

incomprehensible.² What is the purpose? One expects more from Berkeley's Indochina Studies Project.

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Making Sense of Development: An Introduction to Classical and Contemporary Theories of Development and their Application to Southeast Asia. By P.W. Preston. London and New York: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1986. 319 pp.

This is at once a useful but rather disappointing book – useful because it offers a very comprehensive and thorough literature review of contending theories of development, but a little disappointing because its economics content is rather thin (and in places wrong), and its promise to apply general development theories to Southeast Asia never fully realized.

The book is divided into four parts. The first is a brief introduction to methodology (“the nature of social theorizing”); the second looks at classical social theory, and includes separate chapters on Marx, Durkheim, and Weber; while the final section draws together the main arguments and examines “lessons for the future”. The real meat is in Part 3 (“Contemporary Theories of Development”), which takes up about two-thirds of the book. This section comprises nine chapters which examine bourgeois liberal and Marxist theories of development and a long chapter (about one-quarter of the book) on the relevance of these theories for Southeast Asia. This review will focus on this section and, in particular, on the chapter on Southeast Asia (essentially ASEAN).

The author attempts to review the “bourgeois liberal” (his words) theories of development, but his sympathies clearly lie with the various strains of Marxist theory, which are examined in chapters 10–13. Unfortunately, his own views obscure important components of the development literature, and result in a few gratuitous (and quite unwarranted) back-handers. An example of the latter is provided early on, in the book's summary, when, after correctly associating W. Arthur Lewis with early growth theory, it is asserted:

The idea of development is conceived narrowly: it is evidenced in economic growth . . . which is called by the application of the technical scientific knowledge of (Western) economic experts (and their co-workers) (p. xiv).

For Lewis to be characterized in this manner is not only wrong, but downright insulting. But, more importantly, the author skates over a large and diverse growth literature, of growing sophistication since the 1950s.

Whatever criticisms might be directed at the literature on growth models and development planning – and there are many – a volume promising the reader an introduction

2. For example, the material published since 1978 by the Vietnamese Foreign Ministry regarding Hanoi's relations with China since the 1950s presents an entirely new official version of the international politics of the Indochina wars. See E.S. Ungar, “China Studies in the Socialist Republic of Vietnam: Changes and Implications”, *Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs*, no. 16 (July 1986).

to the subject can hardly ignore these writings. Similarly, the chapter on monetarism is largely misdirected. There are important issues in monetary policy and development in Third World economies, and it is entirely consistent for a broadly-conceived development strategy to also pay careful attention to money supply and policy instruments. Instead, the author gets side-tracked almost exclusively to the Chilean reform programmes.

In the long chapter on Southeast Asia, the author has obviously read widely and he quotes local scholars extensively. But many important development issues receive scant treatment. Which theories are helpful in understanding development in the region? Is dependence a useful concept for the region? (Almost certainly not, but the issue is not examined.) What politico-social factors explain why some countries in the region have adopted better policies than others? The discussion seems to concentrate on Singapore in this chapter: perhaps understandably, since the author worked in Singapore and its literature is more readily accessible. However, writings on and in the other countries are also extensive, and they deserve better attention.

Despite these critical comments, it is a book worth having. It is thoroughly researched and well-written, it provokes a reaction (as it did from this reviewer!), and it attempts to bridge the gap between theory and application.

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