

TECHNOLOGY
AND
SOCIETY

SOCIAL RESEARCH
AND PROBLEMS OF
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
IN SOUTH-EAST ASIA



SOCIAL RESEARCH AND PROBLEMS OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH-EAST ASIA

*Proceedings of a seminar
organized by the Viet-Nameese National Commission for Unesco
under the auspices of
Unesco and the Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations
in Saigon (Viet-Nam), 18 to 26 March 1960*

Edited by VU QUỐC THUC
General Rapporteur
Dean of the Faculty of Law, Saigon

Assistant Rapporteur of the seminar
Professor K. F. WALKER,
University of West Australia

U N E S C O

*Published in 1963 by the United Nations
Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
Place de Fontenoy, Paris-7^e
Printed by Ceuterick, Brussels*

TECHNOLOGY AND SOCIETY

Titles in the *Technology and society* series (formerly entitled *Tensions and technology*).

Education in a technological society: a preliminary international survey of the nature and efficacy of technical education

The community factor in modern technology
by Jerome Scott and R. P. Lynton

Cultural patterns and technical change
a manual prepared by the World Federation for Mental Health and edited by Margaret Mead

Social aspects of technical assistance in operation
a report by Morris E. Opler

The nature of conflict: studies on the sociological aspects of international tensions
by the International Sociological Association

Social implications of industrialization and urbanization in Africa south of the Sahara
prepared under the auspices of Unesco by the International African Institute, London

Urbanization in Asia and the Far East
edited by Philip M. Hauser

Urbanization in Latin America
edited by Philip M. Hauser

Social aspects of economic development in Latin America
edited by Egbert de Vries and José Medina Echavarría (2 vols.)

Social research and problems of rural development in South-East Asia
edited by Vu Quốc Thúc

SOCIAL RESEARCH AND PROBLEMS OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH-EAST ASIA

*Proceedings of a seminar
organized by the Viet-Nameese National Commission for Unesco
under the auspices of
Unesco and the Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations
in Saigon (Viet-Nam), 18 to 26 March 1960*

Edited by VU QUỐC THUC
General Rapporteur
Dean of the Faculty of Law, Saigon

Assistant Rapporteur of the seminar
Professor K. F. WALKER,
University of West Australia

U N E S C O

*Published in 1963 by the United Nations
Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
Place de Fontenoy, Paris-7^e
Printed by Ceuterick, Brussels*

P R E F A C E

The present work reports the proceedings of the seminar organized by the Viet-Nameese National Commission for Unesco, under the auspices of Unesco and of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. It deals with problems of rural life in the countries of South-East Asia, and the ways in which sociological research might help to solve them. Fifty experts and 26 observers attended the seminar, which was held from 18 to 26 March 1960 at Saigon, thanks to the generous hospitality of the Government of Viet-Nam. The material organization of the seminar was undertaken by the Viet-Nameese Government, the Unesco National Commission of Viet-Nam, and the University of Saigon, while Professor Vu Quốc Thúc, dean of the Faculty of Law, Saigon, kindly undertook to serve as Scientific Director. Unesco wishes to thank warmly the Viet-Nameese authorities and the University of Saigon for the contribution they made to organizing the seminar, and Professor Vu Quốc Thúc for his scientific direction.

The agenda, which is reproduced in Chapter I in the report of the director of the seminar, conveys a general idea of the complexity and wide scope of the problems considered. Space, unfortunately, does not permit us to reproduce in full all the forty-odd reports and papers, of a high scientific standard, which were read at the seminar. Those printed here have been chosen as having the most direct bearing on the various items of the agenda. In view of the diversity of the different studies, and the wealth of ideas presented, it was decided not to place them strictly in the chronological order in which they were submitted to the meeting.

The conclusions of the seminar, approved at the final meeting, are also given in Chapter I. The purpose of the meeting was to enable the participants, as experts, to discuss the general theme scientifically. The participants made their contributions in their individual capacity and the seminar was not constituted to make formal recommendations to governments but it is hoped that the conclusions will be carefully studied.

Unesco wishes to take this opportunity of thanking all participants for their contribution to this seminar, which has paved the way for further and more detailed research into the problems of rural life as they are found in South-East Asia.

FOREWORD

In the official terminology of the United Nations and Unesco, South-East Asia comprises all the Asian countries south of China and east of India, making a total of 11 States and territories—Borneo, Burma, Cambodia, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Laos, the Federation of Malaya, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet-Nam. These countries cover a total area of 4 million square kilometres, with a population of over 180 million.

The basic characteristic of all these countries, with the exception of Hong Kong and Singapore, is that their economies are essentially agricultural; at least 80 per cent of the population live, often very precariously, by agriculture. The future of the region will thus depend to a considerable extent upon the possibility of increasing the peasants' income by spreading new ideas and introducing new technical methods. Rural development raises extremely complex problems, which cannot be solved without an intimate knowledge of the sociological background and an understanding of the outlook of the rural population.

There is thus a close connexion between social research, though often undertaken in a purely scientific and disinterested spirit, and the various measures of reform introduced with a view to improving rural living conditions.

The purpose of the Saigon seminar was to bring together administrative officials, sociologists and economists concerned with the theoretical and practical problems of rural life. In the light of the contribution of 'pure' science to the clarification of the problem and in the light of practical experience, and confining their discussions to the South-East Asian region, the participants endeavoured to reach conclusions which might be useful alike to Unesco, FAO, and the governments of the region.

Judging by the wealth and variety of the papers presented, the seminar appears to have been extremely instructive. True, it was not always easy to close the debates to which it gave rise; and, perhaps, the conclusions of the final report raise more problems than were solved at the seminar. Nevertheless, the results were very encouraging, for they showed that, despite the uneven development of the social

sciences in different parts of the world, countries which have acquired sovereignty since the second world war are well aware of the growing importance of those sciences in present-day life. One of the most striking advantages of the seminar was that it disclosed the interest taken in the social sciences by administrative officials and research workers in the countries of South-East Asia. The following pages describe the stage reached in the application of social science to the problems of rural development in the countries of the region, and show that applied social science may provide administrators and agricultural extension workers with a particularly efficient instrument of progress.

VU QUỐC THUC

CONTENTS

I.	Report of the seminar, by Vu Quốc Thúc	11
II.	Social research and the problems of rural life in South-East Asia, by H. M. Phillips	27
III.	Problems for sociological research in the countries of South-East Asia, by Father Alain Birou	52
IV.	The rural problem in the countries of South-East Asia, by Vu Quốc Thúc	61
V.	The communication of new techniques and ideas, by D. E. Lindstrom	74
VI.	Local initiative and central government in Thailand, by Lauriston Sharp	95
VII.	Education for community development, by M. de Clerck	112
VIII.	Some economic aspects of extension work, by T. H. Silcock . . .	136
IX.	Psychological aspects of the introduction of new farming practices: an Australian study, document presented by K. F. Walker . . .	149
X.	Sociological problems of introducing new agricultural practices: a Japanese experience, by Jun'ichi Hayashi	160
XI.	Socio-economic surveying in China: the experience of rural Taiwan, by Sam-Chung Hsieh	172
XII.	Economic research and agricultural extension work: a Philippine experience, by A. M. Dalisay	181
XIII.	Some obstacles to the application of new techniques of production in South-East Asia, by Nguyen Cao Hách	189
XIV.	Participation and initiative of the local people, by R. N. Henry	199
XV.	The training of personnel in social problems of agricultural extension work, by Hsin-Pao Yang	213
XVI.	The training of agricultural extension workers, by Nguyen Manh Tu	225
XVII.	The impact of religious ideology, by Nguyen Huy Bao	231
XVIII.	Traditional values in Viet-Nam, by Bui Tuong Huân	235

XIX. *Shorter papers*

About underdevelopment, by Châu Tién Khuong	239
Social structures and trends in Viet-Nam, by Phan Tan Chuc	241
The social sciences and the problem of rural improvement in Viet-Nam, by Nguyen Khac Hoach	245
The rural development programme in Viet-Nam, by Nguyen Phuc Sa .	247
Suggestions for economic and sociological research in Viet-Nam, by Le Dinh Chan	252
Rural development in Laos, by Keo Viphakone	256
Social change and rural welfare in Indonesia, by J. A. Ismael . . .	258
The national community development programme in Thailand, by Nikom Chandravithun	262
Appendix: List of participants.	267

I. REPORT OF THE SEMINAR

by Vu Quốc Thúc

The seminar organized at Saigon by the Viet-Nameese National Commission under the sponsorship of Unesco and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations was attended by 50 participating experts and by many observers. (A list of participating experts and observers is given in the Appendix at the end of the book.)

The seminar was officially opened by H.E. Mr. Tran Huu Thê, Secretary of State for Education of Viet-Nam, in the presence of many prominent Viet-Nameese and of the representatives of the Diplomatic Corps at Saigon. In his speech of welcome, the Secretary of State stressed the importance of rural development in South-East Asia and said that the Viet-Nameese Government was making a substantial effort to improve the standard of living of the rural population. On behalf of the Director-General of Unesco, Mr. H. M. Phillips, chief of the Division of Applied Social Sciences, thanked the Viet-Nameese National Commission for organizing the seminar and expressed his gratitude to the experts and the representatives of the United Nations and the Specialized Agencies for their collaboration.

The seminar adopted the following agenda:

The role of sociological and psychological research in rural development programmes.

Rural life and working conditions in South-East Asia: actual situation, existing structures and social trends, influence of traditional values and social structures on standards of living.

Problems of the sociological training of agricultural instructors. Problems connected with the introduction and communication of new techniques and ideas.

Problem of education in its relationship to community development. Social research and the teaching of the social sciences in South-East Asia.

These problems were examined at 11 plenary meetings held in the conference hall of the Diên Hồng Palace. It was decided, in order to stress the regional character of the seminar, that the meetings should in turn be under the chairmanship of each of the South-East

Asian countries, taken in alphabetical order. Professor Vu Quốc Thúc (Viet-Nam) and Professor K. F. Walker (Australia) were appointed general rapporteur and assistant rapporteur of the seminar respectively.

Thirty reports were submitted or communicated to the meeting. This large number shows the considerable importance of the seminar, which was also demonstrated by the large public attendance at each meeting (about a hundred persons).

THE ROLE OF SOCIOLOGICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL RESEARCH IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

Three reports were submitted by Mr. H. M. Phillips (Unesco), Mr. Nguyen Khac Hoach (Viet-Nam) and Father Birou (France) respectively.

Mr. H. M. Phillips opened the discussion with general observations on the role of social research in the solution of problems of rural life. He recalled the classic distinction between *pure research* intended to contribute to the development of scientific discipline or the scientific body of knowledge, *basic research* for the collection and interpretation of the underlying data necessary for the understanding of the problems of particular regions (e.g., ecological, economic and demographic resources; legal and administrative systems; system of land ownership; class structure, etc.) and *applied research* aimed at contributing to the implementation of programmes of action by means of economic and social surveys and studies of rural communities. He indicated what the various social science disciplines could contribute to the solution of rural problems and cited instances from South-East Asia and from other parts of the world. His résumé included a passage dealing with the way in which social research could be used in the evaluation of development projects.

Father Birou drew the seminar's attention to the need to integrate rural development into a general programme of economic development. Economic development always involves mobilization at all levels of the socio-economic system. It is also closely bound up with other aspects of daily life. All the humane sciences must therefore be brought into play if programmes of action are to be correctly prepared. As regards the importance of human factors in rural development, a distinction should be made between the now traditional rural societies in process of development and rural societies already participating in a market economy. Human factors would appear to have been rather an obstacle to the introduction of new techniques in traditional societies. Thus careful psychological preparation is needed in order to carry out development projects in such societies. Education can play a vital part in this connexion, and

teachers must be associated in the research undertaken by economists and sociologists.

Mr. Nguyen Khac Hoach's report was more specially devoted to social research in Viet-Nam. In that country, social research is not entrusted to a single body but is carried out by several governmental institutions, such as the National Statistical Institute, the General Commissariat for Agricultural Development, the Commissariat for Civic Action and the Committee for Community Development. He laid particular stress on the importance of the research carried out during the past two years by the 'Economics and Humanism' Group. This research had helped the Viet-Nameese Government to prepare its rural development projects (especially those relating to land reform and community development).

The discussion of these reports revealed that all the experts were agreed on the need for research, not only during the preparation of rural development programmes, but also during and after their implementation. Research should cover basic data (geographical, ecological, demographic, institutional, psychological, etc.), the objectives to be reached, the means to be employed and the evaluation of final results. The discussion also showed the essential role of innovators in the adoption of new techniques, and the need to evaluate the social and economic effects of rural development. Such development inevitably implies social changes. The aim of social research is to show how changes are produced and how they can be directed so as to avoid a breakdown in the social structure.

RURAL LIFE AND WORKING CONDITIONS IN SOUTH-EAST ASIA

Nine reports were presented, dealing with existing structures and social trends and the influence of traditional values and social structures on standards of living in various South-East Asian countries. These were an introductory report (the rural problem in South-East Asia), by Mr. Vu Quốc Thuc (Viet-Nam); two reports on Thailand, by Mr. Nikom Chandravithun (Thailand) and Mr. Lauriston Sharp (United States of America); a report on Cambodia, by Mr. Ouk Soeung (Cambodia); a report on Indonesia, by Mr. J. E. Ismaël (Indonesia); four reports on Viet-Nam, by Messrs. Phan Tan Chuc, Châu Tiên Khuong, Nguyen Huy Bao and Bui Tuong Huân (Viet-Nam).

In his introductory report, Mr. Vu Quốc Thuc set out to demonstrate that problems of rural life in the countries of South-East Asia could, despite their great complexity, be reduced to a common denominator, namely the need to modernize rural life.

Farm work imposes on peasants a number of limitations due to

their habitat, work calendar, social life, etc. For example, it is not easy for peasants to organize public utility services or defend themselves against bands of pirates. In the West, however, thanks to technological progress, improved transport, the electrification of the countryside and the mechanization of agriculture, the peasants have gradually freed themselves from these limitations. There is no appreciable difference between rural and urban living conditions. Such is not the case in the countries of South-East Asia. A deep gulf exists in these countries between urban and rural life, because the growth of cities has not been the result of natural economic development, but of contact with the West. The towns of South-East Asia may be thought of as doors through which Western ideas and techniques have entered. For a long time, these novelties met with strong resistance from the peasant population. Yet there seems to have been a kind of awakening since the second world war, and South-East Asian peasants, realizing their poverty, ardently desire to improve their lot by means of appropriate reforms. Circumstances would therefore appear favourable to the combining of governmental intervention and peasant initiative under a national community development programme.

With special reference to Thailand, Mr. Nikom Chandravithun said that many community development projects had been set on foot in that country, and had involved heavy annual expense; however, progress had been very slow for many reasons, in particular the lack of a long-term general policy. The Government of Thailand had recently prepared a national community development plan based on the following principles: (a) villagers must learn to use their own cultivation, their own manpower and their own resources in order to improve their living conditions; (b) the governmental aid already available must be made more effective by means of improved methods of action.

Professor Lauriston Sharp tried to make an 'inventory of resources' as suggested by Mr. Phillips in his report; that is, to describe, analyse and evaluate the possibilities of utilizing peasant initiative in Thailand. He took as his point of departure the social structure of the Thai village, where, outside the family, only four definite social groups existed: the Buddhist priests, the notables, the lay temple committee and the schoolmasters. He had come to the conclusion that the priests had the most prestige and could play an extremely important part as innovators. Among the notables, a distinction should be made between elected officials and the real chiefs of the community. Any change obviously needed the acceptance of the real chiefs. The lay temple committee could be a highly effective instrument for local reforms. Lastly, the schoolmasters, owing to their knowledge and experience, could make a useful contribution to community development.