

ULASAN BUKU/BOOK REVIEW

Peasants, Proletarians and Prostitutes: A Preliminary Investigation into the Work of Chinese Women in Colonial Malaya by *Lai Ah Eng*, *Research Notes and Discussion Paper No. 59, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore 1986*.

Working Women in Southeast Asia: Development, Subordination and Emancipation by *Noeleen Heyzer*, *Open University Press Philadelphia, 1986*.

Two exciting books on the women question in the region have recently been published adding new and valuable insights into the study of social relations in our society. Although Lai Ah Eng's study of Chinese women in Colonial Malaya is primarily a historical one, it is nonetheless well complemented by Noeleen Heyzer's discussion of women in contemporary South-east Asia. Both authors derive their analysis of gender relations from a similar framework in that 'the forms and bases of women's subordination are influenced by larger systems that produce inequalities and are embedded in the social positions and the social relationships developed through the interaction of economic processes and dominant socio-cultural systems' (Heyzer, Introduction). The focus is on the various work situations confronting women -- how the mechanisms of gender subordination are maintained, reproduced and transformed, and how women struggle against such subordination.

Lai Ah Eng's study is very specific. She focuses on wage and non-wage Chinese women workers in Colonial Malaya, discussing women's labour in prostitution, domestic servitude, tin mining, rubber estate production, manufacturing, hawking and construction. What is particularly interesting is how she tries to explain the position of Chinese women through the interplay of class and ethnicity and how these relations interacted with the overall process of capital accumulation, state intervention and social change then. Her strong chapters, where inevitably more information is available, are the ones on prostitution, domestic servitude (*mui-tsai* and *amah*) and tin mine production.

Discussions on prostitution and *mui-tsai* (young girls in domestic servitude) clearly depict the strong male social control and double standards in a patriarchal society, and the role of the state in condoning such forms of gender oppression. For example, prostitutes were socially stigmatized, earning names like *samseng por* (female thug), *hau* (sexually loose) or *kun-lo* (follow men). Yet those who gained from such sexual servicing -- the secret society men who controlled the trade, the colonial state which earned revenue from gambling farms and amusement houses, the Japanese administration which imported Japanese or Korean "rest and recreation girls" for the Japanese army were far from being condemned. Moreover whatever state protection accorded to the prostitutes or *mui-tsai* was basically ineffective, as can be seen in the *Mui-tsai* Bill of 1933 which actually drove the system underground.

Besides the above exploitation of female reproductive labour, Chinese women were also exploited through the sexual division of labour in the tin mining

labour process. Women's work was confined to unskilled and manual work, primarily in *dulang* washing while men operated at the higher skilled and management levels. The chapter on tin-mining also exposes how capital benefits from women's inferior social position by using them as a reserve army of casual labour "drawn into mining at critical periods of the industry to sustain the industry until it got back into its feet" (p.63).

Lai's preliminary investigation into the history of Chinese women's work based on secondary data undoubtedly cries out that more needs to be done. Colonial records need to be uncovered and oral interviews need to be conducted to ascertain in much more detail the gaps in the literature and the everyday responses not only of Chinese women, but women from the other ethnic groups in Malaya. Nonetheless, despite the limitation of time and materials, her excellent pioneering study should be the starting point of a more comprehensive examination of the history of Malaysian women.

Noeleen Heyzer's book is both general and specific. She focuses on the position of women in poverty groups in South-east Asia, with several case-studies to support her contentions. Her interest lies in outlining the broader structural changes brought about by agrarian change, urbanization, industrialization and bureaucratization and their impact on women in the rural and urban settings. Hence, the first chapter outlines the theoretical debates on women and development, the next four chapters discuss specific situations of rural women, migrant women, female prostitutes, estate women and women workers in the textile industry. Chapter seven summarizes and highlights the major issues examined in the previous chapters while chapter eight looks at how women's groups and organizations have mobilized against gender subordination.

Indeed, Heyzer's interesting book takes off where Lai's left us in the colonial era. The case study on plantation women in West Malaysia is particularly relevant in comparing the lot of Indian and Chinese women in the colonial and post-colonial period. Indian women's present economic position has definitely improved -- however this does not mean that they are no longer exploited. As disclosed by Heyzer, the forms of exploitation have been transformed according to the dictates of the capital accumulation process in the plantation economy, while gender subordination has been maintained by the ideology of male domination so prevalent in Tamil/Hindu culture. Thus even though discriminatory wage scales have been abolished, women's work has been intensified, new tasks are added (e.g. ladder tapping) and women and girls continue to provide labour in reproductive work.

The chapter on "the trade in female sexuality" is enlightening in depicting modern forms of sexual slavery without discarding the fundamental premise of prostitution, as the basis of economic and social control of female sexuality in a patriarchal society. To be sure, contemporary forms of prostitution are not much different from those described in Lai's book; the bringing over of Korean girls to service Japanese soldiers has its modern counterpart in sex tourism or male-order brides at this historical juncture. What is noble in both their accounts is to give prostitution a human face - that most prostitutes are

people with emotions who come from poverty-stricken areas - instead of depicting them as sexual commodities to be bought or sold according to the whims and fancies of male pleasure and profiteering.

While the mechanisms of gender subordination are clearly discussed, what is lacking is an examination of the responses and struggles of women towards such inequalities. This holds true for both authors. Lai provides revealing insights into the early feminist and anti-marriage struggles of Chinese women in *Kongsi fong* and *Chai tang* while Heyzer gives a cursory though useful, account of women's organizations in South-east Asia. There is however little discussion and analysis of the nature of women's participation in trade unions, anti-colonial struggles, political parties, to name but a few.

The history of these women's movements has yet to be charted and forms of struggle against gender ideology (e.g. in cultural and religious practices) have still to be documented. However, these limitations should not detract us from the wealth of information and analytical value provided by both scholars. Both these publications are obligatory reading for all those interested "to spread the ethics of care and concern ... which entails an alternative vision of what is possible in human society" (Heyzer: 135).

Cecilia Ng
Women's Studies Unit
Department of Extension Education
Centre for Extension and Continuing Education
Universiti Pertanian Malaysia

Hikayat Sultan Ibrahim Ibn Adham: An Edition of an Anonymous Malay Text with Translation and Notes by Russell Jones, Lanham: University Press of America Inc., 1985.

The book is divided into three parts. The first, consisting of six short sections, provides the necessary geographical as well as historical background related to the nature of and influences on the Malay language and literature, particularly pertaining to influences from Islam and the Middle East. The Malay manuscripts examined and utilized in the study are also described in some detail, with versions of the story in other languages (Javanese, Sundanese, Acheneese, Bugis, Kashmiri, Urdu, Tajik) also alluded to. This is perhaps the most valuable section of the book as far as the general overall study of the *Hikayat* is concerned.

The second part is the romanised Malay version of one of the longer and, as is always the case, anonymous versions of the *Hikayat*, together with its English translation on every corresponding page (52-175). Notes on minor variations between the various manuscripts are given at the bottom of the respective pages. More informative and useful notes, frequently with minute details, explaining the meaning and significance of some terms, appear at the end of the section (182-212).

The third part, the Appendices (212-274), consists mainly of excerpts and specimen pages of the various manuscripts consulted and compared by the author, notes on the Arabic and Koranic citations in the manuscripts, and a table of Arabic citations in the different Malay texts. In addition to a ten-page Bibliography, there is also a rather long, detailed and helpful 43-page index.

Hikayat Sultan Ibrahim Ibn Adham is a story about a Sultan who abdicated his powerful and glamorous position as the Ruler of Iraq - so the story goes - to devote his life as a *fakir* fully, wholly and solely to his Lord. It is about a powerful man who abandoned external worldly pleasures for the pleasure of Allah - as he thought best - to become an unknown helpless ascetic.

The *Hikayat* stands in a category of its own. It is religious, but not in the strict sense as the *sirat al-Mustaqim* of Nuruddin al-Raniri. It does not fall within the genre of historical literature either, though there indeed exists a historical figure, Ibrahim Ibn Adham, whose real life is, unfortunately, not adequately known. It is both Islamic - for the characters are Muslims and the main concern is total devotion to Allah - and Malay, though the setting is Middle Eastern. As pointed out by Dr Jones, the Ibrahim Ibn Adham story is known throughout the Muslim world, but there is no evidence, however, that the Malay versions were mere translations of any of the non-Malay texts. The author of the Malay version(s), though not a creator of fiction, was an ingenious compiler of themes. (248).

It is not a hundred percent Malay as the *Hikayat Hang Tuah*, the *Sejarah Melayu* or *Hikayat Raja-Raja Pasai*, nor is it half-Malay as the *Hikayat Seri Rama* (which though Malay in language, is Indian in spirit and content). Neither is it a *sufi* tract even though the story is about the true commitment of a *sufi* in adherence to his beliefs. In a sense the *Hikayat* is similar to the *Tajus Salatin* - but in reverse. Whereas the latter instructs the ruler on how to rule justly in the religiously accepted manner, *Hikayat Sultan Ibrahim Ibn Adham* indirectly tells one why not to be a ruler. Not only Ibrahim but so also his son, Muhammad Tahir, his rightful heir to the Iraqi throne - so the story claims - abdicated, avoiding completely the pomp and this-worldly glory of a sovereign. Obviously its manner and approach is different from the *sufi* writings of the Sumatran masters, namely, Hamzah Fansuri, Nuruddin al-Raniri and Shamsuddin. It is a story about a Middle Eastern *sufi* retold in Malay. Dr. Jones believes that the authorship was accredited to one Shaikh Abu Bakar of Hadhramaut merely to vest authority to the *Hikayat* (37-38). The setting is foreign, the content and spirit Islamic, and the language is Malay.

Hikayat Sultan Ibrahim Ibn Adham is indeed a valuable literary-cum-religious work in Malay. It is not a historical text but it is historically significant as far as the history of concerned. It also demonstrates the extent of the cross-cultural borrowings that could take place through the medium of one common religion, Islam. The adoption of the Arabic-Persian script by the Malay world made such a borrowing and adaptation a lot easier.

Dr. Jones' effort is commendable. His rendition in English, his notes, and his introduction are superb. The work demonstrates the seriousness and care of a

researcher. It adds to the scholarly world yet another product with a standard that is undoubtedly superior. There is every reason to take this magnificent work to be authoritative. The book gives a more overall and better perspective not only of the Ibrahim Ibn Adham story but also of the development and perhaps the contribution of the Malay version to a story so universal in the old-time Muslim world.

Abdul Rahman Ismail
Pusat Pengajian Ilmu Kemanusiaan
Universiti Sains Malaysia

Soviet Foreign Policy and Southeast Asia by Leszek Buszynski, Croom Helm, London & Sydney, 1986.

Ever since 1978, with the signing of the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation with the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, the Soviet Union had gained a vital foothold in Southeast Asia. The subsequent years witnessed the strengthening of ties between the two countries, with the Soviets acquiring base facilities in Danang and Cam Ranh Bay, Vietnam, as well as in Kompong Som in Hanoi-dominated Kampuchea. Such events have led to a renewal of scholarly interests in Soviet policy towards Southeast Asia - an area often thought to be of secondary importance to Moscow. Academic writings on the subject have tended to exist mainly in the form of articles, but not books dealing specifically on Soviet interests in the region. The present book under review is one such long-awaited book and will certainly help to fill the gap. In fact this is perhaps the first substantial book dealing with the subject in contemporary times since 1966, when the classic Charles McLane's *Soviet Strategies in Southeast Asia* was published.

The author, Dr. Buszynski, currently a lecturer with the Department of Political Science, National University of Singapore, attempts to assess the aims of and the underlying motives behind Soviet policy towards Southeast Asia since 1969. Using primarily Soviet sources, the author has dealt with these matters articulately.

The book begins with an examination of priorities and interests in Soviet Third World Policy, tracing its evolution from Khrushchev to Brezhnev. Dr. Buszynski argues that Soviet policy towards the Third World has become militarised largely because of the failure of the non-military levers of policy, political, diplomatic or economic. The policy is defined in terms of a two-stage process. In the first the effort was directed towards weakening Western influence and establishing a coalition from amongst states and political movements in the Third World which shared Soviet aims. In the second stage, Soviet policy would encourage the decolonised states to free themselves of economic dependence upon the west by promoting or furthering the process of socialist construction.

Brezhnev's policy towards the Third World was adjusted in response to Khrushchev's failures without actually repudiating the basic framework of policy developed while Khrushchev was in power. Inter alia, Dr. Buszynski states that Soviet policy has shown a clear preference for long-term military or security relationships established with dependent socialist or revolutionary-democratic allies over political influence with an independent Third World.

The author devotes a whole chapter on the Soviet Asian Collective Security proposal and reactions of the ASEAN states towards this system. The proposal, which was announced during the Moscow Conference of Communist and Workers Parties in June 1969, signified the beginning of a period of increased interest in the development of political relations with the governments of a very wide area of Asia. Collective security required for its promotion an international climate of opinion that would destroy Cold-War stereotypes of the Soviet Union as a menace and which would demonstrate that cooperation with the Soviet leadership was indeed possible. Most significant for Soviet policy was the effort to use collective security as a method of asserting influence against the Chinese who by their radicalism during the Cultural Revolution had lost much sympathy from their Asian neighbours.

In dealing with the proposal, the author analyses it within the context of several major trends of the year 1969, namely the deepening Sino-Soviet conflict, the expectations of US withdrawal from Indochina and the British withdrawal from Southeast Asia. He also examines the collective security proposal with detente and the correlation of forces - a term used by the Soviets which relates to the distribution of political forces between the two world systems, i.e. capitalism and socialism.

In the subsequent four chapters, Dr. Buszynski deals with Soviet policy towards the ASEAN states and with Vietnam. In the former, the author divides the subject into two - one looks at the policy since the fall of Indochina in 1975 and the other, after the Vietnamese invasion of Kampuchea. Both these events were closely associated with Moscow, as the Soviets provided substantial military assistance to the Vietnamese. They were also of great significance to the ASEAN states, as these two events together with the Soviet connection, helped to shape ASEAN security perceptions and considerations.

As Soviet relations with Vietnam is of utmost importance to the former's policy towards Southeast Asia, Dr. Buszynski correctly examines in some detail this relationship - dealing firstly in what he called an "alliance formation" and secondly, "alliance consolidation". In the first part, the author traces the genesis of Soviet-Vietnamese relations, highlighting certain events which contributed significantly to the betterment of relations between the two countries.

There was no alternative source of military aid and assistance to promote the modernization of the Vietnamese army other than the Soviet Union. Having failed to obtain alternative sources of funding for Vietnam's reconstruction after the unification of the country in 1975, Hanoi had no choice but to opt for the closer relationship with Moscow, as the USSR was perhaps the only great

power which was willing to extend economic aid and military assistance in the quantities desired.

In the second part, the author analyses the Moscow-Hanoi alliance in current times, examining Vietnam's economic and military dependence on the Soviet Union. He also identifies some problem areas, what he calls a major discrepancy between the alliance partners over three foreign policy issues - ASEAN, China and Kampuchea. This is most interesting as it shows some divergence of interests in what is often seen as a convergent alliance.

In the final section, Dr. Buszynski examines the success of Soviet foreign policy towards Southeast Asia. This can be defined in terms of the acquisition of a socialist ally - Vietnam. However, its success is not without cost and this comes mainly from the alienation of the ASEAN states.

A very useful section of Soviet-ASEAN trade, 1970-1982 has been included in the appendix. Apart from tables, some of which are Soviet figures, an analysis of the situation is given. Trade that exists is negligible, showing a pattern of minimal dependence upon the Soviet Union. For example, although the largest exporter to the Soviet Union, Malaysia exports from 1976-1982 exports to the USSR nonetheless averaged only 2-3% of total Malaysian exports annually in terms of value.

There is no doubt that this book is an excellent expose of Soviet policy towards Southeast Asia, and should be read by all those interested in the subject.

Abdul Razak Abdullah Baginda
Department of Social Sciences
Universiti Pertanian Malaysia
Serdang, Selangor

Industrialisation and Labour Force Processes: A Case Study of Peninsular Malaysia by T.G. McGee et al., *Research Papers on Development in East Java and West Malaysia, No. 1, Research School of Pacific Studies Australian National University, 1986.*

This volume is a collection of papers first presented at a workshop on "Industrialization and the Growth of the Labour Force in Malaysia" held in November 1985 at the Australian National University (ANU) as part of a research programme of the ANU's Research School of Pacific Studies on "The Causes and Consequences of Industrialisation in Asia and the Pacific". It is also the first in a new publication series entitled "Research Papers on Development in East Java and West Malaysia" under the sponsorship of that unit.

Publications of proceedings often lack coherence. Happily, the present volume is an exception. It is a well-organised and coherent collection, a

function perhaps of the specific focus of the workshop and, going by the introduction to the volume, of the guiding hand of its convenor, T.G. McGee.

Composed of 6 essays divided into 3 sections, covering the international, national/regional and firm levels, the collection provides a useful overview of the industrialization process in West Malaysia. As such, it should prove useful to students and researchers in the field, both in providing basic information as well as orientation.

The general overview of manufacturing by G.J.R. Linge usefully sets out the global context within which industrialization in the Third World has occurred, while T.G. McGee's piece provides an overview of industrialization in West Malaysia. Geoff Missen's essay gives a useful if at times inaccurate -- for example, it is not the case that unions are not permitted in FTZs -- and debatable (do we still need to hold on to some notion of a "true" proletariat instead of simply accepting that there are various historical modes of proletarianization none of which results in a "truer" proletariat, and has there ever been a proletariat that is/was not segmented along any number of divisions) -- historical perspective on the growth of a proletariat, or wage labour force, and its changing structure and composition in West Malaysia.

Following upon these three essays are more specific studies of industrialization in Penang (by Kamal¹ & Young), and of types of enterprises and structure of labour force and labour demand (Chi & Taylor). Finally, there is Peter Warr's cost-benefit analysis of the country's Free Trade Zone firms and of Licensed Manufacturing Warehouses, both of which are heavily dominated by electronics and textile firms. The volume is "rounded-off" with a short comment by Benjamin Higgins. This reviewer must confess to not being able to quite see the point of those comments in the context of the foregoing essays. It should be noted that these papers largely represent work in progress.

Having said this, it is perhaps pertinent to note that it appears to be the fate of the social sciences to give testimony to Hegel's claim that "the owl of Minerva spreads its wings only with the falling of dusk".

Thus, while the authors of the essays in this volume have revised and up-dated their contributions for the purposes of publication, and while there are attempts at discerning trends resulting from the massive recession of the past couple of years and from the changes occurring in the international economy and in "metanational" (the term is McGee's, borrowing from Borrego) corporations, developments since their original composition have turned up some surprises, carrying with them some new opportunities.

For instance, many of the essays in the book make reference to the then to-be-released Industrial Master Plan (IMP). It has since been released. But a cursory perusal of it reveals how dated it is in some ways. The bulk of the analyses and projections were based on trends up to about 1983. The options suggested, based upon assumptions of a thriving economy, do not now appear to be so feasible.

Recent shifts in national policy, such as relaxation of investment regulations, are acknowledgments of the very different economic climate prevailing in the latter half of the 1980s. Rather than being able to really map out a strategy, the country is faced with the not very palatable option of grabbing whatever it can. Distressingly, there are some indications that the country's administrators may not be especially good at this, and at capitalising on some of the new opportunities resulting from recent shifts in corporate strategy. For example, the country reportedly lost a possible wafer-fabrication plant either because of a lack of urgency or of understanding and of negotiating tactics.

On the other hand, fears of re-location of off-shore processing plants in the Free Trade Zones back to their home countries, mentioned by a number of the authors in this volume, have apparently not [yet?] materialized. Instead, there appears to be a process of re-centralization of production in certain selected geographical areas. While this may be horrendous news for some of the more backward countries, it spells new opportunities for those countries and regions selected to play the role of these centres and willing and able to do so.

Fortunately for Malaysia, it appears that it, or at least regions within it, has been so selected. Such selection may not, however, automatically translate itself into reality, for the actual outcome will depend as well upon processes and practices within the country concerned, in this case, Malaysia.

Simultaneously such opportunities also spell new dangers -- dangers of being affected even more severely in any global downturn; of greater loss of an already highly limited autonomy at the level of labour, the community, and the nation; of greater inter-regional disparities; of a level of technology which the country cannot assimilate and hence cannot creatively adapt to the requirements of some version or other of autonomous development, and so on.

But on the question of national economic autonomy, however, Kamal and Young provide a salutary note of caution when they write: "The strengths of the alternative, with its pious lip-service to a strategy of self-reliance for small countries and its unrealistic claims for the virtues of delinking from the world system, are equally not so obvious" (p. 131).

This brings me to one of the weaknesses of this welcome collection of essays. While the majority of contributors are geographers, they have not fully deployed one of the major strengths of geography. I refer to geography's sense of the spatial dimension to human social activity.

One would have liked to have seen more on spatial analysis. The social sciences, being traditionally weak in comprehending the structuring of and by space (and time), could have been given a salutary lesson in this all-important dimension of human activity.

Thus, while it is all well and good to refer to the international economy and the distribution of economic activity effected by it -- a point of view made dominant by world systems theory and which, despite McGee's rejection, it imposes itself on a number of essays in this volume, -- it is clear that it under-

specifies the actual outcome. It cannot specify why it is that one country or region is privileged over another, unless one contents oneself with the *deus ex machina* of the needs of capital, a view so monolithic and unidimensional as to rob social life of all life, reducing it to the unfolding of a Hegelian Absolute Idea.

Such privileging of regions and countries becomes all the more important in view of the spatial requirements of some of currently fashionable corporate management strategies, in particular the so-called "just-in-time" or JIT strategy which may work not towards re-location back to centre countries -- a possibility suggested by Linge (p. 24) and Kamal and Young, citing Kaplinsky and Kreye (p. 132) -- but towards the establishment of regional centres -- a possibility recognised by McGee, basing himself upon some recent studies. It then becomes important to know whether a prior spatial privilege can be turned to advantage or will become a disadvantage in the face of the new considerations.

Granted, there can be no theoretical specification of such a problem beyond reference to something about intersections and contingencies -- or, as suggested by McGee, the notion of the world economy as "a grid or lattice of places or locations which may be larger or smaller than the nation state" (p. 35), that has been advanced by some other authors, with points on the grid delimited by the interaction of six components, viz., business organisation, human and physical resource-mix, labour force structure, type of economic activity, class structure and the nation state (p. 37). The reader will have to judge how satisfactory is this notion of a grid or lattice and how successfully McGee deploys it as an analytical tool rather than as merely a convenient summary metaphor for the organisation of global economic activity.

In this regard, it is important to consider that labour-cost advantage may not or may no longer be the single most important factor in investment decisions. This has tremendous implications not only for industrial policy but also for labour policy. Thus, "rising labour costs [and] the threat of unionisation" (p. 132) may not be quite as threatening as all that to investments deriving from recent corporate considerations. Nevertheless, it should be remembered that all corporate strategies imply certain modes of labour control affected via specific modes of work and production organization. The social and political consequences of the same -- for instance, their effects upon the organizational capacities of labour -- are matters that should be given serious consideration, especially in view of the, admittedly partial, understandings we now have of the relationship between modes of industrialization and the life-chances of the democratic polity.

For instance, it might well be that Penang will become one of the centres in a reorganized semiconductor industry. That has implications not just for other countries but for other regions within the country. And to the extent that Malaysia intends remaining an open economy, policy considerations must take into account such shifts, not least because constraints upon public funds mean that anything that provides breathing space for a longer drawn-out strategy will be welcomed. Yet a breathing space at one point in time may well turn out to be a strangle-hold subsequently, in particular if it results in a class

structure in which, as has been said of Britain, the ruling class(es) can no longer rule but the subject class(es) does not know how to rule.

To be fair, and as noted earlier, McGee provides a discussion of the possibility laid down above, summarizing it as follows: "Strangely, these arguments suggest that technological development may be leading to 'locational inertia' in the pattern laid down on the industrial grid in the 1970s, and that Malaysia may be able to 'hang on' in the grid of international semiconductor production. But this conclusion will be greatly affected by the ability of the Malaysian state to maintain an attractive 'environment' for the industry" (p. 58). It is something of a pity that these issues -- is it only technological development? -- were not given more prominence in the other papers, although they might well have figured centrally "prominent" in the workshop discussion, not published together with this volume.

The other major shortcoming of this book is that it doesn't really fully deliver on the second half of the title -- "labour force processes". But it should be noted that the workshop had, in its title, "growth of the labour force" and not "labour force processes". Thus, Linge's overview shows hardly any substantial concern with labour force processes.

The various essays, in particular those by McGee, Missen, Chi and Taylor, do provide substantial information on the labour force. However, this is effectively conceptualised within an economic and technicist mould, altogether too innocent of the sociological and political components that should be present within any consideration of "labour force processes".

An instance, is the essay by Chi and Taylor which presents on the one hand a categorisation of firms by ownership status and, on the other, a categorisation of the labour force by occupational hierarchy, gender, ethnicity and wage structure. What is absent is a systematic attempt to link the two in some sort of organizational and dynamic analysis. Thus, their conclusion that they have "shown that the process of industrialization.... is substantially affected by the types of enterprise" (p. 175) cannot really be sustained. But to be fair, theirs is a preliminary exploration and as they themselves recognise "purely descriptive" (p. 175).

Absent, too, from the analyses is a coming to terms with the class structure and class dynamics resulting from the process of industrialization as it has occurred in West Malaysia. To the degree that the industrialization process is not simply a result of a combination of various factors of production, of technology, of changing sectoral relations, of a pro-industrialization state, the emerging class structure and class dynamics must be seen as critical in deciding whether or not there is a sustainable forward momentum to the process, particularly given the fact that the state is not in any position to stoke the fires of, or to provide the fuel for, growth as it did the 1970s.

As a consequence, and despite recognition of some of the points raised above (see, McGee's introduction), there is a strong economic cast to the collection. It charts the growth of manufacturing industry, the growth of a wage labour force, the cost-benefit of export-oriented industrialization, the

structure of labour demand and of remuneration, etc., but remains largely innocent of the changing class structure, the changing relations of state and society, the altered capacities of labour and the changing modes of its subordination to capital and the consequences of all these upon future political developments which, in turn, will act upon the prospects for further industrialization.

Finally, some minor errors should be noted. In McGee's essay, "Joining the Global Assembly Line", the figures provided on the growth of manufacturing industry in the 1960s contain one typographical error. Value-added grew from \$272 million (not \$272,000) in 1962 to \$1.2 billion in 1971 (p. 39). More importantly, the absolute figures cited for the number of factories and number of employees are misleading, although the trend that they indicate is clear enough. The years 1962 and 1971 were not census years, even though their coverage took in the bulk of gross output and value-added as well as about 70-80% of the total number of employees.

Without wishing to nit-pick, there should have been some indication of this fact, as growth rates, etc., calculated on the basis of the surveys, while indicative of trend, should not be presented as more than that. This is particularly true with regards to the number of establishments, as the surveys leave out the smaller ones. Thus, for example, a comparison is made between the 4,499 establishments covered by the 1978 survey as compared to the 3,372 in the 1971 survey, giving an increase of 33% (p. 41). However, the censuses reported 17,782 establishments in 1981 for West Malaysia, as compared to 11,060 in 1973, 9,013 in 1968 and 8,856 in 1963.

The brief picture painted of the pioneer industries in the 1960s (p. 39) is also somewhat misleading in implying that local capital was dominant. The 54% cited refers to ownership of share capital, not capital investment. In fact, foreign-owned (excluding Singapore-owned) pioneer industries, with 42% of the firms, accounted for 62% of output and value-added and about half of the employment in 1968.²

In conclusion, it must be reiterated that the collection, as a whole, is a more than welcome addition to the literature on Malaysian industrialization and all interested researchers should find space on their shelves for it.

Khoo Khay Jin
School of Social Sciences
Universiti Sains Malaysia
Penang

NOTES:

¹ Throughout the volume, Kamal Salih is referred to and cited as Salih. This is rather annoying coming from scholars familiar with Malaysia and its name conventions.

² See M. Lindenberg (1973), *Foreign and Domestic Investment in the Pioneer Industry*. Ph.D. dissertation, Univ. of Southern California.