schedule different, a few peasants would surely try to plant the older varieties. But because NIA controls the schedule, they cannot attempt this lest their fields have water when they should not and be dry when they should be flooded. Another reason is that the older varieties, which take longer to mature than the new ones, would be left ripening after surrounding fields of new varieties have been harvested, making them vulnerable to rats. In order to return to older *palay* producing methods, peasants agree, "Everyone will have to do so together."

Table 3

Comparison of Production Expenses and Returns of Two Groups of *Palay* Growers, 1961-62 and 1978-79

	1962-62		1978-79	
	Seven *palay* growers on seven parcels[1]		Fifteen *palay* growers on seventeen parcels[2]	
	Range	*Mean*	*Range*	*Mean*
Gross (*cavans*)[3]	110.4-332.3	220.0	111.6-585.2	307.7
Expense (*cavans*)	71.6-197.2	132.2	76.0-337.4	186.8
Return (*cavans*)	38.8-135.1	89.3	35.6-248.9	120.2
Hectares (ha.)	2.5- 5.0	3.6	2 - 7	4.4
Gross/ha. (*cavans*/ha.)	44.2- 77.6	61.6	51.8- 97.5	69.4
Expense/ha. (*cavans*/ha.)	28.6- 45.3	37.0	33.3- 56.0	42.1
Return/ha. (*cavans*/ha.)	15.5- 33.0	25.1	10.1- 41.5	27.1

[1] All seven are share tenants, each one growing one crop per year, giving 45 percent of the production to the landowner.

[2] Included are nine leasehold tenants who are supposed to be paying rent or amortization, one owner who also has a parcel on a leasehold basis, three owners, and two who farm land that other leasehold tenants have loaned to them in exchange for borrowing money (a *sangla* arrangement). All raised two crops in 1978-79, therefore the hectarage represented in this table is double the actual physical size of their parcels.

[3] I have standardized the *cavan* to equal 50 kilograms.

Sources: Court of Agrarian Relations Case 2975, NE 1962, Exhibit FF-FF 14, and Court of Agrarian Relations Case 3638, NE 1964, Plaintiffs' Petition (Cabanatuan: Court of Agrarian Relations). Conversations and observations in Bukiran, 1978-79.

Conclusions

Bukiran is one of those "silent" areas mentioned in the beginning of this article. It has had no recent outbursts of violence, no unusual religious groups, no rebels, no 150 *cavan* per hectare yields of *palay*—nothing to attract attention from journalists either opposed or sympathetic to martial law. Silence, though, does not mean enthusiasm for or even contentment with the present situation. Nor does it mean frustrated opposition. Important to understanding what martial law means, this article suggests, are people's experiences in recent history and their views about government.

Extending from the 1930s into the late 1960s, villagers in Bukiran were involved in numerous efforts to improve tenancy conditions, defend themselves against violent repression, and pressure the goverment to treat peasants as equals with large landowners. The high point of this era was the *Huk* movement.

The struggle brought some results. Tenants increased their share of their crops, laws restricted landlords' efforts to evict tenants, new courts were created to hear peasants' complaints, leasehold tenancy was legalized, and repression subsided. The experience fostered the view among large landowners and peasants alike that, although the government is controlled by the more wealthy people, it does occasionally act on behalf of the less wealthy and impoverished.

Many in Bukiran society see martial law in this context. Land reform today, as one former active member of those earlier peasant organizations said, is "the fruit of the seed planted by the *Huks*." It and such programs as government-sponsored loans to tenants are somewhat beneficial to villagers and reinforce their perception that the government can occasionally be helpful. Moreover, martial law has meant more-or-less a continuation from the 1960s of relative peace and moderate government claims on villagers' time and resources. These conditions foster an uncritical view of the regime.

Meanwhile, the government and society in general are run, in most people's eyes, by and for the benefit of the well-to-do sectors of the country. A minority prospers while most people are no better off economically than they were a decade ago. For many, conditions are probably even worse as prices rise faster than earnings and jobs remain scarce and low paying. Most villagers, in short, must struggle daily just to make modest ends meet, raise their families, be at peace with their neighbors, and take advantage of what few opportunities for improvement might appear. Martial law has been an incident in but has not substantially affected those endeavors that preoccupy the majority of villagers. Nor has it dashed the hope to which many cling that they or their children will be among the fortunate few to improve their socioeconomic positions.

Martial law, consequently, is not a significant issue in Bukiran. Just as people are unlikely to be enthusiastic about government officials' efforts to get them to display their support, they are not apt to become excited about attempts to organize against martial law. The call for "restoration of civil liberties," too, may not arouse much interest in Bukiran, where newspapers and other mass media even before 1972 were relatively unimportant and elections often meant turmoil and violence.

Proposals for improvement that Bukiran people offer are different. They suggest, for instance, that government or businessmen create jobs by building factories nearby (vegetable canneries, for example) and that more Filipinos be allowed to go overseas (to the Middle East and especially the United States) as contract laborers (and that the government should stop all recruitment rackets, which have already swindled several hundred pesos each from a few people in Bukiran). Other proposals include lower fertilizer prices, reduced irrigation fees, and higher prices for *palay*. All of these can possibly be done by the martial law regime. Indeed, the government has been encouraging Filipinos to work abroad, it has taken steps to regulate labor recruitment, and it has subsidized some fertilizers in order to reduce the effects on peasants of higher petroleum prices. Although none of these actions has been adequate, the very effort is somewhat gratifying to villagers whose expectations of government are limited to begin with.

The similarity of pre-martial law and martial law in Bukiran is sobering to people like myself who have criticized the regime and urged that martial law be lifted partly on the grounds that it has qualitatively changed the country for the worse. Bukiran's experience suggests that the system—government, state, regime, society—has changed little because of martial law. Simply removing martial law will not markedly improve Bukiran society.[27]

Bukiran's example indicates that martial law needs to be assessed not only in terms of its impact on socioeconomic classes, foreign and indigenous businesses, competing elites, and the country's place in the global economy. Locality, too, must be considered. Bukiran, I suspect, exemplifies one type of rural area that has not suffered the adverse aspects of martial law manifested elsewhere in the Philippines. Without attempting to estimate how often such an area might be found in the Philippines, I want to suggest the following features for it.

First, it is a lowland agricultural area that has long been integrated into the national and international commercial economy, it is heavily populated, and its land use patterns are well-established. Thus it is not conducive to intrusion by agribusiness, which the martial law government has encouraged and which have taken control of large expanses of land in less populated and more frontier-like lowland parts of the country. Nor is the area attractive to other investments that quickly disrupt villages and towns.

Second, the government has treated the area more gingerly than it has other parts of the country. Precisely because of previous unrest or rebellion, national rulers have had to make concessions to villagers. The government and its international advisors and creditors have aimed agrarian reform and related policies explicitly at the area in part, according to policy makers and administrators' statements, to prevent rural discontent.

Nueva Ecija, for instance, has received disproportion-

27. Since I wrote this, President Marcos has, indeed, "lifted" martial law, has been "elected" to a new six year term, and has proclaimed the beginning of the "New Republic." I doubt these events will make much difference to most people in Bukiran and vicinity.

ately more attention from the government's land reform, *Masagana-99*, irrigation, and related programs; I suspect the same is true for other provinces in central Luzon. As an illustration, twenty-five percent of the estimated Nueva Ecija tenants whose fields qualify for land reform are now entitled to being amortization payments on their lands. For Bukiran's municipality, the figure is twenty percent. The total for four central Luzon provinces is twenty-two percent. For the Philippines it is only eight percent.[28]

It is remarkable, however, how far short these programs fall from lavishly publicized goals and how little material improvement actually occurs for most people, at least if Bukiran is a useful example. Nevertheless, such modest results apparently suffice to prevent poor people from looking upon the government as an enemy and even to keep alive the belief that on occasion it can be a friend. Similarly, there are enough people who "make it" to give hope to the vast majority left behind. Such examples, although few indeed, together with the absence of drastically worse economic conditions push people to persevere, continuing to make do with what little they have or at least not departing from their routine to challenge the government or other parts of the social order.

Third, government attempts to "mobilize" the village population for its own purposes while "demobilizing" other rural organizations that it has not authorized have not been nearly as thorough in practice as they might appear on paper, and they have not burdened villagers.[29] Furthermore, they are not new; villagers contended with such things prior to martial law as well. Meanwhile other government efforts to bind the area more closely to the state have made the countryside more peaceful. Such actions here successfully undermined the power of rather autonomous groups that often competed violently with each other.

Perhaps because of the above three, repression, at least of the direct and visible kind, is not extensive.[30] Unlike other parts of the country, the area has nothing that the government and those business interests it endorses want so badly that they have had to forcibly take it. Furthermore, people have not visibly opposed those in power and hence have not provoked the full force of the state's coercive powers.

Bukiran might illustrate not just an area in the Philippines but a situation found in many times and places. In his recent book, Barrington Moore, Jr., tries to account for the paucity of vigilant resistance and revolt in a world filled with injustice, repression, and poverty. His findings, which he cautiously and masterfully weaves from diverse sources, have parallels to what has been said about Bukiran.

Impoverished people, Moore says, are not itching to revolt or even protest. Instead, they usually regard their situation as inevitable and see themselves as inferior to as well as dependent upon their very oppressors. The reason is that these are facts for people at or near the bottom of society. For them their situation *is*, for all practical purposes, inevitable. They are also inferior socially, economically, and politically. And "in a hierarchical society dependency of some sort is a major fact of life for the lower strata, and the human personality adapts to this fact."[31] It is also terribly difficult for such humans "to believe that long established authority is not essentially benevolent. It is the source of awe, conscience, and rewards, as well as punishments and frustrations."[32] An important explanation is that those who are dominant do reinforce such perceptions through direct and indirect means in schools, mass media, churches, and other institutions.

Overcoming this sense of inevitability—and with it inferiority and dependency—is "essential to the development of politically effective moral outrage. For this to happen, people must perceive and define their situation as the consequence of human injustice: a situation that they need not, cannot, and ought not to endure."[33] With difficulty, this can be done. Moore synthesizes several social and economic conditions that, at least in the past, are most conducive to that change: suffering among the lower strata must increase so rapidly that people do not have time to become accustomed to it, causes of the new suffering should be traceable to easily identified people, more goods and services must be available so that people see that poverty is a problem to be solved rather than being inevitable, disruption has to split the dominant classes so that alliances can form between some of those in both the dominant and subordinant classes, an activist minority needs to promote new standards of condemnation, and there must be some niches in the prevailing social order where dissatisfied groups can develop different ways of living and values.[34]

These are formidable conditions, but there is evidence that some are emerging in various localities in the countryside in the Philippines. There are, for instance, alliances forming between groups from both upper and lower classes (best seen recently in developments within the Protestant and Catholic churches),[35] dedicated minorities (e.g., the New People's Army and the National Democratic Front)

28. Calculated from figures (the latest dated 31 March 1979) printed in "Summary: Operation Land Transfer," by the Ministry of Agrarian Reform, and from data given to me by the Agrarian Reform Team Office in Bukiran's municipality. The four central Luzon provinces are Bulacan, Nueva Ecija, Pampanga, and Tarlac.

29. I am drawing upon the idea of "corporatism," which has been applied to the Philippines by Robert B. Stauffer, "Philippine Corporatism: A Note on the 'New Society,' " *Asian Survey*, 27 (April 1977); 393-407.

30. I am sensitive here to distinctions Johan Galtung and Herb Feith have made between direct and structural violence. Both suggest that the former is more readily visible and hence more likely to provoke reactions. Johan Galtung, "Violence, Peace, and Peace Research," in a collection of his articles, *Peace: Research, Education, Action* (Copenhagen: Christian Ejlers, 1975), pp. 109-134; Herb Feith, "Repressive-Developmentalist Regimes in Asia: Old Strengths, New Vulnerabilities," paper presented to the New York Conference of the World Order Models Project, 1-4 June 1979.

31. Barrington Moore, Jr., *Injustice: The Social Bases of Obedience and Revolt* (White Plains, New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1978), p. 466.

32. Ibid., 463.

33. Ibid., 459.

34. Ibid., especially chapter 14. Moore indicates that nationalism—another condition that might be necessary, Moore suggests, is nationalism in the sense of solidarity with fellow nationals against a foreign enemy.

35. See two papers by Robert L. Youngblood: "The Protestant Church in the Philippines' 'New Society,' " *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars*, 12 (July-Sept. 1980): 19-29; and "Structural Imperialism and the Catholic Bishops' Conference in the Philippines," unpublished, 1980.

continue to fan out and reach more villages and towns, and room for maneuvering remains for some groups critical of the prevailing system. Although these developments are scarcely known—and certainly not yet important—in Bukiran and vicinity, they might become so were economic and political conditions to worsen abruptly. If, for instance, the government were to crack down harshly on delinquent *Masagana-99* borrowers and tenants who owe amortization payments and if consumer prices were to increase even more sharply than they have already and wages and jobs to drop rapidly, villagers might be compelled to regard their situation as no longer tolerable. At least then more people might be prone to criticize, protest, and be receptive to affiliating with similarly inclined groups elsewhere in the country. Such outcries would not necessariy result in a radical reordering of society, but they would likely lend to an environment in which more liberating ideas and interpretations could emerge than is currently possible.★

Southeast Asian Agribusiness: The New International Division of Labor

by Gary A. Hawes

Introduction

Southeast Asia has long been a primary source of certain tropical commodities.[1] Colonial and imperialist countries, indeed most of the world, have depended on this region for rubber, spices, sugar, hemp, and hardwood timber.

Today, Southeast Asia remains an exporter of tropical commodities. In the first two decades after World War II, "development models" emphasized industrialization and import substitution to build up the internal market. They also tended to discourage agricultural exports because of relatively higher export taxes or restrictions on the free exchange of the foreign currency earned from exports. These models were another expression of the spirit of nationalism that arose in the region following the war.

During the 1970s, under much pressure from the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the "aid" giving countries, and in response to a generalized economic stagnation, the nations of Southeast Asia began to change their development models. Economies were opened up by freeing currencies to float, by removing protectionist barriers and by inviting in foreign investment. Along with this opening of the economies came a push to manufacture not for an internal market, but for the world market. Proceeds from these exports are to pay for capital goods imports, intermediate goods used as raw materials in producing the exports, and oil to fuel the entire process. The new development model with its emphasis on exports has had at least two economic consequences. First, production on a scale sufficient for the world market has meant enterprises have gotten much bigger. To develop large new projects required tremendous resources. Often only the state or the foreign transnational corporation (TNC) could meet these resource requirements. Second, the push for exports carried over into the agricultural sector where old export commodities have been boosted with more investment, new varieties, and more area planted. At the same time fluctuating or stagnating prices for the traditional commodity exports have led these nations to diversify into new commodities. Throughout Southeast Asia there is a growing trend towards the export of bananas, pineapples, marine products, chickens, and even flowers in a never-ending attempt to increase foreign earnings. At the same time regional markets such as Japan, Hong Kong and Singapore, as well as the developed market economies in general have been eager to get the luxury crops and industrial raw materials produced in Southeast Asia. The TNC with its control of marketing and processing has usually provided the link between Southeast Asia and the developed markets.

For the most part, the new development models have produced growth. As one recent article put it, "growth rates in total output, sectoral outputs (agriculture, mining and manufacture), savings, investment, exports, State revenues and development outlays, have generally exceeded both prior expectations and performance levels in most other less developed countries."[2] Agriculturally, the per capita supplies of protein and calories have steadily risen during the 1970s, as has the index of total productivity for the agriculture sector.[3]

Paradoxically, economic growth and rising per capita supplies of food have managed to eradicate neither hunger nor poverty. In 1979, Arturo Tanco, Jr., President of the World Food Conference and Minister of Agriculture for the Philippines wrote: "To speak of hunger is to speak of Asia. It is in Asia that the world's food problem is most critical, population is thickest, per capita income is lowest,

1. For this article I am using the term Southeast Asia to mean only the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand. This is because I am interested in examining the political and social consequences of agricultural export production on a large scale in developing capitalist countries. The effects of agricultural production for export in the socialist countries of Southeast Asia would, presumably, be somewhat different and equally interesting, but will not be dealt with in this article.

2. Geoffrey B. Hainsworth, "Economic Growth and Poverty in Southeast Asia: Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines," *Pacific Affairs*, Vol. 52, No. 1 (Spring, 1979), 5.

3. Economic Office, Asian Development Bank, *Key Indicators of Developing Member Countries of the Asian Development Bank*, Vol. XI, No. 2 (October, 1980).

unemployment highest, and poverty most widespread."[4]

Figures reported from the Fourth World Food Survey conducted by the Food and Agriculture Organization show that from the early 1960s to the early 1970s food supplies for the most part remained less than adequate for Southeast Asia even if the entire population had obtained equal shares of the supply (see Table 1 below). That distribution is highly unequal means that these per capita figures mask the true extent of hunger.

During the 1970s the daily per capita calorie supply has periodically fluctuated, but has generally tended towards a marginal increase. (See Table 2.) This progress has meant that, with the exception of Thailand, all the nations are producing sufficient food to adequately feed the entire population if equitably distributed. The question of an equitable distribution of the food supply, though, is very important in determining the incidence of hunger. The distribution of food supply is also directly linked to the distribution of income—increasingly linked as the movement towards agricultural production for the market and away from subsistence farming proceeds.

Determining distribution of income and the incidence of poverty and malnutrition are methodologically complex issues and depend to a certain extent on your initial definition of the concepts themselves. Going into great detail is beyond the scope of this article, yet recent evidence from two major surveys conducted in the mid-1970s suggest that poverty and malnutrition for the rural poor may actually be increasing.

The Asian Development Bank reports:

There is a general consensus in the literature that the rural poverty problem has worsened considerably in the ADB region in the past decade. . . . The basic problem seems to be the restricted access of a wide section of the population to productive resources and profitable employment opportunities in the broadest sense. It has thus become obvious that absolute economic growth can be accompanied by a relative impoverishment of certain strata, because this disadvantaged group cannot use technologies and are discriminated against by the existing institutional framework.[5]

The International Labour Office summarizes its case studies of poverty and landlessness in East and South Asia as follows:

The most outstanding facts to be noted are the worsening distribution of income and the declining real income of the rural poor at least in a number of cases. Those studies which contain the relevant data show that the shares of the lower decile groups in aggregate income and consumption have been declining even during periods of relatively rapid agricultural growth. There are significant differences from country to country as regards the proportion of the population that has been adversely affected, but in each country for which data exist, a substantial porportion of the lowest income groups appears to have experienced a decline in their shares of real income over time. Indeed, the evidence from the case studies points to an even stronger conclusion. In

4. Arturo Tanco, Jr., "Feeding on Insecurity," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, July 13, 1979, p. 36.

5. Asian Development Bank, *Rural Asia: Challenge and Opportunity*, (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1978), 63.

Table 1.
Per Capita Calorie and Protein Supplies for Individual Countries
1961–63 and 1972–74

	Supply			Supply as % of Req.		Protein Supply	
Country	1961–63	1972–74	Requirement	1961–63	1972–74	1961–63	1972–74
Indonesia	1,945	2,033	2,160	90	94	39.1	42.3
Malaysia	2,445	2,534	2,230	110	114	43.1	45.0
Philippines	1,880	1,953	2,260	83	86	43.8	46.6
Thailand	2,105	2,315	2,220	95	104	42.2	49.9

Source: The Fourth FAO World Food Survey (Rome: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 1977), Appendix C.

Table 2.
Daily Per Capita Calorie Supply, 1969–78

	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978
Indonesia	1,940	1,975	1,929	1,908	2,147	2,102	2,045	2,054	2,133	2,235
Malaysia (Pen.)	2,481	2,541	2,515	2,538	2,569	2,570	2,586	2,632	2,626	2,673
Philippines	1,945	1,963	2,031	1,941	1,980	2,142	2,057	2,108	2,214	2,291
Thailand	2,281	2,278	2,296	2,241	2,272	2,298	2,315	2,335	1,929	—

Source: Key Indicators of Developing Member Countries of ADB (Manila: Economic Office, Asian Development Bank, Volume 11, No. 2, October, 1980).

Sugar production sold internationally by the Philippine government, but produced locally by hundreds of thousands of poor Filipino workers. Photo: G. Hawes.

each case a significant portion of low income households experienced an absolute decline in real income.[6]

Where do we turn to find an explanation for this paradox of rising productivity coupled with continued poverty and malnutrition? The literature on the green revolution provides a partial explanation. It points to rising landlessness and an inequitable distribution of the rewards in the rice economy.[7] Unfortunately though, the tremendous amount of scholarship devoted to the rice economy has, among other reasons, meant that similar studies of the political economy of the production and export of primary agricultural commodities or the rise of the luxury food industries are almost non-existent.[8]

For other parts of the world, particularly for Latin America, where commodity exports and agribusiness are an integral part of the new economic development model they have long been the subject of critical study.[9] The remainder of this article will attempt to fill part of the void created by the lack of studies on Southeast Asian agricultural exports and agribusiness. It will briefly describe what is happening in the agricultural export sectors and point to areas where further research is needed.

The Situation Today

First, it is appropriate to point out once again the fallacy of the belief that the Third World is incapable of feeding itself. There is a tremendous amount of emphasis (in both the scholarly and the popular literature) placed on the world grain trade and the need for cereal reserves. This over-estimates the vulnerability of the Third World to hunger and tends to hide the role the Third World plays as a major agricultural *exporter*. When we examine the flow of world trade in agricultural products it is actually the developed industrial countries which are the net importers. The figures in Appendix 1 show explicitly the role of many Third World countries as net contributors to world agricultural trade. By contrast, the figures shown in Appendix 2 for selected developed countries indicate that many are net agricultural importing countries.

As Appendix 1 indicates, the four countries being considered here (Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, and the Philippines) rank in the top fifteen net agricultural exporters among the developing countries. They all export a net of over $500 million worth of agricultural products every year.

It is difficult to get accurate figures on the amount of crop land devoted to export crops. It would seem almost as if the Asian Development Bank and the United Nation's Food and Agriculture Organization do not consider these figures important enough to include in their respective publications. For the Philippines, there is evidence that land area devoted to export crops (sugar, coconuts, *abaca* [a kind of hemp], pineapple, etc.) has been growing more rapidly than land area devoted to food crops, with the area of export crop land increasing from about 35 percent of food crop land in 1963 to almost 45 percent by 1976.[10] In

6. International Labor Office, *Poverty and Landlessness in Rural Asia*, (Geneva: ILO), 9.

7. There has been much literature generated recently which deals with the consequences of the green revolution. To mention just two examples, see: Andrew Pearse, "Technology and Peasant Production: Reflections on a Global Study," *Development and Change*, Vol. 8, No. 2 (April, 1977), 125-59; and Ingrid Palmer, *The New Rice in Asia: Conclusions From Four Country Studies*, (Geneva: United Nations Research Institute For Social Development, 1976).

8. I say this with some confidence after a survey of the issues over the last decade of the many journals concerned with Southeast Asia and economic development in general, including: the *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars*, *AMPO*, *Journal of Asian Studies*, *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, *Southeast Asian Chronicle*, *Pacific Affairs*, *Asian Survey*, *Journal of Peasant Studies*, *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, *Development and Change*, *Developing Economies*, *World Development*, *Journal of Developing Areas* and *Journal of Development Studies*. The one exception to this is the excellent reporting on agricultural development in the *Far Eastern Economic Review* by Ho Kwon Ping. Also see his article, "Why Pineapples, Chickens and Bananas Give Much Food for Thought," *ASEAN Business Quarterly*, (Third Quarter, 1980), 13-19, 49.

9. Among the recent studies of Latin America are two by Ernest Feder, "How Agribusiness Operates in Underdeveloped Agricultures: Harvard Business School Myths and Reality," *Development and Change*, Vol. 7 (1976), 413-43 and "Agribusiness and the Elimination of Latin America's Rural Proletariat," *World Development*. Vol. 5, No. 5-7, pp. 559-573. Other longer works include *Agribusiness in the Americas* by Roger Burbach and Patricia Flynn, (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1980) and the collection of essays edited by Lawrence Alschuler, *Dependent Agricultural Development in Latin America*, (Ottawa, Canada: The University of Ottawa Press, 1981). Two books that deal with these issues on a global scale are Susan George, *How the Other Half Dies: The Real Reasons for World Hunger*, (Montclair, New Jersey: Allanheld, Osmun and Company, 1977) and Frances Moore Lappe and Joseph Collins, *Food First: Beyond the Myth of Scarcity*, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1977).

10. Central Bank of the Philippines, *Statistical Bulletin, 1976*, Table 106. The major food crops (rice, corn, fruits and nuts, root crops, and beans and vegetables) increased from 5,862,000 harvested hectares in 1963 to 7,732,000 in 1976. The export crops (sugar, coconuts, *abaca*, tobacco, pineapple, citrus, coffee and cacao, ramie, rubber, maguey, kapok, and cotton) increased from 2,073,000 harvested hectares in 1963 to 3,452,000

Malaysia the percentage of total crop land devoted to rubber, oil palm and coconuts (the major export crops) has risen from 74 percent in 1960 to 86 percent in 1975.[11]

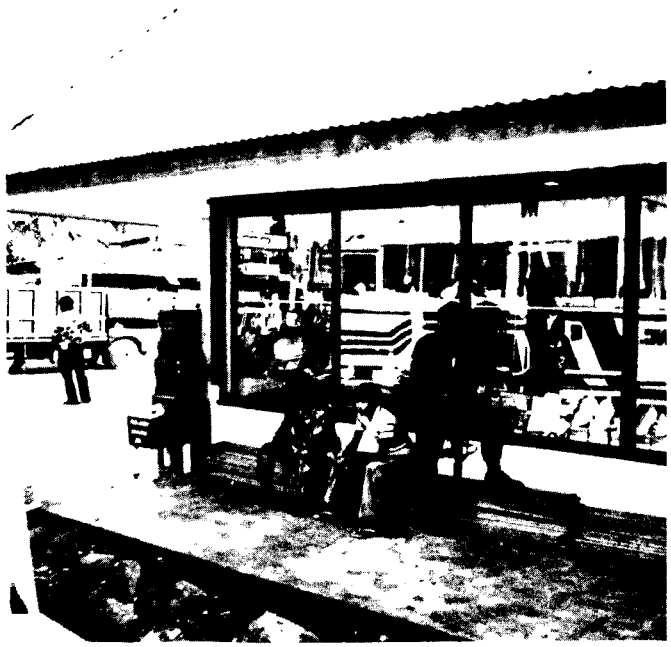
If, in the absence of good figures on land devoted to export crops, we look at production (see Appendix 3), we find that growth has come not so much in the traditional crops as in some of the newer varieties destined specifically for the export market (e.g. bananas in the Philippines, pineapples in Thailand, palm oil in Malaysia).

Paradoxically, economic growth and rising per capita supplies of food have managed to eradicate neither hunger nor poverty.

In the Philippines and Thailand, where the land frontier is for all practical purposes already closed, this expansion of land for export crops means that agricultural exports compete directly for land with the production of staple crops. Even in Indonesia and Malaysia, where new land is still being opened, export crops compete with staples for scarce capital, other inputs such as fertilizer or pesticides, and limited resources such as infrastructure and skilled labor. Agricultural exports directly bear on the question of hunger. The Philippines, for example, exports about 800 calories per person per day just in coconut oil.[12] Similar examples throughout Southeast Asia could be cited for other primary commodities or luxury export crops. All this takes place in countries where

> *food consumption patterns have changed little during the last ten years. The average per capita energy intake remains at close to 2000 calories per day in most DMCs (developing member countries), indicating that the bulk of the population does not consume the minimum dietary requirements for normal health. Protein-calorie malnutrition, and the high incidence of infectious and parasitic diseases associated with this are thus widespread and serious problems in many DMCs.*[13]

A second way that growing commodity production affects hunger is through a growing concentration of the ownership of land. Consolidating large land areas under the control of state agencies or the TNCs has often taken place at the expense of subsistence farmers. A common exmple is the small settler who moved to the frontier over the last decade or two or who followed the logging companies into virgin lands. The settler family then cleared the



Military repression is part of the cost of the new international division of labor. Photo: G. Hawes.

land and began raising subsistence crops and planting fruit trees and making other improvements. Perhaps, too poor to shoulder the expense of titling the land being tilled (if the government will even grant a title) the settlers trust in the benevolence of the government to honor their claim to the land or become tenants of the richer, better connected person who has the resources to obtain the title. Then when the government or the TNC identifies the area as suitable for the production of plantation crops the settler with no title to his land is often forced off the land in the interest of "agricultural development." Oftentimes the government involved will even try to convince the foreign investor that the area designated for development is unsettled. This is precisely what happened to Guthrie Corporation when they agreed with the Philippines National Development Company to develop an 8,000-hectare palm oil plantation in Agusan del Sur province. Guthrie had been told that the land had been newly logged over and there would be no "squatters." Yet when I visited the project site there were existing towns, churches, schools and even a hospital in the designated area. Settlers I talked to had been in the area for as long as fifteen years, many of them had been unsuccessfully seeking land titles for almost that long.[14]

Plantation crops such as rubber, pineapple or palm oil require less labor, in the range of one person for three to five hectares, then does mixed crop farming geared towards family subsistence. Also most plantation crops cannot be intercropped, or the corporation controlling the land refuses to allow intercropping even where it is possible, fearing a loss of control of the land. Finally, the subsistence

in 1976. Thus the ratio of export crop hectarage to food crop hectarage has increased from about 35% to about 45% in a period of less than fifteen years.

11. Kevin Young, Willem C.F. Bussink and Pavez Hasan, *Malaysia: Growth and Equity in a Multiracial Society*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980), 218-219.

12. Interview with a member of the World Bank agricultural mission to the Philippines, May, 1980.

13. Asian Development Bank, *Rural Asia*, p. 2.

14. This is based on an interview with the manager of project development, a representative of Guthrie, in July of 1980 and visits to the project area during July, August, and September of 1980.

Castle & Cooke bananas produced in Mindanao, Philippines. Photo: G. Hawes.

farmer who has lost control of his plot of land frequently ends up working as a rural proletarian for the corporate plantation.

This brings us to a third connection between commodity production and hunger. The wages earned by the growing rural proletariat are most often very near the legally set minimum daily wage, which in turn is often at or even below poverty lines or subsistence levels.

Ho Kwon Ping reports:

> *The commercialization of Thai agriculture has spawned a rapidly growing group of non-farming rural workers. Virtually non-existent 20 years ago, they now account for 30 percent of all households—almost double the urban population. . . . The incomes of unskilled rural workers, such as hired hands—the largest component of this non-farming rural group—are as low as those of subsistence rice farmers of the northeast, and substantially lower than those of farmers in the Central Plains.*[15]

In Malaysia, the government has sought to reduce rural poverty through opening new settlements on virgin land. The Federal Land Development Authority alone developed over 800,000 acres of new land during the twenty-one-year period 1956–1976.[16] Yet, perversely, the labor requirements for the new export crops raised on estates has declined, resulting in underemployment and a growth in the number of contract laborers. Also replanting schemes have resulted in greater rural disparities as the privileged gain access to high yielding varieties and the

There are at least three ways that a direct connection can be made between the production of agricultural exports by an expanding agribusiness and the increase of rural poverty and hunger. These are: (1) competition between food and export crops for scarce capital, land, and other inputs; (2) a growing consolidation of land ownership and control which decreases the access of small farmers to the land and creates a larger rural proletariat; (3) often only seasonal employment is available and even then low wages relegate these workers to the poorest of the poor.

disadvantaged on smaller, less productive holdings raising the older varieties sink deeper into poverty. The largest groups living in poverty are the smallholders in rubber, smallholders in rice, and the contract laborers on the large estates. All these groups have failed to gain an equitable share of Malaysia's rapid economic growth and have been among the first to suffer from declining terms of trade for commodity exports.[17]

In the Philippines, among the poorest are the landless laborers that work in the coconut, sugar and banana sectors of agriculture. They are often underemployed, getting work for only two or three days out of each week.[18] Even during peak periods such as the harvest season when there might be work everyday for several months, the workers receive (if they are lucky) only the minimum legal daily wage. Even though the minimum wage has increased, it has lost over the last eight years about 40 percent of its real value due to inflation and the government's determination to keep wages low to attract foreign investment.[19] The minimum daily wage is now so low that living on it without supplemental income from other sources guarantees that the worker and his family will live in absolute poverty.

There are, thus, at least three ways that a direct connection can be made between the production of agricultural exports by an expanding agribusiness and the increase of rural poverty and hunger. These are: (1) competition between food and export crops for scarce capital, land, and other inputs; (2) a growing consolidation of land ownership and control which decreases the access of small farmers to the land and creates a larger rural proletariat; (3) often only seasonal employment is available and even then low wages relegate these workers to the poorest of the poor.

Current Trends in Development

Until now I have spoken of agricultural exports and agribusiness in very general terms. It might now be helpful in trying to understand current trends in development to differentiate amongst the various actors. There are at least three main actors:

15. Ho Kwon Ping, "Thailand's Broken Rice Bowl," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, December 1, 1978, p. 43.

16. Tunku Shamsul Bahrin and P.D.A. Perera, *FELDA: 21 Years of Land Development*, (Malaysia: n.p., July, 1977), 50.

17. For a discussion of rural poverty in Malaysia see, Young, Bussink and Hassan, *Malaysia: Growth and Equity in a Multiracial Society*, pp. 223-252.

18. Based on the author's interviews conducted in the Philippines during 1980.

19. Republic of the Philippines, *Central Bank Statistical Bulletin, 1979*, Tables IX.4 and IX.5.

1. The TNCs from the developed countries that produce agricultural inputs, process Third World agricultural commodities, and manufacture consumer food products worldwide.

2. The nation-states which since World War II have increasingly taken control of land ownership and the marketing of agricultural export commodities.

3. The native elites which have, through joint-ventures or their own expansion to multinational scale, played an important part in the commercialization of the Southeast Asian agricultural sector.

The impact of the transnationals from the developed countries is gradually becoming a subject of general public knowledge. The ever-increasing diversification of the industrial conglomerates into the food industry and diversification by food companies into other commodities make them more difficult to study but cannot hide certain essential facts. We know, for instance, that the world market for agricultural equipment is held by only a handful of companies, that banana marketing is essentially controlled by three companies (Castle and Cooke, Del Monte, and United Brands), or, to take an example used by the United Nations,

> *At present, tobacco manufacturing in the developing countries and the developed market economy countries—apart from the state tobacco monopoly countries—is dominated by five large transnational tobacco corporations (British American Tobacco, Imperial, the Rembrandt/Rupert Group, R.J. Reynolds and Philip Morris) which straddle the globe with hundreds of proprietary brand names, and for which tobacco accounts for a diminishing share of their global output, sales and profits.*

Commenting on this conglomerate power, the UN points out:

> *There appears little opportunity for other producers to enter the market for manufactured tobacco products. Allowing for the possibility of such intruders, they would be regarded as highly vulnerable to annexation or reduction of their [already highly circumscribed] freedom of manoeuvre due to the sheer weight of existing conglomerate power—with their actual and potential power for collective marketing sanctions—and their further ability to relate technology, finance capital, and the communications media to attain their primary objective of ever larger market shares.*[20]

This oligopoly power held by a number of giant conglomerates in the food and tobacco industries has been increasing at an ever-growing rate during the twentieth century. For the effects of this trend in the United States, it is useful to quote rather lengthily from a recent study published by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.[21]

> *The 50 largest food manufacturing firms' share of the industry's total assets rose from 42% in 1963 to 63.7% in 1978, and could rise to 100% by the year 2000. This report confirms long-term structural trends in the food and tobacco manufacturing industries, as first identified by the National Commission on food marketing in its 1966 study. These trends, which reinforce the market power of the largest firms include*
>
> *—the number of firms is declining by about 3% a year*
>
> *—the number of mergers, industry concentration, product diversification into and out of industries, and product differentiation are all increasing*
>
> *—the profitability of firms with assets over $100 million was higher than for smaller firms in most years.*
>
> *Other trends identified by the report were:*
>
> *Foreign investment in U.S. food and tobacco manufacturing firms is large ($1.8 billion in 1975) and is rising rapidly; investment by U.S. firms abroad ($4.7 billion) is rising less rapidly*
>
> *—TV advertising of food products accounts for over 50% of all media advertising, and is increasing*
>
> *—profit rates for food and tobacco industries exceeded the rates for the rest of manufacturing for the first time during the early 1970s*
>
> *—wholesale prices of food products are elevated an average of 10% by the oligopolistic structure of food manufacturing*
>
> *—the 200 largest food and tobacco manufacturing firms account for two-thirds of industry sales, over four-fifths of industry assets, four-fifths of all media advertising and over 96% of all research and development.*

The recent acceleration of the merger movement under the Reagan administration could mean that the situation described above has worsened since the report was written in 1975. Along with that would come an increase of the oligopoly overcharges that come with industrial concentration. For example the Council on Wage and Price Stability in a 1976 report said that an FTC investigation disclosed that U.S. farmers paid $251 million in monopoly overcharges that year because the fam machinery industry is so tightly concentrated.[22] Testimony before the U.S. Congress presented evidence that consumer loss due to monopoly in the U.S. food manufacturing industries in 1975 was at least $10 billion, but possibly as high as $15 billion.[23]

Because the agribusiness TNCs have to a large extent captured the Third World markets for consumer food products and agricultural inputs, these monopoly overcharges are not limited to just the U.S. marketplace. As the division of labor in the Third World has been working out, the private sector and not the state is for the most part the supplier of agricultural inputs and consumer goods. (More will be said below about the division within the private sector between the TNCs and the domestic elite.)

The state in the four countries under study here is taking a more active role in agricultural production and

20. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, *Marketing and Distributing Tobacco*, (Geneva: UNCTAD, 1978), 13 and 15.

21. John M. Connor, *The U.S. Food and Tobacco Manufacturing Industries: Market Structure, Structural Change and Economic Performance*, (Washington: USDA Agricultural Economic Report No. 451, March 1980).

22. Council on Wage and Price Stability, *Report on Prices for Agricultural Machinery and Equipment* quoted in Frederick F. Clairmonte, "United States Food Multinationals: Lessons for the Third World," *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, Vol. 11, No. 1 (1981), 62-90.

23. Testimony of Dr. Parker and Dr. Connor during hearings before the Subcommittee on Antitrust, Monopoly and Business Rights of the Committee on the Judiciary, United States Senate, First Session, April 6, 1979, p. 49.

trade, but mainly *in two* areas: controlling access to land or land development and in the marketing of agricultural raw materials.

In Indonesia, which recently held an international workshop to attract foreign investors, Agriculture Minister Soedarsono Haidapoetro said the government will not alter its basic policy against foreign ownership of land. But he went on to say:

> *While necessary to achieve the employment, income and productivity aims of the government in the rural sector viable smallholder programs in the vast hitherto unutilized land tracts available in Indonesia will be difficult to develop over the forseeable future. Faced with that reality the government is pressed by the need to immediately increase output of basic food crops and to diversify the commodity range to establish a niche for Indonesian products in world markets. The only option, therefore, is for the government to actively promote plantation type agricultural develoment hand-in-hand with smallholder programs.*[24]

In the Philippines foreign investors in plantation agriculture used to be given almost unlimited access to land with long-term leases at often ridiculously low rentals, but now the government is using its control of the land to acquire majority status in joint ventures which will engage in the development of oil palm plantations, a relatively new export crop for the Philippines. The state has also taken over the export marketing of sugar (1974) and coconut products (1979), the two major export commodities.

In Malaysia the assertion of national control has taken a slightly different route. Foreign corporations are free to acquire and develop any land, but as a counterbalance the state has also sought, through a number of land development agencies, to provide adequate land for Malaysian smallholders. Also Malaysianization of the publicly held European plantation companies has taken place through the purchase of stock. The success of these stock purchases recently culminated in the reorganization, under a Malaysian chairman and Board of Directors, of Sime-Darby, one of the giants in the plantation industry.

Two factors seem to determine which areas can be effectively controlled by the Southeast Asian states and which will be left to the transnationals. The first is land. The state can always use its control of the land to extract concessions from foreign investors. There are, however, limits to the power that comes from control of land. The experience of the Indonesian government since March, 1980, when it issued a presidential decree prohibiting the ownership or exploitation of land by foreigners, certainly indicates these limits. It has been reported that since the decree was issued foreign investment plans in farm industries have stopped short or been completely withdrawn. Consequently, the Minister of Agriculture has now had to re-evaluate the implementation of this policy and offer new incentives to attract foreign investment in agriculture.[25]

The second factor is the existence of a working international commodity market or marketing systems which are not under the exclusive control of the TNCs. The Philippines could take over the marketing of its sugar and coconut products because there are existing commodity agreements and open marketing systems for these products. The same holds true for state marketing of rice and sugar in Thailand. For agricultural exports such as pineapple, bananas, chickens, and, in fact, for most of the newer luxury food products that Southeast Asia is now diversifying into the marketing system is many times more complex, marketing is under the control of a handful of TNCs and the products require more elaborate processing and packaging. Thus, national control is much more difficult to achieve and consequently the share of surplus that goes to the state is much smaller.

Just as there is a division of labor between the state and the private sector,[26] there is also evolving a new division of labor between the foreign investor and the private sector elites of Southeast Asia. While the TNCs have engaged in import substitution through the domestic production of consumer goods they have often concentrated on the more affluent urban market. This leaves an unmet demand for processed foods of lower price and quality which has been met by a growing class of domestic entrepreneurs. A few of these domestic corporations have become so successful they have even begun to expand regionally.[27]

A second, more important, area of growth for the domestic elite has been in joint ventures or contract growing. As competition for land and access to raw materials such as fishing rights increase because of rising world demand for food and decreases in the amount of unsettled land the role of the domestic rural elite has increased.[28] Because this rural elite oftentimes starts out with control of land or natural resources (for a variety of historical reasons), this increased competition strengthens their bargaining position relative to the TNCs.

If this rural elite has sufficient land and access to capital that it can use modern technology and hire the requisite labor to work the land it can reinforce its elite status. This relatively small number of rural elite then shares an interest with the urban bourgeoisie in extracting a surplus from its workers and supports State policies that discipline the labor force and encourage capitalist development.

In determining which contract growers enter the rural elite what is most important is not solely the size of the landholding, although the larger the landholding the more

24. Joseph Manguno, "Indonesia Hopes to Lure Farm Investors But Will Keep its Foreign Landholding Ban," *Asian Wall Street Journal*, May 16, 1981.

25. *Ibid.*

26. Despite this growing division of labor between the state and the private sector it remains true that the state provides considerable assistance to private accumulation by local and foreign investors. This assistance includes social and physical infrastructure, investment incentives, and a "disciplined" labor force.

27. See, for example, Ho Kwon Ping's discussion of the Charoen Phokphand Chicken Empire in Thailand in Ho Kwon Ping, "Why Pineapples . . ." *op. cit.* Another example would be the Philippines' Pure Foods Corporation which is controlled primarily by Antonio Floirendo, the Philippine "banana king" and the Ayala Corporation. It is gradually expanding to meet the growing market for processed meats in Hong Kong and Japan.

28. Andy McCue, "Plantation Land Becoming Elusive Asian Investment," *Asian Wall Street Journal*, June 16, 1979, p. 1.

VERTICAL INTEGRATION

Vertical Integration is a key ingredient in Castle & Cooke's corporate strategy for profit stability and long-term growth. It is one of the Company's major operational strengths, particularly in our widespread food activities.

The concept of Vertical Integration can be defined as having management control over as much of an operation's activity as possible—from growing the raw product through sale to the customer. The concept can be divided into four major components—source, processing, distribution and marketing.

Within Castle & Cooke's food activities, the degree of integration varies from product to product. It is greatest in the Company's pineapple, banana and mushroom operations. With each of these, we grow our raw product, process and pack it, and handle the distribution and marketing.

The vertical integration of Castle & Cooke's food operations is portrayed in this chart showing locations of source and processing, means of distribution, and geographic markets for major products

	Source	Processing	Distribution	Marketing
Pineapple	Hawaii, Far East and Honduras	Hawaii, Thailand, the Philippines	By ship, rail, truck; "Jet Fresh" by air	North America, Europe, Japan
Bananas	Latin America and the Philippines	All handled as fresh product	By chartered fleet of "reefer" ships	North America, Europe, Japan
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	Handled by C and H	By C and H in Western U.S.

likely that the owner will succeed in capturing a larger share of the surplus generated. Of increasing importance is the ability to combine landholding with modern production techniques, access to markets through the TNCs, and effective control of the labor force.

For example, in the Philippines some of the largest of the contract banana growers, those which have thousands of hectares and sell their product to Del Monte, United Fruit or Castle and Cooke have done exceptionally well. In Malaysia, the World Bank reports that the group of smallholders in oil palm, often with as little as five or ten acres, "is relatively small and rich in comparison with other groups of agricultural households."[29]

Having access to only a small parcel of land is, nonetheless, an economic disadvantage. A recent study of the smaller contract growers (those averaging only a few hectares) raising bananas in the Philippines for sale to the Castle and Cooke subsidiary shows that the average indebtedness by contract growers to the company was just slightly under $1000 per hectare and the general consensus among growers was that they had been cheated by the company.[30]

Similarly, smallholders in rubber throughout the industry, whether in Thailand, Indonesia or Malaysia and whether they sell their product to government agencies or produce under contract for private corporations, represent one of the poorest groups in these societies. This problem is exacerbated whenever the world price for rubber happens to drop.

In spite of this mixed picture the trend seems to point towards greater contract growing of export crops in Southeast Asia. As already mentioned, the Indonesian Minister of Agriculture is pushing plantation type agriculture hand-in-hand with smallholder programs. Malaysia is definitely seeking to create larger numbers of smallholders producing export crops. The Philippines Minister of Agriculture has also encouraged foreign investors to set up core estates which will be surrounded by smaller contract growers to supply raw materials for processing by the TNCs.[31]

The World Bank has legitimized this model of development by providing loans which will help pay for resettlement and development of smallholder lands. This, the Bank claims, helps to meet their commitment to provide assistance to the rural poor. The Bank has also recommended the implementation of policies that would limit backward integration by food processors and require that

29. Young, Bussink and Hasan, *Malaysia, op. cit.* p. 231.

30. Randolf David, Temario Rivera, Patricio Abinales and Procopio Resabal, Jr., *Transnational Corporations and the Philippine Banana Export Industry*, submitted to the United Nations Joint CTC/ESCAP Unit on TNCs, (Quezon City: Third World Studies Program, University of the Philippines, January, 1981), 175-76.

31. Arturo Tanco, Jr., *Amcham Journal* (March, 1979), 2, 54 and 55. Amcham Journal is the journal of the American Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines.

they purchase a percentage of their raw materials from small growers.[32]

Political and Social Implications

As was noted in the introduction, the trend towards a more open economy which produces for the world market has resulted in more investment in plantation crops and a diversification into production of luxury crops for the developed country markets. Projects of this scale and complexity have limited the number of potential investors and resulted in a new international division of labor in the agricultural sector. The TNCs continue to control the downstream processing of many agricultural commodities and the production, processing and distribution of the luxury food crops. They maintain their position through their monopoly over technology for processing and their predominant power in the marketing chain for luxury foods. The state through control over the access to land and its power to regulate public policy on tariffs, investment incentives and taxes has invited in foreign capital for certain areas of investment, but has increasingly taken over the processing and marketing of primary commodities which are used as raw materials in the developed economies. It has also taken on the role of joint-venture partner in the arena of production in certain cases. It is the domestic elite in the private sector that has most often provided the land and hired the labor that produces the primary commodities and also serves as a joint-venture partner with the foreign investor in the production of luxury crops.

Taken as a whole, this is a very elitist model of agricultural development. The projects are mostly large-scale and capital-intensive. They generate a large, poorly paid labor force in the plantation crop sector (although not as large as a comparable size multi-crop project would) and a small number of jobs in the processing sector. Control over technology and marketing by TNCs allows for large-scale transfer pricing. Control of the marketing of primary commodities by the state also suggests that surplus is accumulated at the national level and not at the level of the small producers. Contract growing has tended towards the creation of a small group of privileged, elite farmers and at the same time a mass of impoverished smallholders in debt to the large corporations with the relative size of the two categories depending on the contractual arrangements and the size of the holdings. The concentration of land ownership and the capital intensity of the production process results in a growing class of landless laborers, sometimes migrant and often only semi-employed.

If we start from the belief that development means an increase in the general welfare of the people, then what is happening in the agribusiness sector of Southeast Asia is not development. It is a process of growth wherein the rewards are divided among the state, the TNCs, and a small number of the local elite. Because the distribution of the benefits from this new growth is so inequitable, rural poverty and malnutrition will likely continue. Ironically, these problems will be most severe for the people who produce agricultural commodities and luxury crops for the rest of the world's developed markets.

Contrary to what the dominant ideology of economic development tells us, these problems are not going to disappear. At least in the predictable future I cannot foresee the benefits trickling down and the Kuznets' curve moving back towards greater equality of income.

A recent article by World Bank staff members Shlomo Reutlinger and Harold Alderman attempted to "analyze the likely changes in the prevalence of calorie-deficient diets in selected countries under a variety of development policy scenarios." Even under the most optimistic of projections, including constant food prices and high income growth rates, they project that by 1990 a substantial segment of the population will still consume less than FAO/WHO's recommended calories (Philippines 45%, Thailand 7%, Malaysia 8%, Indonesia 13%). Under less than optimum conditions (1% annual increase in food prices and low income growth) the percentage of the population consuming less than recommended calories will go even higher (Philippines 57%, Thailand 20%, Malaysia 16%, Indonesia 37%).

They conclude by saying,

> *Our prognosis suggests that the normal course of development, even with a vigorous expansion of food production, is not likely to solve the nutrition problem. In addition, special attention should be given to measures which improve the income distribution or at least prevent the income distribution from becoming more unequal, and to interventions in food markets designed to provide for the nutritional needs of the target population.*[33]

No doubt, these suggestions are well-meaning, but it does seem short-sighted to expect that governments which have embarked on a process of export-led industrialization and which are major beneficiaries of the new international division of labor in the agricultural sector will take remedial steps to improve the distribution of income when the entire model is based on an inequitable distribution of the rewards of growth.

I would like to conclude this article with a call for further study of some of the issues that have only briefly been discussed here. It is important to raise the level of scholarship devoted to Southeast Asian agribusiness. Specific areas that deserve study are the impact of contract growing arrangements, the implications of the new joint ventures between the state and the foreign investors, and the growing importance of the domestic elite that are investing in agribusiness under the new conditions of capitalist growth in agriculture. Do these elites have competing or common interests with the currently dominant foreign in-

32. E.g. the recommendation to the Philippine government that, "consideration should be given to adopt the policy whereby, within a predetermined period of, say 5 to 10 years, all large processors procure not less than 30% by value of all their domestic inputs from independent suppliers —preference being given to small growers and fishermen, formed into associations or cooperatives with which the large producers would contract." *Philippines: Industrial Development Strategy and Policy*, (Washington: International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, 1980), 114.

33. Shlomo Reutlinger and Harold Alderman, "The Prevalence of Calorie-Deficient diets in Developing Countries," *World Development*, Vol. 8, (May-June, 1980), 399-411.

vestors and their counterparts in the urban bourgeoisie? More work should be done on the distribution of benefits among the various groups which have interests in a particular commodity chain from production to processing to export and finally to marketing. Also work needs to be done on the amount of surplus generated in agribusiness that actually remains in the country, how that surplus is used, and how much escapes to the center countries.

In-depth work needs to be done on the conditions, perceptions, and understanding of the workers who labor in these agricultural enterprises. It would be enlightening to compare their class interests with those of the peasantry.

Another fruitful line of inquiry would be to compare (along the lines of the questions listed above) the agribusiness sector of these four Southeast Asian nations and the state-run agricultural projects of Vietnam.

It is only by further study of these questions and the dissemination of the knowledge to the powerless that the rural poor and the malnourished can form political alliances which will give them the power to force changes in agriculture and development models. Appeals to governments for reform have not worked to date and there is no reason we should expect them to work now. We can, however, have faith that people, when armed with knowledge about what is happening under this model of agribusiness development, will be able to solve their own problems.★

Appendix 1.
Top 20 Net Agricultural Exporters Among Developing Countries, 1978
(Thousands of U.S. Dollars)

Country	Agric. Exports	Agric. Imports	Balance	Rank
Brazil	6,662,432	1,547,420	5,115,012	1
Argentina	4,477,779	262,078	4,215,692	2
Colombia	2,484,316	243,333	2,240,983	3
Thailand	2,320,062	339,420	1,980,642	4
Malaysia	2,757,214	1,010,610	1,746,604	5
Turkey	1,604,279	109,569	1,494,710	6
Ivory Coast	1,745,636	292,092	1,453,544	7
Philippines	1,438,857	382,891	1,055,966	8
Ghana	957,317	148,253	809,064	9
Guatemala	841,764	100,389	741,375	10
Ecuador	707,760	111,377	596,383	11
Mexico	1,656,152	1,078,526	577,626	12
Indonesia	1,826,721	1,273,701	553,020	13
Kenya	675,903	130,534	545,369	14
Cameroon	612,444	93,231	519,213	15
Costa Rica	592,131	94,065	598,066	16
El Salvador	591,044	97,160	493,844	17
Nicaragua	511,277	60,516	450,761	18
Honduras	462,425	72,657	389,768	19
Dominican Republic	450,775	133,901	316,874	20

Source: FAO Trade Yearbook, 1979.

Appendix 2.
Net Agricultural Exports of Selected Developed Countries
(Thousands of U.S. Dollars)

Country	Agric. Exports	Agric. Imports	Balance
United States	30,554,940	15,759,790	14,795,150
Canada	4,587,083	3,724,176	862,907
France	1,249,689	1,239,865	9,824
United Kingdom	600,565	1,368,465	(767,900)
Netherlands	1,218,304	862,384	355,920
Denmark	3,923,884	1,945,862	1,978,022
Soviet Union	2,333,536	10,512,216	(8,178,680)
Japan	53,870	1,351,594	(1,279,724)
Australia	5,766,477	787,084	4,979,393
New Zealand	2,209,269	257,181	1,952,088
Belgium	4,633,437	6,512,644	(1,879,207)
Germany,	724,626	2,078,778	(1,303,152)

Source: FAO Trade Yearbook, 1979.

Appendix 3.
Production of Agricultural Commodities
(1,000 Metric Tons)

	1969–71	1977	1978	1979
Indonesia				
Coffee	173	198	223	267
Tea	65	85	89	93
Sugar Cane	10,322	14,709	14,880	15,995
Rubber	838	835	900	851
Jute	1,189	1,288	1,497	1,445
Rice	19,136	23,356	25,781	26,350
Palm Oil	218	525	610	640
Philippines				
Coffee	48	82	105	122
Sugar Cane	16,271	23,126	2,273	20,348
Bananas	893	2,125	2,390	2,430
Pineapples	251	427	465	480
Rice	5,225	6,895	7,318	7,000
Malaysia				
Cocoa Beans	4	19	24	26
Rubber	1,285	1,613	1,607	1,617
Rice	1,696	1,922	1,527	2,161
Palm Oil	457	1,778	2,184	2,600
Thailand				
Sugar Cane	5,856	23,658	20,561	20,000
Bananas	1,200	1,700	2,000	2,082
Pineapples	187	1,250	2,000	2,000
Rice	13,475	13,921	17,530	15,640

Source: FAO Monthly Bulletin of Statistics.

Science and Authority in International Agricultural Research

by Edmund K. Oasa and Bruce H. Jennings*

Introduction

In the past decade, many have criticized agricultural research in the United States for its socio-economic consequences and its apparent inability to account adequately for them.[1] But little has been said in this vein about agricultural development outside of the United States, particularly in the Third World. Our task is to direct attention to this experience, pointing particularly to the nature of international agricultural research. Agricultural scientists cannot remain steadfastly oblivious to the consequences of research or by assigning responsibility elsewhere. Not recognizing such consequences cannot be justified on the grounds of neutrality and objectivity in science, because the value and political biases of the agricultural research and development are ultimately reflected in social results.

For the Third World, science-based technology represents the foundation of the dominant strategy to alleviate "the food problem." Exemplary are the high-yielding cereal strains released by international agricultural research centers in the 1960s, most notably the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) in the Philippines and the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT) in Mexico. This strategy, however, has been criticized for "betting on the strong," benefiting mainly those cultivators commanding adequate irrigation facilities, fertile soil, and credit for chemical inputs.[2]

Our paper will: (1) review the international agricultural research organizations' responses to their critics; and (2) argue that these amount to nothing more than a reformulation of past efforts that, ultimately, reflect a basic interest in sustaining a technological approach to the study and solution of problems that are political in nature. The retention of a technological approach casts serious doubt upon the extent to which *international* agricultural research is capable of contending with the social consequences.

Science, Capitalism and the Technological Project in Agriculture

The scientific community that stands behind agricultural research in the United States has traditionally been unwilling to examine the consequences of its work. This situation has more to do, however, with the historical factors that have influenced the development of this scientific community than the choice of individual scientists. Central among these forces is that of corporate capitalism. In this respect, agricultural science has become a mechanism serving the legitimacy, reproduction, and stability demanded by corporate capitalism.[3]

In the agricultural sector this demand signaled the transformation of production from a household to an industrialized process. A catalytic force was research provided by land grant colleges and state agricultural experiment stations. The drive toward higher levels of production was accompanied not simply by greater yields, but by serious human consequences. Rebellion by many rural people in the late nineteenth century, protesting their declining economic and social status, marked the period of industrial expansion. Farmers protested not only declining farm prices but, even more significantly, the growing trends toward mechanization that industrialists so favored.[4]

By the early twentieth century the nation had an agricultural research system funded by private and public monies. The public subsidization of research did not result in an increased participation in the setting of research agendas. Instead, local research stations and land grant colleges found most of their work defined according to the private economic interests of owners of extensive land holdings, large scale producers of fertilizer-seed-livestock, corporate food processors, and manufacturers of farm machinery.[5]

* An earlier version of this paper appeared in Mexico in: *El Trimestre Económico*, No. 196, "la naturaleza de la investigación social en la agricultural internacional: La experiencia norteamericana, el IRRI y el CIMMYT," 1982.

1. Charles E. Rosenberg, "Rationalization and Reality in the Shaping of American Agricultural Research, 1875-1914," *Social Studies of Science*, Vol. 7, 1977, pp. 401-442; J. Hightower, *Hard Tomatoes, Hard Times* (Cambridge, Mass.: Schenkman Publishing Company, 1978); John Vandermeer, "Agricultural Research and Social Conflict," *Science for the People*, Vol. 13, January/February 1981, pp. 5-8, 25-30; William H. Friedland and Tim Kappel, "Production or Perish, Changing the Inequities of Agricultural Research Priorities," Report from the Project on Social Assessment and Values (Santa Cruz: University of California 1979); Wendell Berry, *The Unsettling of America: Culture and Agriculture*, (New York: Avon Books, 1977); and Lawrence Busch, "Structure and Negotiation in the Agricultural Sciences," *Rural Sociology*, Vol. 45, 1980, pp. 26-48.

2. Keith Griffin, *The Green Revolution: An Economic Analysis* (Geneva, Switzerland: United Nations Research in Social Development, 1972) as well as various other reports published by the United Nations Research in Social Development.

3. Harry J. Cleaver, Jr., "The Origins of the Green Revolution," Ph.D. dissertation, Stanford University, Palo Alto, California, 1975.

4. Gabriel Kolko, *Main Currents in Modern American History* (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1976).

5. Charles E. Rosenberg, *No Other Gods: On Science and American Social Thought* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976).

CIMMYT's headquarters near Mexico City. Photo: CIMMYT

Scientists not only excelled at making agriculture more productive, but also productivity became the dominant ideology in science. In various fields defined by corporate capital, industrialists combined the notion of scientific objectivity with the practice of limited social responsibility. This professional norm of circumscribed responsibility reflected a disinterest among capitalists towards the consequences of reorganizing social relations within the work place. Researchers who addressed the linkage between science and industry received employment and professional recognition, but those whose research threatened existing social arrangements—by promotion of health instead of profits, for example—met either indifference or opposition from the financial patrons of science.

One of the early and most influential forces on organized science in America was the Rockefeller Foundation. At the turn of the century the Foundation together with the United States Department of Agriculture conducted farm demonstrations in the South that substituted technology for manpower as a means of commercializing agriculture. This application of science to agriculture not only made farming a profitable industry, but supplanted political demands with the promise of technological improvements.[6]

As the Rockefeller Foundation expanded from a philanthropic agency to a manager of research it promoted particular practices in science. In public health, for instance, the Foundation recruited researchers into a medical "science" largely limited to disease control. Those who focused attention on the conditions necessary for health, such as the work environment, found no support in a profession increasingly dominated by "Rockefeller medicine men."[7]

In the early 1940s the Rockefeller Foundation began to apply its experiences in health and agriculture to a technical assistance program in Mexico. The research agenda that resulted from this program was, within two decades, institutionalized at two international agricultural research centers—CIMMYT and IRRI. These were the forerunners of a research network that now includes more than thirteen centers and a consortium of international donors.

The center for this international system is the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) with its secretariat in the World Bank. Funding for the Consultative Group and member centers is now drawn from more than a dozen governments, regional development banks (African, Asian, and Inter-American Development Banks), the International Research Centre, and the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations. The centers employ nearly ten thousand persons with a budget exceeding 100 million dollars.[8]

The research priorities at CIMMYT and IRRI reflect those of corporate philanthropies and the scientists there continue to be preoccupied with greater production through technology. They are not given to examining its consequences. Their orientation remains grounded in the agenda first defined by the Rockefeller Foundation in Mexico some forty years ago.

The International Center for the Improvement of Maize and Wheat

American interest and interference in Latin America has been carefully documented in numerous historical and political-economic studies.[9] By 1940, Latin American na-

6. Grant McConnell, *The Decline of Agrarian Democracy* (New York: Atheneum, 1969).

7. Richard Brown, *Rockefeller Medicine Men* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978).

8. International Development Association, "Bank Group Financial Support in 1979 for International Agricultural Research" (Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 1979).

9. Fernando Henrique Cardoso and Enzo Faletto, *Dependency and Development in Latin America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971); James Petras, *Politics and Social Structure in Latin America* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1970).

tionalism was on the rise, threatening American corporate interests in the region. The Rockefeller family's interests in particular came under attack when Mexican President Lazaro Cardenas expropriated the Standard Oil Company in 1938. The company demanded a large compensation and organized boycotts, but the Rockefeller Foundation, in an effort to improve the unstable situation, continued its public health projects there that had begun in the 1910s.[10] Such was the socio-political context in which the Foundation began its project in international agriculture.

The Rockefeller Foundation and "Scientism" in Agricultural Research

Dr. J. A. Ferrell, a Rockefeller Foundation officer involved in public health, reported in 1936 that one of the most urgent needs of Mexico was a program to improve economic conditions. Because the average Mexican family was too poor to pay taxes, Ferrell stated that funds were unavailable to finance such services as health, education, and welfare.[11]

In 1936, Dr. Ferrell spoke with a former minister of agriculture, who had served ex-president Calles, about the possibility of establishing a cooperative mission in agriculture between the Rockefeller Foundation and the government of Mexico. Dr. Ferrell then wrote a memorandum to the president of the Foundation, Raymond Fosdick, about the possible mission, noting:

> *A beginning toward economic improvement could probably be undertaken in the field of agriculture. No serious controversial issues would be involved and ultimately the range of aid might be broadened.*
>
> *Except in public health, I have not attempted to mature a project for Mexico, but I believe two or three qualified persons might be sent to study its agricultural problems and possibilities and then outline broadly a constructive program. Again, a small number of carefully selected Mexicans might be given fellowships for special training in other countries. When they returned for duty, they might be given some financial aid through proper channels toward organizing and conducting activities.*[12]

With the inauguration of President Manuel Avila Camacho in 1940, the possibility of creating a cooperative mission between the United States and Mexico was proposed to the U.S. Vice President, Henry Wallace. On February 3, 1941, the Vice President, Ferrell, and Raymond Fosdick met at the Senate Office Building in Washington,

10. Cleaver, "The Origins of the Green Revolution," p. 305. An account of the Standard's tactics and attitude can be found in Howard F. Cline, The United States and Mexico (New York: Atheneum, 1963), pp. 240-241.

11. Letter from John A. Ferrell to Raymond Fosdick, October 1936 (New York: Rockefeller Foundation Archives).

12. Ibid.

D.C. Wallace stated that among the important problems confronting Mexico was the need for greater agricultural production. Wallace suggested that demonstrations of agricultural practices should be located in the densely populated central plateau. Wallace further stated that while the Rockefeller name was generally associated with philanthropy, "it might also be linked with the oil industry, expropriated property, and the attendant controversies."[13] When questioned on this point, Wallace responded that the Rockefeller Foundation was regarded as apolitical and that it had advantages over alternative programs, such as between the governments of the United States and Mexico.

Wallace commented that his concern over low agricultural productivity was the result of the "possible danger" that this made in the face of a high birth rate. Wallace stated that he and the U.S. ambassador to Mexico, Mr. Daniels, felt that President Camacho "wants peace with the United States and that a basis for the settlement of controversies about American property is in prospect."[14] The Vice President concluded the meeting by emphasizing the importance of Mexico to the national defense of the U.S.

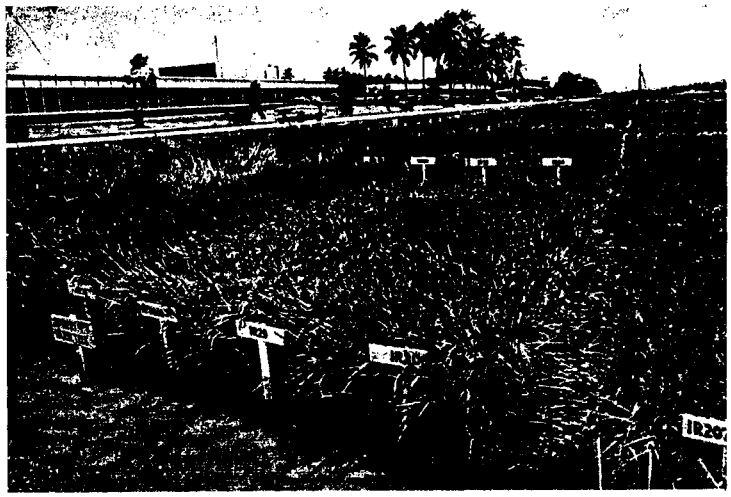
In subsequent conversations within the Foundation, it was agreed to organize a survey team as suggested in Dr. Ferrell's 1936 memo. The "qualified persons" selected to review Mexican agriculture included three scientists of agriculture: Dr. Richard Bradfield, professor of soils and agronomy at Cornell University; Dr. Paul Mangelsdorf, professor of plant genetics and breeding at Harvard University; and Dr. E. C. Stakman, professor of plant protection at the University of Minnesota.

In July 1941 the three American scientists traveled to Mexico. By December the team had completed its survey and issued an evaluation of the feasibility of "technical assistance." The program of technical assistance proposed by Stakman, Bradfield, and Mangelsdorf included the following:

1. *Developing improved agronomic-production-management practices.*
2. *Breeding improved varieties of maize, wheat, and beans.*
3. *Improving weed control.*
4. *Improving animal production.*
5. *Training a corps of Mexican scientists.*[15]

Although their observations were circumscribed by a study of the feasibility in technical assistance, the prescriptions of the survey team reflected a commitment to science.

Bradfield, Mangelsdorf and Stakman held a fundamental belief in the importance of science in Mexican agriculture, and described "genetics and plant breeding, plant protection, soil science, livestock management and general farm management" as the means of improving the five areas of technical assistance listed above. Their observation of Mexican agriculture reflected an advocacy of "scientism." That is, science was not merely a method for improving production; science also provided the technique which was the sole means to improve agriculture. Although they accorded science the primary position in agriculture, they were not unaware of other historic developments in Mexican agriculture.



IRRI at Los Banos in the Philippines. Photo: CGIAR

In a book written later recording their observations of Mexican agriculture, Bradfield, Stakman, and Mangelsdorf addressed the role of agrarian reform:

> *Agrarian reform had long been one of the principal aspirations in Mexican revolutions. . . . Mexico was being transformed largely from a country of latifundia to one of minifundia; whereas a few people had owned much of the land, each of many people now farmed a little land. . . . Land redistribution was satisfying the hunger of the landless for land, but was it satisfying their hunger for food?*[16]

These scientists argued for the "encouragement, stimulation, and guidance of existing institutions and individuals."[17] Such arguments obscured the sharp cleavages that existed between personalities and within institutions. In the aftermath of the revolution and controversies renewed by the Cardenas administration (1934–1940), was the improvement of agriculture to occur amongst commercial farmers, subsistence cultivators, or the landless?

The Survey team did not attempt to answer questions concerning who was to be the recipient of its program except as part of a general strategy for the scientific improvement of agriculture. In a memo to the Rockefeller Foundation, the three scientists suggested a strategy of how and where technical assistance should begin:

> *The plan presented assumes that most rapid progress can be made by starting at the top and expanding downward. The alternative would be to start at the bottom and work toward the top. A program of improving the vocational schools of agriculture and of extension work directed towards the farmers themselves might be undertaken. But the schools can hardly be improved until teachers are improved; extension work can hardly be improved until extension men are im-*

13. *CIMMYT Chronology*, n.d., p. 2 (CIMMYT: El Batan, Mexico).

14. Memorandum of conference with Vice President Wallace by John A. Ferrell, February 10, 1941, p. 6 (New York: Rockefeller Foundation Archives).

15. E. C. Stakman, Richard Bradfield, and Paul C. Mangelsdorf, *Campaigns Against Hunger* (Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1967), pp. 32-33.

16. Ibid., p. 22.

17. Ibid., p. 1.

proved; and investigational work cannot be made more productive until investigators acquire greater competence.[18]

But some in the Foundation were concerned with the social aspects of technical assistance. Prior to the visit of Stakman and the other members of the team to Mexico, an officer of the Foundation suggested that the views of someone familiar with Latin America be solicited regarding technical assistance to Mexico. Dr. Carl Sauer of the University of California was suggested as someone who was "in entire sympathy with the importance of focusing on agriculture."[19] The Foundation was acquainted with Sauer through his proposals to the Foundation for the support of research projects in Latin America. His projects emphasized the importance of social studies as a means of understanding Latin American problems.

Early Criticism of the Rockefeller Approach

Dr. Sauer recommended in 1941 that the improvement of the genetic base of agricultural crops be predicated on an understanding of the relation of such work to the poorer segments of the society. As an example, Sauer suggested that improvements in agricultural productivity could be directed to the rural poor by considering the role of various foods in their kitchens. The nutritional practices of the Mexican peasantry or campesinos, Sauer stated, were excellent as far as their pocketbooks allowed. The same was said to be true of their agricultural practices. Sauer stressed that the main problem confronting the Mexicans was one of economics, not culture.[20]

In concluding his remarks on agriculture, Sauer reminded the officers of the Foundation that plants such as maize had a much more varied use in Mexico than in the United States. As a result of these differences, Sauer cautioned against the use of applying the agricultural science to recreate the history of U.S. commercial agriculture in Mexico:

> *A good aggressive bunch of American agronomists and plant breeders could ruin the native resources for good and all by pushing their American commercial stocks. . . . And Mexican agriculture cannot be pointed toward standardization on a few commercial types without upsetting native economy and culture hopelessly. The example of Iowa is about the most dangerous of all for Mexico. Unless the Americans understand that, they'd better keep out of this country entirely. This must be approached from an appreciation of native economies as being basically sound.*[21]

Foundation members, including Fosdick, Ferrell, A. R. Mann, and Andrew J. Warren, received Sauer's evaluation, but Dr. Sauer's emphasis on building on the knowledge of agriculture possessed by the peasantry generated little discussion or interest among them. In spite of the severity of Sauer's observations, the Foundation set the

18. Richard Bradfield, E. C. Stakman, and Paul C. Mangelsdorf, Recommendations of the Commission to Survey Agriculture in Mexico, December 3, 1941 (New York: Rockefeller Foundation Archives).

19. Ibid.

20. Letter from Dr. Carl O. Sauer to the Rockefeller Foundation, February 10, 1941, p. 2 (New York: Rockefeller Foundation Archives).

21. Ibid., p. 3.

stage for scientific management according to the logic of commercial production.

In February 1945, Joseph Willits, director of the social sciences division in the Foundation, received a letter from Carl Sauer.[22] Sauer, while on a trip through Mexico, met with Drs. Edwin Wellhausen and George Harrar and forwarded another evaluation of Mexican agriculture and the role of the Mexican Agricultural Program (MAP) to Dr. Willits. Sauer wrote that he was impressed with Dr. Wellhausen and that he was not one of those "natural scientists who remain unaware of the cultural medium in which they are working. . . ."[23] Sauer commended Wellhausen in his letter to Dr. Willits, saying, "he sees that they [the members of the MAP] must work with the native corns; he is not a missionary for soybeans, and I suspect he sees the pitfalls in the wheat campaign."[24]

Sauer argued against the campaigns to increase wheat cultivation in Peru and Chile as well as Mexico. He wrote that work on the cultivation of legumes was much needed by Mexican households. Moreover, local varieties of corn were of much greater value to local communities than research pursued by the MAP on alfalfa and on barley and wheat: "the 'natural' place for these small grains in the local economy is pretty restricted, I think."[25] Sauer noted that the absence of legumes in the diet of many Mexicans was the result of historic factors, not environmental ones. He described the Spaniards' emphasis on the cultivation of wheat and barley beginning in colonial times as ill-suited to the ecology and economy of Mexican villages.

Although Sauer spoke of the need to help the Mexican peasantry, he placed considerable value on their accumulated knowledge and skills. He repeated his earlier assessment to the Foundation, stating that the Indians of Mexico "need to be encouraged that their ways are good and they need protection against exploitation."[26] Sauer's concern for the peasantry reflected an interest in understanding the meaning of agriculture as defined by its participants:

> *I am not interested in the Indians as museum pieces and I am also interested in non-Indian populations that have cultural values of their own as apart from the standardizing tendencies which are flowing out from the urban centers to strip the country of its good and ablest men and pauperize it culturally as well as often economically.*[27]

Sauer analyzed Mexican agriculture critically as a reflection of the United States' model of development:

> *The agricultural situation in Mexico is an exaggeration of that which we have in our experimental work in California; the interest is directed away from subsistence or village agriculture to the needs of city and factory with the attendant emphasis on standardization of product and on yield, also on tariff protection, and on the commodities which the privileged fraction of the population can absorb.*[28]

22. Letter from Carl O. Sauer to Joseph Willits, Feburary 12, 1945, p. 1.
23. Ibid., p. 1.
24. Ibid.
25. Ibid.
26. Ibid., p. 3.
27. Ibid.
28. Ibid., p. 1.

Sauer's letter to Dr. Willits apparently provoked no reappraisal by the Foundation of its proposed program in Mexico. One of the few records of reference to any discussion generated by Sauer's criticisms in 1941 and 1945 within the Foundation occurred several years later.

Mangelsdorf wrote to Weaver in 1949 that Dr. Edgar Anderson, a paleo-botanist at Washington University, agreed with Carl Sauer's opposition to the Mexican agricultural program. Mangesldorf summarized the arguments of Sauer and Anderson for Weaver:

> *If the program does not succeed, it will not only have represented a colossal waste of money, but will probably have done the Mexicans more harm than good. If it does "succeed," it will mean the disappearance of many ancient Mexican varieties of corn and other crops and perhaps the destruction of many picturesque folk ways, which are of great interest to the anthropologist. In other words, to both Anderson and Sauer, Mexico is a kind of glorified ant hill which they are in the process of studying. They resent any effort to "improve" the ants. They much prefer to study them as they now are.*[29]

The arrival of the MAP in Mexico in 1943 resulted, within the span of twenty years, in a changed organization of agricultural production, changes brought by the application of a science to agriculture. The organization of agricultural research within the Ministry of Agriculture in 1940 was, however, marked by a lack of consensus concerning the sources and definition of scientific research.

One important controversy revolved around the type of land tenure to be promoted—*ejidal* or private. The *ejido* refers to a form of communal tenancy which post-revolutionary regimes granted to millions of rural people. While there were those who conceived of the *ejido* as an adjunct to private agriculture, others saw the *ejido* as a means of moving agriculture away from capitalism. Associated with this question were controversies concerning the role of scientific investigations. The Office of Experiment Stations, initiated in 1933, eventually became the location within the Ministry of Agriculture where the role of science became most controversial. Prior to 1944, under the guidance of Edmundo Taboada, the Office of Experiment Stations was the main agency applying scientific investigations to agriculture. Yet under Taboada's leadership science was not perceived as a neutral tool for the general improvement of agriculture. Taboada suggested that scientific investigations in agriculture could be tailored to produce distinct consequences for Mexico's social classes. Taboada later alluded to the politics imbedded in scientific research in describing the distinctive approach fostered by the Institute of Agricultural Investigations (IAI) and its predecessor organization, the Office of Experiment Stations:

> *Scientific investigation must consider the men who put its findings into practice. . . . It is possible that a discovery can be made in a laboratory, in a hothouse, at an experiment station, but useful science, manageable, operable science, must grow out of the local laboratories of . . . small farmers,*

29. Memorandum from Paul C. Mangelsdorf to Warren Weaver, July 26, 1949 (New York: Rockefeller Foundation Archives).

ejidatarios, and indigenous communities.[30]

In contrast to research in the United States, such departments within the Ministry of Agriculture as the IAI promoted a science of agriculture founded on the active participation of the peasantry. Divisions within the Ministry of Agriculture between American scientists and certain Mexican scientists reflected a basic disagreement about agriculture, central to which were differences regarding the origin and control of science.

Scientific Production for the Market

It is important to recognize that the cooperative mission established by the Rockefeller Foundation never seriously entertained the research approach advocated by Taboada or others of the IAI. The organization of research from the top down as argued by Stakman and others reflected moreover not merely a different orientation towards scientific investigations, but a monolithic conception of science that excluded other meanings. The decision not to work for an agricultural science to be controlled by the powerless in society was consonant with other decisions made by American agricultural scientists. In fact, the design of a research process that was class controlled was a conscious effort on the part of the American scientists. The Rockefeller scientists recognized very early that such an organization of agriculture was bound to produce further class antagonisms and inequities.

In 1949 Warren Weaver invited three of the Foundation's trustees to Mexico to see the work of the MAP. After the visit of Dr. John S. Dickey (President of Dartmouth College), William Meyers (a dean at Cornell University), and Dr. Thomas Parran (a dean at the University of Pittsburgh), Weaver posed two questions regarding the Rockefeller program in Mexico. Weaver asked each trustee: (1) what were their ideas about the Foundation's method of withdrawal from Mexico, and (2) "how could we capitalize" on the "useful administrative, organizational, and technical procedures" that were developed by the MAP?[31]

John S. Dickey responded that various members of the Foundation agreed that the program should not be ended abruptly. Dickey commented that the program could not be carried on indefinitely and that it might be terminated as early as 1953 or 1955, but that this depended on agreement on a "limiting principle." Dickey suggested one type of a limiting principle and how and when the Foundation members might agree to terminate the program in Mexican agriculture.

> *. . . I suggest that one of our limiting principles might be that we will not carry the program beyond the point where it has been established as a scientific process; to put it otherwise, that the Foundation is not and will not be primarily concerned with the long-range problems of practicality involving major political, economic, and social decisions and operations.*[32]

Obviously Dickey's limiting principle was based on his anticipation of major social consequences resulting from the introduction of different agricultural techniques.

Although Dickey acknowledged that the MAP had been drawn into demonstrating its scientific work in Mexico, he counseled against allowing the program to become deeply involved in the general application of its work to Mexico. The basis for determining the termination of the MAP was therefore based on establishing a set of rules for the improvement of agriculture and arranging the departure of the Foundation before being called to account for the social consequences of these rules:

> *For example, I can imagine that this program before long might begin to have a considerable impact upon the whole land-use policies of Mexico, and I am perfectly sure that within three to five years the program will raise some very acute problems with respect to the political control of these benefits. . . . These very benefits may introduce fresh economic disparities within the Mexican economy, which will present political problems not now even dimly perceived by many Mexicans.*[33]

Dickey strengthened his case, saying that "it would be unfortunate for all concerned, especially for the program itself, if the Foundation is heavily in the picture when this growth in social tensions takes place."[34]

Dickey's concern, unlike that of Carl Sauer, was not in trying to understand how to lessen or prevent unpleasant social consequences caused by changes in agricultural technology. Dickey's questions to Foundation members were, instead, directed at how to conduct a program of agricultural innovation without jeopardizing the gains already achieved in Mexico and programs being planned elsewhere in the world. Instead of basing the Foundation's experiment in agriculture on the improvement of social conditions, as suggested by Sauer, Dickey urged the Foundation to locate its responsibility in the validity of scientific experiments. Thus the Foundation supported the creation of a scientific community in Mexican agriculture that made the measurement of changes in production the standard of success. Dickey's limiting principle presupposed a scientific community that accepted productivity as the sole criterion for evaluation of its activities and demanded of its participants a willingness to forego critical reflection about the social value and consequences of their work in agriculture. The fact that Dickey regarded the MAP as a success and sought to replicate its activities in other parts of the world illustrated the Foundation's backing of a science that separated the theory from the practice of technological change. This division of theory and practice was not happenstance.

In spite of the fact that Weaver and others were aware of Sauer's critical assessment of the Foundation's plan for agriculture, they made no attempt to respond to Dr.

30. Cynthia Hewitt de Alcantara, *Modernizing Mexican Agriculture: Socio-Economic Implications of Technological Change, 1940-1970*. (Geneva: United Nations Research Institute on Social Development, 1976), p. 19.

31. Memorandum from Warren Weaver to John S. Dickey, Thomas Parran, and William Meyers, October 26, 1949 (New York: Rockefeller Foundation Archives).

32. Memorandum from John S. Dickey to Warren Weaver, William Meyers, Thomas Parran, and J. George Harrar, January 1951, p. 2 (New York: Rockefeller Foundation Archives).

33. Ibid., pp. 2-3.

34. Ibid.

Sauer's criticisms. While Dickey's assessment also indicated he was aware of the probable negative consequences of the Foundation's work in Mexican agriculture, his main preoccupation was with disguising the political dimensions of scientific research as managed by the MAP. To this end, the Foundation arranged for a study of how best to bring about changes in Mexican agriculture while keeping the process remote from political discourse. The study conducted by Dr. Herrell De Graff of the Division of Social Sciences of the Foundation in the early 1950s represented one of the earliest attempts to create a structure conducive to the domination of science in Mexican agriculture.

De Graff urged the Foundation to concentrate its efforts on the private commercial farms in Mexico. De Graff referred to a particular Mexican state where there were less than 10,000 farms with more than five hectares and even fewer with five or more hectares of cultivatable land. De Graff argued that the contribution of these private farms was much greater than their numbers might indicate:

> *The owners of large, private farms have a different economic setting than do ejidos and minifundia, mainly lying in the fact that they are managed with commercial intentions. They are operated with a profit and loss account in mind—and operators are guided by the market place, by costs and returns, instead of by the families' direct food needs. They are employers rather than suppliers of labor. And to a much greater degree they combine capital with land and manpower resources in an effort to get more efficient and profitable operation. . . . In short, they are a group with similar motivations and aspirations to those of the U.S. commercial farmers—and any good agricultural extension agent from this country, knowing their language and their local conditions, would know precisely how to go about working with them. Better seed, fertilizers, pesticides, and specialized equipment are not to them foreign ideas of which they are suspicious.*[35]

De Graff presented little detail in his report to the Foundation about the implications of technological change for various social classes. De Graff's report concentrated on the contributions of technological change in agriculture to the development of the Mexican economy. While De Graff recognized that technological changes would produce certain social tensions, these were justified by the need to alter existing social relations because of the constraint that they imposed on the organization of agriculture in the interest of capital:

> *Nevertheless, when a "development" program is started, and to the extent that it succeeds in the biological improvement of agriculture, much of the economic simplicity of self-sufficing village life is on the way out. . . .*
>
> *Until there is motivation to money-wants which the market place and money can satisfy—there will be little or no change from self-sufficiency to commercial undertakings. . . . The crucial point is that if money is to be spent, money must be taken in, and the farming system is no longer controlled by the direct needs of the farm family but rather by profit and loss.*[36]

De Graff then outlined how the Foundation's Division of Social Science could provide support for the extension and domination of science. In contrast to such scholars as Sauer who took a critical stance toward prevailing conditions, De Graff proposed to use the social sciences as a vehicle to extend the technical and scientific organization of Mexican agriculture:

> *Secondly, DSS may contribute to answering the economic and social problems which surely will follow upon acceptance of improved biological practice in Mexican agriculture. Such acceptance obviously means change in farming methods and farming systems. Again, if this were not so there would be no meaning to any part of the program. Change means disruption and then reorientation of the rural economy which has existed. What is wanted, of course, is the greatest and most advantageous change in production with the least possible social and economic disruption. . . . And the social sciences again should be expected to help smooth the path of these changes.*[37]

The proposal to use social science for making the social consequences of changing agriculture less "disruptive" was a one-dimensional application of scientific knowledge. De Graff's report on agriculture made it clear that the "scientific" study of Mexican society was to have a specific class-based orientation. While the practical uses of social science in De Graff's plan were to help construct capitalist agriculture, the conceptual consequences were no less important.

Like its counterpart in the agricultural sciences, De Graff's social science for Mexico would alter and supplant the previous understanding of the meaning of agriculture. The question of agriculture after the revolution was inseparable from the question of class control, but De Graff hoped to replace this equation with terms that eliminated discussion of class entirely. The post-revolutionary discourse on agriculture which had focused on the relationship of a class-based society to soil was to be replaced with the relationship of market production to the soil. De Graff's plan placed the question of class relatins outside the sphere of the scientific investigation of agriculture and society.

By the late 1950s the efforts of the MAP to transform Mexican agriculture had been realized and this has since been extolled as the Mexican "miracle" in agricultural production. The rationalization of agricultural production produced impressive yields in wheat, maize, sorghum, barley, and livestock that were testimony to the efficacy of the narrow technological measures promulgated by the MAP beginnning in the early 1940s.

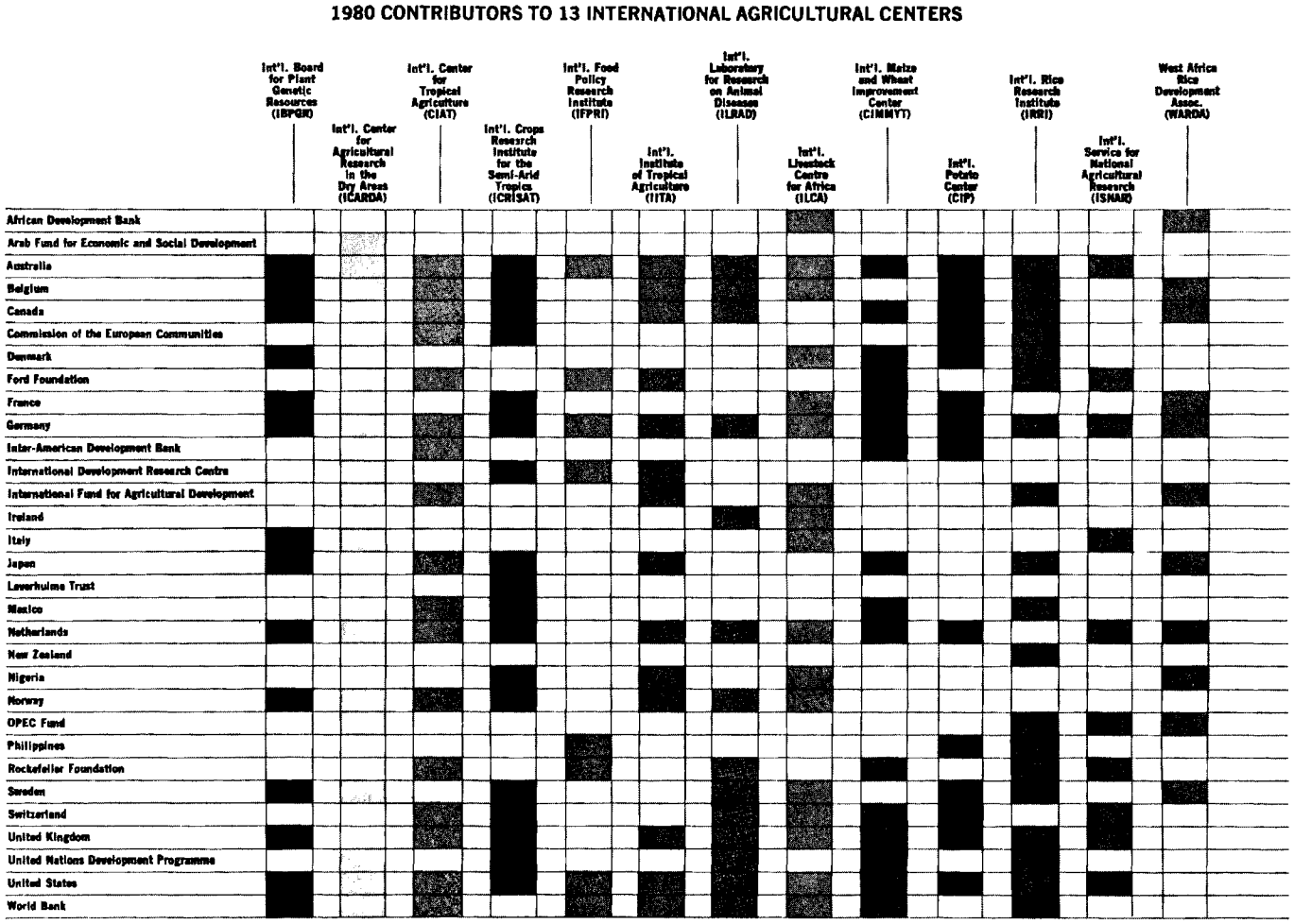
Nonetheless, by the late 1950s, the social tensions that the Foundation hoped to avoid began to appear in many parts of rural Mexico. "In 1958, thousands of peasants from Sonora, Sinaloa, and Baja California invaded simultaneously the latifundios [large, privately-held lands] in their regions, especially those owned by foreigners."[38] More than simply isolated, disconnected incidents, these events pointed to the contradictions between the organization of production for the market and social consequences. Be-

35. Report from Herrell De Graff to Joseph H. Willits, September 10, 1952, pp. 39-40 (New York: Rockefeller Foundation Archives).

36. Ibid., pp. 56-57.

37. Ibid., pp. 52-53.

38. "The State and the Peasants" by Rosa Elena Montes de Oca, p. 55 in *Authoritarianism in Mexico*, editors J. L. Reyna and R. S. Weinert (Philadelphia: Institute for the Study of Human Issues, 1977).



Contributors to CGIAR international agricultural centers. Graphic: Rockefeller Foundation

cause of its conflicting roles as an essential mechanism in the accumulation of capital and champion of liberal democracy the state began to face the larger crisis of legitimacy.

At this point the Foundation decided to withdraw from Mexico. In 1960, the indigenous agricultural research establishment that the MAP had been constructing since 1943 assumed the leadership in Mexican agriculture. The most important centers of research constructed by the MAP had close relations with corporate capital and wealthy agriculturalists all of whom were integrated into the federal system of agriculture research. During the next several years, the scientists who had worked in Mexico joined various agricultural programs around the world. Many of these programs were funded by the Rockefeller and Ford Foundations and would eventually make up the system of international agricultural research. In 1966, many of the scientists who had worked with the MAP assumed positions in the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center located at one of its former research sites in Mexico.

Yet the movement of agricultural research to an international plane did not eliminate the continuing problems proscribing the scientific analysis of worsening rural social conditions. Beginning in the 1960s, CIMMYT attempted to construct a regional program in Mexico that would produce more beneficial results for small farmers. Yet after a period of several years the program had failed to meet the objectives set by the CIMMYT scientists. Evaluations by other observers of CIMMYT's work in Mexico and its application elsewhere in the world by the late 1960s questioned the neutrality of science as practiced at CIMMYT. In a study prepared by the Ford Foundation in 1970, CIMMYT was advised to use greater caution in participating in and taking responsibility for projects that might compromise the nature of scientific investigations.

As a result of increasingly serious attacks on its activities, CIMMYT in 1970 created its first permanent department of social scientists in the thirty-year history of its own activities and that of its predecessor organization. The social scientists selected for inclusion were drawn exclusively from agricultural economists. The stated purpose for these agricultural economists was to protect CIMMYT from what were regarded as unfounded attacks.

Instead of conducting investigations to disprove the criticisms directed against CIMMYT, the agricultural economists initiated studies designed to achieve a greater spread of technology in agriculture worldwide. In place of studies taking up the damaging social consequences of technology produced or transferred by CIMMYT to other

settings in the world, the economists immediately engaged in studies of how to develop technologies for the spread of technologies. CIMMYT's social scientists eschewed studies of society that were informed by a critical awareness of the harmful consequences of the single-minded focus on productivity. The director of CIMMYT's economic unit expressed this view accurately if cynically in 1979 when he stated that he was "not interested in theories of how the rich screw the poor."[39]

The International Rice Research Institute

The first use of the expression "green revolution" was by a former administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development in 1968, in regard to the technological developments in Asian agriculture a couple of years earlier.[40] The official was referring to IR8, a short-stemmed rice variety that had yielded impressively when planted under "optimal conditions." IRRI released IR8 in 1966 and sparked both euphoria and a sense of urgency in development policy-making circles. It was shortly thereafter that the CGIAR—the nerve center of international agricultural research today—was established, and a more intense effort to solve the world food problem began.

Why such a burst of action? There is no doubt the IR8 was enough of a major technological breakthrough to attract the support and attention of major international organizations involved in aid and development. Many predicted high payoffs not only for third world agriculture but perhaps more importantly for the industrialized capitalist nations sponsoring aid and development programs.

The political situation in the underdeveloped world, in particular Southeast Asia, indicates this deeper self concern. Instability in the area was steadily reaching its peak, the connection between political turmoil and an agriculture oriented toward market production was once again coming to the fore.

Export of the Rockefeller Model to Asia

This connection was very much present in IRRI's inauguration in February 1962. The idea of involvement in rice production and marketing arose in theearly 1950s in the Rockefeller Foundation. Already embarked on a major wheat project in Mexico, the Foundation turned its attention to Asia, where the communist threat appeared even more ominous against the backdrop of the revolution in China and the revolutionary movements in South and Southeast Asia. While the idea of a rice project was under consideration, the following statement appeared in an internal Foundation memorandum:

> *Whether additional millions in Asia and elsewhere will become Communists will depend partly on whether the Communist world or the free world fulfills its promises. Hungry people are lured by promises; but they can be won by deeds. Communism makes attractive promises to underfed people; democracy must not only promise as much but must deliver more.*[41]

These concerns were repeated at IRRI's inauguration by Philippine President Macapagal, who stated that IRRI would be a potent weapon against the threat of Communism.[42]

The political context surrounding IRRI's establishment was very clear from the outset. Continuing a process set in motion in American agriculture, the food problem was defined in Malthusian terms, and the task was to determine how food production would increase. Between the two alternative approaches of increasing yield per unit area or focusing on reducing inequities in rural society, Foundation scientists did not hesitate in choosing the former. J. George Harrar, then Deputy-director of the Foundation's Division of Natural Sciences and Agriculture and later to become Foundation president, said: "If farmers in these countries are taught modern scientific methods and given access to the materials which have come to be essential to modern agriculture, such as fertilizers, insecticides, fungicides, etc., rapid progress can be made."[43]

IRRI's organization reflected the thrust of Harrar's arguments, being divided into the disciplines of agricultural engineering, agronomy and soils, chemistry, plant physiology, plant protection, varietal improvement, statistics, communication, and agricultural economics. The latter was the most likely arena for raising social questions on agriculture, but given the Institute's highly scientific and technical orientation, it comes as no surprise that the Department of Agricultural Economics merely played a supportive role.

IRRI's first economist, Vernon W. Ruttan, arrived in 1963, and outlined for the Institute's director, Robert F. Chandler, Jr., six areas of research covering a wide range of topics on the economics of agricultural development.[44] Chandler expressed interest in one of them, the economics of technical change, arguing for attention to low yields and slow adoption rates. His statements echoed those of U.S. land grant scientists in alluding to the "hesitation of farmers to employ technological advances."[45] At the same time, he dismissed the farmer's concern over the costliness of improved techniques by calling it an "excuse." In doing so, Chandler (as well as the Institute as a whole) accepted as given the social setting of inequality. The problem, then, was one of adoption rates and the investigation of constraints upon them. Research had to contribute towards the elimination of constraints to higher yields. In other terms,

39. Interview with Donald Windelmann, Director Economics Program, June 1980 (CIMMYT: Batan, Mexico).

40. William S. Gaud, Former administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development, first used the expression "green revolution." This information was obtained from personal (Oasa's) correspondence with former IRRI director, Dr. Robert F. Chandler, Jr., October 9, 1978.

41. E. C. Stakman, Richard Bradfield, and Paul Mangelsdorf, "The World Food Problem, Agriculture, and the Rockefeller Foundation," mimeo., June 21, 1951.

42. Macapagal stated this in a letter to U.S. President John F. Kennedy and it was reported in the *Manila Chronicle*, February 8, 1962.

43. J. George Harrar, "Agriculture and the Rockefeller Foundation," mimeo., June 1, 1951, p. 2.

44. Letter from Vernon Ruttan to Robert F. Chandler, November 5, 1962. Besides the economics of technical change, Ruttan listed five other research areas: (1) production economics and farm management; (2) the economics of distribution; (3) the economics of consumption and utilization; (4) the economic impact of social, legal, and political institutions which included land tenure, water rights, income, and trade policies; and (5) the role of agriculture in national and regional development.

45. Letter from Robert F. Chandler to Vernon W. Ruttan, November 21, 1962.

higher yields would compensate for the high costs of agricultural inputs.

The Department of Agricultural Economics began with four projects which focused on: (1) sources of output growth, (2) productivity and efficiency in rice production, (3) rice supply, demand, and price behavior, and (4) institutional factors. The department's findings pointed to problems deriving from the dominant social order. Even before IR8 was named, Ruttan's group pressed for more precise application of water regimes in order to assess adequately the yield potential of varieties. This suggested that the cultivator's command over adequate irrigation, which require substantial financial resources, was crucial. By the end of the Institute's first decade, the department emphasized the indispensability of irrigation and drainage facilities if farmers were to use the new varieties profitably. Without them, economists concluded, farmers would be taking a "great risk."[46]

These findings led to other arguments regarding shortages of capital, lack of credit, and high interest rates. In its 1969 annual statement, the department reported the following:

> *The shift from traditional to high-yielding varieties of rice involves far more than the use of new seed. Investment in agricultural chemicals and in more costly methods of cultivation is necessary if improved yields are to be achieved. Such investments involve a great risk on farms that depend on rainfall alone for their water supply. On irrigated land, a high rate of return on investment is relatively secure. At least early in the process of diffusion, farmers with little ready cash and inadequate credit facilities hesitate to invest in high-yielding varieties unless they have an assured water supply.*[47]

The Institute closed its first decade fully conscious that the new technology would aggravate existing inequalities. The remainder of this paper will review how IRRI responded to their own findings and the criticisms of others. The Department of Agricultural Economics did hint in the 1969 statement at what would be in store for its second decade. "For the long run," economists claimed, "resistant varieties offer a more fruitful approach than emphasis on insecticides, which, for the individual farmer, are expensive and have uncertain benefits."[48] The response would again be technological; technologies, through research, would create profitable cultivation for the market within the given social context. The task would again be turned over to the biological sciences.

A Belated Critique

In 1971, the Institute sponsored a meeting of "a group of development specialists in agricultural economics, rural sociology, and related "fields" to begin considering "ways to undertake research to improve our understanding of the changes occurring and the problems associated with the adoption of the new rice technology at farm levels."[49] After ten years, this meeting was a first of its kind.

The meeting resulted in a survey which was novel in two respects. First, it extended the reaches of the Department of Agricultural Economics to other parts of Asia, covering thirty-six villages in the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, India, and Pakistan. Second, it increased the breadth of the department's participation and, as a result, the *types of questions raised*. For the first time IRRI projects involved sociologists and anthropologists in addition to economists and their participation resulted in varying perspectives regarding the nature of socio-economic research in agriculture. Some of the participants had "IRRI-type" concerns about the rate and extent of adoption of the new rice technology. Others preferred to evaluate the technology by investigating social consequences. A proposal submitted to the International Development Research Center of Canada reflected the new variations in approach. The proposal was "to investigate the effect of changing technology on rice farming and farmers, and on how factors such as physical environment, tradition, and established institutions affected the adoption of modern technology." More specific questions were as follows:

> *To what extent have the modern or so-called high-yielding varieties been accepted in the study areas? Were changes in other farm practices associated with the introduction of modern varieties?*
>
> *What are the major obstacles to further growth in rice production? Are these a function of physical environment, socio-economic factors or a combination of both?*
>
> *How has the new technology affected the level and structure of employment? Has the labor requirement increased? Is the labor saving equipment being adopted?*
>
> *Who has benefited from the new technology, and how have these benefits been spent? To what degree are profits capitalized into rising land values? How has the relationship among various tenure groups (landowner, tenant, landless laborer) changed?*[50]

The findings which IRRI published under the cover of *Changes in Rice Farming in Selected Areas of Asia (Changes)* in 1972 reflected the two conflicting concerns: how best to fit farmers into new technologies versus how to design practices based on public need. Some of the authors reported that the technology was biased in favor of owners "and the unfavorable position of small landowners, and tenants in the inputs, credit and factor markets have increased inequalities."[51] Other reports indicated that yields were not significantly greater than those of local, traditional varieties, which suggested that the yield differences were insufficient to compensate for credit repayment. Moreover, some even warned that the new technology could potentially plant "seeds of future tensions and conflict" in the countryside.

These reports were significant in that *Changes* findings clearly pointed to harmful social consequences at the village level. The findings were even more compelling given

46. IRRI, *Annual Report 1969* (Los Banos: IRRI, 1970), p. 193.

47. Ibid., p. 193.

48. Ibid., p. 177.

49. IRRI, Changes in Rice Farming in Selected Areas of Asia (Los Banos: IRRI, 1972), p. 1.

50. Ibid., p. 1.

51. See especially G. Parthasarthy, "India: West Godavari, Andhra Pradesh," in Ibid., p. 43. Similar statements were made by other authors who wrote about India and Indonesia in the *Changes* volume.

the areas selected for investigation—namely, areas where the Institute's technologies were hailed to be performing rather well. They were locations with controlled water supplies that allowed for two or more crops each year, "reasonably good" access to markets, and immediate access to complementary technological inputs.

That the Institute was at a major turning point became apparent. Was it seriously prepared to incorporate the findings in *Changes* about the consequences and the political implications of the new technology into its program? This effort, in our view, would have demanded a critical examination of the socio-political aspects of agriculture that, combined with high-input technology, aggravated existing inequalities. Was the Institute prepared to examine a social context which opened the way for some cultivators to get ahead of others and which contributed to the problem of a growing pool of landless laborers that the Institute would openly recognize towards the end of its second decade?

The Technological "Fix" Reaffirmed

The project which was the end result of *Changes* took on the title of the Constraints to Higher Yields Project (Constraints). The purpose was to identify *technical* factors of production that constrained maximum yield performance. It was designed "to focus on that core of the constraints problem which farmers and government agencies can *exercise the most control*—the management of inputs and cultural practices."[52] (Emphasis added.) It assumed that through governmental programs and the farmer's own initiative it is possible to change varieties, chemicals, weeding methods and fertilizer application methods, etc. Constraints thus incorporated the technological variables of fertilizer, pesticides, and varieties. To determine the economic viability of different combinations of these variables, it also included credit in its experiments and mathematical equations. Finally, room was given to account for the possible technical inefficiency of the farmer in using modern inputs as a contributing factor to low yields.

Once again, the technological research tradition and approach to food and agriculture was reaffirmed. The "non-IRRI" type of concerns reflected in *Changes* were virtually buried in the transition from *Changes* to Constraints. As one Institute senior scientist put it in an interview, the eventual outcome of *Changes* was yet another "self-centered" project based strictly on technological factors, which the organization had always been most comfortable in dealing with. Moreover, the same scientist said that participants in *Changes*, who were interested in social consequences, were not "constrained by IRRI's concerns," which accounted for the projects' much broader perspective.

The transition from *Changes* to Constraints clearly indicated that, according to IRRI's conception of agriculture, profitability was the key to success for the individual, entrepreneurial farmer. If the technology is profitable, another scientist said, then all farmers stand to benefit. The following is a paraphrase of part of an interview explaining how the benefits accrue to all farmers:

> *The so-called larger farmers stand to benefit the most, especially if they can get the government to establish fixed prices for rice. If supply exceeds demand and therefore causing prices to drop, fixed prices can prevent this and therefore larger farmers will not be faced with the disincentive of low prices. As far as the small farmer is concerned, particularly the one who lives totally on subsistence farming before adopting HYVs, they stand to benefit in every way. If the small farmer was marketing none of his produce before the HYVs came along, then he will benefit. HYVs will lead to higher yields, the small farmer can sell that portion left after his needs are met and therefore make a profit; or he can keep the entire harvest for his own consumption. In both cases, he benefits.*[53]

The corollary is that if varieties do not yield enough to compensate for the costs incurred for chemical inputs, then the farmers will not adopt the technology. In this case, too, it is argued that the farmer "benefited" by not using "unprofitable" technologies.

The technological project in agriculture was uncontested. Research still was premised on the validity of a peculiar notion of causation in regard to the relationship between undesirable social consequences and low yield that assumed that the latter *caused* the former. More significantly, the monopoly held by this type of thinking over the specific questions embraced in research went hand in hand with a certain view about the results of technological change: "Everyone knows that with the introduction of advanced technology, benefits will be skewed; this is not a new thing, as everyone knows this."[54] In spite of the determinism and in some sense fatalism of this view, the technological project continued unabated.

The technological project continued in the form of another program called the Consequences of New Technology. The topic became increasingly important as the Institute's second decade wore on. The 1970s brought forth a body of critical literature so vast that the Institute could not dismiss it with mere lip service. As early as 1970, the IRRI Board of Trustees discussed the idea of bringing a couple of the green revolution's critics to the IRRI complex to tell them that "they have no real proof that the big boys [read larger farmers] have been shoving out the small boys [read small farmers and landless laborers]."[55] One Board member went so far as to say that perhaps the Rockefeller Foundation might want to identify a person who could work on the problem, someone who could " 'trade blows' with a critic." Reports by the Department of Agricultural Economics also seemed bent on refuting the critics by claiming that its "data do not support the hypothesis that small farmers have generally lagged behind largely in the use of new technology that would increase their yield,

52. Randolph X. Barker, "Adoption and Production Impact of New Rice Technology—the Yield Constraints Problem," paper presented at the Conference on Farm Level Rice Yield Constraints, April 24-26 (Los Banos: IRRI, 1978), p. 10.

53. Interview with IRRI senior scientist, August 10, 1978, Los Banos, IRRI.

54. Ibid.

55. Minutes to the Meeting of the Executive and Finance Committee of the Board of Trustees of the International Rice Research Institute, August 19, 1970.

income and employment."[56] Econometric models, it continued, showed "that the introduction of modern technology . . . has an effect of promoting equal distribution through the downward pressure exerted on prices and hence, on those farmers with a large proportion of marketed surplus."[57]

As time went on the Institute became increasingly concerned about its critics. The Department of Agricultural Economics held a conference in December 1976, for which it published a proposal entitled "Economic Consequences of New Rice Technology: A View from IRRI (*Consequences*)." The proposal was couched in terms of a response to the claims of critics. In reference to the critical reports, it read as follows:

> *In many cases, however, those discussions are impressionistic and not based on the solid empirical evidence, as reflected in the sudden shift in the public mood from the initial enthusiasm on the "green revolution" to the recent "world food problem."*

Furthermore:

> *The purpose of this conference is to put together the empirical findings of IRRI research on the economic consequences of the new rice technology and to promote positive discussion on this controversial issue using the IRRI research findings as background materials.*[58]

If, in the early and mid-1970s, IRRI's view was that the critics were wrong and their data impressionistic, then it appeared to have undergone considerable change by the decade's end. The change, it seemed began with two projects headed by Yujirō Hayami, who introduced in-depth village studies into the Institute's socio-economic research program. One was called the "Anatomy of Rice Village Economy" and the other "Dynamics of Agrarian Change." An early 1978 summary report noted several implications of these studies:

> *Is the system viable in the long run? If present trends continue, farm size will decline further, landless laborers will continue to increase in numbers relative to farmers. Real wages will decline and the value of tenancy rights will rise widening the income gap between farmers and landless workers.*[59]

The report then posited alternatives to the growing landlessness. The problem was seen as one of increasing employment within the village through the intensification of both rice and non-rice production. The problem consciousness once again was technological in that the report assumed that research on the rice plant and cropping systems should continue in order to develop profitable technologies and to intensify the production process. The latter was expected to generate employment "by mobilizing village labor which remains idle during the slack months of rice farming."

Just two months after this report, the Department of Agricultural Economics sponsored a workshop on village-level studies. Although just a workshop lasting for only two days in March 1978, it recalled the important meeting whose findings were published in *Changes*. It brought together twenty-nine participants from the disciplines of anthropology, sociology, economics, political science, and demography. And like *Changes*, the workshop accommodated a variety of viewpoints. It was not, therefore, an "IRRI" workshop that expounded on "IRRI-type" questions. In short, the Institute was again reminded of the socio-political dimensions for the food problem.

Randolph Barker, IRRI agricultural economist and departmental head, provided an insightful and revealing summary of the workshop, pointing out various themes that had perhaps never been spelled out so clearly at IRRI.[60] One theme dealt with landless laborers. It was significant that increasing landlessness was not attributed *solely* (by some participants at least) to an increase of population. Instead, the problem was couched in socio-political terms of "control." Barker had the following to say in his summary:

> *At the bottom of the ladder are the increasing number of people including the landless workers and* small farmers, *who are losing control over their destiny, control over those who make decisions, control over productive resources, control over the sharing of benefits gained from new technology. The people at the bottom are not organized or represented by interest groups and hence have no countering power against other interest groups. . . . We want these people at the bottom of the ladder to be organized and to participate to increase their capability to respond to government programs. In turn, their participation may lead to "better" decisions by the government or the community. (Emphasis added.)*[61]

Even more interesting was a second theme that grew out of the first, that of rebellion and revolt. Participants not only touched on this matter, but hinted at the possible positive effects of organized movements:

> *What is appropriate in terms of institutional structure can only be established in terms of the values of those to be directly affected by the specific institution. But individuals lack capacity to articulate their own preferences. Inevitably, the organization of movements must come from the outside. Such movements may be of great benefit to the government in the long run as a vehicle for allowing the people to express their own preferences. But if the government suppresses such organizational movements in the name of subversion they may inadvertently be sowing the seeds of rebellion.*[62]

This passage begins to make the connection between social tensions and the application of technology and the socio-political function of the state. If technology bore,

56. Department of Agricultural Economics, IRRI, "Consequences of New Technology," n.d., mimeo (Los Banos: IRRI), p. 5.

57. Ibid., pp. 6-7.

58. Department of Agricultural Economics, IRRI, "Economic Consequences of New Rice Technology: A View form IRRI (A Proposal for a Conference)," mimeo (Los Banos: IRRI, 1976), p. 1.

59. Department of Agricultural Economics, IRRI, "Consequences of the New Rice Technology," paper presented at the IRRI Internal Annual Review, January 25, 1978 (Los Banos: IRRI), p. 6.

60. Randolph X. Barker, "A Summary of Proceedings of the Workshop on Village Level Studies—March 17-18, 1978," mimeo (Los Banos: IRRI, 1978).

61. Ibid.

62. Ibid.

indeed, seeds of tension, it was because of its inextricable connection to the socio-political context, of which the state is an integral part. The intimacy of this relationship meant that it would be altogether untenable to discuss technology without discussion of the state and the political context generally. To speak of one is essentially to speak of the other.

A third theme emerged in regard to the rural poor which pointed toward the notion of accountability. Barker's summary stated:

> *There seemed to be general agreement that government intervention to affect institutional change was largely unsuccessful due both to ignorance and/or unwillingness to act in a more constructive manner. A starting point for any research agenda would be to remove the ignorance by describing the structure and process of institutional change. To this end, there could be merit in organizing a group of "concerned scientists" dedicated to researching this problem area and to presenting the facts to policy makers in as clear and concise terms as possible. But until we properly understand the "animal" with which we are dealing—that is to say until we have a better grasp of the structure and process of institutional change, we are not in a strong position ourselves to judge the merits of various alternatives.* Again, one encounters a dilemma. If the agenda for institutional change should come from the desires of the people, can we develop the answers through research? Can we develop a research agenda in social science "for the people?" *(Emphasis added.)*[63]

The connection between "understanding the 'animal' and providing the benefits of research to "the people" became apparent when the summary directed attention to the dichotomy between government and people or elite and mass with respect to alternative research agendas. The dilemma that Barker mentioned in part concerned the role of an investigator's norms in the actual research process. To conduct research "for the people" would require the researcher to take a political stand in favor or against specific groups or classes in society. Given the history of the International Rice Research Institute, an Institute debate over this issue would necessarily dig into the roots of its entire existence.

For our purposes, the following questions arise: how and under what conditions were the insights of this mixed group of participants incorporated into IRRI's program? was the Institute prepared to take a political stand? or was it determined to remain "neutral"?

A long-range planning committee report put out by IRRI in January 1979, pointed toward the continuation of its historically-dominant technological project. The committee's section on *Consequences* stated that "IRRI's comparative advantage lies in the interface between constraints and consequences research—in the consequences of reducing constraints on production, income, income distribution, and employment."[64]

Conclusion

This essay reviews how critical social inquiry has been systematically eliminated from the research agenda at IRRI and CIMMYT. Those who have questioned the technical project in agriculture in its social, political and economic dimensions have been consigned to oblivion. The international agricultural research centers have, in this sense, employed science as an instrument of political authority. While technical solutions are continually decried as inadequate to solve the basic problems in Third World agriculture, the histories of IRRI and CIMMYT testify to the exclusion of other approaches. Science and technical change in agriculture are held up as the only legitimate pursuits to contribute toward the welfare of mankind. Those who challenge neutrality of scientific communities that have primarily served the wealthy are dismissed as themselves biased.

The seeds for international agricultural research were planted at the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center where a narrow approach to agricultural science and a restricted technical definition of hunger and poverty underpinned decisions to concentrate on bettering the productivity of the private, commercial farmer. These policies amounted to a "wager on the strong" and begged the recurring question concerning who was actually benefitting. The response of the members of the Rockefeller Foundation hierarchy to the criticisms of Dr. Carl Sauer and the statements of Drs. John S. Dickey and Herrell De Graff, clearly shows that this policy decision was made at the outset. Emerging out of this context was a social science program for agricultural development that unreflectively and uncritically supported the technological project.

The International Rice Research Institute consistently explained criticisms of the consequences of its work in terms of inappropriate technologies. This orientation remained irrefutable even when set against arguments and evidence that the crucial factor is the existence of a socio-political context within the developing nations that is not only plagued by but reproduces inequality and social discrimination. The technological project has persisted despite increased concern within the centers over social consequences.

Recent documents by CGIAR have reaffirmed the position taken by CIMMYT and IRRI. The CGIAR 1977 *Report of the Review Committee* informed member institutes that many of their donors have also become increasingly preoccupied with problems of the small farmer and rural poor, which the report noted, have historically received "less emphasis."[65] The CGIAR's Technical Advisory Committee's (TAC) report entitled *TAC Review of Priorities for International Support to Agricultural Research* (released in March 1979) was even more emphatic:

> *. . . TAC also recommends that due account be also taken of the need to achieve an improvement in the level of income and standard of living of the less advantaged sectors of society in the developing countries (especially rural), which*

63. Ibid., p. 2.

64. IRRI, "IRRI Long Range Planning Committee Report," (Los Banos: IRRI, January 1979), p. 67.

65. CGIAR, Report of the Review Committee (Washington, D.C.: CGIAR, January 1977), p. 35.

determine their access to food, equity in distribution of benefits from research, and efficiency in the use of agricultural inputs.[66]

Although "due account" should be given to distribution, the CGIAR and the TAC reports cautioned against heavy research involvement in this area and warned that agricultural technology alone cannot solve the economic problems of the rural poor. As TAC put it, "the benefits derived from international agricultural research by different social groups would very much depend on the conditions of the country concerned and are a matter of consideration by individual governments in establishing their development plans and policies."[67] In other words, the distribution of benefits was a matter of state policy and not a proper topic for research.

These statements echo the actual stance of the two institutes examined above. They reiterate the historical interest that the industrialized capitalist countries have in ensuring that the research institutes maintain a "neutral" stance towards the socio-political order within which the new technologies are applied globally. It has not escaped the policy makers behind the international agricultural research establishments that remaining "neutral" amounts to a crucial political act that lends support to the reproduction of the dominant social order.[68]

It is useful to recall the dilemma posed by Barker at IRRI: "Can we develop the answers through research?" and "Can we develop a research agenda in a social science 'for the people'?" Such questions only pose a "dilemma" so long as the research centers remain captive of organizations from the industrialized countries which have specific interests in maintaining the existing social organization of agriculture in the developing countries. Technical food research will become accountable only to the extent to which it is truly exposed to the needs of the people. A critique of the social status quo must embrace a critique of the historical forces which have dictated the kind of role science has come to play in international agricultural research. ★

66. CGIAR Technical Advisory Committee, *TAC Review of Priorities for International Support to Agricultural Research* (Rome: TAC Secretariat, March 1979). The TAC is a committee of agricultural scientists that reviews projects/programs funded by the CGIAR. Its stamp-of-approval is important in determining whether or not a program within the CGIAR family of institutes will be funded.

67. Ibid.

68. Technology, as we view it, is also a human process and not simply "hardware." As we have continually maintained throughout this paper, technology enters a particular social context, which therefore makes it a social phenomenon.

Errata

A general note about typographical and other mistakes in the *Bulletin:* We are always glad to acknowledge any errors that are likely to confuse or mislead. In all such cases, we request your indulgence and wish to explain that we have neither proofreading staff nor time or funds to mail galleys to authors who reside in many parts of the world.

Democratic Kampuchea—CIA to the Rescue

Note

The *Bulletin* dialogue on the difficult issues that grew out of the inter-communist conflicts of southeast Asia in the 1970s continues with this issue. The Editors invite others to participate with essays or other works which present new evidence and documentation, approach the questions from a fresh perspective, and proceed in a comradely fashion.

The Editors

by Michael Vickery

As Noam Chomsky has pointed out, press accounts about the non-western world, in particular Cambodia, are often as interesting for themselves, as "works of art," as for information about conditions within the country concerned. For over three years the mainstream western press generally treated the regime of "Democratic Kampuchea" (DK) and its leader, Pol Pot, as very nearly the worst known to human history; and calls for intervention to displace them were heard even from usually responsible quarters. Yet when they finally were displaced, following a war largely provoked by their own actions, and by a polity whose record on human rights had always seemed much better, not only was little rejoicing heard, but the remnants of the DK regime became recipients of recognition and support by the powers who had cried out most loudly against them. Clearly concern with human rights or atrocities was of secondary importance to considerations of international power politics; and if no one was willing to suddenly declare Pol Pot a bulwark of the Free World against Godless Communism, the atrocities over which he had presided tended to be implicitly forgiven as his role in an anti-Vietnamese coalition was emphasized.

Of course, even in the United States the fraction of the public who regularly read newspapers are too sophisticated to accept an overnight about-face on the DK regime, and a certain amount of ideological preparation, or *agitprop* work, was required to justify American support for the regime "worse than Hitler's." This first took the shape of increasingly negative assessments of Vietnam rather than any direct effort to rehabilitate DK; and by the end of 1979 serious writers had been led to repeat that even if the worst stories about DK were true, it was *now* (1980) that Cambodia was in danger of extinction.[1] It would have been only a short step—although no one took it explicitly—to the position that DK killings, to the extent that they were directed against pro-Vietnamese elements, represented a benign bloodbath.

Since the total factual picture of DK had never become clear, and since, as John Pilger once remarked, "the Vietnamese case has always been better than their propaganda," it was difficult even for those with some experience in Cambodia studies to judge the conflicting information.[2]

In March 1980 it became possible for me to travel to Thailand for a closer look, and from April to the end of September I worked with and interviewed Cambodian refugees in the largest camps in Thailand or along the Thai-Cambodian border (Khao I Dang, Nong Samet, Nong Chan)—and was able to speak to them in their own language, unhindered by interpreters, guides, or administrators of any kind. The information supplied by those people, most of whom are former town-dwellers, some of whom I knew well before 1975, and all of whom reject both DK and the Salvation Front (Heng Samrin) regime, has been of great help in beginning to construct a more coherent picture of Cambodia in 1975–80 than was earlier current.

CIA Kampuchea

On returning to Canberra in October, after that contact with the sources, I was finally able to obtain a copy of the famous CIA research paper, "Kampuchea: A Demographic Catastrophe." Its compilers claim it to be based on "the expert interpretation of events," and, in consultation with "analysts of Kampuchean affairs," to have come up with estimates that "should be considered reasonable." It opens with a statement that ten years of war and

1. For example, William Shawcross, "The End of Cambodia," *New York Review of Books*, 24 January 1980, an article full of errors of both fact and interpretation, which are not all Shawcross' fault, since he was led astray by people such as Francois Ponchaud, whom he believed reliable.

2. John Pilger in Letters to the Editor, *New Statesman*, 29 August 1980, p. 14. As examples of Vietnamese propaganda which tend to discredit their own case: (1) their repetition of the wildest western estimates of DK deaths, such as 3 million; (2) republication of atrocity photographs long known to be fakes, in *Kampuchea Dossier* I, plate [10]; (3) their presentation, as Malcolm Caldwell's assassination site, of a room in the *Samakki* hotel where Caldwell had never been.

other disasters "have played havoc with the Kampuchean population," who now (since January 1979 that is) "may be threatened with virtual extinction as a people."[3]

With the "havoc" I am sure there is full agreement in all quarters concerned with Cambodia, but with "virtual extinction" somewhat less, or at least not on the basis of the "statistics" and "estimates" bandied about since 1975. Naturally, much of the information I obtained from refugees related to conditions of life and death, and since the first rumors which reached me about the CIA report indicated that it might show an unexpectedly, perhaps even embarrassingly, large number of surviving Cambodians,[4] I opened the report with no little interest.

Those rumors proved to be inaccurate. Although not repeating the worst charges of 3 million deaths and only 4 million survivors, the report shows a very high level of destruction of human life. Its conclusions are presented in three series representing best case, worst case, and a "Medium Series," which the authors consider the most probable figures and which are the only ones I shall discuss here. Starting with a little over 7 million as the population estimate for 1970, they figure 7.3 million just before 17 April 1975, subtract from that 200,000 Vietnamese who returned immediately to Vietnam leaving 7.1 million Cambodians (including Chinese) to face the rigors of the communist regime. They divide these into 4 million urban, soon to become "new" (new to the DK regime) people, and 3.1 non-urban or "old" (villagers already under Khmer Rouge administration, or more precisely "base") people. They conclude that as a result of starvation, illness, execution and flight, the population on 1 January 1979 was 5.8 million and by December of that year only 5.2 million, with the decrease up to January falling entirely within the "new" group which would have declined from 4 to 2.7 million.[5]

Those human losses are further broken down into 400,000 dead on the first exodus from the towns in April 1975; 400,000 more dead on the "second population displacement" in late 1975 and early 1976; 250,000 more deaths during 1976; plus 100,000 former military, civil servants and teachers executed in 1975–76; and one death for every successful escape into Thailand. Executions, they claim, ended by January 1977, and living conditions improved somewhat, but the number of "new" people continued to decline because of illness and lack of proper food, while the "old" people, who had somewhat better treatment, increased their number slightly in 1975 and maintained it until 1979.[6]

As the authors of the report admit, and this is probably the only perfectly honest bit in the entire report, *any* estimates about the Cambodian population *at any time* are fraught with possibilities for error, since the only complete census, which itself left much to be desired, was taken in 1962. Every figure since then has been the result of applying various standard rates or more or less sophisticated demographic techniques to the 1962 data.[7] Thus, any estimate for the total population when the war started in 1970 could, I would say, be wrong by as much as half a million either way, and extrapolations beyond that date are even more risky.[8] Probably the only figures which can be accepted as almost entirely accurate are those for Phnom Penh and the provincial capitals in 1962, and as fairly accurate the estimates for those same places for subsequent years up to 1970.

The purpose of this hasty CIA report is to put the pro-Vietnamese Heng Samrin regime in the worst possible light.

In an apparent effort to overcome that difficulty, the report includes a long "Methodology" section (eight out of fourteen pages plus several more pages of tables) in which the reader finds impressively scientific descriptions of how things like "birth rates," "death rates," and "vital rates" were calculated and applied year by year to the remainders from the 1970 estimates to reach the estimate for 1979. However, when I got to the paragraphs concerning the number of estimated deaths resulting from execution or from being moved about the country or trying to escape to Thailand, I experienced a troubling sense of *déjà vu*. This was also true of their estimate of total urban population in 1975, about one million more than most other published figures.

And sure enough, as I allowed my mind to pass in review the literature on Cambodia to which it had been exposed, it came up with John Barron and Anthony Paul's *Murder of a Gentle Land*, based on information available in late 1976. There we find virtually the same global figures as cited above from the CIA report. The only differences are an estimate of 430,000 for deaths on the "second forced population displacement," and a different total for escaped refugees, since Barron and Paul were dealing with refugee figures of November 1976, while the CIA report includes the total through 1978.[9]

Up until now I had always assumed that Barron and Paul were nothing more than what they claimed, a couple of hacks from *Reader's Digest* who interviewed a few refugees with stories which satisfied their preconceived notions about life in Cambodia and who then concocted, from those stories, figures which also fit those notions. If that were true, then all of the CIA's impressive calculations would be nothing more than an effort to work out an apparently scientific cover for Barron's and Paul's crude

3. National Foreign Assessment Center, "Kampuchea: A Demographic Catastrophe," (CIA, May 1980), based on research completed on 17 January 1980, quotations from p. 7.(Hereafter cited as CIA report.)

4. Elizabeth Becker, "The Famine is Easing in Cambodia," *The Boston Globe*, 7 February 1980, p. 3.

5. CIA report, pp. 2, 5, 10-11.

6. CIA report, pp. 9, 10, 12, 17.

7. CIA report, p. 1.

8. The best study of Cambodian demography is Jacques Migozzi, *Cambodge faits et problèmes de population* (Paris: Editions du CNRS, 1973).

9. *Murder of a Gentle Land* (New York: Reader's Digest Press, 1977), pp. 203-206.

guesses and to carry the extrapolations out to obtain a total for 1979.

Otherwise, and giving the CIA credit for more finesse than that, we have to imagine that back in 1976 a nice man from the company passed Barron and Paul those figures, pointed them in the direction of Thailand, and said, "Now get on over there and find us some refugee stories to back this up." The stories, true ones, were not hard to find. Some people did have horrible experiences and if those *selected* by Barron and Paul represented faithfully the totality of refugees and were valid for the entire country, the extrapolated figures would not be unreasonable.

Of course, to be honest, we must take note of still a third possibility: Barron and Paul, as they claimed, independently got their refugee stories and then simply, in guise of extrapolation, used the total figures which the CIA had derived from their own, presumably accurate, intelligence sources. Whatever the case, we have evidence of an embarrassingly close cooperation between them and the CIA, justifying the view that from 1975 to 1977 there was a calculated effort to smear the Cambodian regime, whatever the truth might have been.

I was one of those who in 1975–77 was inclined to doubt the reliability of the popular press accounts of Cambodia and the refugee stories on which they were based, and my doubts are on record in Noam Chomsky and Edward S. Herman, *After the Cataclysm, Postwar Indochina and the Reconstruction of Imperial Ideology*.[10] At the same time I had no reliable alternative picture and wondered, also on record, whether the truth could ever be determined. Moreover, my doubt about my doubts was compounded by my one source within the American Embassy in Bangkok (not Charles Twining or Timothy Carney), who said that even if the refugee stories were not entirely reliable, which he admitted, the CIA was picking up absolutely authentic information through sophisticated electronic eavesdropping and their information confirmed the very high estimates of executions. He also said, however, that all of the CIA information was highly classified and would not be published, and the only specific examples I ever wormed out of him were; (1) an *American* agent caught and executed inside Cambodia, and (2) leaders in a Cham village in central Cambodia executed on orders from Phnom Penh. Both of these stories could reasonably have been obtained by electronic snooping, but do not confirm the picture of generalized atrocities against the population as a whole.

That experience only increased my suspicions about the whole area of super-secret CIA data. Since it was safe to assume, at least up into 1977, that the CIA thoroughly disapproved of the Cambodian regime and wished to damage it in any way possible, one could expect that if they had had hard data on atrocities they would have found some way (and some way more convincing than Barron and Paul) to publicize them. My private thoughts on the matter then were that CIA electronics had in fact not obtained evidence of large-scale massacres and perhaps would even serve, if the evidence were published, to contradict such stories. At the time, however, nothing more than speculation was possible.

Refugee Kampuchea

Now, after five months interviewing refugees, I believe I have better information about the policies of the Cambodian regime and about what the CIA might have picked up with their special equipment, including some information which was probably unknown at the time the report was compiled, or at least unknown to anyone likely to talk to the CIA. Although the number of executions or the total number dead from hunger can still only be very roughly estimated, information from large numbers of refugees establishes some general patterns which cannot be put in doubt.

First, conditions varied widely from one zone to another and also from district to district within a zone and even among contiguous villages. An acknowledgement of this was always squirreled away somewhere in the sensationalist press, but its implications were never inserted into their calculations. Such an acknowledgement even finds a line in the CIA report.[11] There were areas, fairly large, where conditions were as bad as portrayed. There were other areas where neither death from starvation nor from execution exceeded what might have been expected in the good old days of Sihanouk and Lon Nol. In between were places where hardly anyone was killed but many died of hunger and illness and other places where the opposite was true.

Thus, throughout most of the Southwest Zone, the East until 1978, the Kratie Special Region 505, and the exceptional Region 3 of the Northwest, the food situation was relatively good and there were few deaths from starvation even among the "new" people. In those areas executions throughout most of the DK period were selective—in some places, such as Region 3, minimal—and only Republican officers were targets simply because of their background. Teachers, doctors, engineers, and most civil servants were never marked as such for extermination. In the North and Central Zones as well starvation was rare, but here cadres were more murderous, and large-scale arbitrary killings a much more clear and present danger. Probably the worst areas for starvation were Regions 2 and 6 of Pursat province, and Region 5 of Battambang. Since hunger often led to protest or diminished work incentive, executions as a disciplinary measure could also occur in such areas more frequently. Even in the worst regions, though, there were still individual villages where no one starved and few were killed. Conversely, some of the otherwise good areas showed shocking death tolls from illness, particularly malaria.

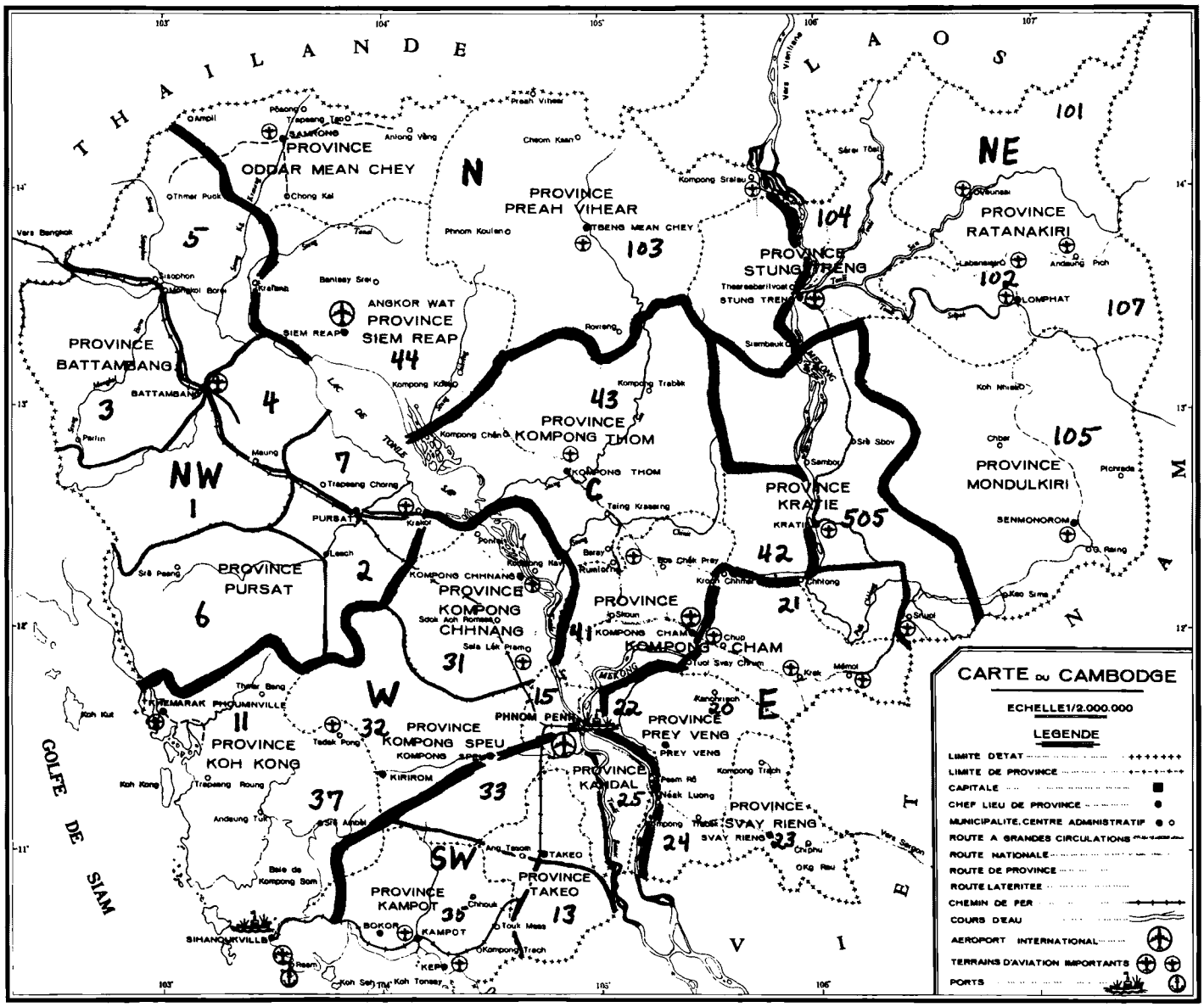
Next, the large majority of the refugees in Thailand are from the former urban population, who obviously would have suffered most from the revolution however one wishes to view it. The large majority also spent 1975–79 in the Northwest Zone, where, as a whole, conditions

10. Noam Chomsky and Edward S. Herman, *The Political Economy of Human Rights* (Boston: South End Press, 1979), Vol. 2.

11. Francois Ponchaud, *Cambodia Year Zero* (Penguin Books, 1978), pp. 71-74, 78; Barron and Paul, p. 130; CIA report, p. 8.

កម្ពុជា CAMBODGE

SITUATION (MAI 1971) DE LA LIBERATION DU CAMBODGE
PAR LES FORCES ARMEES POPULAIRES DE LIBERATION NATIONALE DU KAMPUCHEA



Administrative Divisions of Democratic Kampuchea 1975–79

Zones: Designated by compass point initials and enclosed by heavy lines.

Regions: Subdivisions of Zones, designated by number, and enclosed by lighter lines where boundaries determinable.

Below the Regions were Districts (*srok*) and Sub-Districts (*khum*), usually identical to cooperatives and villages.

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were worse throughout those years than in any other of the five or six zones into which Cambodia was administratively divided. Thus the refugee reports have generally come from the roughly forty to fifty percent of the population which as a group suffered most and from that portion of them who lived in the worst fourth or fifth of the country.

The refugee reports nevertheless reveal a number of important things about country-wide patterns of executions and unusual deaths from other causes. Right after April 1975 there was a wave of large-scale killings of Lon Nol officers and, in some places, more or less highly-placed civilian officials. These were part of a central government policy which had been decided before the surren-

der of Phnom Penh, but which was carried out everywhere on local initiative, uncoordinated from central headquarters, and the details of which were therefore not likely to have been picked up via electronic snooping. The way in which the executions were carried out shows that what probably was central policy was a decision that the higher levels of officers and perhaps most of the highest levels of civilians could never be trusted, would always be actively dangerous, and must be killed. This general policy was then understood in different ways as it was communicated, possibly verbally, down to various lower administrative levels, and the results were very different. There were places in which a systematic effort was made to hunt down all officers and all civilians who had any kind of official position at all, including teachers, and in which even Lon Nol enlisted men might be in danger. In other places execution was restricted to officers while civilians, even important ones, were expressly assured that they were not in danger as such. There were also places where the search and killing, however the policy was understood, were haphazard, leaving many who were real objects of the original policy untouched.

Any attempts to judge the Heng Samrin regime must start by emphasizing that there have been no massacres at all beyond some killing of Pol Pot cadres in early 1979 immediately following the invasion.

Barron, Paul and the CIA claim a figure of 100,000 executions in 1975–76, and this is based on an assumption of 200,000 military, 30,000 civil servants and 20,000 teachers who were targets of extermination policy, and of whom twenty percent died of hunger and disease and half the remainder by execution. We now know, however, that of the military only officers, perhaps ten percent of the total, or about 20,000, were designated targets.[12] As for teachers, professionals, and civil servants, central government policy is less clear, but, as described above, there were large areas where they were not in danger as such; and they were only singled out in some of the worst places, such as parts of the Northwest, North and Center, where cadres apparently interpreted policy as a license to kill anyone they disliked.

Thus, if we hypothesize that in the exodus from the towns about one-third to one-half of the civil servants and teachers went to the bad areas, we can only add up 20,000 officers, plus 10–15,000 civil servants, and 7–10,000 teachers for a grand total of between 37,000 and 45,000 *targets*, not all of whom, even in the worst places, were killed. This relatively low death toll obtained from more refined extrapolation than that indulged in by Barron, Paul and the CIA fits well with a phenomenon which astonished people dealing with the large emigration of refugees after January 1979 and who found themselves confronted by thousands of these "targets of extermination" who had survived. And not all of them even tried to come out as refugees. According to Stephen Heder's investigation, the Heng Samrin regime, after the first efforts to reorganize local administration, were discomfited to find that they ran the risk of parts of the country being taken over at that level by military and civil servants of the Sihanouk-Lon Nol period.[13]

What the CIA gadgets could have picked up about the first wave of executions was a central government order in October 1975, and possibly an earlier order already in May,[14] to stop them. Thus those objects of the original central policy who had been overlooked, or neglected, or who had concealed themselves, got a reprieve. The reprieve, like the initial policy, was not total and was understood in different ways, but at least it cut down the numbers, for further executions had to be more furtive, in small numbers, and generally only after some provocation. The report reflects this at least to the extent of stating that executions in 1976–77 were fewer than in 1975.

According to my information, among the general population, whether "old" or "new," killings in 1976 and at least the first half of 1977 were many fewer and, in fact, individual, sporadic, carried out in secret, and often illegal even in terms of DK justice. Many of them were the settling of old scores, either personal or because of class hatred.

The heavy killings in those years, which could have been noticed by the CIA since they involved policy decisions in Phnom Penh concerning outlying areas, were the purges of other factions of the revolutionary forces by the Pol Pot group. These purges hardly touched the "new" people at all, but were known to many refugees, and they have been confirmed by the records of the Tuol Sleng prison in Phnom Penh which show that the numbers were somewhere between 10,000 and 20,000. Perhaps in connection with these purges there began in the latter half of 1977, in some places, a new search for the surviving Lon Nol officers.

Finally, the last and worst wave of mass executions began in May 1978, and must have been picked up by the CIA, since it followed the most serious of all revolts against the regime. It was initiated suddenly by the central government and accompanied by troop movements, all of which required radio communication, including some an-

12. The consensus of refugee information is that only officers, and perhaps originally only officers above the rank of captain, were designated targets in central policy. This was already clear from the Barron-Paul (pp. 64-68) and Ponchaud (pp. 58-61) accounts of the massacres in Battambang in April 1975.

13. Stephen R. Heder, Kampuchean Occupation and Resistance (Bangkok: Institute of Asian Studies, Chulalongkorn University, January 1980), pp. 12-16; and Heder, "From Pol Pot to Pen Sovan to the Villages," (Bangkok: Institute of Asian Studies, June 1980), pp. 21-31.

14. Two refugees, one a former DK village chief, from different parts of the country, told me separately of the October order. Ben Kiernan, "Conflict in the Kampuchean Communist Movement," *JCA*, 10:1/2 (1980), p. 51, indicates that there may already have been such an order in May.

nouncements to the populace over the domestic service.

One of the most intriguing things about the CIA report is that this affair is not mentioned at all and the execution estimates end at January 1977. For the following period it merely says "living conditions most likely did not vary during these two years [Jan. 1977 to Jan. 1979] from the conditions during 1976."[15] The continuing decrease in the total population which it postulates to have continued on into 1979 would have been due to hunger, illness and escape to Thailand and Vietnam.

The 1978 affair is something about which *all* refugees from the zones concerned have the most vivid memories. For them it represented the largest number of killings over a short period of time and killings performed in the most revolting manner. Most of the mass graves probably date from it. Following a rebellion of East zone cadres in April-May 1978, not only were all such cadres who could be found killed, but large numbers of the ordinary population were rounded up on the pretext that they were potentially pro-Vietnamese traitors, taken to the West or Northwest zones, and there most of them were killed. This exercise was the worst spate of killings in the refugees' memories, yet the Heng Samrin regime, in its trial of Pol Pot and Ieng Sary in early 1979, could put forth an estimate of only 40,000 victims.[16] The figure may really have been higher, since eastern people were also evacuated to other provinces than Pursat, mentioned at the trial, and many others were killed on the spot all over the Eastern zone. Whatever the total, the 1978 massacres represent the worst wave of systematic executions. Their exclusion from the CIA report, which states that executions had ended by 1977, a time when in fact they were on the increase, merits close attention.[17] If the omission was merely an accident, it shows that the report is nothing more than a careless dressing up of the old Barron-Paul figures, wherever *they* came from, and means that this CIA "research paper" may forthwith be dismissed from further consideration as a serious contribution to Cambodia studies.

Perhaps even more difficult than execution estimates is an accurate assessment of those who died either in the first exodus in April 1975 or the second displacement at the end of the year. The CIA figures have again been taken from Barron and Paul, or are perhaps figures which the CIA fed to Barron and Paul in 1976–77 to reclaim later as results of research by "analysts of Kampuchean affairs." Those figures are certainly inflated, but any efforts at lower estimates can be no more than relatively well informed guesses. It is important to emphasize that refugee accounts of the first evacuation from the towns are in general agreement on two points; (1) there were few killings, little brutality of any kind beyond the rigors of suddenly being uprooted, and (2) there was virtually no starvation, except possibly in the case of those who were already close to starvation, in Republican Phnom Penh—no doubt a subject into which the Barron-Paul-CIA crowd would just as soon not delve.

Barron and Paul state, and the CIA report "follows" them in relating, that both on the first exodus from the cities and during the second movement in late 1975, no food or water was provided. That is quite untrue and one need go no further than Ponchaud, or even Barron's and Paul's own pages to find different information.[18] If the food provided was not entirely sufficient, people on the first exodus were free to forage, or bargain with peasants, in an often well-stocked countryside. In general the pace was leisurely, on most routes people were allowed to take as many supplies as they could carry, and if executions did occur, particularly on the roads northward, they were few.

For the CIA, however, and for U.S. policy in general, the specific conditions in any given country are of less importance than that country's position in a larger geopolitical context. . . . Democratic Kampuchea, it was seen, could be used in the international power game to weaken Vietnam—the strongest and best-organized of the Indochina states—and ultimately the position of socialism in Southeast Asia.

Barron and Paul are at their most dishonest and their informants exceptionally well selected in their description of the southward evacuation, relying on the tale of a pampered adolescent girl from a wealthy family. Given the composition of the refugee population in Thailand, the first exodus to the south is an experience about which the most abundant documentation is available. Few people recall it as a particularly terrifying experience. In fact it was en route to the south that conditions were most benign, and most refugees, when questioned carefully, substantiate the assessment of Pin Yathey—whose *L'Utopie Meutrière* is not at all pro-DK and who himself fled in 1977—that the exodus from Phnom Penh to the south (Southwest Zone) "had taken place without police brutality, without administrative harassment."[19]

Although any kind of accurate count is now impossible, it seems unlikely that any but people who were already very ill would have died from conditions en route. It seems clear that deaths in excess of a normal rate, and due to the conditions of evacuation, could have been no more than a tenth to a fifth of the Barron-Paul-CIA estimate, or about 40–80,000 rather than 400,000.

Next something needs to be said about the so-called "second exodus" or "second population displacement," from which there are thousands of survivors in the refugee

15. CIA report, pp. 13, 17.
16. Kiernan, "Conflict," p. 44.
17. CIA report, p. 17.
18. Barron and Paul, pp. 106, 114, 138; CIA report, pp. 4, 12; Ponchaud, pp. 41, 44, 77.
19. Pin Yathay, *L'Utopie meurtrière*, (Paris: Editions Robert Laffont, 1980), p. 60; Barron and Paul, chap. 4.

camps in Thailand. This movement affected a large number of former Phnom Penh residents, probably numbering in the upper tens of thousands, or even over 100,000 (although any really accurate figure is impossible) who in April went first to the countryside south of Phnom Penh and then several months later, sometimes on order and sometimes in response to a request for volunteers,[20] were taken into the northwest. The Barron-Paul figure of 430,000 deaths was extrapolated from a few of the worst accounts of this second wave, assuming that it had been a country-wide experience affecting the entire "new" population. It involved their application of a death rate of twelve percent to their figure of 3,600,000 "new" survivors of the first exodus. In fact, since the total number of people involved was probably no more than 400,000, the number of deaths, even ignoring the question of the validity of their rate, was a fraction of what Barron-Paul supposed.

The second move was worse than the first, but not the total disaster implied by Barron and Paul, and not an experience which affected the entire country. Food was provided, though often not enough, and death from starvation does not seem to have been a generalized menace. Even if, again, an accurate count is impossible, one-tenth to one-fifth of the Barron-Paul-CIA figure, or another 40–80,000 is all that can reasonably be estimated.[21]

Having seen how much faith can be put in the Barron-Paul-CIA methods and in some of their estimates, let us take a look at their total population figures which I cited at the beginning of this article. For the sake of discussion I will accept their figure of 7.1 million for the total population in April 1975 after removal of the Vietnamese, even though the true figure could have been significantly lower. I will also start by accepting their figure of 4 million urban people even though it is even more subject to caution; and I will provisionally accept that the number of "old" people slightly increased from 3.1 to 3.2 million by the end of 1975 and no more than maintained that strength until 1979. Neither will I dispute 32.5% as a useful factor for estimating the decline in the number of "new" people in *the worst areas*, roughly one-third of the country, between 1975 and 1979 (4 million minus 2.7 million 1979 survivors = 1.3 million dead, or 32.5% of 4 million).[22]

The modifications I will introduce are, first, that the Vietnamese who were evacuated were overwhelmingly urban and the 200,000 should be subtracted, not from the population as a whole, but from the 4 million urban segment, leaving 3.8 million "new" versus 3.1–3.2 million "old." Next, since the Barron-Paul-CIA extrapolation concerning the new people was based on testimony from the worst areas, the percentage derived should be applied only to an estimate of the number of "new" in such areas; and I shall postulate that one-third of them were in the northwest and bad pockets of other zones. One-third of 3.8 million is 1.27 million to be diminished by 32.5%, or a little over 412,000, leaving roughly 875,000. I will assume that the remaining two-thirds of the "new" people maintained themselves as well as the "old," that is at least 2.54 million survived until January 1979. We then come up with a total January 1979 population of 3.2 million "old" plus 2.54 "new" from good areas plus .857 "new" from bad areas or altogether 6,597,000 within Cambodia, down half a million from 1975, which roughly approximates some of the more cautious estimates made 2–3 years ago.[23] One might also wish to question the figure of 4 million townspeople with which the calculation began; and if a more reasonable 3.5 million were taken, and treated as above, the resulting estimate for 1979 would be around 6.7 million, probably unacceptable *a priori* for Barron, Paul and the CIA.

Just one more thing needs to be said here about these population figures. The CIA estimates for the best case, that of the "old" people, were predicated on an assumption of zero population growth as a result of various kinds of hardship and reduced fertility. Such must certainly have been true in some places, but observation of the refugees indicates that it cannot have been true over the entire country.

As I emphasized above, the population of the Khao I Dang refugee camp is composed in majority of "new" people from the worst zone of the country; and although the UNHCR statistics leave much to be desired, their figure for the total camp population in mid-1980 was probably fairly accurate, as was the number of births recorded within the camp. From those figures a birth rate sufficient for our purposes can be calculated. Furthermore, in June 1980, when the total population was around 130,000, the CARE organization operated supplementary feeding centers for mothers and children in eight of the camp's Khmer sections with a total population of 93,491. Because of the nature of the operation, rather accurate count had to be kept of the numbers of children in those sections, and in particular of children under five years of age. Those figures offer a possibility of calculating the number of children born to that segment of the population between 1975 and 1979. I first took the total of all children under five, which of course included all those born through May 1980 and conceived well after the end of the Pol Pot period. To find those who at the latest were conceived under Pol Pot conditions (no later than January 1979, born in September 1979), I applied the June Khao I Dang birth rate, which must have been higher than previous months as a result of improving health and nutrition, to all months from October 1979 through May 1980 and subtracted that number from the total of children. The resulting total of children under five, born or conceived under Pol Pot conditions was 16% of the relevant population sample, comparing favorably with the situation in Malaysia (14.3% under four) or Thailand (14.8% under four).[24] This would seem to show that the birth rate for this part of the population must have been close to normal, and

20. Pin Yathay, pp. 81-82, 110; Barron and Paul, chapter 7; CIA report, p. 12.

21. See Pin Yathay's description, pp. 110-134.

22. CIA report, pp. 2, 4, 5.

23. Chomsky and Herman, pp. 159-160.

24. For Malaysia and Thailand see *Illustrative Projections of World Populations to the 21st Century*, U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of the Census (January 1979). All other information is from my own research in the Khao I Dang refugee center.

means that the "old" people, and the most favored two-thirds of the "new," not only maintained their numbers but increased.

The above calculations were not intended to represent any kind of final assessment of the population of Cambodia, but only to indicate how the CIA figures, used more honestly and in a more accurate historical framework, would produce quite different results. There is a possibility, for example, that the massacres of 1978, not included in the report, were much more terrible than suggested above. However that may be, two estimates made public by international organizations at the end of 1980, and based in part on observations within the country, approach my own rough calculations. In November a "senior UN official" in Bangkok was quoted as saying that the Cambodian population was "6 million, 25% higher than previously estimated;" and a month later the FAO announced that its projections for food requirements in 1981 were based on an estimate of 6.5 million.[25]

We must conclude that the CIA report is a fraud, utterly without value for assessing the true extent of the havoc which has without doubt been wrought on Cambodia. At best its authors were naive in relying solely on Barron and Paul for their information, or at worst they were dishonest, cooking the figures and planting them on Barron and Paul to be taken up three years later as research by serious analysts. Indeed their omissions with respect to 1978 may be downright sinister, if deliberate.

As for Barron and Paul, at best they were naive in allowing themselves to become tools of a CIA disinformation ploy; at worst they entered knowingly and enthusiastically into the game. In either case we may now definitely write their book off as no kind of serious contribution to the Cambodia question.

Heng Samrin Kampuchea and CIA Objectives

The purpose of the *Reader's Digest* project at its original date in 1976–77 and the subsequent CIA report is clear. It was to discredit Cambodian communism in the assurance that no one then could come up with a convincing alternative picture. Unfortunately, a more honest alternative, some of the aspects of which I have sketched above, is no cause for rejoicing. Even in my own best case scenario I consider the Pol Pot regime to have utterly discredited itself, to have deserved overthrow, and to be unworthy of any further support. The alternative analysis of the CIA figures, however, is not a scholastic or useless exercise. We must now ask why, in early 1980, the CIA decided to dust off the old Barron-Paul figures as their own and to publish a document which, for the period up to 1979, provides no data not already published in 1977, deliberately ignoring important incidents of 1977–78 which should have contributed further to their portrayal of an arbitrary, murderous regime. It cannot have been to convince skeptics as far as the 1975–79 period is concerned, for anyone who would take a CIA report uncritically would already have swallowed Barron and Paul.

The reason must lie in what it has to say about the post-January 1979 Heng Samrin regime, which the report seems to imply may be worse than the Pol Pot group, perhaps spelling "the demise of the Khmer as a people." The only statistic offered — which is partly based on the "birth rates," "death rates," and "vital rates," the nature of which we have already seen—is that the population declined during 1979 by another 600,000, a larger drop than in any year after 1975.[26]

Of course, the war in early 1979 and the subsequent change of regime disrupted the lives of many people, destroyed the agricultural organization of the previous regime, and thereby caused a certain, but indeterminable number of deaths from hunger and illness which might not otherwise have occurred. Study of these questions is very incomplete and there is room for honest disagreement, but the report's estimates of people facing starvation (3.5 million) and deaths over births (ten to one) seem no more solidly based than their estimates for earlier years. In particular, if those figures represent some kind of extrapolation from "the great westward movement" of people "from all areas of the country" toward the Thai border, they are certainly wrong. For we know now that in late 1979 and early 1980 observers at the border, sometimes through honest error, sometimes deliberately, were exaggerating the numbers of people involved, which was probably around half the 400,000 estimates by the report.[27] We also know, as described above, that most of them were from the northwestern provinces close to Thailand, and what is more important for an assessment of the Heng Samrin government, we now know that only a fraction of them were moving westward from fear of imminent starvation. The rest were coming for all sorts of other reasons—to trade, to join the Khmer Serei guerrillas, to send mail abroad, to try to go abroad themselves, or occasionally just for the adventure of freely moving about after three-and-a-half years of strict control. When the Khao I Dang camp was opened in November 1979, UNHCR officials, on the basis of reports from the border, expected to be engulfed in a rush of 300,000 starving and ill Cambodians. The rush in the first three weeks, these people who really wanted out of the country at once, amounted to less than 75,000, of whom few were starving. During the next three weeks only something over 3,000 per week more showed up.[28]

Any attempts to judge the Heng Samrin regime must start by emphasizing that there have been no massacres at all beyond some killing of Pol Pot cadres in early 1979 immediately following the invasion. With respect to violence, the new regime is probably the most benign Cambodia has had for over ten years. The CIA report takes no note of this, but does emphasize "the destruction of the agricultural system," a type of system which one would have imagined the CIA would want destroyed, particularly since, in their own analysis of 1975–1977, it was given responsibility for the death of several hundred thousand

25. *FEER*, 14 November 1980, 9; and 19 December 1980, p. 37.

26. CIA report, pp. 2, 5, 6.

27. CIA report, pp. 3, 13, 14.

28. Information from UNHCR officials present at the time, and from members of the first refugee groups. Weekly statistics provided by the UNHCR office, Khao I Dang.

people.[29]

Whatever the real condition of agriculture in 1979, the people were *not*, pace the report, (p. 6), "urged to leave communes," and thereby neglect food production. Without using the same kind of force as the old regime it was impossible to keep the former urbanites down on the farm growing crops. In a few outlying areas it was attempted and caused great resentment. The new regime gave people almost complete freedom of movement and choice of occupation, which one would expect the CIA to approve. If the result proves disastrous, it will not be due to nefarious policies, but because of the poor quality of what they had to work with. It seems now, even from the reports of recent refugees who are in principle opposed to Heng Samrin, that conditions have been steadily improving in 1980 and 1981.

It appears that the purpose of this hasty CIA report is to put the pro-Vietnamese Heng Samrin regime in the worst possible light. The statistical picture is still contrived. It starts with the inflated estimates of 1975–77 which reflect the CIA policy of that time. Then suddenly the brakes are applied and the worst violence of the Pol Pot regime, which would be more in line with the picture presented up to 1977, is ignored, apparently in order to show steady relative improvement interrupted only by the Vietnamese invasion and a Heng Samrin year which was demographically more disastrous than the Pol Pot period. This analysis of the report also sheds new light on a couple of details in earlier published material which puzzled me at the time, but which now gain new meaning and in turn give support to my conclusions.

In a book completed in June 1978 Jean Lacouture, in a discussion of Cambodian communist origins, remarked that "up to 1977 . . . the CIA considered the PCK [Cambodian Communist Party] as a simple appendage of the Vietnamese party." Although noting that the CIA opinion might possibly still be the same, Lacouture suggested a change at that time, no doubt prompted by some contact he had. If that is really what the CIA thought, they were far behind all other serious observers of Cambodian affairs, including some in the employ of the U.S. government.[30] But in any case, why a change of views in 1977?

Someone with even better CIA contacts than Lacouture, Guy J. Pauker, in a book devoted to predictions and policies for Southeast Asia in the 1980s and published in 1977, revealed a very interesting nuance in the conventional wisdom about DK.[31] One of Pauker's topics in the chapters he wrote was "population and development." He evoked the problems of growing populations, need for more food, increasing scarcity of land, and insufficient urban employment for the hordes of peasants moving into the cities. He showed some concern that voluntary migrations within Southeast Asia were "not from overpopulated villages into the wilderness" as they should be, in order to develop new land, "but from the countryside to the cities," and that "the noncommunist countries use only mild administrative measures to slow down the flow." Indonesia's "transmigration" program, for instance, was too modest. In this connection one would expect some reference to Cambodia, and Pauker wrote: "The forced migration inflicted on the Cambodians after April 1975 . . . is certainly not a desirable model." That was all—not that the Cambodians were doing the wrong thing, or that Cambodia was being destroyed by inhuman murderers, but only that they were not taking apparently necessary steps in the best way. This is the only comment on the Cambodian revolution in the entire book.

There is one more detail of relevance to study of the Cambodian revolution. Pauker showed his respect for CIA research in quoting several times from their various compilations of statistics. Yet when presenting projections of population statistics he cited the UN figures, which, as mere extrapolations from the 1962 census, are inherently unreliable even in the best of circumstances, and told his readers, without comment, that the Cambodian population in 1975 was 8.1 million and in 1980 would be about 9.4[32]

This indicates that Pauker, and probably the CIA, disregarded the wilder stories of excessive deaths in Cambodia, even those prepared by the latter for Barron and Paul in 1976 and republished in the 1980 report. Pauker's book, after all, was intended as a serious work on policy, not a propaganda tract for the general public, and it must therefore reflect what its authors believed to be the most accurate information available rather than trumped-up figures suitable for dissemination via the *Reader's Digest*.

The CIA position on Cambodia apparently did undergo a change around 1977, although perhaps not in exactly the way Lacouture suggests. At the end of the Indochina wars in 1975 it would have appeared that Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos were forming a new, cohesive, fraternal socialist group which would have a reasonable chance of success and which would attract favorable attention from discontented peasants in other Southeast Asian countries, first of all in Thailand. It was essential to discredit the new Indochina governments, and Democratic Kampuchea lent itself perfectly to the propaganda campaign by taking measures incomprehensible even to many peasants and workers, measures much more brutal than anything which occurred in Vietnam or Laos.

The Barron-Paul book, which must be seen, at least in part, as a CIA project, was the first mass media effort to discredit Democratic Kampuchea in the United States, and probably to advance justification for policies against it which might be initiated. The same sort of material was also used in Thailand throughout 1975–76 to undermine all movements working for greater economic and social justice in that country.

For the CIA, however, and for U.S. policy in general, the specific conditions in any given country are of less importance than that country's position in a larger geopolitical context, and thus increasing murderousness in DK

29. CIA report, pp. 4-5, 12.

30. Lacouture, *Survive le peuple cambodgien*, (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1978), p. 54; Kenneth M. Quinn [U.S. State Dept.], "Political Change in Wartime: the Khmer Kraham Revolution in Southern Cambodia, 1970–74," *Naval War College Review*, Spring 1976, based on research completed in 1974.

31. Guy J. Pauker, Frank H. Golay, and Cynthia H. Enloe, *Diversity and Development in Southeast Asia*, The Council on Foreign Relations, (New York: McGraw-Hill), p. 33.

32. Pauker, et al., pp. 34, 35, 36, 40.

would be of less concern than Cambodia's relations with other countries. It soon became clear that fraternal socialist relations did not prevail between Cambodia and Vietnam. The CIA, whatever their earlier views on DK, realized that it was not only not subse nt to Vietnam, but anti-Vietnamese above all else. Democratic Kampuchea, it was seen, could be used in the international power game to weaken Vietnam—the strongest and best-organized of the Indochina states—and ultimately the position of socialism in Southeast Asia. The new American policy is clearly revealed by what has happened since 1979. The U.S. has not only expressed no enthusiasm over the removal of the "regime worse than Hitler's," but also supported its continued presence in the U.N. and abetted efforts to provide the DK remnants with material aid across the Thai border and to discredit and destabilize its rivals in Phnom Penh.[33]

The DK forces have responded in kind. Declaring that socialism is unviable in Cambodia, and that the first task must be the combat againt Vietnam, they call American diplomats "comrade," and offer their services in what they conceive to be an American effort to restore reactionary regimes in Laos and Vietnam. Never was the old "running dog" epithet more apt than applied to these relics of *Angka*.[34]

This is why the CIA has produced such a blatant propaganda tract in the guise of a research paper. This is why such documents must be carefully scrutinized and dissected, even if the alternative picture is less than cheerful. For the CIA are still cooking the books and are even willing partially to rehabilitate Pol Pot in support of their new position.

The CIA report on Kampuchean demography began by reproducing the estimates of human destruction in 1975–76 which had appeared in the sensationalist press of that time in order to discredit the DK regime, and which are now known to have been both selected and inaccurate. The report then ignores, even whitewashes, the murderous events of 1977–78, in particular the latter year, in which there were possibly more executions than during all the rest of the DK period. This cannot have been due to ignorance, but must reflect a precise propaganda goal.

That goal emerges from the treatment of 1979, the first year of the Heng Samrin regime, which is made to appear worse than any DK year except the first. Democratic Kampuchea, however brutal its methods and disastrous its policies, is shown achieving steady progress interrupted only by the Vietnamese invasion and the change of regime.

Since a new pro-Vietnamese regime in Southeast Asia was regarded as inimical, Democratic Kampuchea was seen in a new perspective which had already begun to take shape in 1977 or 1978. By then it was clear that the DK regime was not going to be a Marxist success which would turn Cambodia into a strong, if isolationist, peasant state and serve as a pole of attraction or launching pad for peasant revolutionaries in neighboring countries. Its worst massacres were for non-communist, racist, and in particular anti-Vietnamese reasons. Finally Pol Pot's Cambodia was really becoming bloody enough to attract some positive American interest.★

33. On U.S. activities at the Thai-Cambodian border see John Pilger, "America's Second War in Indochina," *New Statesman*, 1 August 1980. Unfortunately Pilger blunted the thrust of his article with unnecessary sensationalism and petty innuendo directed against sincere and innocent, even if naive, volunteer workers in the refugee camps. His main points, though, the magnet effect of the refugee operations, and U.S. involvement in the campaign to destabilize Phnom Penh and Vietnam, are valid. Morton Abramowitz, U.S. Ambassador to Thailand, was reputed to have prepared an answer to Pilger's article, but I was unable to obtain a copy of it from the embassy.

34. This information, beyond what has frequently appeared in published interviews with DK leaders, is from an interview of Thiounn Mum, a leading DK intellectual, with Stephen Heder, who generously provided me with a transcript. I refrain from naming the American diplomatic "comrade." Of course, DK conceptions of American policies do not prove that such policies exist.

Comparative Death Estimates

This table includes only the categories of casualties treated in the CIA report and discussed in the accompanying article, and is not intended to represent any kind of definitive statistical treatment. It involves only the scaling down of CIA estimates in accordance with areal variations in living conditions as described by refugees, accepting in some cases CIA rates for the worst areas.

	First Exodus	Second Exodus	Deaths 1976	Executions/Targets 1975–76	Executions 1978
CIA	400,000	400,000[1]	250,000	100,000/250,000[2]	0
MV	40–80,000	40–80,000	80–120,000	< 30,000/37–45,000	> 100,000

Estimates of Total Population after End of DK Period

CIA–Jan '79	CIA–Dec '79	MV–Jan '79	UN–Nov '80	FAO–Dec '80
5.8 million	5.2 million	> 6.3 million[3]	6 million	6.5 million

Notes:

1. The Barron-Paul estimate was 430,000. Otherwise they agree with the CIA.
2. See discussion above.
3. See discussion above. This figure also includes the over 100,000 estimated deaths in the 1978 massacres. The discrepancy which still remains between the estimate here and those above, where the 1978 figure was not included, reflects executions in 1977 and the inherent unreliability of *all* Cambodian population statistics.

Interviews in Kampuchea

by Kathleen Gough*

In February 1982 I visited Kampuchea for three weeks on the invitation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Like all visitors to Kampuchea whom I have met, I was shattered by the evidence of genocide and of destruction of the economy by the Pol Pot regime between April 1975 and December 1978. But I was equally impressed by the rapidity of the country's recovery under the present government. There appeared to be a sense of hope and purpose among the fifty Kampucheans with whom I had conversations, even though every one of them had lost between fifteen and fifty relatives in the Pol Pot terror.

The United Front for Reconstruction and Defense of Kampuchea

An Interview with Snguon Chem, Permanent General Adjunct of the Front

On February 23rd I had an interview with Mr. Snguon Chem, Permanent General Adjunct of the Council of the National United Front for the Reconstruction and Defence of the Motherland.

Gough: *I came to ask you about the Front for the Motherland. I would like to know how and when it was formed and what its progress has been.*

Chem: Our Front was formed on December 2nd, 1978. It grew out of what we called a Reunion Congress. In the beginning it was called the National United Front for the Salvation of Kampuchea; it was renamed recently. At the start, the Front put forward an eleven-point program. It proposed to overthrow the Pol Pot–Ieng Sary dictatorship, elect a national assembly, create mass organizations such as Youth, Women's, Trade Unions' and Peasants' associations, and build a popular army. It promised to create basic freedoms and democratic rights, develop a national economy and polity that would move towards socialism, care for the sick and wounded, and abolish the reactionary culture of Pol Pot. It determined to develop peaceful relations with neighboring countries, resolve international disputes through negotiations, and restore our solidarity with revolutionary and progressive forces throughout the world.

Gough: *Where was the National Front formed?*

Chem: It was formed in Vietnam. Under Pol Pot, the whole of Kampuchea was divided into concentration camps of about two to three hundred people. It was very difficult to move—people were killed if they tried to leave their villages. Even so, some did manage to escape and flee to Vietnam.

Gough: *Do you know how many reached Vietnam?*

Chem: I do not know exactly how many arrived altogether.[1] About one hundred thousand reunited in the Congress which formed the Front. The Congress chose forty people to represent the Front.

Gough: *Can you tell me when most people fled to Vietnam?*

Chem: People began to leave in 1976, but the majority fled in 1978 when the massacres were at their height and most of the rebellions took place. Their aim was to reconstitute the society after overthrowing Pol Pot.

Gough: *Please tell me how the Front proceeded after liberation in January, 1979.*

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1. Mr. Hoang Nguyen, editor of Vietnam Courier, told me that the United Nations High Commission for Refugees estimated that there were 300,000 Kampucheans in Vietnam by the beginning of 1979. Hoang Nguyen thought there might have been up to half a million, for many had left the camps near the border and gone on to Ho Chi Minh City. About 60,000 ethnic Chinese fled Kampuchea for Vietnam early in Pol Pot's reign when Chinese residents were being massacred. Most Kampucheans returned home after the liberation of January 7, 1979. About 80,000 Khmers remain in Vietnam. Others, especially Muslims of the Cham minority, went on to Malaysia with the help of the UNHCR.

A Kampuchean liberation army soldier. Photo: K. Gough.

Chem: The first months were entirely concerned with saving lives and providing the barest means for survival. Then we held our second Congress in September 1979, despite all the problems. Even before that, two months after liberation, we began political courses to train and retrain cadres. Because most of the intellectuals had been killed, we enlisted anybody who could read and write. In that way, somehow we managed to get a government together. The problem now is that we have too many incompetent people in our ministries, but we can't get rid of them. We have to try to improve their quality.

In the early months, we constructed several public services in the cities and provinces. Our leaders in the districts and the communes knew people and knew who were suitable; they sent us representatives. It was harder to locate suitable people in Phnom Penh. Eventually, thirty-five people were selected to represent the Front. They held conferences every two months to deal with the most urgent problems. Local conferences were held in the provinces and districts.

Gough: *How was the structure of government set up? How were the local authorities chosen?*

Chem: Our party directly installed the heads of the twenty provinces. Lower down, in the districts and communes, matters were more loose; the local people suggested suitable leaders.

Already in 1979, we organized the Women's and the Youth Associations. We formed separate associations for young men and young women. Then in 1980 we started the trades unions. Our women and youth were very active. They went about doing propaganda about the Front's programs and values. For example, they explained the Front's policy of amnesty for the Pol Pot cadres and about the new freedoms of religion, of national customs, and of culture. They also mobilized people for defense against the Pol Pot remnants.

Gough: *I have heard that you declared an amnesty for all the Pol Pot troops and cadres who surrendered or were captured. That really surprises me, after such wholesale massacres.*

Chem: We had to put a stop to the killing. We had had too much of Khmers killing Khmers. We divided the Pol Pot cadres into two groups. Those who hadn't killed anyone were detained only two or three weeks for re-education. Those who had committed killings were kept for re-education in Phnom Penh for a longer time.

Gough: *How Long?*

Chem: Two to three months.

Gough: *Two to three months! I thought you would say at least five years, or ten.*

Chem: (laughing) Madame, we couldn't feed them! We had a famine, you remember.

Gough: *This alarms me. You mean those young mass murders are wandering about the country, perhaps even here in Phnom Penh. . . .*

Chem: Don't worry, they are not dangerous now. They're disarmed and are under local authorities who supervise them. Everyone knows who they are, and they dare not make a wrong move.

Gough: *Are there many of them? More than the Pol Pot troops still fighting?*

Chem: Yes, they are very numerous.

Gough: *Tell me more about the work od the Front.*

Chem: The Front's members encouraged people to build new houses and helped them with construction work, for most of the houses had been destroyed by Pol Pot. We

Beside the Mekong, Phnom Penh. Photo:: Nguyen Van Ku.

distributed food and medicines, and taught people to take hygienic precautions in the villages. In Phnom Penh the Vietnamese were very helpful, working through interpreters. They helped us to stabilize the people and to reassure them. We also had to help people to get divorces, for most of the women who had made forced marriages under Pol Pot wanted to separate. In general we had to persuade people that the new regime wanted their safety and happiness. The hardest task was to calm people and restore their morale. Madame, our women were very courageous; you would have been impressed. They carried their own rice and walked miles, days, to villages to help other women. We didn't even have bicycles at first, and can still only distribute twenty cycles per province. Some women walked twenty kilometres a day to help the villagers.

Gough: *Were there many crimes at the beginning, in the disorder following Pol Pot's flight, when people were moving back to their home villages?*

Chem: There was some banditry, but there was surprisingly little crime. People were so exhausted and so happy to be free, they were gentle with one another. And then, you know, seventy to seventy-five percent of the adults in the villages were women, widows with children; their husbands had been killed. They had to do the work that men did before the Pol Pot period and before the U.S. war. Even today, sixty to sixty-five percent of the adults over eighteen in villages are women. Once they were home, organizing people was not too difficult. We held conferences in the provinces and districts, and brought suitable people to train as new cadres in Phnom Penh, then sent them back to the provinces.

Gough: *I think you had a third Congress of the Front quite recently?*

Chem: Yes, the third Congress was in December 1981. Three years after liberation, we realized that the situation was saved and the emergency was over. Now we have started development and reconstruction. We have enlarged the Front—we have eighty cadres now in our central committee. And the Front has put the organs of the state in place. Commune representatives and representatives of the city and municipalities were elected as early as March, 1981.

Gough: *How were they elected, and how big is a commune?*

Chem: The Front sought out competent people in the villages and ran them as candidates; it also asked the women and youth to run their own candidates. Then people elected a certain number from among the candidates. A commune comprises from five to twelve villages depending on their size.

Gough: *What about the role of the party? How big is it, and what can you tell me about it?*

Chem: I can't give you details about our party because I am not a member. As we are still half at war, its membership and activities are partly secret. The party influences the policies of the Front and takes part in the political education of cadres. I don't know the number of members, but I know it is small.[2] Training cadres and enlarging the party with trustworthy people are urgent priorities. Our party had its first Congress in 1951 after the division of the Indochinese Communist Party among Laos, Vietnam and Kampuchea. The second Congress was in 1960, the third early in 1979, just after liberation, and the fourth in May, 1981.[3]

Gough: *I know you have a new constitution. How was it formulated?*

Chem: We began the project for our constitution at the beginning of 1980. First we constituted a committee of jurists and politicians. Their proposals were discussed among the higher cadres, then those of middle level. In addition, we called cadres from the villages to a Congress in the city every three months, and they offered suggestions and amendments. Every cadre had to explain all the articles to the general population in his community and get responses. The discussions went on for months, so the constitution is a truly democratic achievement.

Gough: *I want to ask you now about the structure of the government and about the general election of 1981.*

Chem: We held the general elections for our first National Assembly in all the provinces on May 1, 1981. The process was similar to that we had tried out in the earlier elections in the communes. The Front and its various mass organs chose a list of 148 candidates, after much discussion among the people about who were best suited to run. One-hundred seventeen of them were elected, fifty from the capital and sixty-seven from all the provinces.[4] Each province has some members from the capital and some from the province. We have to do it that way because we have a number of provinces such as Takeo, Kampot, Kompong Chhnang, Pursat, Rattanakiri, Preah Vihear, and Prey Veng, with no intellectuals left alive at all, and others such as Kratie, Mundolkiri and Kompong Speu with only a very few.[5] For example, I am a member for Svay Rieng province and pay special attention to the affairs of that province, but I live in Phnom Penh. The assembly meets every six months; it first met last June, and again this month. In the recent session it passed three laws, one concerning the Assembly and the Council of State, one on the Council of Ministers, and one on the tribunals of justice. The assembly meets only for short periods but, in between, its members work hard in their constituency and hear requests and grievances from the people.

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2. *The Asia Yearbook, 1982* estimated that the Kampuchean Communist Party had about 600 members and 4,000 candidate members (p. 127). A photograph in the Military Exhibition in Phnom Penh shows forty-four members sitting at desks in a classroom at the Third Party Congress early in 1979.

3. Chem here omits the period from 1962, when Pol Pot became General Secretary of the Party (it is thought, after having the previous Secretary murdered) until he was overthrown in 1979.

4. Phnom Penh, the capital, was estimated to have a population of about 400,000 in February 1982. Shortly before the general elections of May 1981, the total population of Kampuchea was estimated at 5,746,000 (Wilfred Burchett, *The China-Cambodia-Vietnam Triangle* [Chicago: Vanguard Books, 1981], p. 229).

5. A chart on the wall of the National Exhibition in Phnom Penh lists only 10,173 intellectuals for the whole country in late 1981, an "intellectual" being anyone who has been through high school. Ten out of the twenty provinces had fewer than seventeen intellectuals and eight had none.

Gough: *Are the Council of State and the Council of Ministers both elected?*

Chem: Both Councils are chosen by the National Assembly. Not all the ministers need be members of the National Assembly, but most of them must be. All members of the Council of State, including Heng Samrin, its president, must be elected members of the National Assembly. The members of both Councils and of the National Assembly are there for a five year period until we have new elections.

Gough: *I understand the Front and the government much better than I did, and I'm grateful to you for talking to me.*

Chem: I'm glad you came, and if you need any more information, do let me know. Essentially, the Front is the bridge between our people and their government. It explains the government's policies to the people and takes back their opinions.

Gough: *I want to ask you one last question. Do you think the new set-up is really "irreversible"?*

Chem (laughing): I do hope so!

President Heng Samrin signing legislation after the national assembly session, royal palace, Phnom Penh, February 1982. Members of the cabinet stand behind him. Photo: K. Gough.

A Phnom Penh Interview with Hor Nam Hong, Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs

On February 24 I had an interview with Mr. Hor Nam Hong, the Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of Kampuchea. Hor Nam Hong's personal story, as told to me by his chauffeur and by other friends around him, is typical of the nightmare world inhabited by all Kampuchean citizens under Pol Pot.

Now aged forty-nine, Hor Nam Hong was the Cambodian ambassador to Paris under the regime of Prince Sihanouk in the late 1960's. When Sihanouk was overthrown in 1970, he rallied to the side of the united front formed by Sihanouk and the Khmer Rouge revolutionaries, and became the front's ambassador to Cuba. When Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge forces "liberated" Phnom Penh in April, 1975, Hor Nam Hong flew home to meet and aid the revolutionary government. On arrival, he was imprisoned in Phnom Penh for "re-education," robbed of all his possessions, and then sent to back-breaking work as an agricultural laborer in a village in Kampong Cham province —a village which, like all villages in Kampuchea, was in effect a concentration camp. He grew thin and weak from starvation and overwork. Hor Nam Hong was only thankful that his wife and children had remained in Havana.

After some months, the Pol Pot government cabled his wife in the name of her husband to return and join the revolution. When she reached Paris, Kampuchean refugees told her of the terrifying conditions in her country and begged her to go no further. She insisted on proceeding, believing that the Khmers Rouges were true revolutionaries and that her husband had summoned her. On arrival at Pochentong airport, the wife and three children were taken to the Soviet-Khmer Friendship University, which had been built under Sihanouk but was now a prison. They, too, were robbed of their clothing and luggage, given black suits to wear and a piece of bread to eat, and sent by ox-cart to join the husband. When he returned from the paddy fields at midday and saw them, Hor Nam Hong was terrified, believing that, like other families of intellectuals, they would all be killed. His wife could barely recognize him in his sick and emaciated state. Soon the family settled down to the life of agricultural slaves. Later, they were transferred to Phnom Penh and made to grow vegetables "in filthy, stinking water," then sent to a formerly Muslim village outside the city where all the inhabitants had been moved or massacred. Hor Nam Hong was made leader of a group of Kampuchean ambassadors all of whom had returned to serve the revolution and all of whom had been turned into agricultural laborers working fourteen to sixteen hours a day. One by one, these men with their families were told that "Angkar" ("the organization") needed their services and were removed to Phnom Penh. It later became known that all of them had been murdered in the infamous Tuol Sleng prison in the capital, where more than 16,000 Kampucheans were put to death. By the end of 1978, only Hor Nam Hong and a handful of others remained, expecting every day that they, too, would be "needed by Angkar."

In January, 1979, having been imprisoned in his village with no news of the outside world, Hor Nam Hong heard only that fighting was going on among the Khmers Rouges and between Khmers Rouges and Vietnamese. In the general disorder, he and his family fled north to the town of Pursat, hoping to reach Thailand. They were met by Vietnamese troops, recognized by a ranking officer, and sent in state by plane to Phnom Penh. After a few days in a second (but very different) re-education camp, Hor Nam Hong's wife and children were taken to Ho Chi Minh city to buy new clothes, and he himself was enrolled in the ministry of foreign affairs. At that point, the whole ministry had only ten members, for most of the previous government servants had been killed and most remaining intellectuals were still afraid to come out of hiding. Later, more people of education dared to return to Phnom Penh and govern-

ment departments were gradually reconstituted with the help of Vietnamese advisors. Most of these have now returned to Vietnam. The American and Western European branch of the Foreign Affairs ministry, alone, now has forty Kampuchean members.

While I was in Kampuchea, Hun Sen, the foreign minister, was away at the Communist Party conference in Paris. Hor Nam Hong was very busy, for large numbers of foreign journalists, film crews, international aid personnel, and academics fly into Phnom Penh and request interviews. As one interpreter put it, "We may not be very popular, but we are certainly very interesting." I am grateful to Mr. Hor Nam Hong for giving me an hour of his time, and to Mr. Uch Kiman for translating the interview which follows.

Gough: *Can you tell me, please, whether the attacks on Kampuchea from Thailand have been increasing or decreasing in recent months?*

Hor Nam Hong: Although the Pol Pot forces are dwindling, the attacks from Thailand have increased recently. The Thais have violated our territory with artillery shells, invaded our air space, and captured marines in our territorial waters. Last December, for example, they sent ships into our waters, sank a frigate, and took five sailors prisoner.

Gough: *I read about that in Bangkok. The Thai government, of course, said that you had invaded* their *waters.*

Hor Nam Hong: This is quite customary—there have been several such incidents. There is no doubt at all that they attacked us very close to our shore. Believe me, we have no incentive to invade Thailand. What could possibly be our purpose? We have more than enough to do, reconstructing our shattered country. They make these attacks as a way of lending support to the Pol Pot troops on both sides of our border. This is the military side.

Politically, the Thai government has also carried on a number of harmful activities. The remnants of the Pol Pot troops and other reactionary forces are given sanctuary inside Thailand. There they receive arms and other assistance from China with the help of the Thai authorities. Thailand has also worked hard to create and promote a coalition government-in-exile.

This so-called coalition is a maneuver and trick of China. A number of governments have fallen into this trap.

Gough: *Would you also say that this is a trap laid by the USA?*

Hor Nam Hong: We must be clear that this is a Chinese trap, but nowadays, of course, the USA and China are in collusion. Their long term strategies are different, but for the moment they parallel each other. China would like Pol Pot and his clique to return to Kampuchea, while the US would like Son Sann. For the moment, they are in the same boat in their efforts to destabilize us.

Gough: *I want to ask you about the use of chemical warfare in Kampuchea. . . .*

Hor Nam Hong (breaking in) I would like to tell you quite frankly that this accusation about our use of chemical weapons is a slander concocted by the US government. Neither we, nor any of our allies, have used chemical or bacteriological weapons in any part of Indochina.

Gough: *I have heard this repeatedly in both Kampuchea and Vietnam, and I accept it. After all that Indochina has suffered from these weapons, it seems very doubtful that you would use them against small minorities, especially as you never used them in the anti-US war. What I most want to ask you is whether it is true that Thailand is using chemical weapons against you? I read in a French newspaper in Phnom Penh that chemical weapons had been sent twice from Thailand in mid-February and had made several people ill.*

Hor Nam Hong: That is true. Shells containing chemicals were lobbed into Battambong province. About twenty people became ill and vomited. This had not happened previously.

Gough: *Who do you think sent them?*

Hor Nam Hong: We cannot say; we only know they came from Thailand. It's most probable that it was the Thai authorities, who may be getting them from the USA. We know of course that Reagan has decided to produce a lot of chemical weapons.

Gough: *Is there any change in the policies of the other ASEAN countries towards Kampuchea?*

Hor Nam Hong: The five countries of ASEAN make an external show of unity, but we know that the attitudes of Indonesia and Malaysia differ from the rest. These two governments understand that the main threat comes from China. Recently, the prime minister of Malaysia said that Malaysia was prepared to withdraw its support from Pol Pot in the United Nations this year. The Indonesians have said they agree with this declaration of the Malaysian prime minister. At the recent inter-parliamentary conference of

Tuol Sleng, Phnom Penh, formerly a high school, turned into a prison and death camp under Pol Pot. More than 16,000 former government servants, urban workers, Communist party cadres, and opposition figures from Pol Pot's government were tortured and killed here in 1975-78. The railings surround fourteen graves of mangled and decaying bodies discovered in classrooms by the Kampuchean liberation troops when they entered Phnom Penh on January 7, 1979. Behind the buildings are pits containing several thousand skeletons. Photo: K. Gough.

ASEAN in Kuala Lumpur, the head of the Thai delegation said that he would report this declaration to his government, and that he personally agreed with it. If Malaysia and Indonesia stop supporting Pol Pot this year it would be very good for us.

Gough: *Is there a likelihood of any change on the part of the western industrial countries, for example France?*

Hor Nam Hong: Our Minister of Foreign Affairs has just attended the 24th Congress of the Communist Party of France. He met a representative of the President of France in Paris, and in the near future, we shall receive a visit from a delegation of the French parliament in Phnom Penh. So the situation is evolving, although we don't expect any very quick changes. We understand this and know that time is on our side. If there is a change in French policy this will have an impact internationally, but we don't hope for any rapid developments. The situation will change slowly.

Gough: *You know that in the west, your government is assumed to be a puppet of Vietnam. How is one to answer that charge?*

Hor Nam Hong: If one can say that Kampuchea is a puppet of Vietnam because we have Vietnamese troops here, we can say the same of several other governments. West Germany and Japan have US troops; Singapore and Malaysia have Australian troops. The United States came to liberate West Germany from Nazi domination, much as the Vietnamese came to liberate us from Pol Pot's fascism. Are the West Germans puppets of the USA?

Gough: *Is Kampuchea a member of COMECON, or is it likely to become one?*

Hor Nam Hong: We are not yet part of COMECON, but if it seems necessary we will certainly consider it. So far, the socialist countries and especially Vietnam have given us assistance in every field. In the future, our cooperation with the socialist camp will flourish and we shall do whatever is best in that regard. But we are not rejecting or discarding cooperation with other countries. For example, we have very good political relations with India, and this means that our other relations with India will be close.

Gough: *Could you tell me something of your relations with India? Do you have trade, or receive aid?*

Hor Nam Hong: A high ranking delegation of economic experts was here recently from India and we discussed a lot of problems. On their return, they are preparing a cooperation and assistance programme for us. We have no trade yet, but the delegation has that in mind. We hope they will help us with development projects both in industry and agriculture.

Gough: *I want to ask about the international aid agencies. Is it true that their aid is declining?*

Hor Nam Hong: The aid of several agencies has been decreased this year because they say, quite rightly, that conditions in Kampuchea have been stabilized. UNICEF, the International Committee of the Red Cross, and a few others have decreased their aid.

Gough: *I suppose the question of your membership in the United Nations will affect the prospects for future aid?*

Hor Nam Hong: Perhaps the western governments think that whether or not we are in the United Nations is a criterion for judging how much aid we should receive, but we ourselves have a very different focus. Having liberated our country and stopped the genocide, we have to create the conditions for a stable life for our people. Admission to the United Nations is our right. Although we are not yet in UNO, our chief and daily task is to reconstruct our country, provide stability, and improve the living conditions of our people. Some of the aid agencies say they will not give us diplomatic assistance, only emergency assistance. We cannot understand that. Under Pol Pot our children were abused, deprived of all education, and even killed by the thousands. We have saved and revived them and provided them with schools. We cannot understand these agencies' concept of humanitarianism.

Gough: *I am sure you have been asked this many times, but I want to bring up the problem of Pol Pot and his relationship to China. I have two questions. First, do you understand what Pol Pot was trying to do? Even apart from killing such a vast proportion of the population, it's beyond me to know why he destroyed the economic infrastructure—the hydro-electric dam, factories, power stations, etc.*

Second, I am puzzled because on the one hand, Pol Pot is said to have tried to introduce a kind of caricature of the Chinese cultural revolution. But the government of China changed in 1976 and the ultra left was thrown out. Yet the Chinese apparently went on and even increased their support for Pol Pot.

Hor Nam Hong: Pol Pot and his gang represented what one might call the criminal ultra left. Yes, they did try to apply some features of what they knew of the cultural revolution, but they were far, far worse than that. They wanted to bring Kampuchean society back to the middle ages; they openly claimed that. They even said they wanted to get back to primitive communism. They said that was the best system because there was no property and everyone shared everything.

Gough: *What about China? Did they encourage all that, or did they just go along?*

Hor Nam Hong: It's true that the Chinese government changed in 1976. But throughout the time that Pol Pot was in power, from April 1975 to December 1978, only the Chinese had free access here. I don't know how many troops they had here, but there were certainly many soldiers and military advisers. And apart from the military, there were tens of thousands of civilians, many of whom must have known precisely what was happening. And since January, 1979, the Chinese have made every effort to return the Pol Pot gang to power. Each of us has to judge from the facts available to us.

Gough: *Our time is up, I see. Thank you very much for sparing me this hour.*

Hor Nam Hong: Thank you, and best wishes in your work.

The Kampuchean Economy

While in Kampuchea I had two interviews with government officials on agriculture and other aspects of the economy. The first was with Mr. Nhem Heng, Vice-Minister for Agriculture. Mr. K.T. Bunthan of the Bureau of International Relations in the Ministry of Agriculture interpreted.

Gough: *I would like to have an overall view of agricultural developments, both under Pol Pot and in the recent period.*

Nhem Heng: You know of course that our population was totally undernourished at liberation on January 7, 1979. With people in such a condition, and in the chaos of their movement back to their home towns and villages, it was hard to get cultivation going. Our first task in 1979 was to see people fed and healthy again, with international assistance.

When cultivation was restored, we had a big problem with the shortage of buffalo. Most of them had died from lack of fodder or sickness under Pol Pot.

Gough: *Do you know how many buffalo remained after Pol Pot's flight, and how many there had been before?*

Nhem Heng: All the documents relating to agriculture were destroyed by Pol Pot, but we know we had about 2,700,000 cattle and buffalo under Sihanouk. Perhaps half a million were killed in the Lon Nol war. We may have had roughly one third of the original number by the end of Pol Pot's reign.

Gough: *What happened with respect to irrigation?*

Nhem Heng: Water management was extremely bad under the Pol Pot gang. They put thousands of people to work digging dikes and dams, but because they killed most of the technicians and had no respect for experts, most of their efforts were wasted or actually harmful. In some areas their constructions brought about floods in the rainy season; several hundred drowned in Kompong Cham province in 1977, for example. Along the west bank of the Tonle Sap lake they put about 10,000 people to work digging a massive dike; many hundreds if not thousands died of overwork, hunger, and sunstroke. The whole thing was useless —it was technically incorrect. In general, by 1979 we had had unimaginable loss of life and found it very difficult to save people and reorganize them.

Gough: *Can you tell me something about foreign aid, in those early months?*

Nhem Heng: Right away, the Vietnamese brought food and materials and moral help. We can never forget what they did to save our people. In 1979, most of the aid came from Vietnam; some from the Soviet Union. I can't give figures, but it was indispensable. From October 1979 until now we have had substantial aid from other humanitarian organizations too, with tools, seeds, motor pumps, and tractors. We have eighty tractors from UNICEF and 320 from all sources. Fertilizers and insecticides have mostly come from FAO and a few other organizations. Our petrol comes entirely from the USSR, also some other fuel for motor pumps, of which we now have several thousand.

Gough: *Please tell me about the extent of cultivation in various years.*

Ploughing in Kampuchea. Agriculture is being restored. Because of the shortage of men, solidarity teams of ten to twelve peasant families help cultivate each others' fields. Photo: Nguyen Van Ku.

Nhem Heng: Under Sihanouk we cultivated about 2.5 to 2.7 million hectares. That declined greatly during the Lon Nol war, probably to less than a million hectares. Production was stepped up under Pol Pot, but I really don't know how much land was cultivated or food produced. All of us were imprisoned in communes that were concentration camps; all we knew was that we worked like slaves, ate very little, and saw most of the produce taken away in trucks.

After liberation in 1979, we managed to cultivate 600,000 hectares of paddy; we began in May and finished in December. In 1980 that increased to 1,200,000 hectares. In addition, we grew sweet potatoes, manioc, maize, and vegetables on about 300,000 hectares of dry lands. The fact that we succeeded at all was mainly due to good weather and the land's fertility, for our people were still not well organized.

In 1981 our government and party planned to cultivate 1,550,000 hectares of rice. But we were very unlucky; we had unprecedented floods and also drought, and were able to manage only 1,100,000 hectares. The drought hit part of the country in June and July, but in the same period we had floods near the Mekong. It was most unusual. For 1982, our plan is to cultivate 1,600,000 hectares of paddy, 90,000 of maize, 15,000 of sweet potatoes, 25,000 of manioc, 30,000 of lentils, and 17,000 of vegetables.

These amounts refer to cultivation by mutual aid groups, each of which involves twelve to fifteen families. Many of the families are entirely composed of women whose husbands were killed under Pol Pot. The groups pool their skills, tools and animals, and cultivate as much land as they can manage. On weekends and in the harvest seasons, teams of men go out from all our government departments, from the foreign embassies and international aid agencies, from our army and from the Vietnamese troops, to help with cultivation and construction.

In addition to the hectares, I have mentioned, most families grow extra vegetables and poultry on private plots near their homes; I have not counted those. Altogether, we

hope for much better production this year. But we shall still be short; we anticipate a deficit of about 300,000 tons of paddy in 1982. Unfortunately, the shortage will begin in June when we are just starting cultivation. We don't know yet where or whether we shall get this food—we are negotiating with several countries.

Meanwhile, we are trying to re-establish the irrigation system, but it is not easy. Besides undoing much of what Pol Pot did, we have to reclaim land that was left fallow as the population declined. We need motors, bulldozers, and scrapers. We have a few from the international organizations, but they are in very short supply.

Gough: *What about hybrid high-yielding varieties of seeds?*

Nhem Heng: Yes, we receive some HYV's from the Philippines. FAO, Oxfam and CIDCE have introduced them and they improve the yields. We also have some for dry season rice production. But the problem, of course, is fertilizer, which is hard to obtain. We hope for some from FAO, but the prospects are uncertain. We don't have industries to make fertilizers ourselves.

Gough: *What about fishing and stock breeding?*

Nhem Heng: We have encouraged fishing in the lakes to eke out food. It is improving, but thousands of the fishermen were killed, especially Vietnamese residents and Muslims of our Cham minority. Vietnam has helped us greatly by bringing in pigs and poultry; we have also received some from the aid agencies, but not cattle. At present we have about 930,000 oxen and 390,000 buffalo; we need many more. Both the Lutherans and Food For the Hungry in Australia have promised us some cattle of good breeds; we do hope they come through.

Gough: *Can you tell me anything about the loans you receive or your trade in agricultural products?*

Nhem Heng: We are not receiving agricultural loans at all, only gifts. And our trade is still very meagre. We sell a little rubber to the socialist states, that's all.

Gough: *Where do the peasants sell their produce?*

Nhem Heng: At present they are free to sell either privately or to the state. We don't want to coerce them after all they have suffered, but we must improve distribution now that Phnom Penh and other towns are growing larger again. We have tried to provide state collection centres in most areas, and the peasants are bringing in their produce, especially paddy.

Gough: *You mentioned the mutual aid groups in the villages, and I have seen troops and government servants going out to transplant paddy on weekends. What about agricultural specialists? Do you have some?*

Nhem Heng: We are woefully short of cadres, and must train new ones as quickly as possible. I'll give you only one example. Before Pol Pot came, we had hundreds of engineers. Now we have only five. I am one of them, but I'm needed for administration.

Gough: *I'm sure you are tired of answering questions about the Pol Pot period, but I have two. One is, what happened to all the food that was produced, if the people did not eat it?*

Nhem Heng: Most of it went from Kompong Som port to China to pay for weapons. The rest was stored for the army, for the invasion of Vietnam.

Gough: *I want to ask you finally what you think Pol Pot was trying to do. The massacres, the destruction of the economy . . . it's beyond me.*

Nhem Heng: (consults in Khmer with K.T. Bunthan) We do not know what the goals of Pol Pot were. We knew only the

A market in Phnom Penh, one of about a dozen. Industrial consumer goods are mostly imported through the black market from Bangkok. Photo: Nguyen Van Ku

suffering. But I do think it was planned in China. There was a telephone line from the Tuol Sleng death camp to the Chinese embassy, and documents show that there were orders from the embassy to Tuol Sleng. Dr. Vandy Kaonn, our only surviving sociologist, conducted that investigation. I think the invasion of Vietnam was definitely a Chinese idea, and that they intended to bring Chinese to settle here after Pol Pot had finished killing his countrymen.*

* When I first reached Kampuchea, I found this extreme opinion shocking, but I gradually realized that it was held by many, if not most, of the Kampucheans I interviewed. While I myself find it simplistic and farfetched, it is necessary to realize that because of the large-scale massacres of 1977 and 1978, many Kampucheans do hold this view. K. Gough

My second interview on the economy was with Mr. Keo Samuth, Director of General Planning; it was interpreted by Mr. Kang Keng, Director of International Cooperation.

Keo Samuth: Before answering your specific questions, I want to speak about the Pol Pot period and the immediate aftermath. Under Pol Pot, for three years, eight months, and twenty days, our people lived in hell. About three million out of eight or eight-and-a-half million died from massacres, famine, or neglected illness. All of us are mourners; everyone you see today is a survivor from the Pol Pot massacres. Many whole families were wiped out. For those who did not die, life was a nightmare; we lived as in a trance. Every village was a concentration camp; if you tried to leave it, you were killed.

The overwork was utterly inhuman, utterly without precedent—fourteen to sixteen hours a day in most places, with no proper food or rest. Most of us were kept digging dikes, dams, and canals when we were not cultivating, all to no purpose. Only the Pol Pot cadres did any handicrafts or trade, and only for themselves. We had no houses to live in, only the barest shelters. After all our labour, "Angkar" used little for the people; at harvest time big trucks came and took everything away. Often ten people had to share one eight ounce tin of rice. They gave us it as gruel, not white rice like today. Sometimes we got one spoonful, sometimes two. We ate rats, mice, cockroaches: never was there such inhuman starvation in the midst of plenty.

Our children were taken from us, forced to work like animals, but also turned against us, made to spy on us. Husband and wife had no proper marital life, and unwanted marriages were forced upon young women. In every district there are common graves, huge pits of corpses. Pol Pot was worse than Hitler; never has there been such genocide.

After that reign of horror, our people were utterly traumatized, starving, homeless. Most people were far away from their home towns and villages. Many walked hundreds of kilometers to get home, and when they got there, often, nothing: houses destroyed, half of their family, or their whole family, dead.

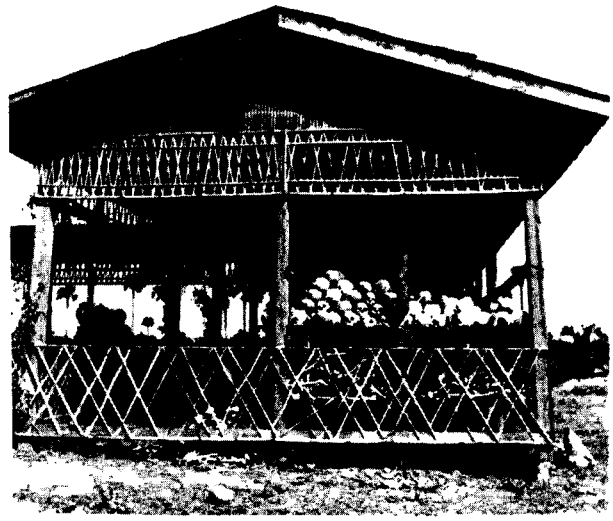
January 7, 1979, was a historic date, the day of liberation. It saw the start of our recovery, yet we faced unimaginable travails. It took about a year for all our people to reach home. Food, of course, was our first problem. Our People's Revolutionary Council did its utmost, also our Vietnamese allies, but we could not save everyone. Clothing was the second problem, and the third was housing. For a year, we could think of little else. It is against such a background that I now turn to your questions.

Gough: *I want to ask first about the situation with respect to energy. I notice, of course, many pylons near the roadsides that are without electric cables, and I understand that under Pol Pot most of the power stations were put out of action. Yet I also know they had some telephones. What happened to electricity and other energy sources under Pol Pot, and what has happened since?*

Keo Samuth: Under Pol Pot the electrical infrastructure was totally destroyed. The Kirirom hydro-electric power station a few miles from Phnom Penh, which previously served much of the country, had already been bombed and damaged in 1972–75. It was already out of action before Pol Pot came, but the damage was not great—it needed some repairs. Instead, Pol Pot took away the transmissions and the power lines. The Pol Pot forces had small generators for the offices of the diplomatic corps, for the heads of troops, for the Chinese embassy, and for the prisons. There was no electricity in the countryside. They used wireless across the country to get in touch with one another.

After liberation our government appealed to any former technicians who were still living to come forward to repair the power stations. Vietnamese technicians came to help us too. Now COMECON is studying a proposal to repair the hydro-electric dam. The Yugoslavs began it in the first place, under Sihanouk. They built the first reservoir, but the second and third were not completed. If they are completed, they will solve our problems of electricity.

At liberation all the power stations in Phnom Penh were out of order; they are more or less repaired now.



Some of the 8,982 skulls, with bones, excavated at Cheuong Ek, Kandal province, victims of Pol Pot's purges. Each oif the 129 mass graves so far excavated here contained 40 to 100 skeletons. Victims were trucked here from Tuol Sleng and other prisons and killed by blows to the back of the head. Photo: K. Gough

Repairing them was not easy because the machines came from different places; we had United States GM machines in some stations, Czech in others. In 1980 we put a proposal to the Soviet Union to build a new power station, and that is going ahead. We have asked the Czechs to rebuild the Chak Angre station south of Phnom Penh, which was originally built by them; we have no answer yet. In 1981–85 we plan to repair all the power stations in Phnom Penh, Battambong, Siem Reap, Kompong Cham, and Kompong Som. Most of our economic projects are for one year only, but we have planned the electricity for five years. 1982 will be our first year for repairing power stations systematically. Under Sihanouk we had stations in Phnom Penh, all the provincial capitals, and some district towns; all that must be restored. Our most urgent need is to produce electricity where we have possibilities for industry and commerce, then to develop it in all the provinces.

Gough: *What about petrol and other fuels?*

Keo Samuth: Before Pol Pot there were some state enterprises providing fuel, as well as foreign countries. Since liberation we have received fuel from the USSR and some of the international organizations.

Gough: *May I ask now about industries?*

Keo Samuth: We had many industries under Sihanouk. Some were damaged in the war of 1970–75, but all were destroyed by Pol Pot.

Gough: *All? I read that there were some . . .*

Keo Samuth: All. There were *no* machine industries under Pol Pot. Almost all the factories were systematically destroyed and none were operated. Since liberation we have tried to restore eighty big, medium and small factories. They have been functioning since 1980, but they do not run smoothly because of shortages of power and raw materials. Certain spare parts are lacking. We have tried to make new ones, or to obtain them from friendly socialist countries, but we have many problems. We also have a severe shortage of skilled workers and managers.

Gough: *What industries do you have now?*

Keo Samuth: Beverages, alcohol for the Ministry of Health, and textiles. The machines to produce cotton fibre, the spindles, and the looms, were all destroyed but we have replaced some of them. We make some rubber goods in Phnom Penh, but the belts in the factories are damaged. We make some batteries, but we lack raw materials. We make cigarettes. There again, we have plenty of tobacco, but it's hard to get cellophane, filters and rolling paper.

For the foreseeable future, handicrafts will be crucial for us, especially to serve agriculture. We are developing them rapidly in Phnom Penh and other centres.

Gough: *Are your factories state owned, or are some private?*

Keo Samuth: At the time of liberation, there was not a single economic unit under private ownership. All the factory owners were massacred by Pol Pot, so all our factories belong to the state. We have no problem with a private industrial sector; it does not exist.

Gough: *I want to turn now to trade. I see that there are many markets in Phnom Penh—at least a dozen—and several in Battambong and Sisiphon, selling a great array of consumer goods. I hear that most of them come from Bangkok, but what puzzles me is how they are paid for. I'm also aware of the black market in dollars, which seem to sell privately for four times the rate in banks. Yet I doubt if there are enough dollars in the country to purchase all those foreign goods. Can you explain the trading networks, and the government's efforts to regulate them?*

Keo Samuth: Your observations are correct. We are in the process of trying to restore trade, from base to center. The organization is set up, but to date the practice is not good at all. The state at present sells food, cloth, salt, and kerosene for home use at low prices. Other things are obtained from the free market, which is advancing much faster than state trade. We allowed this for some time because we wanted people to have as many goods as possible. Because of our state of war against the Pol Pot troops, who are provisioned from Thailand, we have no official trade with Thailand, and we can't entirely control the free trade across the border from Bangkok.

In 1979 our people were destitute. Our government thought a lot about trade but it had to let people get things where they could. In principle, we did not allow free exports or imports, but we winked at them because our people were so needy. It is mainly gold, not dollars, that is used to buy things from Thailand; much of our gold has already gone there.

Gough: *I thought Pol Pot collected all the gold.*

Keo Samuth: He tried to collect and store it, but our people hid some.

In mid 1981, we saw that the standard of living had been raised and enough food, clothing, and utensils obtained, so our government introduced strict measures to prevent imports from Thailand. What you see in the markets now was mostly imported before that. There is still some smuggling, but we try to control it in order to prevent the growth of a rich, corrupt trading class. The government is now studying new measures to discourage contraband, not only of Thai goods to Kampuchea, but vice-versa. Snakeskins, sandalwood, and valuable craft objects are being exported illegally. The free trade has meant a big loss of gold from Kampuchea, and also the Pol Pot ravages—Pol Pot took much of our gold to Thailand.

We do expect our state trade to penetrate the villages in the near future; we want to buy the peasants' produce and sell them goods. The government now has paddy collection centers in several places: Battambong, Kompong Cham, Siem Reap, Prey Veng, Svay Rieng and Takeo. We expect to buy more from the peasants in future. Farmers bring their paddy to the purchase points, and we try to evaluate each province's consumption needs and shift the surplus to other areas. 1981 was hard because we had serious drought, also floods from the Mekong valley, and not enough was produced. We tried to take paddy to the disaster areas, to loan paddy to those without enough and to collect the surplus in Phnom Penh. There will be a deficit again in late 1982. We are trying to persuade people to grow a dry season crop, but it won't be enough. We hope to buy from the USSR and the international agencies, but so

far we have had no good or exact agreements. We hope for help from the World Food Program.

Gough: *What was transport like under Pol Pot, and what are the recent developments?*

Keo Samuth: The transport situation in 1979 was utterly appalling. The highways were destroyed, and there was virtually no means of transport. Pol Pot had cut the roads every few meters during the Lon Nol war, and no repairs were done. He destroyed all the cars and buses and most of the trains. Under Pol Pot there was little transport except some trucks to take rice to Kompong Som or to army storage centres and to take prisoners to their deaths.

Gough: *I see a great variety of cars and some buses, now, from several countries, including Mercedes, Fords, Pontiacs, etc.*

Keo Samuth: Our people have literally rescued some old cars and buses from the car jungles round Phnom Penh, put them back together from odd parts and bits of scrap, and repainted them. Some of the U.S. cars have been given by Vietnam, some by the international agencies. All the socialist countries have helped with transport; cars come mainly from the Soviet Union and the GDR.

We are gradually reorganizing our communications. The Vietnamese help a lot with highways. Our own efforts are restricted. We have no stone crushers, for example, and our biggest need is tar. The USSR can't provide it. They pack it in cotton boxes, which are useful in a cold country but can't be brought to Kampuchea. The Soviets have promised to find a solution in 1982, but it's difficult.

The railway has been functioning again since 1980, but the service is irregular and the trains are not on time. They have to cross forest regions that are not yet safe; you may have heard of the train that was blown up by Pol Pot troops in late 1980, with several hundred killed. Still, we are now moving considerable amounts of goods by rail. The damage has been great—after using some trains to escape, Pol Pot derailed them, destroyed the bridges in Pursat and Battambong, and burnt the carriages. We have been repairing them with Vietnamese assistance, and now security men take duty along the railway and in the carriages. The railway runs from Phnom Penh northwest to Battamnbong and southwest to Kompong Som. Under the old regime we had a rail route to Thailand, but not now. Telecommunications are also a great problem, but are gradually being restored.

At liberation we had little means of transport on waterways. Many boats were lost during the Pol Pot time, and the motor boats and steamers all destroyed. We have one passenger steamer now on the Mekong, and are able to take goods by boat from the provinces to Phnom Penh.

The roads are worst in the northeast, in Kratie, Stung Treng, Rattanakiri and Mondolkiri. One has to approach those provinces from Ho Chi Minh City. Pol Pot let jungle grow there.

Gough: *I would like to ask you now about foreign aid.*

Keo Samuth: Vietnam has helped us in every field. Vietnam is the first friend of Kampuchea, make no mistake. When we set up our Front for liberation, Vietnam was the first to respond to our request for aid. During the liberation many Vietnamese, including officers, laid down their lives, and Vietnamese troops are still shedding blood on our behalf. Right from liberation, Vietnam's help has been inestimable. They transported rice to feed us Kampucheans, provided officers and cadres for factories and other units, advised us in every sphere, and have helped us to preserve peace and security. During the Pol Pot time hundreds of thousands of Kampucheans fled to Vietnam and found succour there.

The other friendly socialist countries have also helped, especially the Soviet Union. In 1979–80 we received free aid from all the socialist countries that recognize Kampuchea, and from 1981, these countries gave development loans.

Gough: *What are the conditions for the loans? Are they long term?*

Keo Samuth: The length of time varies. Some are long term, some until the enterprise starts to produce. In several cases we have taken loans for five years, then promised to repay them over the next ten years. Specialists have come from the USSR and GDR to facilitate these loans. We have begun trade with many socialist countries and hope to increase its quantity and quality. At present we export some rubber and a little tobacco and kapok fibre.

The international agencies have been helpful but their activities are declining. They think the situation has been stabilized, and they refuse development as distinct from emergency aid. Not being in the United Nations is, of course, an obstacle to further aid. We feel it is totally unjust, for it is we who have saved the country from genocide, revived our children and families, started schools and hospitals again. . . . But we cannot help these things. Time is on our side, and meanwhile we must try to persuade some countries to prolong their aid.

Gough: *I have one final question about Pol Pot. I cannot understand what he was aiming at, why he committed such crimes and destroyed the economy. Do you understand it?*

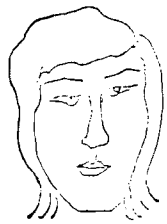
Keo Samuth: I do not understand it; the whole system was criminal, nonsensical. We two were farmers to begin with, not afraid of work; we knew farming, but that situation was unbelievable. We would have to create a new vocabulary to describe it. (With tears) I'm sorry. I don't want to talk any more about Pol Pot.

Kang Keng: Madame, you must excuse us. As we told you, all of us are survivors from massacres. As two small examples, my friend here lost four of his eight children; all three of mine were killed.

Gough: *(weeping) I am very sorry . . . , please forgive me.*

Keo Samuth: It is all right, madame. Thank you for coming. *Au revoir,* and best wishes with your work. ★

Niwa o tagayasu (I Plough the Garden) by Tomioka Taeko: A Translation and an Interpretation



富岡多恵子自画像

Self-portrait of Tomioka Taeko. Courtesy T. Prindle.

by Tamae K. Prindle

Tomioka Taeko (1935-) is a poet-novelist known in Japan for her unique style of writing. She wrote her first poem "*Tanjōbi*" (Birthday) in her junior year at Osaka Women's College and has described her initial encounter with the world of poetry as follows:

> *. . . on our way to Kyoto, I was looking at the scenery from a window of the Hankyū electric train. Passing Ibaragi, a pasture suddenly opened up before my eyes; it concretely enveloped me. The scenery hit me, then, in abstraction. I wrote down the inspiration, upon my return home, on a sheet of paper and named it "*Tanjōbi,*" meaning my first poem.*[1]

Prior to this awakening experience, Tomioka had read only one thin collection of poems by Shigeharu Nakano (1902-1979), and an elementary poetry text. Her attempts to imitate model poems resulted in frustration.[2] Her path to success was just to "write down words on paper" as she pleased.[3]

By 1973, Tomioka had published seven poetry collections: the first, *Henrei* (A Grateful Return) published in 1957, was awarded the Mr. H. Prize; and the third, *Monogatari no akuruhi* (The Day When the Story is Unfolded) published in 1960, won the Murō Saisei Prize. At the completion of the *Tomioka Taeko shishō* (Tomioka Taeko Poetry Collection) which contains all of her independent volumes, Tomioka closed her career as a poetess and opened a new one as a successful novelist, essayist and scenario writer. The Tamura Toshiko Prize and the Joryū Bungakushō (Women Writer's Prize) awarded for her two novels *Shokubutsusai* (Festival of Vegetation) and *Meido no kazoku* (A Family in Hades) respectively, testify to her talent in this genre of writing. This paper attempts to decode one of Tomioka's longer poems, "*Niwa o tagayasu*" (I Plough the Garden), first published in *Karisuma no kashinoki* (An Oak Tree of Charisma) in 1959.

"I Plough the Garden" depicts Japan in the 1950's. This was a period in which economic growth was placed above all else: a time for Japan to transform its postwar makeshift industrialization into a basis for international competition. An urge toward economic expansion similar to the militaristic imperialism of Meiji (1868-1912) and early Showa (1926-present) stirred Japan. Adoption of Western materialism had already gone far in people's everyday life. Tomioka, however, sees breaches between Japan's Westernization and tradition; between the national goals and the standard of private living; and also, between organizational policy and individual's awareness. This is a political poem.

Natural calamities such as earthquakes, landslides, typhoons, floods, droughts, are frequent and familiar happenings in Japan. The wood and paper framed houses burn well, once kindled. Even today, an amulet or two hang from a kitchen post, protecting the house from fire. A miniature Shintoistic shrine and a Buddhistic temple—often both in the same house—are placed in inner rooms for the family's private wish-grantings. This is the cultural background of Japan which Tomioka describes in her first lines: "Esoteric incantations/For natural calamities and fires."

Economically, Japan's natural resource is water.

> *We have no oil but our water is good:*
> *A romance of water,*
> *A ballad of water,*
> *A sonnet of water,*
> *A Japanese ditty of water.*

There is a certain parallel between the oil-water and the Westernization-tradition relationships. The former part of each set of two elements represents solidity; the other part, fluidity. In the poetess' words, "natural calamities and fires/Drift in the bubbles of a moving water." She, then, mockingly associates water with the humanitarian arts of romance, ballad, sonnet and Japanese ditty. Japan is industrializing upon this kind of flimsy foundation. The nation is about to earn its rice "With the help of foreign scripture," i.e., by using foreign technology. It barely manages to do so, by way of gimmickry: possibly by trading

1. *Gendaishi bunko 15: Tomioka Taeko shishū* (A Library of Contemporary Poems 15: A Collection of Taeko Tomioka's Poems) (Tokyo: Shichōsha, 1968), p. 124.
2. Ibid., 124.
3. Ibid., 124.

water (labor) for oil (natural resources) metaphorically. The fear that the "fraud may be brought into light" haunts the nation, or at least the more conscientious segment of the Japanese population including the poetess herself.

A sad reality of everyday economy is that the ordinary citizen feeds on river fish, char (*iwana*), which privileged people would rather not bother themselves with. Japanese commoners can live on it thanks to their skill in deboning it. This painstaking food, moreover, is the only delicacy available. The Japanese economy, indeed, is heavily dependent on skilled labor. Ordinary people, such as "he and she," in the meantime, live in a "pigpen" or a small room edged by a bed, a desk, a toilet, kitchen sink and what not. This level of living is a reward granted to those who have completed the nationalized education system: "A pigpen out of the national school texts." They are at least mathematically trained. Every Sunday, he and she calculate *tête-à-tête* trying to figure out how to make a living. Of course, both the young couple work even over-time and at extra-company jobs. Their daily routine consists of cooking, washing, cleaning and making sure that they report to work on time, the house is safe and babies are not conceived accidentally. Holidays are more problematic than other days because the couple begin to think and wonder about the condition of their livelihood as soon as they are released from routine social obligations: "One more restless day." Family life, before long, proves to be frustrating. In reaction, the mother leaves home without telling her destination—a recent phenomenon branded by the news media as *jōhatsu* (evaporation).

The mother turns herself into a child,
In bitter reaction to her own child of early adolescence.
She, herself, takes off.

Is the nation ready to fly a rocket? Why does it fly a rocket? The "rocket" in this poem is not necessarily a spaceship. It is, rather, a national goal, more like a high GNP ranking or the like. The state flies a rocket because it "aspires to Heaven," as does the tall smokestack of factories. This goal stays in the sky beyond people's reach. It is a thrilling "circus" to watch it fly. The audience's entrance fees are invested by the state in a claque which creates the illusion of success. "Not bad," shouts the claque. "It flew, it flew," "it's flying, it's flying," echoes the audience. Soon, the audience is bathed in an illusory euphoria; people start to perform their own "obdurate pieces." That is, believing in Japan's success and in his/her own strength, each, in his/her own manner borrows money and ventures to build a socially prescribed household. This state of affairs is "an optimism, full of exclamation marks," to sensitive and sensible minds. Scholars' words are ignored, for enlightenment is only an impractical legend. "Quit consoling us," bluster the commoners who are good enough to keep up with economic needs but have no capacity for spiritual pursuits. But "he and she" 's value judgment is not so clear-cut; they postpone their initial plan to annihilate the scholars: "Not yet!"

Our artist associates the central government with an aloe plant which reproduces parthenogenetically. Like the aloe, the central government self-generates, monopolizing its power through a careful selection of staff, including some of the minor clique members. A humanitarian fusion between two sexes or pollination from other flowers is uncalled for. The plant may disguise itself as an herb and cure gastrointestinal upsets. The state has a similar hypocritical caliber; it can fatten the privileged who make a proper use of it, but not the needy people: "A devil for the oppressed." Both the aloe and the government cause an outrageous sensation, if mishandled. Neither are to be chewed or grated, but both are to be swallowed. Here is a holistic or monarchic, rather than democratic, image of the government, one reminiscent of the war-period imperialism. The government must be respected as a whole, regardless of its components. Leading newspapers are its allies; they are biased. Local papers are more frank in naming minor villains. The population growth rate is also controlled directly or indirectly by the state. The "catheter" inserted into the "slender island" (Japan) artificially encourages a population increase, while the infrared rays, whose long wavelengths are invisible to human eyes, sterilize or minimize it. The indirect and invisible control measure may just be the lack of welfare programs and the nation-wide low income level. Whatever the "insect-like projection" may be, surgery on it is a major act, affecting the function of the organization or the individual. It is unclear who is conducting the surgery, partly because the meetings of the influential are clandestine and their use of shovels, scoops and hammers (their tools and methodology) is directed toward private objectives: "they laud a being." The overall implication is simply that a central force functions on the basis of self-interest.

The populace by and large is ignorant and can be misled. It may be submerged "in the odor of the claque" and it may be cooled in the "liquid air made of powder snow" and casually ousted from the "galaxy." It may be inveigled into taking chemical tranquilizers which are advertised as means to "liberate" the masses from uneasiness and tension, disregarding the social causes for their mental distress. These people are a part of the thematic metaphor of the "bubbles of a moving water," a passing phenomenon. They do not have an objective eye that "discovers," having no identity or individualism, "You are not you at all." An individual is a part of a mass, a part of an ephemeral historical current. He/she lives in the mass-media oriented "ink-colored town," where external attributes such as a "coup d'état of earrings," the "din of motorcycles," and the "soap opera of fashion show" play a major role. The concept of revolution, in his/her mind, belongs to a "faultless genre" of events, distinct from mundane chores. Nothing will come out of him/her until his/her jewelry is ripped off asunder and an "aphorism/In Japanese classics" is found. The author exclaims in despair:

What's wanted
Of you
And your neighbor
Is not you
But your devotion.

The commoners' preoccupation is with the kind of skill-oriented labor referred to with the image of deboning the fish. The dimension of their interests is small and provincial: "Japan will solve her own problems/A patchwork of the world atlas."

The characteristic aspect of a Japanese life—Tomioka

seems to indicate—is that "A contrived autumn shower falls" after these "meaningless sports." The melancholy autumn shower is a typical motif in traditional Japanese art. Revived in this modern context, the traditional emotionalism attempts to wash off political contentions. This shower "*gokurōsan ni mo*" (taking the trouble of) falls in this poem. The shower with this verbal modifier is no longer an accidental phenomenon but an artificial or a designed activity. A supernatural or human plotter, or even both, is implied. The linkage between the designed activity and natural phenomenon, indeed, is peculiar. The deliberate policies must have been made to appear natural. The state must be tinting its policies, in other words, with the ideology of patriotism and nationalism. It leads the public to believe in Japan's god-sent success. This traditional shower, therefore, ruins the Western pretense symbolized by curled hair, a blouse, a skirt, etc. . . . Behind this delicate operation are scholars. Observe how an "honorable Japanese" wife of a scholar submissively responds "Aye" and puts on her Western stockings. The two contradicting elements of spiritual tradition and materialistic Westernization do not seem to conflict in this housewife. This is why the public has difficulty annihilating the scholar. Unconsciously, but not rationally, the populace gradually becomes grouped together in a holistic notion of patriotism:

The "permanent" incident dragged on,
Before we knew,
Got into our system, allowing us no time to complain;
It is relevant only to the grand total of the fact
That we are forced to be here.

To the poetess, the patriotism contributes only to the realization that the Japanese people have physically been forced by natural and historical circumstances to share the same islands.

Tomioka finds the state undependable, for it switches its priorities back and forth—like "the science of recurring decimals"[4]—between the Western rationalism (imitation pavement) and the Japanese sentimentalism (our palm). At one point, one element is expanded; at another, it is destroyed. The basic rhythm this flipping back and forth follows is that of dixie music. The birthplace of this music, the United States, is Japan's Western model.

It is too embarrassing, for the poetess, to rank Japan among industrialized nations, unless the country's living conditions are greatly improved. If the commoners are to shore up the state's double-dealings, they "must at least buy a car" just to be Westernized, and cause some traffic accidents just to destroy the Westernization, possibly by turns, "keeping pace with dixie music."

The word "void" does not appear in "I Plough the Garden," but the basic concept is there. The drifting bubbles of moving water represent one aspect of the void. Water is Japan's best natural resource; it is shapeless and constantly moving; bubbles floating on top are still more evanescent; this fluidity symbolizes Japan's economic, political and cultural conditions. The state's mundane maneuvering of the public, and the public's blind and empty submission are effectively dramatized in the circus scene, in the allusions to the aloe and catheter. The title "I Plough the Garden," summarizes the sardonic choreography of the poem in which the poetess digs into the socio-politico-economic tradition (garden) of Japan. Her solution to the problem is for the public, including herself, symbolically to take a part in the "meaningless sports" in a negative way by buying a car and causing traffic accidents, for, she is only another citizen of her empty planet. ★

庭を耕す
天災と火災は
ゆく水のうたかたに流れて
われら固有名詞なき彼と彼女
ゆく水から岩魚(いわな)釣りあげ
手さばきよろしく骨をぬく
それぐらいしかうまいものとてなく
それぐらいしかこちとらにはあたらない
異国の文字で
どうやらこうやら得たこめつぶ
そのこめつぶへの手品も
はったりずくめの心配
いつボロを出すか分らない
天災と火災には

Opening lines of Niwa o tagayasu. *Courtesy T. Prindle.*

I PLOUGH THE GARDEN

Natural calamities and fires
Drift in the bubbles of a moving water
We are he and she without proper nouns.
We fish char from the moving water, and
Deftly remove its bones.
That's about the only tasty thing available;
That's about the only thing we have a share of.
The rice grains
Secured, by the skin of our teeth,
With the help of foreign scripture;
Even the gimmick of securing those rice grains.
Is a concern fraught with imposture.
No knowing when the fraud may be brought to light.
Esoteric incantations
For natural calamities and fires;
A pigpen out of the national school texts;
He and she in the pen
Pull out a math text
And practice addition:
Your salary,
My salary,
Always an addition.
Your salary,
My salary,
The answer is always the same.

What is the cause of the rocket flying in the sky?
It may be that
They bet, in a circus, with the entrance fees,
Hire a claque, and
Hail a storm of cheers:

4. One example of a recurring decimal would be: 5.156156. . . .

Not bad!
They submerge the whole world in the odor of the claque;
Cool him and her
In the liquid air made of powder snow,
And casually
Oust the two out of the galaxy.
He and she exclaim: it flew, it flew!
He and she exclaim: it's flying, it's flying!
You should work more overtime.
You'd better cut the expenses down:
Overtime to the hilt,
Cutting to the hilt,
Part-time work to the hilt,
The answer for the addition is always the same:
The constant human beings.

The claque and the costume,
The contrivance beyond reality.
The paraphernalia are real:
Reality in excess of reality.
Cheers to the thousand dollar actor!
Obdurate acting,
Obdurate pieces,
You, in your manner,
I, in my manner,
Borrow money and
Somehow manage having children.
A scholar friend of ours teaches us:
Dante was a man of enlightenment.
Quit consoling us!
I'm not kind enough to borrow money from you!
His son, Rousseau, is a tyrant.
His Emile,
His wife is an honorable Japanese maiden.
When he calls, "My wife,"
She responds, "Aye," and puts on her blue stockings.
When he calls, "My sister," her answer is "Fine."
The two people cry out:
Let's wipe him out
On our way home from the show.
The couple shout:
Not yet!

All the Sundays happen to fall on holidays.
If there were
One more deity,
We would have had
One more day off;
One more restless day.
Sundays are for regular meetings.
You, on Monday, Wednesday and Friday;
Me, on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday;
In charge of what?
Cooking rice, and the alarm clock,
Washing and cleaning.
Me, on Monday, Wednesday and Friday;
You, on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday;
In charge of what?
Sentry and contraception.
Calculation on Sundays,
Mathematics on Sundays.
Sunday is a resting day and for extra-company jobs.
Ah, ah, ah!
Exclamation marks!
An optimism, full of exclamation marks!
You are sneering
At my hypersensitivity,
At my amnesia,
And at this chap's serious look.
He admires but does not love women.
Ah, ah, ah!
Bothersome explanation!
A meeting full of exclamatory sentences.
The constant of exclamatory sentences.

A plant called aloe, I hear, is
Of virginal generation and parthenogenetic.
Disguising itself as an herb,
It functions as stomach medicine—
A devil for oppressed—
If grated on a grater,
And placed on the tongue,
Its outrage resembles sex.

No interest in subscribing to leading newspapers!
Our cues for thrillers come from local papers.
Don't act stuck up, you, the standard-bearer of good conscience!
If they are innocent,
Who, on earth, did it?
They only know.
Instead of proving your innocence,
Prove kindly the swine who did it.
Am I not right?
You,
Who's who, Who's who . . . ?

Hun, hun, hun, humn.
A summer goes like this.
And a family ascends to soprano.
The mother turns herself into a child,
In bitter reaction to her own child of early adolescence.
She, herself, takes off.
She opens the curtains of somebody's apartment,
And exposes her bare body to the afternoon moon.
You search for somebody's naked body,
Find the naked body,
And hide yourself.
In the meantime,
You do not have another you that discovers
You are not you at all.
You don't know her laziness.
You listen to a tango,
And insinuate that
With a glass of on-the-rocks,
With an outline,
With silence,
With another naked body,
Something called a revolution
Gets started somewhere,
Divorced from puerility.
You vouchsafe with conviction
That the revolution

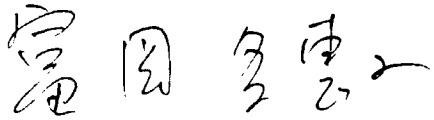
Belongs to a faultless genre.
What's wanted
Of you
And your neighbor
Is not you
But your devotion.

The print became an advertisement:
We have various tranquilizers
Which liberate you from uneasiness and tension.
The back cover of a general magazine.
Liberate?
To where?
What's the question?

Out into the ink-colored town!
Coup d'état of earrings;
We should rip off jewelry asunder,
And search for an aphorism
In Japanese classics.
Let's live briefly but meaningfully!
The din of motorcycles,
The soap opera of fashion show,
Japan will solve her own problems:
A patchwork of the world atlas;
We make a sculpture of the globe.
We have no oil but our water is good:
A romance of water,
A ballad of water,
A sonnet of water,
A Japanese ditty of water.

I found a nifty room.
My favorite miniature record player
Keeps playing while I wash my face.
I collapse, "Ah, exhausted,"
Gulp a cup of tea,
Dump a can of spinach
On a plate
And pleasantly complete my supper.
A bed on one side,
A desk and books on another,
A toilet on another.
There lives nextdoor a fellow that responds if called
But never shows up.

Having worked on the square root of their salaries,
The boy and the girl go
Out into the ink-colored town
With a hammer.
Their cute conversation gets on my nerves.
The steel frame of a factory that had gone out of business:
Its tall smokestack aspires to Heaven.
After a clandestine conference,
In an anteroom of flesh, they laud a being;
They get isolated in their usage of
Shovels,
Scoops,
Hammers.
They thrust the catheter that's been inserted into the slender island
Into the average population rate,
And barbecue the shish kebab on infrared rays.
I have a creeping suspicion that
Nobody knows
As to who helps
The surgery on their insect-like projection.
In fact,
Disrupting the precious tie with parents,
Going so far as to bring a tribute,
They manage to stain somebody's fingers with their own blood.
Catering a fragrant negative-picture,
They pursue quite so scurrilously,
A flower of perpetuity which radiates fragrant-olive gold.
After the meaningless sports,
A contrived autumn shower falls.
Yesterday's permanents
Ended up being drenched.
The "permanent" incident dragged on,
Before we knew,
Got into our system, allowing us no time to complain;
It is relevant only to the grand total of the fact
That we are forced to be here.
The shower
Which deflected my hair from the waves,
And ruined
My white blouse,
The only skirt I own,
And some underwear,
Is not fickle but too disingenuous
The art of radio-activity is undependable.
For the sake of the science of recurring decimals.
It expands and destroys by turns—
Keeping pace with dixie music—
The imitation pavement
And our palms on both hands.
No need to bother with them;
We, ourselves,
Are greatly embarrassed and troubled
Unless furnished with more than double our livelihood.
We must at least buy a new car
And cause some traffic accidents.



Tomioka Taeko's signature. Courtesy T. Prindle.

The Male Present Versus the Female Past: Historians and Japan's Ancient Female Emperors

by E. Patricia Tsurumi[1]

William H. Goetzmann's colorful portrayal of the "winning of the American West," *Exploration and Empire*, suggests that explorers' records tell us at least as much about the old world the explorer leaves as they do about the new world he or she encounters. The persuasive thesis of this fine book is "that explorers, as they go out into the unknown, are 'programmed' by the knowledge, values, and objectives of the civilized centers from which they depart. They are alert to discover evidence of the things they have been sent to find."[2] Throughout this encyclopedic account of nineteenth century explorers in Western America flash vivid images of cartographers reproducing prevailing but erroneous notions regarding North American geography, of artists documenting landscape and inhabitants through the eyes of European painters, of botanists and zoologists romantically classifying exotic species with "little, if any, idea of ecology or the relationship of the birds and animals to their environment and the corresponding life and food cycle."[3] The cultural tools these travelers brought with them did not always encourage accurate record-taking: map charting entered the realm of fictional geography and endless catalogs of plants and animals contributed little to scientific comprehension of the universe.

Historians—whatever their age or cultural center—are as much explorers as Goetzmann's nineteenth century travelers in the American West. Venturing into the unknown—their own past or that of another national or cultural group—they too are "programmed" by their cultural baggage. Discoveries of historical explorers are conditioned by what they expect to find as well as by the forests of raw data into which they stumble. This, of course, is but common sense. Yet while on one level contemporary historians readily accept this truism, awareness of it is often conspicuously absent from the practice of their craft. Frequently they are as heavily programmed as were the historical explorers whose investigations preceded their own.

There is nothing in the Chinese observations regarding Pimiku and Iyo or the Japanese chroniclers' exposition of the folk heroine, Jingū, that encourages the assumption that in early Japan the norm was a male emperor and females must therefore be intermediaries, as our experts so doggedly assume.

This paper focuses upon part of the programming of one group of historians—the scholars who have dedicated themselves to elucidation of Japan's ancient past. It is concerned with the guidance they have given us in the wilderness of Japanese political history from the end of the sixth century until the late eighth century, a period during which a full half of the occupants of the Japanese throne were female.

According to conventional Japanese chronology, the time between Suiko's accession in 592 and Shōtoku's death in 770 is divided into sixteen reigns, half of which featured female sovereigns. Since two of these women reigned twice, returning to the throne after abdication to rule under a different reign name than before, these eight sovereigns in reality numbered six individuals. For at least two centur-

1. A distorted, incomplete version of this essay appeared without my permission under the title of "Japan's Early Female Emperors" in *Historical Reflections/Réflexions Historiques* (Spring 1981). The term "female emperor" is preferred to "empress" because the latter is ambiguous—it can refer either to a reigning sovereign or to the spouse of an emperor. Since the first Japanese sovereign to be called emperor (*tennō*), a title borrowed from China, was female as was the first abdicated sovereign to be given the title Great Abdicated Emperor (*dajō tennō*), it is only fitting that these ancient rulers not be designated by a term which can also suggest they were only wives.

2. William H. Goetzmann, *Exploration and Empire, The Explorer and the Scientist in the Winning of the American West*, New York, 1972, p. 199. I am deeply indebted to Brian W. Dippie for bringing Goetzmann's work and that of Robin W. Winks to my attention.

3. Goetzmann, p. 323.

ies scholars—mostly Japanese although in recent times they have been joined by Westerners—have studied the lives and careers of these six, along with those of early male emperors and the prominent personages of both sexes who stride through the pages of the earliest extant Japanese chronicles which deal with "national" politics, the *Kojiki* and the *Nihongi*. Because even the most intelligent use of these chronicles as primary sources for historical research is full of problems and puzzles, the historians' studies have been enlivened by a variety of controversial interpretations. Although troublesome gaps in their comprehension of pre-ninth century Japan do exist and approaches to these do vary, specialists in ancient Japanese history probably know as much about most of these six women as they know about male contemporaries of the six. What have they told us about these early female emperors who reigned eight times, occupying the throne throughout approximately half of the 178 years between 592 and 770?

Regarding these rulers, the specialists' world of learned debate over textual interpretation and source reliability has bequeathed but two well-known legacies to the world of the non-specialist student and interested inquirer. The experts have given us the Dōkyō myth and the theory of the female sovereign as an intermediary holding the throne for a future male ruler. It is at this second legacy, the intermediary theory, that this paper is aimed.

While the life and times of one eighth-century emperor gave birth to the Dōkyō myth, our other inheritance from the brains of the experts is fashioned from material supposedly found in the study of all the early female emperors. Our ancient history experts tell us that Suiko's accession in 592 began the practice of an Empress-Consort (*kōgō*) of a male emperor ascending the throne after the death of her imperial spouse, in order to secure the throne for a descendant of that deceased male sovereign. That descendant was usually her son who was perhaps still a child or in danger of being challenged by another royal claimant to the throne.[4] Echoing the voice of his mentor, Inoue Mitsusada, G. Cameron Hurst explains: "An empress came to the throne simply to avoid succession troubles and ensure transmission of the succession to the proper person. Once the troubles had been settled—one of the claimants had died, for example, or a younger crown prince had come of age—then there was no longer any need for the empress to remain on the throne."[5] Hurst, like Inoue before him, claims that "An examination of all the female rulers in Japan in the period after historical records become reliable"[6] supports this theory. Thus an examination of the careers of our six female rulers from Suiko to Shōtoku is surely a reasonable way to test the validity of this claim.

Daughter of Emperor Kimmei (r. 539-571), Suiko was younger sister to Emperor Yōmei (r. 585-587) by the same mother. At age eighteen she became empress-consort to Emperor Bidatsu (r. 572-585). As empress-consort she was very active in politics. In her day the position of empress-consort was a very powerful one. This is illustrated by the tales of the semi-mythical, semi-historical figure, that great Empress-Consort Jingū who, without formally ascending the throne, was supposed to have ruled brilliantly from about 201-269. As Kishi Toshio has pointed out, the marvellous Jingū tales are certainly not all literally true, but they do reveal something of the importance of the political role of an empress-consort at the time they were first written down—which was during Suiko's reign.[7]

During the reign of her brother, Yōmei, which followed Bidatsu's death, Suiko continued to be a major force in state affairs. As is well known, when Soga no Umako killed the thirty-second emperor Sushun (r. 587-592) in 592, she came to the throne. Did she secure her deceased husband's succession through her descendant? No. As is also well known, Yōmei's son, her nephew, Prince Umayado, generally known to us by his posthumous title, Shōtoku Taishi, became her heir. Although Shōtoku Taishi died seven years before she did, Suiko did not appoint an heir to replace him. Does this sound like appropriate behavior for an intermediary who was holding the throne for someone else? Book XXIII of the *Nihongi* which relates the details of the reign of the next emperor, opens with a lengthy description of the confusion that Suiko's omission caused among the leading court figures who after her death were rushing about trying to choose the heir Suiko would have chosen.[8] Certainly the power of Soga Umako and the new leadership class he represented had much to do with Suiko's accession. And it is common knowledge that both Suiko—through her mother who was Shōtoku Taishi's grandmother—and Shōtoku Taishi were blood relations of the Soga.

Suiko was no passive figurehead. With domestic crises at home and problems with enemies in Korea, even the powerful Soga needed an especially commanding presence as sovereign. They needed an experienced politician who because of her combined religious and political background as empress-consort—a role which probably embodied ancient concepts of queenship harking back to the dawn of Japanese history—was an extremely charismatic figure. They needed a candidate held in such high regard that no one would oppose her selection, regardless of what was thought of her bloodthirsty Soga supporters. Ueda Masaaki,a bit of a maverick among our experts, has suggested the depiction of Suiko as an intermediary sovereign came after her time from writers who had later female rulers in mind and who were influenced by their readings of Chinese history and their knowledge of the Chinese practice of establishing a consort of a deceased emperor as regent of the realm.[9] Certainly she was no intermediary

4. See Inoue Mitsusada, *Kodai Kokka no kenkyū* (A Study of the Ancient State), Tokyo, 1965, pp. 223-228. According to Inoue, a distinguished advocate of the intermediary theory, the practice began with Suiko's accession, although Suiko's way had probably been paved by the widowed consort of Emperor Ankan (r. 531-535).

5. G. Cameron Hurst, *Insei: Abdicated Sovereigns in the Politics of Late Heian Japan, 1086-1185*, New York, 1976, p. 49.

6. Hurst, p. 49.

7. Kishi Toshio, *Nihon kodai seiji shi kenkyū* (Studies in the political history of Ancient Japan), Tokyo, 1966, pp. 243-244.

8. W.G. Aston, transl., *Nihongi*, Tokyo, 1972, pp. 157-164.

9. Ueda Masaaki, *Nihon no jotei* (Female emperors of Japan), Tokyo, 1973, p. 107. For an interesting account of empress dowagers as regents in Chinese history see Lien-Sheng Yan, "Female Rulers in Imperial China," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, vol. 23 (1960-1961), pp. 47-61.

sovereign.

After Suiko's successor, Emperor Jomei (r. 629-641), died in 641, his empress-consort, then aged forty-nine acceded and ruled for three years as Emperor Kōgyoku (r. 642-645). Kōgyoku had an outstanding reputation as a shaman, so the notion of an emperor as a religious as well as political leader who talked to the deities on behalf of her people was still significant. As Ueda Masaaki reminds us, these female shamans were not cloistered virgin-priestesses who acted as mediums but priestess-queens who ordered generals as well as prayed to gods. They often lived life lustily—indeed Jomei was Kōgyoku's second husband. But unlike Suiko before her, Kōgyoku was not a politically active sovereign. And unlike Jitō after her, she did not play a heavy role in state affairs after her abdication. Participation in the religious side of the emperor's duties took up more of her energies than state politics, which were dominated by the Soga clan. Ueda has suggested that she was the first female emperor who while carrying out the religious role of a female ruler was just a puppet politically.

Under pressure from powerful figures around her she gave up the throne to her younger brother, who became Emperor Kōtoku (r. 645-654) in 645. When she came back a decade later to reign again as Emperor Saimei (r. 655-661) at age sixty, she did so in order to alleviate the tension that had mounted after Kōtoku's succession and to clear the way for her son, Crown Prince Naka no Ōe. During her second reign this crown prince may have been the real power holder. Kōgyoku appears to have been the "classical" intermediary sovereign who held the throne for her son, the crown prince, whose formal accession as Emperor Tenji (r. 668-671) did not take place until 668.[10]

Our next female emperor, Jitō (r. 690-697), was also a deceased emperor's empress-consort; and also abdicated on behalf of an heir whose line she wanted to see continued. But the resemblance to Kōgyoku is entirely superficial. Unlike Kōgyoku/Saimei, Jitō was no one's puppet and always a political activist. When her husband acceded as Temmu (r. 673-686), twenty-nine year old Princess Uno became his empress-consort. The *Nihongi* tells us that from the begining of his reign she "assisted the Emperor in pacifying the Empire."[11] In the first year of his reign she "followed the Emperor when he took refuge in the Eastern provinces. She addressed the troops and mingled with the throne, until at length they together formed a plan by which several tens of thousands of fearless men were separately ordered to take up their posts in all the most defensible positions."[12]

In non-military affairs too, the future Emperor Jitō shared power with her reigning husband. For fourteen years Temmu left the high post of Great Minister vacant because he and his consort governed jointly. In fact Temmu and Jitō led a team of imperial princes, which made political decisions without consulting the Council of Nobles. In an age of imperial family politics, Empress-Consort Uno stood second to no one as imperial family politician. In 681 when the edict announcing the beginning of compilation of an important new body of law codes, the *Asuka no kyomihara ritsuryo*, was promulgated, Temmu and his consort addressed the assembled princes and ministers jointly, seated in the same seat as befitting individuals of equal status.[13] Five years later Temmu gave orders that "all matters of the Empire, without distinction of great and small, should be referred to the Empress-Consort and the Prince Imperial."[14] The Prince Imperial was of course Uno's son, Prince Kusanokabe, who had been made Crown Prince in 681.

When Temmu died in 686 this energetic consort took over his functions of her own accord without bothering to have the Council of Nobles install her as emperor. Cleverly she disposed of able Prince Ōtsu, whom she saw as an obstacle to her son Kusanokabe's succession. She relied heavily on her own abilities rather than upon the last will and testament of Temmu: she did not insist, for example, that the deceased emperor wanted her enthroned, although it was common for an incoming sovereign to do so. By her own political maneuvers she strengthened her position and that of her son, Crown Prince Kusanokabe. But when in 689 her beloved Kusanokabe died at the age of twenty-eight, did she retire? Calmly she saw the compilation of the *Asuka no kyomihara ritsuryo* finished and at the beginning of the following year, 690, she had herself formally enthroned as Emperor Jitō. After seven years of vigorous rule she abdicated in favor of Kusanokabe's son, who acceded as Emperor Mommu (r. 697-707). After abdication she remained an important force in the government sharing all control of state affairs with Mommu. In her later years she was called by the title, *dajō tennō*, Great Abdicated Emperor, the first abdicating sovereign to be granted this title.

She developed a very warm relationship with Princess Abe, a younger half-sister from the same father, Emperor Tenji. Since the mothers of Jitō and Abe were sisters, they shared the same maternal grandfather—perhaps this brought them closer than was usually the case of half-sisters seventeen years apart in age. The friendship was solidified by Abe's marriage to Jitō's beloved Kusanokabe, whom Abe bore a son. After Kusanokabe's death, Jitō was a great patron of Abe and her son, on whose behalf she abdicated in 697. He was fifteen at the time, and Jitō at fifty three years of age, maintained him in power. After Jitō's death five years later, Mommu's rule was threatened by bloody rebellion; voices claiming that Mommu's succession violated succession conventions in force from ancient times became louder and louder. The claims were false, but this is beside the point; more pertinent is that without the powerful Jitō around to protect him Mommu's position was shaky. Jitō was certainly interested in securing the succession of her son Kusanokabe's line. But her efforts in this direction were only one part of a larger, outstanding career as a stateswoman before and after as well as during her reign as the forty-first emperor.

When Mommu died in 707 in his twenty-sixth year, his mother Abe—emulating the great Jitō—on her own initia-

10. Ueda, pp. 117-124.
11. Aston, *Nihongi*, p. 383.
12. Aston, p. 382.
13. Aston, pp. 349-350.
14. Aston, p. 378.

tive declared herself emperor. The proclamation which formalized her enthronement as Emperor Gemmei (r. 707-715) announced that her accession was not only the will of Mommu and Jitō, it was also in accord with "the immutable law" of Tenji. Although there is much disagreement among scholars regarding the specific content of Tenji's immutable law, was Gemmei not perhaps invoking Emperor Tenji's authority because he had been her father? Could she be trying to suggest that as a descendant of Tenji she had some claim to the throne? Does this mean that a princess as well as a prince might conceivably advance such a claim?

Certainly she was interested in securing the throne for her grandson, Mommu's son, Prince Obito. But successfully doing so was not Emperor Gemmei's sole accomplishment. She was supported at her enthronement by Fujiwara Fubito, of the already powerful new Fujiwara clan because she was advancing the claim of the son of Mommu who happened to have a mother who was Fubito's daughter. Could there have been a trade-off between Fujiwara support and Gemmei's interest in Mommu's son, Obito? As a ruler she was fearless—military crises did not daunt her. After her abdication in 715 she remained an important figure in the highest councils of state. Her death in 721 destroyed an important balance of power in the imperial government—a balance maintained between two strong politicians, the Minister of the Left and *dajō tennō*, Gemmei.[15]

When she did abdicate in 715 it was not to enthrone the sickly Crown Prince Obito. At seventeen he was certainly old enough to succeed, but perhaps Gemmei thought that the way was not clear enough yet for him. His appointment as crown prince had met with opposition. Gemmei still had some work to do—demotions for the mother of Mommu's other two sons, for instance. Or perhaps Gemmei simply thought that her own beautiful, able and energetic daughter of thirty-six years would make a better monarch than Obito? At any rate when Gemmei abdicated she put this daughter on the throne as Emperor Genshō (r. 715-724), Japan's forty-fourth sovereign. The intermediary theory alone does not answer all questions about Gemmei's transfer of the throne to Genshō.

Meanwhile Fujiwara support for Fujiwara Fubito's grandson Obito grew ever stronger. Fujiwara advisors, attendants and tutors surrounded this crown prince. They managed to engineer his accession in 724 as Emperor Shōmu (r. 724-749). When Asukabehime, a wife of Shōmu who was also a daughter of Fubito bore the emperor a son, her brothers and father gleefully saw this baby named Japan's first infant crown prince. To their great sorrow this prince, whom they had carefully ensconced in a Fujiwara residence, died before he reached his first year. Since another spouse of Shōmu bore a son about the time of this child's death, Fujiwara Fubito's sons decided they must raise the rank of their little sister to that of empress-consort—a shocking thing to do since this position had always been reserved for princesses of the blood. Violently mowing down all opposition, they raised Asukabehime's rank in 729 with great fanfare, which included a change in the name of the era period. In order to justify this unheard-of departure from precedent, they made tortuous claims that the consort of Emperor Nintoku in the fourth century had not been of royal blood—but such apologetics were too awkward for anybody at court to swallow. They also made extravagant claims for the exceptional qualities supposedly possessed by their sister, who now became known as Empress-Consort Kōmyō. Much was made of the fact that the new consort's mother had been rewarded by Gemmei for loyal service. Because of this, Gemmei's name was invoked to drum up support for the appointment which, as everyone knew, had been achieved through brute Fujiwara force.

The next Fujiwara-initiated event at court also departed from all previous precedent: their protege, Shōmu, made Kōmyō's surviving offspring, a twenty-one year old daughter, Japan's first crown princess. Interestingly this took place after the epidemics of 737 had killed off four powerful Fujiwara leaders. Other clans than the Fujiwara also showed themselves willing to support the unprecedented choice of a young woman as heir to the throne. The choice appeared to have shocked people far less than her non-royal mother's rise to rank of empress-consort had done. In 740 the new heir, by means of a ceremonial ritual which linked females with sacerdotal and secular rule, took the initiative to show the assembled nobles that she meant to accede. She was no temporary heir to be replaced by another before it was time to accede. Indeed, Shōmu, in accord with the will of Empress-Consort Kōmyō, gave up the throne to this crown princess nine years later. Shōmu's appointment to the post of *dajō tennō* was accompanied by Kōmyō's promotion to *kōtaigō*, Great Retired Empress-Consort, a post from which she expanded her political influence, helping her Fujiwara relatives attain high rank and position. The new Emperor Kōken (r. 749-758) was a vigorous ruler with a mind of her own, but Fujiwara power, especially in the person of Fujiwara Nakamarō, Chief of the Great Retired Empress-Consort's office, was growing strong again too. The Great Retired Empress-Consort, who was Nakamarō's aunt, moved him from important post to important post until he gained admittance to the highest councils of state. In 756 Shōmu, in a deathbed wish, named a crown prince for Kōken, but the promise to uphold this choice was violated within a year. Fujiwara Nakamarō forced this prince to resign and replaced him with his own candidate, a prince with in-law links to Nakamarō's family. Two years later Nakamarō was able to get Kōken to resign in favor of this prince, who became the ill-fated Emperor Junnin (r. 758-764).

Perhaps Nakamarō was able to persuade Kōken to abdicate because she was ill—it was during her illness that she met the learned Buddhist priest, Dōkyō, a medical authority called in to treat her illness. Restored to health, *dajō tennō* Kōken was more politically active than the emperor himself. As Fujiwara Nakamarō had been pushed by the Great Retired Empress-Consort, so Dōkyō was promoted by her daughter, Great Abdicated Emperor Kōken. In 762 Kōken appeared to have lost all patience with Emperor Junnin and seemingly with the power behind him, Fujiwara Nakamarō. Before the nobles she had invited to court, she formally chastized the reigning emperor. In an edict she attacked his very legitimacy, arguing that unlike herself he was not in direct succession from Prince Kusano-

15. Ueda, p. 176.

kabe whose imperial line, according to her, was the true one. Her edict contained the announcement that henceforth only minor ceremonies and functions would be carried out by the reigning sovereign. She, the Great Abdicated Emperor, was taking back into her own hands all important affairs of state.

Such bold action threatened even the mighty Fujiwara Nakamarō. His meteoric rise, had, of course, been supported by an alliance that had included Kōken as well as her mother and his political puppet, the Emperor Junnin. In 764 Nakamarō seized the emperor's seal and appeared about to replace Junnin with another candidate for the throne, but Kōken moved even more quickly. Getting wind of the plot, she sent forces to capture Nakamarō and his wife, who were banished, and killed. Equally quickly she deposed unfortunate Junnin and came back to the throne again, this time as Emperor Shōtoku (r. 764-770).

There is no question that during her second reign she awarded prestige and position to her religious mentor, Dōkyō, and appeared to have been prepared to see Dōkyō occupy the throne. Yet the political, social, and cultural leaders of 770 were not as outraged by this unprecedented movement of events as we, at first glance, might think. By 770 they were prepared for this as they had never been prepared before. In earlier times the position of empress-consort was as religiously revered and politically crucial as the position of emperor. Consorts no less than emperors had always been of royal blood. Yet the Fujiwara had already achieved for Kōken's own non-royal mother the very goal Kōken wanted for Dōkyō. Fujiwara Nakamarō had also helped pave the way of Dōkyō's ambitions by ensuring that posthumously at least—in the way their graves were honored—Fujiwara were treated as equals of the emperor of the land.[16] In addition, Dōkyō may have represented a new push for power on the part of rising forces in the countryside. And, thanks to steadily increasing numbers of Korean immigrants who had settled in Japan, among new intellectual currents from the East Asian mainland the Chinese concept of an emperor receiving a heavenly mandate—which went to a contender for rule on the basis of virtue rather than pedigree—was gaining acceptance in Japanese leadership circles.[17] However, as noted at the beginning of this essay, the complexities of the Dōkyō myth will not be analyzed here. One can only note in passing that the challenge to the imperial line posed by Dōkyō cannot be attributed solely or even chiefly to the whims of a doting, love-sick female sovereign.[18]

Shōmu's career reminds us that female emperors did not monopolize abdication in order to secure a successor and Junnin's reminds us that an emperor need not be female in order to be a political puppet. The two reigns of Kōken/Shōtoku blast sky high the shaky claims that the intermediary theory applies to all the female rulers in Japan in the period after historical records become reliable." As should be clear by now, the intermediary theory fits only the case of Kyōgoku/Saimei neatly. All other fits are imperfect at best; sometimes they are extremely sloppy, sometimes they are impossible to wear at all. This theory may help explain some of the functions our eight female sovereigns performed but certainly not all of their functions as rulers.

Why, then, have our learned experts so tenaciously clung to this hopelessly one-dimensional theory to explain the presence of women on the throne? All hints we have about the hazy pre-historical past give an even greater role to dominant female leadership than does open-minded study of early historical times. There is nothing in the Chinese observations regarding Pimiku and Iyo or the Japanese chroniclers' exposition of the folk heroine, Jingū, that encourages the assumption that in early Japan the norm was a male emperor and females must therefore be intermediaries, as our experts so doggedly assume.[19] Why have they concentrated so single-mindedly on this particular track to the exclusion of all other lines of inquiry? I do not know. I know only that open minds are better than closed minds—even for experts—and that historians, like other explorers, bring more cultural baggage to scientific inquiry than we care to admit.

The following answer to this question is not mine; it comes from that creative destroyer of groundless assumptions, the great ethnologist, pre-historian,and meta-historian, Takamure Itsue (1894-1964). She answers the question regarding our experts' tenacity with a rhetorical one of her own: "Is it not," she suggests, "because for several hundred years from the time of the scholars of the Edo period [1600-1868] down to that of the progressive scholars of our own day, the historians have always been male?"[20] It is not the intention here to challenge a one-dimensional theory with a one-dimensional answer. Takamure Itsue's valuable work is only now receiving some of the attention it deserves because pendulums regulating the "knowledge, values, and objectives of the civilized centers" of explorer-historians have begun to swing in new directions. In a sense Takamure Itsue is also "programmed" by her cultural center—even though hers is a program of rejection of mainstream values and objectives. Yet if her "counter-programming" encourages critical reexamination of the "programming" of mainstream scholarship, its insights should not be rejected. Culturally programmed the explorer-historian may inevitably be, but as Robin W. Winks has suggested in his delightful *The Historian as Detective* the scholar as sleuth must try to get beyond some of the programming. With a characteristically generous attribution to someone else, Winks reminds us: "History is, as James Malin once remarked, like nailing jelly to the wall. But someone must keep trying."[21] ★

16. Kishi, pp. 253-254. Kishi views this honor to Fujiwara graves as direct encouragement to Dōkyō's ambitions.

17. Ueda, pp. 203-208.

18. Ueda, pp. 197-198, persuasively argues that the Dōkyō-Kōken relationship was no sordid, lustful affair. He sees Kōken's long attachment as rooted in respect and love for Dōkyō's learning. She was, in this view, attracted to his knowledge and intellectual abilities. Ueda suggests the popular portrait of Dōkyō as a charming, dashing, priestly smoothie was quite false.

19. See Katayama Shigeo, *Nihon kodai seijishi no kenkyū* (Studies on the political history of ancient Japan), Tokyo, 1959, p. 375 for a typical example of the casual way the unsupported assumption about male sovereigns as the norm is slipped into passages of the specialists' work.

20. Takamure Itsue, *Josei no rekishi*, I, Tokyo, 1972, p. 261.

21. Robin W. Winks, *The Historian as Detective*, New York, 1970, p. 543.

Review

POLITICAL WOMEN IN JAPAN: THE SEARCH FOR A PLACE IN POLITICAL LIFE, Susan J. Pharr, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981,

By Roger W. Bowen

There are not very many "political women" in Japan, according to Susan Pharr, but she has written a book about one hundred of them anyway. Pharr writes on the optimistic assumption that her 100 political women are "agents of change" who now and in the future will "show others the way" (14). From a thorough analysis of a highly selective and skewed sample which she took over ten years ago, she makes the prediction that "women's political rights, planted late in unfriendly soil by foreigners who did not fully understand local conditions [i.e., the Occupation]," not only can and will "flourish in Japan," but "by implication" will eventually "flourish outside the original suffrage states." Her optimism in this regards extends even to the Islamic states.

Pharr's unrealism stems from a number of serious, interrelated problems attending her methodology, her mode of analysis, and her ideological bias. These problems combine to force her to dismiss competing interpretations and to ignore totally fundamental aspects of social dynamics in Japan which directly bear on the issues of women in politics and political equality for women, though the latter seems to be of little interest to her.

Pharr's thesis is a product of her methodology and her methodology is shaped by the conservative mode of analysis she employs. She began her research in 1970-71 when the "theory" of structural-functionalism still enjoyed some credibility in the so-called behavioral sciences. The theory itself rests on the politically conservative assumption that the status quo is good, that a social structure which functions is ipso facto worth retaining. Change, whether political, social, or economic, is (or should be) gradual, rational and reformist in order to do minimum damage to an idealized systemic equilibrium. The proponents of this "theory" of social stasis include Talcott Parsons, Thomas Merton and to a lesser extent political psychologists like Robert Lifton. The focus of their analyses of the social system is the individual who is conceptualized as a free actor engaged in socially meaningful behavior for the primary purpose of advancing his/her own special interests. In pluralist society, the individual attempts need-gratification by freely participating in particular groups which best represent his/her special interests; participation is voluntary, hence the changes that the group manages to effect are rooted in political voluntarism.

The political system and its underlying value structure is not questioned by volunteer politicos—indeed, their reformist approach is itself an unstated endorsement of the legitimacy of the system. Moreover, political voluntarism takes place in splendid isolation of other parts of the social system: a movement of women urging the state to extend the rights of women, in this view, has no connection with, for example, labor movements seeking recognition of their rights or outcaste groups struggling for theirs, and so on. That these different sorts of social movements might emanate from inequalities intrinsic to the system, especially in a capitalist system that is buttressed by traditional cultural forces, is not seriously considered in the structural-functional behavioralist approach.

And so it is with Pharr. She ignores systemic inequalities in favor of treating political volunteer women in terms of "role-redefinition," "avoidance behavior," "psychological predispositions," "compartmentalization," and "role strain." Such terms, she alleges, serve as *explanations* (rather than as *descriptions* which they are) of the *individual* woman's attitudes *and* behavior which the writer mechanically links through the selfsame concepts. Her approach focuses exclusively on the individual and therefore takes no account of *concrete* political realities such as who has power, how it is held, who benefits, and what social consequences it has. Such questions in her view appear to be entirely separable from the question of how an individual's attitudes are translated into political behavior. In this sense, her approach, like that of most behavioralists, is profoundly apolitical.

Why Pharr adopted an apolitical approach to study political women seems clear enough. She wrote the book in two stages, each separated by a decade. The first stage she completed around 1970 when she finished formulating a research plan based on the social science jargon of behavioralists of the fifties and sixties; her use of sources makes this clear. It appears that her intellectual investment in this approach was sufficiently strong that by the time she

began to write up her findings, apparently in the late seventies, she was not prepared seriously to entertain more critical approaches to the women's movement that were written in the interim. She makes reference to the newer approaches (referring to them as "structural determinists") only at the beginning and end of the book, but leaves it at that.

With research design in hand already by 1971, Pharr embarked on an ingenious and highly courageous course to gather her sample of 100 political women. (See Appendix A, esp. pp. 187-92.) Her sample, as she readily acknowledges, was not randomly taken but instead evolved out of a highly fixed situation. As she says, the sample is skewed "in the direction of women who strongly identified with a political role rather than toward women who were less sure about their place in the political world" (191). Pharr makes a virtue out of this liability by stating she is concerned only with exceptionally committed political women activists, but on the faulty assumption that they are pioneers "smoothing the way" (184) for the uncommitted.

As a consequence, what we get is a number of individual biographies (about eight in all from her sample of 100 women) representing one of the three main types that Pharr reduces her sample to include: Neotraditionalists, New Women, and Radical Egalitarians. Pharr apparently assumes that the reader will accept the case studies as representative of the entire sample. Whether they are or not, each case is fascinating and very skillfully treated.

Briefly, the "Neotraditionalists" are women whose political concerns are extensions of, and stem from traditional obligations to husbands, fathers, family, and the like. Neotraditional women have redefined their traditional role of wife/mother/domestic servant to accomodate a presumed social superior. Neotraditionalists do not believe in full economic and social equality for women, and despite Pharr's admission that this view "predominates in Japan today" (12), she includes only twenty such women in her sample.

The "New Women" represent "a subtle change from the Neotraditional perspective." In Pharr's words,

> *New Women accepted the traditional assumption that the domestic role should be central to their lives as women, but in what is a major change in attitude, they held at the same time that women should be able to engage in numerous other activities not relating to the homemaker role (46).*

The New Women make up a full sixty percent of her sample although it remains unclear to me why they should be so overrepresented.

Finally, twenty percent (twenty women) of her sample is composed of Radical Egalitarians, militant feminists who remain "highly marginal" in Japanese society. One of the most interesting case studies is of one such feminist (Suzuki Fumiko, 66-72), a member of the Red Army. A fascinating contrast is Masuda Yoko (106-09) who is a Neotraditionalist nonetheless involved in the radical Revolutionary Faction (*Kakumaru-ha*).

The distinctions between these three types of political women, Pharr's claims notwithstanding, are not terribly important in the overall framework of the book. They figure prominently only in Chapter 3 ("Outcome of Gender-Role Socialization") and in the first half of Chapter 5 ("Becoming Politically Active"). Pharr's real emphasis is on why *all* of her 100 women, regardless of type, get involved in politics. The psychology of politicization, not politics itself, is Pharr's chief concern. Why, then, the distinction between the three types? An obvious reason seems to be the symmetry (20-60-20), or rather, the sense of symmetry gained from what would otherwise appear as a very biased sample. There is also an implied sense of progressive development of women's political consciousness in these distinctions, whereby with the passage of time women change from Neotraditionalists to New Women to Radical Egalitarians, though this is not demonstrated. Pharr's own explanation for the distinctions is that each represents an "alternative ideology of woman's role," yet the obvious problem with this is that the ideological content of each type, let alone the material or social basis of each, is not discussed. Pharr is interested in mind, not matter, and the price her analysis pays for this Cartesian dualism is high.

Part of the price includes truisms and tautologies in explaining the psychology of "role-redefinition." For example, "A *new* view of woman's role that challenges the prevailing definition is a *precondition* for the entry of most women activists into politics" (75, emphasis mine). What does this mean? All too simply, the traditional or prevailing definition of a woman's role cannot be challenged without first having a "new view" of the woman's role; something new is needed to challenge something old. Whence comes this "new view"? Pharr lets the answer ride atop the term "precondition" whereas reason would suggest a more concrete notion of the new emerging out of a *reaction* to the old as women become increasingly important in an expanding capitalist economy. Similarly, Pharr states that "all *political* people have a *psychological predisposition* to participate in *politics* . . ." (75, emphasis mine). In other words, political people like to participate in politics. What else is new? She says much the same earlier on when she identifies an "essential finding"; "Some degree of gender-role change, then, was an essential precondition for their [political women] later activism" (12). Again, all too simply she means that in a society traditionally dominated by men, when women act like men, i.e., participate in politics, then gender-role change occurs.

Pharr offers such truisms in place of concrete social analysis. Her different types of political women are all psyche, cut adrift from the social moorings of Japanese society. The familiar social-psychological dynamics of groupism, *amaeru*, and moral relativism—thoroughly treated by Takie Lebra and Chie Nakane, for example—which can in a limited way help explain social discrimination against women in Japanese society are either ignored or too quickly brushed aside. Pharr's discussion on pages 131-33, for instance, where she psychologizes about the importance of mother-daughter relationships in "role experimentation" entirely omits reference to *amaeru* as an explanation of the mother's tendency to indulge the daughter's political activism. Pharr hints of the importance of this concept on p. 110, but quickly dismisses it in favor of a "sociological explanation" that finds a mother's "extradordinary tolerance" of daughter's activism "a sign of a subtle dynamic in operation"; but the essence of the subtlety as an outcome of *amaeru* is altogether ignored.

Pharr's explanation for maternal indulgence of the daughter's political activism rests on the *assumption* that "in a postwar world in which new freedoms and possibilities have opened up to women, [mothers] may feel a certain distant longing for experiences they can never [why?] have, for opportunities available to young women of today that came too late in their own lives" (132). In other words, Japanese mothers vicariously live political lives through their daughters' political activities. This might be so but since Pharr never interviewed the mothers of political activists, she has only the self-justifying perception of the daughters to go on.

But more to the point, what exactly are these "new freedoms and possibilities" for young political women in Japan? Pharr's nonanswer to this question goes to the heart of the book's failings. Pharr says they are "dating, premarital sex, educational or job opportunities, travel abroad, or active political participation" (132).

No doubt, young women today are freer to date and enjoy sex before marriage than in the past (though we must imagine that these are not *new* freedoms, but very old ones that are today *less* frequently subjected to public censure), and they also no doubt are able to travel more freely to more places than in the past, but exactly what does this have to do with politics or the public's acceptance of women into the political process? Not much, I would argue, and even further, such activities simply represent *social freedoms* granted in the absence of real *political equality*.

It is Pharr's other so-called "new freedoms" that most directly address the issue of women in politics: education or job opportunities and active political participation. It is important to recognize that Pharr only asserts the existence of these freedoms, she does not document their existence, a luxury she possibly permits herself since she is dealing with a "laboratory" rather than with a real society.

In the real society which Japanese women must endure, young women, the very age group Pharr discusses, have the highest suicide rate in the world (Lebra, et al., *Women in Changing Japan*). A 1979 Prime Minister's Office poll shows 23% of all Japanese women would not marry *if* they could be economically independent. But economic independence is hard, if not impossible, in a society where women earn an average monthly salary that is 54.9% of that of men; where wage differentials between the sexes is widening, not narrowing; where in only 6.3% of all businesses can women expect maternity leave; where 38.7% of all female workers bearing children were forced into retirement by their companies, where only 0.3% of women working for big business and government held managerial positions; where 95% of 500 corporate headquarters polled in Tokyo and Osaka stated that the qualities they most looked for in women employees were "cheerfulness and obedience"; and where in a 1980 opinion poll, 33.4% of all women wished they could be reborn as men!

The political realities for women in Japan are no less sobering in effect. In 1977 a Woman's Party was created by feminists in order to contest seats in the Upper House election; the party received 0.4% of the national vote and not one candidate was elected to office. Those women who have been elected to national office in the past have usually been either conservative Liberal-Democratic Party (LDP) *tarento* (talent, e.g., movie star) candidates or nominees of the *slightly* more liberationist-minded Japan Communist Party. These are facts that Pharr sidesteps in favor of dwelling on the high voting rate of women in Japan which she takes as an index of rising political consciousness. Pharr does not say which party Japaneses women tend to support, however. The facts are, according to the polling company Jiji Tsushinsha (in its 1981 *Sengō Nihon no seitō to naikaku*), that Japanese women overwhelmingly and consistently support the conservative LDP at election time; this has been the case at least since 1960. Women in Japan vote for the very male chauvinist candidates who least care for women's rights issues. A more in-depth focus by Pharr on the Neotraditionalists might have shown this.

But Pharr does not discuss such dismal realities and does not go very far toward providing clues as to the reasons for them. She has in fact eschewed politics for psychology and possibly the psychology of the wrong women at that. Her book on political women is far, far away from the realities of women in politics in Japan today.★

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