

FEA
301.34
M145

SEADAG PAPERS

ON PROBLEMS OF DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

The Urbanization Process: Western Theory and...

FEA

301.34 Southeast Asia Development Advisory Group
M145 (SEADAG).

The Urbanization Process: Western Theory and
Southeast Asian Experience. T.G. McGee.
Mar. 1969.

23 p.

Bibliography: p. 19-23.

Not to be quoted without permission.

1. Urbanization - FEA. 2. Rural-urban migration - FEA.
3. Social change - FEA. I. McGee, T.G. II. Title.

SOUTHEAST ASIA DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY GROUP

PNAB1058
ISN 71781
Southeast Asia Development Advisory Group

THE ASIA SOCIETY, 112 EAST 64th STREET, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10021

Number Fifty-nine

THE URBANIZATION PROCESS:
WESTERN THEORY AND
SOUTHEAST ASIAN EXPERIENCE

by T. G. McGee

59

A.I.D.
Reference Center
Room 1656 NS

T. G. McGee
University of Hong Kong

24 March, 1969

*This paper was presented at a meeting of the SEADAG
Urban Development Seminar at the East-West Center,
Honolulu, on March 24-25, 1969. [REDACTED]*

*This paper, furthermore, is intended only to represent
the views and conclusions of the author.*

11

THE URBANIZATION PROCESS:

WESTERN THEORY AND SOUTHEAST ASIAN EXPERIENCE

by T. G. McGee

It is well nigh univervally agreed by men of all parties....that it is deeply to be deplored that the people should continue to stream into the already over-crowded cities, and should thus further deplete the country districts.

Ebenezer Howard, 1902.

INTRODUCTION

To convene a conference* with the specific theme of evaluating the relationship between city and countryside, not only in the tightly-packed urban factory we call Hong Kong but in the broader regional area of Southeast Asia, is to resume a debate which occurred in Western Europe and the United States during their periods of rapid urban expansion. Admittedly at times it was a rather one-sided debate, for the visionaries (whose viewpoint is well exemplified in the quotation which introduces this paper) attacking the city as an inadequate form of human settlement, were most articulate and persuasive. The defenders of the city were less concerned with words; they were too busy building cities and making money. The latter group, of course, won the debate not by logic, not by the moral correctness of their position, but simply because their cities still stand.

It seems that much the same debate is being waged in Asia today. As the cities, particularly the great primate cities, grow larger, the outcry against them grows in volume. Hear Levi-Strauss' poetic cry of anguish concerning Calcutta:

...Filth, promiscuity, disorder, physical contact; ruins, shatks, excrement*, mud; body moistures, animal droppings, urine, purulence,

* This paper was originally presented at the Conference on Development and Conservation of the Countryside held at the University of Hong Kong, March 1969. It will be published in the Proceedings of that Conference edited by Jon A. Prescott

secretions, suppuration--everything that urban life is organized to defend us against, everything we loathe, everything we protect ourselves against at great cost--all these by-products of cohabitation never here impose a limit on its spread. On the contrary, they constitute the natural setting which the town must have if it is to thrive. (Levi-Strauss, C. , 1962:3)

It is tempting to say that Asia is involved in a painful process of urban revolution identical to that characterizing the Western world. It is also tempting to say that some advantages of the contemporary world--improved technology and greater government participation and control--together with the knowledge of the past, might be invoked to ease the process.

But first it is important to establish that the urbanization process in Asia is as customarily assumed, indeed the same as that which characterized the Western world. In 1964 Leonard Reissman summed up what may be regarded as this conventional viewpoint:

The urban process has begun in the rural and undeveloped countries of the world. From what is now known about it, that process of urbanization is strikingly close to the lines followed in the West a century and a half before. (Reissman, L. , 1964:153)

This paper explores the accuracy of this assertion in the context of Southeast Asia. First, the major features of the urbanization process in the West and the theories that have emerged out of this experience are briefly considered. Second, the contemporary urban process in Southeast Asia is outlined, and the validity of Western-based urban theory as an explanatory conceptual framework is evaluated. Finally, the implications of this investigation are considered with respect to a new theoretical framework.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE URBANIZATION PROCESS IN THE WEST.¹

There is by now common agreement that the term "urbanization process" is a concept which urbanologists may manipulate in many ways to incorporate their particular viewpoints. The "urbanization process" for instance may be simply defined as "the growth of cities" or more grandly designated as a process of "societal change." Lampard's definition of the urbanization process as "...a way of ordering a population to attain a certain level of subsistence and security in a given environment," (Lampard, E. , 1965:521) is perhaps a little broad, but it does carry the main conceptual meaning of a spatial re-

¹ The term "West" may appear geographically confusing. However, it is now common currency in the language of the social sciences. I use it in the same sense as Reissman, to mean the high per capita income societies of Western Europe and the United States.

organization of society.

Whatever the debates on the definition of the urbanization process, there is general agreement on the measure of its end product--the urbanization level--which is generally assumed to be the proportion of the total population of a country (or any designated statistical unit) resident in urban places.² Thus, an increase in the level of urbanization is the symptom of the successful operation of the urbanization process.

Kingsley Davis has described the features of this change of level of urbanization in the West as typically represented by a curve in the shape of an attenuated "S". He describes it as follows:

Starting from the bottom of the S, the first bend tends to come early and to be followed by a long attenuation. In the United Kingdom, for instance, the swiftest rise in the proportion of people living in cities of 100,000 or larger occurred from 1811 to 1851. In the U.S. it occurred from 1820 to 1890, in Greece from 1879 to 1921. As the proportion climbs above 50 per cent the curve begins to flatten out; it falters, or even declines, when the proportion urban has reached about 75 per cent. In the United Kingdom, one of the world's most urban countries, the proportion was slightly higher in 1926 (78.7 per cent) than in 1961 (78.3 per cent).
(Davis, K., 1967:17)

It must be clear, however, that this attenuated S simply charts the end-product of the urbanization process. What is important with respect to the comparative experience of the Southeast Asian nations, are the components of the process. Broadly speaking, it is possible to delineate three main facets of the urbanization process grouped into demographic, economic, and social aspects. Davis indicates that the demographic manner in which cities grow may incorporate any combination of the following:

- (1) The reclassification into "urban" of settlements previously classified as "rural";
- (2) the natural increase of urban place populations; and
- (3) the shift of populations from non-urban to urban areas.

In the history of Western urbanization, it would appear that the shift of population from rural to urban areas during the initial period of rapid city growth was the largest contributor to city place increase since it is argued that natural increase was much lower in the cities than in the countryside

² It must be admitted that there is considerable disagreement over the definition of "urban places." There is a wide variety in country to country definitions, urban places sometimes appearing to be defined on the basis of "political whimsy" rather than reality. Many governmental authorities, prompted by the United Nations, are moving towards an acceptable upper limit of urban concentrations of 100,000 population or more as a basis of definition. (See Davis, K., 1959)

principally due to higher mortality rates in the cities.³

To understand why this rural-urban migration occurred, one must evaluate the economic facets of the urbanization process. The principal economic symptom of this process was the shift from agricultural to non-agricultural occupations. Once again, the historical experience of the West was that this process, while it occurred at varying rates from country to country, was one of the main reasons for the increase in productivity. Davis has explained the reasons for this structural shift as follows:

The reason was that the rise in technological enhancement of human productivity, together with certain constant factors, rewarded urban concentration. One of the constant factors was that agriculture uses land as its prime instrument of production and hence spreads out people who are engaged in it, whereas manufacturing, commerce and services use land only as a site. Moreover, the demand for agricultural products is less elastic than the demand for services and manufactures. As productivity grows, services and manufactures can absorb more manpower by paying higher wages. Since non-agricultural activities can use land simply as a site, they can locate near one another (in towns and cities) and thus minimize the friction of space inevitably involved in the division of labour. At the same time, as agricultural technology is improved, capital costs in farming rise and manpower becomes not only less needed but also economically more burdensome. A substantial portion of the agricultural population is therefore sufficiently disadvantaged, in relative terms, to be attracted by higher wages in other sectors. (Davis, K., 1967:21)

Thus if the simple "push-pull" framework of motivation for migration is accepted, it seems clear that the "pull" factors of increasing opportunities for employment in the new industrial cities and large towns were far more important than any "push" factors such as the decline of agricultural employment opportunities.⁴

The sum total of this economic revolution, often more popularly labelled "The Industrial Revolution" (See Ayres, C. E., 1952:62-93 for one of the clearest expositions of the Industrial Revolution) was the rise in the level of economic development in Western societies. Hence urbanization in

³ I am aware of the controversy which has been waged in historical demography over the relative contribution of births and mortality to natural increase during the industrial revolution, particularly in England; but as yet it appears unresolved. (See Habakkuk, H. J., 1953; Krause, J. T., 1958 and 1959; and McKeown, I., and Brown, R. G., 1955)

⁴ Evidence for this claim can be found in Redford, A., 1926; Smelser, N. J., 1959; Ravenstein, E. G., 1885 and 1889; Saville, J., 1957; Hagerstrand, T., 1957; Pred, A., 1962; and Pickney, D. H., 1953.

the West has come to be understood in terms of its connection with economic growth. Indeed, the growth of cities is now generally regarded as being a necessary part of economic development.

Finally, it is argued, the urbanization process in the West was responsible for radical social change. Reissman's words sum up this interpretation of the impact of the urban revolution on Western society.

Urbanization is social change on a vast scale. It means deep and irrevocable changes that alter all sectors of a society....Apparently the process is irreversible once begun. The impetus of urbanization upon society is such that society gives way to urban institutions, urban institutions and urban demands. (Reissman, L., 1964:154)

Virtually no areas of human existence escaped this change in the Western view. The family became smaller, religion lost its influential position, new class structures were created. An entirely new mode of life emerged--the urban way of life. The city created modern man. Urban society and national society became synonymous.⁵

THEORIES EMERGING FROM THE URBANIZATION EXPERIENCE OF THE WEST

This brief resume of the principal features of the urbanization process in the industrialized nations of the West now needs to be looked at in terms of the theories which have emerged, based on the Western urbanization experience. Their importance cannot be underestimated for it is true to say that some of these theories have come to dominate social science in the Anglo-Saxon world. Of even more importance is the fact that these theoretical preconceptions underlie much of the analysis and planning occurring in Asian cities today.

First, let us consider the major demographic theory that has emerged out of the experience of the urbanization process in the West. This is the theory of the demographic transition. Broadly it states that the pattern of population growth in the West may be divided into three stages. The first stage, "the preindustrial phase," characterized by high birth, death, and infant mortality rates led to a relatively young, slowly-growing, and small population. Industrialization and urbanization introduced a second phase labelled by Petersen "the early Western population type" when, because mortality was reduced and the birth rate remained high, the population increased rapidly. Finally, this phase merged into a stage of population growth cha-

⁵ Because of the inexigencies of space, I am simply condensing many versions of what actually happened to Western societies into one paragraph. An excellent review of these changes may be found in Sorokin, Pitirim and Zimmerman, C. C., 1929.

acterized by relatively low birth rates, very low infant mortality rates, and low mortality rates leading to a relatively stable and older population. (See Petersen, W., 1961:11-14 for a fuller discussion of this pattern.)

From the point of view of this paper, it is not necessary to consider the fact that historical demography has rendered certain facets of the theory suspect; but it is important to consider what variables are said to have determined this particular sequence of demographic change. The two most significant factors are (1) technologies of birth and death control, and (2) the socio-cultural system of the societies undergoing transition. The important point here is that while mortality patterns are directly affected by the technology of death control, the widespread adoption of birth control is affected by the prevailing values of a particular society. (See Abu-Lughod, J., 1964:476-490 for an excellent discussion of this question.)

It is with respect to this latter variable that the urban way of life is said to have been a major cause of the decline in fertility. Hauser sums up this common view as follows:

The basic changes in the way of life and value systems in the development of Western cities and urbanization have resulted in significant declines in birth rates....the fact is that the urban way of life in the West has produced great declines in fertility to match the gains in mortality and bring about a new equilibrium in population growth. (Hauser, P., 1957:83)

It is a comforting theoretical position to assume that the growth of urbanization in Asia, where the rapid rates of population growth appear to bog down economic development, might also result in a similar decline in fertility.

A second body of theory concerned with economic growth is based upon the analysis of the urbanization process in the West. It assumes that "...cities have, on the whole, exercised a generative function on real income..." (Hoselitz, B. F., 1954-55:279). The rationale for this assertion is summed up by Lampard:

Specialization of functions makes inevitably for specialization of areas; it promotes a territorial division of labor between town and country and differentiates town from town....The closer integration of interdependent functions means that less of a community's limited stock of energy and material need to be devoted to overcoming the various disutilities of distance. Local concentration of specialized activity is thus an ecological response to certain technological and cost considerations which impel a more selective use of space....city growth is simply the concentration of differentiated but functionally integrated specialisms in rationale locales. The modern city is a mode of social organization which furthers efficiency in economic activity. (Lampard, E., 1964:332)

In conjunction with this process of economic growth and territorial division of labor, there is also a structural change in the labor force with a shift from the dominance of the agricultural sector to manufacturing, and finally, with the development of services, to tertiary occupational dominance. (See

Clark, C., 1940:490 *et seq.*) It is natural, therefore, to assume that urbanization and economic growth should be associated, and that the city is a vital catalyst to economic growth. For instance, Sjoberg says, "Economic development, it seems clear, demands expansion of the urban sector" (Sjoberg, G., 1966:237). Berry echoes Sjoberg when he claims, "...that economic advancement is related to urbanization, and that increasing specialization and continued urban growth go hand in hand" (Berry, B. J. L., 1962:15).

The final group of theories which grew out of the Western experience of urbanization are those concerned with the supposed positive role of the city in inducing social change. Despite some diversity in the position of these theorists, there are certain common features. Some stressed the role of a city as an institution breaking down the "traditional" way of life; others claimed that the city-induced changes in social behavior spread outwards into rural areas and hence could not be confined to the limits of an area defined as the city. But above all, there was one central idea: the belief that the city was a significant social sub-system which induced certain behavior patterns in any population dwelling within its boundaries. Basic to this idea was an assumption of distinct rural-urban differences in the nature of these sub-systems which were measurable and quantifiable. The ideas of the rural-urban distinctions have been built into a broad theory of social change which is highly important in Western sociology. This body of thought has generally been classified under the general heading of the rural-urban continuum. There is not space in this paper to review its principal features.⁶ Wirth's sociological proposition (Wirth, L., 1938) that number, density, and heterogeneity are basic determinants of the urban way of life has been widely accepted in the West. Similarly, Redfield's picture of the rural end of the continuum as being characterized by the polar opposites of the urban way of life has also had an important influence on sociological theorists. Despite considerable criticism of the accuracy of the rural-urban continuum, the theoretical viewpoint that the process of urbanization is also a process of social change has, on the basis of Western experience, gone unchallenged.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE URBANIZATION PROCESS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

Following a superficial evaluation of the end product of the urbanization process in Southeast Asia it is tempting to suggest that the Western experience of urbanization is being repeated. Since 1945 the rate of urbanization in many countries has been almost double that of the total population (See Table 1), although, in the case of some countries (notably the Philippines and Indonesia), This rate of urbanization has not led to a rapid increase in the level of urban-

⁶ This was previously done in McGee, T. G., 1964. For later comments on the theory see Pahl, R. E., 1966-67; Lupri, E., 1967; and Schnore, L. F., 1966.

ization.⁷

It cannot be denied, however, that individual cities are undergoing booming rates of increase. Furthermore, the largest metropolitan areas are growing at rates greatly in excess of the smaller cities. Thus if the rates of growth of the first and second largest cities in selected Southeast Asian countries are compared (See Table 11), it is apparent that in most cases the larger city is growing faster.

Exceptions to this generalization occur when, due to Independence the larger colonial political units are split up. Thus Kuala Lumpur has grown at almost double the rate of Singapore. Similar patterns characterized Phnom-Penh and the former trading capital of French Indo-China before the Vietnam War was accelerated, turning Saigon into a gigantic refugee camp.

Thus it would appear that Southeast Asia, statistically at least, is conforming to the Western experience, and it is not unreasonable then to analyze the Southeast Asian urbanization process in terms of Western-based theory. However, a closer analysis of aspects of this process (not the end product) raises considerable doubt as to Western similarity. First, consider the demographic components of the process. These are difficult to establish with any degree of accuracy in the Southeast Asian context, particularly since the quality of demographic data varies markedly from country to country. Isolated studies would appear to indicate that boundary expansion of existing cities and the reclassification of rural settlements as urban is of some consequence, inflating the figures of urban growth. In the case of large metropolitan centers such as Kuala Lumpur, boundary extension incorporated genuine suburban development, and reflected a valid process of urban growth (See McGee, T. G., 1969:379-383 and Castles, L., 1967); in other cases such as the Chartered Cities of the Philippines, which often include large rural populations (See Spencer, J. E., 1958 and Lacquian, Aprodicio, A., 1966), no real increase of urban population is represented. The basic difficulty in analyzing this part of the demographic process is estimating the relative contribution of boundary expansion on new urban creation to overall urban population growth, and on this point census authorities are notably reticent and ill-equipped to aid the researcher.

The contribution of natural increase is even more difficult to ascertain since adequate figures on rural-urban differentials are scarce. With respect to birth rates, a similar occurrence of declining birth rates, induced by city residence, is said to be occurring in Southeast Asia (Myrdal, G., 1968:470). There is evidence to support this statement in the case of Singapore (Barnett, K., Dec. 12, 1968:603). Milone suggests that this may also be true for Indonesia:

⁷ This point is difficult to establish empirically because of the wide variety of statistical definitions of "urban areas" adopted by governments of Southeast Asia. See my discussion of this aspect in McGee, T. G., 1967: 76-78.

Table 1

CHANGES IN THE PROPORTION OF POPULATION

In localities of 20,000 or more in selected Southeast Asian countries

<i>Country</i>	<i>Dates</i>	<i>Percentage of Total Population in Centres 20,000+</i>	<i>Per cent Yearly Increase of Centres 20,000+</i>	<i>Per cent Yearly Increase Total Population</i>
Federation of Malaya	1947	17.1		
	1957	20.3	5.8	2.8
Sarawak	1947	6.9		
	1957	10.7	11.0	3.6
Philippines	1950	12.7		
	1960	14.2	5.3	4.0
Indonesia	1950	9.1		
	1960	11.2	5.3	2.4
Thailand	1947	5.1		
	1960	8.8	12.0	3.5

Sources: Fell (1960); Hamzah (1964); Sternstein (1965b); Hauser (1957);
Biro Pusat Statistik (1962); U. N. O., 'Demographic Yearbook 1960'
(1960).

Table 11

PERCENTAGE AND TOTAL POPULATION INCREASES

In largest and second largest cities for selected Southeast Asian countries

<i>Country and City</i>	<i>Date Population</i>	<i>Annual Per Cent Increase</i>	<i>Date Population</i>
CAMBODIA	1936		1960
Phnom-Penh	103,000	14.0	450,000
Battambang	20,000	3.2	35,526
THAILAND	1947		1960
Bangkok Met. Area	781,662	8.3	1,633,346
Chengmai	38,211	5.5	65,736
PHILIPPINES	1948		1960
Manila Met. Area	1,366,840	4.6	2,135,705
Cebu	167,503	4.1	251,146
INDONESIA	1931		1961
Djakarta	533,015	15.2	2,933,052
Surabaya	341,675	6.5	1,007,945
FEDERATION OF MALAYA AND SINGAPORE	1947		1957
Singapore City	680,000	3.4	912,300
Kuala Lumpur	176,000	7.9	316,200

Sources: Indo-China (1943); Sternstein (1965b); Philippines Census 1960. Summary Report (1963); Withington (1963); Fell (1960); Chua (1960); Cambodian Census 1959 (1959).

To date, though all census tables have not been completed, there is strong evidence (based on a 1% sample of age data) that there is a lower birth rate in the urban than in the rural areas for the whole of Indonesia (urban 38.5 per 1,000; rural 43.8 per 1,000)...there is also a firm indication from certain unpublished Greater Djakarta statistics of a lower degree of fertility among the more educated and urbanized population of the cities. (Milone, P., Dublin, 1966:95)

Similar evidence on the last point has been presented by Amos Hawley in the case of the predominantly Catholic Philippines (Hawley, A. H., 1954:27-42). Thus, there appears to be some evidence to support the argument of an urban-induced decline in fertility.

It is, however, the question of rural-urban differentials in mortality which is of most significance since the high mortality rates of the Western city population, during the early phases of urban growth, was an important factor allowing rural migrants to move into the city and to find jobs. There is little doubt that the advent of the medical revolution has led to a substantial drop in crude death rates and infant mortality rates in the cities of Southeast Asia. For instance, in Singapore the crude death rate fell from 24.2 per 1,000 population in 1931 to 6.4 in 1959. The decline in the infant mortality rate was even greater--from 191.3 per 1,000 live births in 1931 to 36 per 1,000 in 1959. In general, the urban death rates are much lower than rural death rates throughout the region. Even in a region such as Java where urban areas appear superficially to be little more than congested extensions of the rural areas, Milone reports that the urban death rate at 15.9 per 1,000 "...is appreciably lower than that of the Javanese rural areas (22.6)" (Milone, P., 1966:96). The most important conclusion of these vital statistics is the fact that lower mortality rates in cities than in the countryside and the only slightly lower fertility rates mean that there may be higher rates of natural increase in the cities than in the rural areas. This is certainly the case in Java. If this situation pertains to other Southeast Asian countries, then one vital variable in the demographic component of the urban process is very different from the experience of the West; natural increase is a far more important contributor to city population growth than it was in the "industrial urban revolution." As Davis has commented:

Today the underdeveloped nations--already densely settled, tragically impoverished and with gloomy economic prospects--are multiplying their people by sheer biological increase at a rate which is unprecedented. It is the population boom that is overwhelmingly responsible for the rapid inflation of city populations in such countries. Contrary to popular opinion both inside and outside those countries, the main factor is not rural-urban migration. (Davis, K., 1967:27)

While one may be critical of the generalities of Davis' statement, especially as it applies to some Southeast Asian nations (particularly Malaysia), its analytical significance cannot be denied; it raises the question of whether the spatial redistribution of population from rural to urban areas which occurred in the West will occur at the same fast rate in every Southeast Asian country.

The implications of this possibility are of considerable importance to a con-

ference considering the relationships between countryside and city. For in the heavily populated parts of Asia (i.e., Java and India), what happens if the spatial redistribution of population which occurred in the West does not occur? Do the populations of rural areas continue to grow to a point where they absorb the food supply of the urban areas completely? Or, can food production be increased to allow the continued feeding of the cities? Do we have to envisage a situation in which a permanently lower level of urbanization will be maintained than in the West? These questions are of course speculative but they do challenge the acceptance of the inevitability of the "urban revolution" (See Keyfitz, N., 1965 for an excellent discussion of rural-urban relations in Southeast Asia).

At present there seems to be no doubt that every country in Southeast Asia is experiencing rural-urban movement although it is difficult to establish its contribution to urban growth. An analysis of the censuses of respective countries indicates that while there are considerable variations from country to country, in many cases up to a third of the urban population have been born outside their present place of residence--in most cases in rural areas. (Evidence for these statements has been presented in: McGee, T. G., 1965:207-218.)

It has been customary for researchers to analyze the motivations for rural-urban migration within a "push-pull" framework. Their conclusions are generally that the "push" factors have been more significant in forcing migrants into the city as opposed to the "pull" of migrants in the West. For instance, Hauser reports:

It gives a clue to one of the most important features of Asian rural-urban migration; namely, the *push* of people from the countryside to the cities rather than the pull of industrial and employment opportunities in the urban areas. (Hauser, P. M., 1957:133)

This experience appears to be in direct contrast to that of the Industrial Revolution in Western Europe where there was a close connection between the demands for labor exerted by the rapidly growing urban industry and the growth of cities. In reality, it would seem that this push-pull model is over-simplified. While there is ample evidence in Southeast Asia of people being pushed to the cities--the most horrifying contemporary example being the mass exodus of the South Vietnamese rural population to the cities⁸--there is also evidence that the cities in Southeast Asia are attracting migrants because of suspected availability of jobs, the concentration of educational institutions, and even the glitter of modern life. I have conducted research among Malay migrants in Kuala Lumpur City which has led me to question the validity of the push-pull dichotomy, for it would appear that there is often a combination of motivations operating which cannot simply be classified as either "push" or "pull" (See McGee, T. G., 1969: 50-58; 668-681). Unquestionably there is need for much more detailed research

⁸ A recent *Newsweek* article cited a U.S. Senior Civilian Advisor who claimed that over 3 million Vietnamese farmers had moved to the cities in the last three years. Even allowing for exaggeration, this is a remarkably high figure. *Newsweek*, January 20, 1969:20.

on this subject in the Southeast Asian context.

While I have dealt in rather general features with the demographic components, and realize that one must treat with caution the available statistics, there seems at least enough evidence to suggest that the demographic components of the urbanization process in Southeast Asia are not identical to those of the West.⁹

The second facet of the urbanization process is the favorable association of urban growth with economic development. Here, once again, the analysis of the economic features of the urbanization process in Southeast Asia indicates substantial differences from the experience of the West. The first of these differences is that many countries in the region are characterized by a level of organization which is high in relation to the level of economic development. The statement of the E.C.A.F.E. Bulletin summarizes the situation for the wider region of South Asia:

When the major industrialized countries of Europe and North America were at a comparable level of urbanization they were far more developed as is shown by the fact that approximately 55 per cent of their labor force was engaged in non-agricultural occupations as against the present figure (for South Asia) of 30 per cent. (U. N. O., 1959:19)

While there are substantial variations within the region as to the validity of this generalization it certainly is least valid in Malaysia; it is most valid in Indonesia. The inference that Southeast Asia is "over-urbanized" in relation to its level of economic development has been widely accepted.¹⁰ Moreover, empirical evidence for the dominance of service occupations is strong. Indeed, the pattern throughout much of the underdeveloped world including Southeast Asia appears to be "...that urbanization is proceeding at a more rapid pace than the expansion of manufacturing employment, resulting in a direct shift out of agriculture into services" (Moore, W. E., 1966:203). This is not to deny that industrial output has increased in some countries of the region, but this has not always led to large increases in the manufacturing work-force, principally because these industries tend to be capital-intensive.¹¹ The consequence of this pattern has been a shift of population from agricultural occupations to low productivity occupations in the city, particularly in the service sector. This is illustrated in Table III which shows the occupational structures of selected Southeast Asian cities.

⁹ I have not dealt with the important factor of ethnic heterogeneity in these cities, but the presence of large alien communities within the cities imposes further difficulties on demographic interpretation. See McGee, T. G., 1967:118.

¹⁰ Most recently by Mrydal, G., 1968. A major critique of this concept has been written by Sovani, N. V., 1966.

¹¹ Sir Arthur Lewis has discussed the economic reasons for this emphasis on capital-intensive industry in Lewis, Arthur, 1967:13-22.

Table 111

PERCENTAGE OF LABOR FORCE BY MAJOR INDUSTRIAL GROUP

For selected Southeast Asian cities

<i>City</i>	<i>Agriculture Mining</i>	<i>Manufactur- ing</i>	<i>Construction</i>	<i>Commerce</i>	<i>Transport Storage Other Service</i>	<i>Govt. and Other Service</i>	<i>Not Adequately Described</i>	<i>Total</i>
Met. Manila (1956)	2.8	21.3	6.4	19.2	9.4	39.0	1.9	100.0
Phnom-Penh (1959)	4.4	11.0	10.0	27.0	12.0	34.0	1.6	100.0
Met. Kuala Lumpur (1962)	3.0	17.0	5.0	25.0	10.0	40.0	---	100.0
Singapore Island (1957)	9.0	14.0	5.0	25.0	12.0	33.0	2.0	100.0
Bangkok (1960)	14.0	17.0	2.0	26.0	7.0	29.0	5.0	100.0
Djakarta Raya (1961)	5.0	16.0	9.0	24.0	13.0	33.0	---	100.0

MODERN CULT CENTRES

Sources: Ramos (1961); Cambodian Census 1959 (1959); Department of Statistics, Federation of Malaya (1964); Chua (1960); Thailand Population Census 1960 (1961); Biro Pusat Statistik (1963).

Note: For Metropolitan Manila, Phnom Penh, Kuala Lumpur, Singapore Island and Djakarta Raya, the labor force is defined as those economically active over the age of 10. Bangkok's labor force is defined as those economically active over the age of 11.

A table such as this does not, however, do justice to the true economic structure of the Southeast Asian City which is in many cases divided into two economic sectors. Geertz has characterized their economic structure as follows. One sector is a firm-centered economy:

...where trade and industry occur through a set of impersonally-defined social institutions which organize a variety of specialized occupations with respect to some particular productive or distributive end.

The other sector is made up of the bazaar economy which is based on:

...the independent activities of a set of highly competitive commodity traders who relate to one another mainly by means of an incredible volume of *ad hoc* acts of exchange. (Geertz, C., 1963)

On the face of it, this distinction between the two sectors of this city's economy might be said to approximate the model of the dual economy (Boeke, J. H., 1953). Certainly it has affinities with the model of technological and economic dualism put forward by Higgins (Higgins, B., 1956), to the extent that the firm-centred economy is clearly capital-intensive and the bazaar economy is labor-intensive; each utilizes a very different type of technology. In addition, there is a clear distinction between the labor commitment which characterizes the two sectors. In the bazaar sector, the basic labor commitment of the "chef d'entreprise" is to the utilization of his family (kin); in the other, the firm-type sector, "...labor becomes a commodity to be hired and dismissed by the enterprise" (Franklin, S. H., 1965:148).

It should be made clear that this model of dualistic economic structure is perhaps overdrawn since there are undoubtedly intermediate forms of economic organization. This may be particularly true of some immigrant organizations in the Southeast Asian city (See Skinner, G. W., 1957). It may be that Riggs' bazaar-canteen model of the economic structure of these cities is more correct in that it portrays the complex mixture of economic behavior and organization more accurately (Riggs, F. W., 1958:7-59).

Nevertheless, there are important consequences stemming from the character of these two sectors. In terms of the "quantity" of employment they can offer, the "firm-type sector" would appear to be limited by a need to introduce labor-destroying innovations in order to keep up its high productivity. On the other hand, in the bazaar sector the possibilities for employment seem much greater even though productivity is lower and the end-product is a condition of "shared poverty" (Wertheim, W. F., 1964) which Breeze, less satisfactorily, has described as "subsistence urbanization" (Breeze, G., 1966).

In practical terms, the immediate consequences of the dual economy can be seen in virtually every aspect of the Southeast Asian cities' economic structure. In the labor-intensive, bazaar sector--hawkers, small cottage industries--underemployment and low productivity are ubiquitous. The land use patterns of the parts of the city in which this sector dominates are chaotic. Illegal housing, both in the interstices and on the periphery of the cities, often tends to be occupied by the people working in this bazaar sector. In the modern sector, economic units are larger, people work regular hours, capital investment

is on a large scale, levels of technology and productivity are high. Unemployment, not underemployment, is characteristic.

In conclusion, it may be argued that the dualistic structure of the Southeast Asian city may appear to be little different from that of the Western city at a comparable stage of development.¹² However, it is in the persistence of this duality that the chief problems of Asian urbanization lie; above all, the continuance of the dual economy is basically the symptom of economic underdevelopment and of the relationship of these countries to the developed economies (See Armstrong, W. R. and McGee, T. G., 1968:353-378 for an elaboration of this argument).

The problem of the dual economic structure is further aggravated in the Southeast Asian cities by the fact that alien Asian communities are frequently unevenly distributed throughout the occupational structure. The Chinese in particular have tended to dominate the commercial, financial, industrial, and artisan occupations, while the indigenous groups are polarized at the extreme ends of the occupational scale from government services to unskilled and domestic occupations. This situation has been an important source of conflict between the politically-powerful indigenous groups and the economically-powerful alien communities. In some cases, as in Indonesia and Burma, it has resulted in the drastic measures taken against these communities. Whether or not government interference will improve this situation remains uncertain. It is sufficient to say that the plural societies remain one of the most critical problems of these cities.

Finally, the question of social change in the Southeast Asian city may be considered. Here once again the paucity of empirical studies and the wide diversity of cultures in the region make generalization hazardous. In general, one may argue that the persistence of pluralistic ethnic structures and a large bazaar sector have inhibited the kind of social changes said to have occurred in Western cities. Bruner's claim that "...the social concomitants of the transition from rural to urban life are not the same in Southeast Asia as in Western society" (Bruner, E. M., 1961:508) is certainly true. Hauser has explained the reasons for the different pattern of social change as stemming primarily from the persistence of "folk" conditions within the cities. In fact, in many of the cities, the creation of squatter colonies has allowed the retention of basic village forms of political and social organization (See McGee, T. G., 1960, and Pye, L. W., 1962). Furthermore, people living in these folk areas often have persistent and interlocking contacts with kinfolk in rural areas, both in the form of social contacts and economic remittances. Thus, among migrants principally engaged in the bazaar sector, social change is not great. In most Asian cities there are, however, an elite and growing middle class which cannot be identified with the former group. It is tempting to argue that this group is changing its behavior towards the model of the Western "urban way of life" since the most observable feature of their behavior (their consumer spending) seems to

¹² In Europe, Naples represents a fine example of this continuing persistence of a dual economy.

be the same as that of the wealthier inhabitants of the West; in other areas of social behavior, it is less apparent that social change is occurring (See McGee, T. G. and McTaggart, W. D., 1967).

To sum up, social change in Asia is not keeping pace with the urban revolution in the West. Basically this is because the dimensions of the urbanization process are so different. Hauser sums up the major reason:

In large measure, the problems--social and personal--in the great cities of Asia, derive not so much from 'urbanism as a way of life,' but reflect rather the problems of the nation at large, problems arising from low productivity and mass poverty. (Hauser, P. M., 1957:88)

Finally we must consider the end product of this process of urbanization in terms of the spatial patterns which emerge and the problems they pose to planning and development. First, virtually all the large Southeast Asian cities characterized by these dual economies assume similar spatial patterns. Congested inner cities--cores where the pedestrians and handcarts dominate--surround the concrete skyscrapers of the Western central business districts. Spreading zones of settlement--mixtures of squatter and suburbia--merge into a countryside of dense rural population. (Kuala Lumpur is an exception with respect to most of its hinterland.) There is the same conflict over land usage on the fringes of the Asian city as that which has characterized the Western city.

In the inner cities there are similar problems over conflicting land uses. Congested areas of the bazaar economy form barriers both to the expansion of the Central Business District and to the free movement of its white collar workers who commute from the outer suburbs to work in its offices. Virtually every large Southeast Asian city has been grappling with this problem in a variety of ways: the improvement of traffic flow by punching freeways through the barriers of these congested areas, and the planned decentralization of the population from these inner areas into a ring of satellite towns around the metropolis or else into smaller, medium-sized towns distributed throughout the country. Urban renewal, except in the immediate highly-valued vicinity of the Central Business District, is not economically attractive although it is often considered.

The relative merits of these schemes will be considered during this conference; the success of the alternatives will depend not only on economic viability but also on their ability to cope with the distinctive problems posed by the socio-economic structures of these cities.

CONCLUSION

The import of this brief review of the empirical features of Southeast Asian urbanization suggests that the present components of the urbanization process are different from those of the West. There is an important distinction with respect to lower mortality in the Southeast Asian cities and consequent higher

rates of natural increase. The persistence of dual economic sectors (a reflection of slow economic development) poses real questions as to the role of cities in economic development, is responsible for the chaotic land use, and may be one factor inhibiting social change.

These differences are sufficiently important to suggest that at least one important element of Western theory concerning the city does not apply in Southeast Asia. This is the view that the city is an inducer of change. Benet's comment on its role in Western sociological theory sums up these approaches-- "The city was the key variable, a social sub-system which became all inclusive" (Benet, F., 1963:1). This premise of the city-dominant theorists in the West is understandable in view of the fact that urban growth was the most observable feature of the modernization process. However, in the context of Southeast Asia, it seems that a theoretical framework which regards the city as the prime catalyst of change must be discarded. Rather, the city must be seen as a symptom of processes operating at a societal level. Thus, to accurately diagnose its characteristics, one must investigate the condition of underdevelopment which characterizes these countries. In this context cities only too frequently may be described as cancers, not catalysts.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Abu-Lughod, J., (1964), "Urban-Rural Differences As A Function of the Demographic Transition: Egyptian Data and An Analytical Model," *American Journal of Sociology*, 69:476-490.
- Armstrong, W. R. and McGee, T. G., (1968), "Revolutionary Change and the Third World City: A Theory of Urban Involution," *Civilizations*, XVIII, 3, 353-378.
- Ayres, C. R., (1952), *The Industrial Economy. Its Technological Basis and Institutional Destiny*, (Cambridge, Mass.).
- Barnett, K., (1968), "Mooncake For the Millions?," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, LXII, 50:603-606.
- Benet, F., (1963), "Sociology Uncertain: The Ideology of the Rural-Urban Continuum," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, VI, October: 1-23.
- Berry, B. J. L., (1962), "Some Relations of Urbanization and Basic Patterns of Economic Development," in Forrest R. Pitts (ed.) *Urban Systems and Economic Development* (Oregon); 1-15.
- Biro Pusat Statistik, (1962), Sensus Penduduk, 1961, Republik Indonesia (Population Census, 1961. Republic of Indonesia) Kabinet Menteri Pertama (Djakarta).
- Boeke, J. H., (1953), *Economics and Economic Policy of Dual Societies as Exemplified by Indonesia* (New York).
- Breese, G., (1966), *Urbanization in Newly Developing Countries* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey).
- Bruner, E. M., (1961), "Urbanization and Ethnic Identity in North Sumatra," *American Anthropologist*, 63, 3:508-521.
- Castles, L., (1967), "The Ethnic Profile of Djakarta," *Indonesia*, 2:153-204.
- Chua, S. C., (1960), State of Singapore. Report on the Census of Population 1957 (Singapore).
- Clark, C., (1940), *The Conditions of Economic Progress* (London).
- Davis, K., (ed.), (1959), *The World's Metropolitan Areas*, (Berkeley and Los Angeles, California).
- Davis, K., (1967), "The Urbanization of the Human Population," in *Scientific American, Cities* (New York): 3-24.
- Fell, H., (1960), 1957 Population Census of the Federation of Malaya, Department of Statistics, (Kuala Lumpur).

- Franklin, S. H., (1965), "Systems of Production, Systems of Appropriation," *Pacific Viewpoint*, 6, 2:145-166.
- Geertz, C., (1963), *Peddlers and Princes. Social Change and Economic Modernization in Two Indonesian Towns* (Chicago).
- Habakkuk, H. J., (1953), "English Population in the Eighteenth Century," *Economic History Review*, 6, 2:117-133.
- Hagerstrand, T., (1957), "Migration and Area. Survey of a Sample of Swedish Migration Fields and Hypothetical Considerations on Their Genesis," in Hannerberg, D., Hagerstrand, T., and Odeving, B., (eds.), *Migration in Sweden. A Symposium* (Lund).
- Hamzah, Sendut, (1964), "Urbanization," in Wang Cungwu (ed.), *Malaysia, A Survey* (New York); 82-96.
- Hauser, P. M., (ed.), (1957), "Urbanization in Asia and the Far East," Tensions and Technology Series, UNESCO (Calcutta).
- Hawley, A. H., (1954), *Papers in Demography and Public Administration* (Manila).
- Higgins, B., (1956), "The 'Dualistic Theory' of Underdeveloped Areas," *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, 4, 2:99-115.
- Hoselitz, Bert F., (1954-55), "Generative and Parasitic Cities," *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, 3:278-294.
- Keyfritz, N., (1965), "Political-Economic Aspects of Urbanization in South and Southeast Asia," in Hauser, P. M. and Schnore, L. F., *The Study of Urbanization* (New York); 265-309.
- Krause, J. T., (1958), "Changes in English Fertility and Mortality, 1781-1850," *Economic History Review*, August, 11, 1:52-70.
- Krause, J. T., (1959), "Some Implications of Recent Work in Historical Demography," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 1, 2:164-188.
- Lacquan, A. A., (1966), *The City in Nation-Building*, (Manila).
- Lampard, E. E., (1964), "The History of Cities in the Economically Advanced Areas," in Friedman, J. and Alonso, W., (eds.), *Regional Development and Planning*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts): 321-342.
- Lampard, E. E., (1965), "Historical Aspects of Urbanization," in Hauser, P. M. and Schnore, L. F., (eds.), *The Study of Urbanization* (New York): 519-544.
- Levi-Strauss, C., (1962), "Crowds," *New Left Review*, May-June, 15:3-6.
- Lewis, A. W., (1967), "Unemployment in Developing Countries," *The World Today*, January, 1:13-22.

- Lupri, Eugen, (1967), "The Rural-Urban Variable Reconsidered: The Cross-Cultural Perspective," *Sociologica Ruralis*, VII, 1:1-20.
- McGee, T. G., (1964), "The Rural-Urban Continuum Debate, The Preindustrial City and Rural-Urban Migration," *Pacific Viewpoint*, September, 5, 2:159-181.
- McGee, T. G., (1965), "An Aspect of the Urbanization of Southeast Asia: The Process of Cityward Migration," Proceedings of the Fourth New Zealand Geographical Conference: 207-218.
- McGee, T. G., (1967), *The Southeast Asian City. A Social Geography of the Primate Cities of Southeast Asia*, (London).
- McGee, T. G., and McTaggart, W. O., (1967), "Petaling Jaya. A Socio-Economic Survey of a New Town in Selangor, Malaysia," *Pacific Viewpoint Monograph*, No. 2 (Wellington)
- McGee, T. G., (1969), "Malays in Kuala Lumpur City. A Geographical Study of the Process of Urbanization," Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand.
- McKeown, Thomas and Brown, R. G., (1955), "Medical Evidence Related to English Population Changes in the Eighteenth Century," *Population Studies*, November, 9, 2: 119-141.
- Milone, P. D. (1966), "Urban Areas in Indonesia: Administrative and Census Concepts," Research Series No. 10, Institute of International Studies (University of California, Berkeley).
- Moore, W. E., (1960), "Changes in Occupational Structures," in Smelser, N. J. and Lipset, S. M., (eds.), *Social Structure and Mobility in Economic Development*, (London).
- Myrdal G., (1968), *Asian Drama. An Inquiry into the Poverty of Nations*, 3 Vols. (New York).
- Pahl, R. E., (1966), "The Rural-Urban Continuum," *Sociologica Ruralis*, VI, 3-4: 299-327.
- Pahl, R. E., (1967), "The Rural-Urban Continuum. A Reply to Eugen Lupri," *Sociologica Ruralis*, VII, 1:20-28.
- Petersen, W., (1961), *Population* (New York).
- Pickney, D. H., (1953), "Migrations to Paris During the Second Empire," *The Journal of Modern History*, March, XXV, 1:1-12.
- Pred, A., (1962), "The External Relations of Cities During 'Industrial Revolution'," University of Chicago, Department of Geography, Research Paper No. 76 (Chicago).
- Pye, L. W., (1962), *Politics, Personality and Nation Building: Burma's Search for Identity*, (Yale).

191

- Ramos, C. P., (1961), "Manila's Metropolitan Problem," *Philippine Journal of Public Administration*, April, 5, 2:89-117.
- Redford, A., (1926), *Labour Migration in England, 1800-1850*, (London).
- Reissman, L., (1964), *The Urban Process. Cities in Industrial Societies* (Glencoe, Illinois).
- Riggs, F. W., (1958), "The Bazaar-Canteen Model: Economic Aspects of the Prismatic Society," *Philippine Sociological Review*, July-October, 6-50.
- Saville, J., (1957), *Rural Depopulation in England and Wales, 1851-1951*, (London).
- Schnore, L. F., (1966), "The Rural-Urban Variable: An Urbanite's Perspective," *Rural Sociology*, June, 31, 2:131-143.
- Sjoborg, G., (1966), "Rural-Urban Balance and Models of Economic Development," in Smelser, N. J. and Lipset, S. M., (eds.), *Social Structure and Mobility in Economic Development* (London):235-261.
- Skinner, G. W., (1957), *Chinese Society in Thailand: An Analytical History* (Ithaca, New York).
- Smelser, N. J., (1959), *Social Change in the Industrial Revolution: An Application of Theory to the Lancashire Cotton Industry, 1770-1840*, (London).
- Sorokin, P. and Zimmerman, C. C., (1929), *Principles of Rural-Urban Sociology* (New York).
- Sovani, N. V., (1966), *Urbanization and Urban India* (London).
- Spencer, J. E., (1958), "Cities of the Philippines," *Journal of Geography*, September:288-94.
- Sternstein, L., (1965), "A Critique of Thai Population Data," *Pacific Viewpoint*, May, 6, 1:15-38.
- U.N.O., (1950), "ECAFE," *Economic Bulletin*, X, 1.
- U.N.O., (1960), Department of Economic and Social Affairs, *Demographic Yearbook* (New York).
- Wertheim, W. F., (1964), *East-West Parallels: Sociological Approaches to Modern Asia*, (The Hague and Bandung).
- Wirth, L., (1938), "Urbanism as a Way of Life," in Hatt, P. K. and Reiss, A. J., Jr., (eds.), 1957, *Cities and Society* (Glencoe, Illinois): 46-63.
- Withington, W. A., (1963), "The Kotapradja or King Cities of Indonesia," *Pacific Viewpoint*, March, 4, 1:75-86.

22