

Chapter 1, followed by three chapters dealing, respectively, with the role of government, the functions of competition and its protection, and the social elements of the economy. The discussion is then broadened: first, with the inclusion of a chapter setting the economy in its regional and wider international environment; and, second, in line with the subtitle, with a concluding chapter which considers the problems of applicability to developing countries, taking account, among other things, of the planning and decision-making competence of private enterprises in such countries, and of the extent to which the institutional framework to support and contain a social market economy is able to be developed and protected.

There is much in this book that is bound to be of considerable interest especially to those who are involved in the task of transforming the economic systems of developing nations. This is all the more likely given the present apparent appeal of market-oriented strategies involving forms of privatization and selective deregulation. As the editor rightly argues, however:

Every developing country should continue striving to find out for itself the appropriate relations between private and governmental initiative that will suit the intellectual and cultural traditions as well as the economic realities best.

This kind of argument is frequently advanced, but is much less frequently comprehended and heeded to the extent that it usually should be.

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Thailand: Development Planning in Turbulent Times. By George Abonyi and Bunyaraks Ninsananda. Asia Paper No. 3. University of Toronto-York University Joint Centre for Asia Pacific Studies, 1989.

In recent years Thailand has emerged as one of the world's fastest growing economies, giving

rise to speculation that the country will join the ranks of the Newly-Industrialized Economies (NIEs) before the end of this century. Not surprisingly, a question which frequently arises in academic circles is the extent to which development planning has helped to accelerate Thailand's economic growth rate. Thus the publication of *Thailand: Development Planning in Turbulent Times* by Professor George Abonyi and Dr Bunyaraks Ninsananda comes at an opportune moment and provides useful clues to the nature and role of development planning in Thailand.*

The book begins with some background concepts to assist the reader in interpreting the Thai development experience. It then traces and evaluates Thailand's development planning experience, beginning with the First National Economic Development Plan launched in 1961 and ending with the Sixth Plan which will be completed in 1991. This is followed by a summary of the evaluation of development planning in Thailand: its changing focus and the process of planning. Subsequently, the authors identify what they see as the key characteristics of a planning system which is more likely to be responsive to an increasingly turbulent global economic development. The final section presents some interesting conclusions on Thailand's overall development planning experience.

Given the authors' impressive academic background and extensive "hands-on" experience with the process and mechanism of development planning in Thailand, the book, as expected, provides useful and interesting insights into the nature and role of development planning in a developing economy. The authors rightly credit the various plans for laying the foundations for economic growth in the country and also for laying out the framework for the diversification and structural changes in the economy. In the latter respect, the Thai economy is much better diversified and better poised to meet the challenges of a rapidly changing global economic environment than many other developing countries in Southeast Asia.

At the same time, the authors also noted the

failure of the various plans in narrowing the ever widening gap among the various groups and regions in the country. In the present context, the authors could have also added that even though the First Plan perceived the importance of providing basic infrastructure, neither the First nor subsequent plans was able to address the problem adequately. Consequently, the woes which the economy is experiencing as a result of inadequate infrastructure may to some extent be blamed on the failure of the development planning.

The authors have also made some useful suggestions to enable development planners cope with the changing domestic and international economic environment. The most useful suggestion concerns the need to increase the consultative and participatory dimension of the planning process. More specifically, the creation of the Joint Public and Private Consultative Committee (JPPCC) and its extension to the provinces provides a desirable mechanism for the explicit participation of private sector interests in the development management process. It would have been more illuminating if the authors had assessed the effectiveness of the JPPCC and the contribution it has made to the development planning process in Thailand.

Similarly, the book would have been more useful if the authors, instead of assuming that all readers are familiar with Thailand, had presented a brief profile of the Thai economy as well as a brief discussion of the institutional framework of the planning agency, namely, the National Economic and Social Development Board (NESDB). A table of figures on the Thai economy for the years 1960 and 1990 comparing the pre-planned, and three decades of planned Thai economy would be another useful contribution by the two authors. The addition of an organizational chart of NESDB would have provided a useful guide for the reader who is not familiar with Thailand.

Finally, the concluding section is rather brief. The authors could have explained some of the problems faced by development planners in Thailand of which there must have been several.

For example, how do planners cope with inadequate data and how often have poor implementation frustrated their carefully laid plans? What lessons can other developing countries draw from the Thai experience? These and other questions may have to await a sequel of the book by the authors.

However, these minor criticisms should not detract from the overall excellence of the book which does make a significant contribution to our understanding of Thailand's development planning experience. Thus the book will be widely read not only by academics but also by a wider audience of administrators, especially development planners who seek a better understanding of development planning.

* The views expressed herein are entirely the reviewers' and do not reflect those of the organization where they are employed.

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Unity and Diversity, Regional Economic Development in Indonesia since 1970. Edited by Hal Hill. Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1989. Pp. 610.

This book is a collection of essays which examine the dimension of regional economic development in Indonesia in a comparative way. The final work is the result of a collaborative effort by 43 contributors, comprising Indonesian and Australian researchers. Twenty-five chapters cover 26 Indonesian provinces (Bengkulu is omitted due to lack of a survey writer for this province). From the foregoing one could perhaps apply the book's title, *Unity and Diversity* to the book itself rather than its Indonesian contextual meaning since, despite the large number and diversity of the contributors, the editor has managed to ensure a fairly consistent approach