



Five Decades of Urbanization in Southeast Asia

A Personal Encounter

T. G. McGee

香港亞太研究所

Hong Kong Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies

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Director : Yeung Yue-man, PhD(*Chic.*), Professor of Geography
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HK\$30.00
ISBN 962-441-060-7

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About the author

T.G. McGee is Director of the Institute of Asian Research and Professor of Geography at the University of British Columbia.

Acknowledgement

The preparation of this paper was supported by the Lippo Urban Research Fund at the Hong Kong Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies.

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ISBN 962-441-060-7

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The Southeast Asian city is a mosaic of cultural and racial worlds each invoking the memory of other lands and other people; the tree-lined avenues of Phnom Penh and Saigon reminiscent of Paris; the canals and stuffy buildings of old Batavia, replicas of the medieval Dutch town; and the towering skyscrapers of downtown Singapore are part of the universal Western business district. The bustling overcrowded Chinatowns with their pavements full of hawkers and stalls that reach back into the cool of the open shops; and above the crowded tenements with washing hanging from the open windows. Innumerable flags hung for the procession of hawkers, human carriers and grubby children who move along the pavements. The streets of Indian textile sellers — white draped figures beckoning the potential purchaser with a frenzy of a Greek chorus at the moment of tragedy. The aroma of curries labels the street. The rural quiet sets apart the Malay urban Kampung or the Burmese “kwetthit” where gardens and fruit trees mask the houses and absorb the noises of the Malay or Burmese orchestras from the Japanese transistor radios. Only the cupola or the white mosque or the glinting gold stupa or the Buddhist temple shows above the sea of green tree-tops. Around the city spreads the spacious residences of the wealthy elite and less sizable Western bungalows of the emerging middle class interspersed with the attap huts of the poor and dispossessed of the city — the squatters. Here the contrast are not those of cultural diversity of the racial worlds of the inner city, but the contrasts between wealth and squalor.¹

Introduction

The lengthy quotation which heads this paper captures the period of my first engagement with the cities of Southeast Asia. It is no coincidence that this description of the landscape of the Southeast

Asian cities written 30 years ago coincides with the current mood of some parts of human geography that calls for more "self reflexivity" on the role of the researcher and the natural tendency as one goes older to want to talk about the experiences of the past.

I was rather fortunate in the sense that, at the age of 22, I was thrown into a teaching position in a Southeast Asian university. This provided me the opportunity to travel extensively throughout Southeast Asia in the period between 1958 and 1965 and develop my passion for the life and landscapes of Southeast Asian cities. Ever since I arrived in Singapore in 1958 and walked the streets of Chinatown in the early morning, I have been hooked by the colour, the people, the life of Southeast Asian cities. And, this is a "love affair" which has continued for almost four decades, constantly rekindled by visits and the opportunity to provide periodic reviews of the dramatic changes that have occurred in the patterns of Southeast Asian urbanization.

The documenting of these changes has been largely decadal coinciding with the release of the ten year census reports of the majority of the Southeast Asian countries. They and other statistical sources provide the skeleton, the bones upon which flesh of experience can be planted. I am therefore delighted that my friend and colleague Yue-man Yeung has given me the opportunity once again to engage in this review process.

Yet, on this occasion, I do not want to simply describe the internal demographic, economic and social changes in Southeast Asian urbanization in the decade of the 1980s² but, rather, I want to focus on the question of how the changing context of research in the last years is affecting our implementation of the Southeast Asian urbanization process. In suggesting this approach, I was struck down by an idea introduced in an earlier Occasional Paper in this series which spoke of the "pulverization" of research during the 1980s.³ This felicitous comment was introduced to suggest that *research* had moved from issues of grand theory (dependency underdevelopment), which certainly has been central to much of my work on Southeast Asian urbanization, to a concern with the local level which emphasizes the "everyday

lives" of people who are actually engaged in the process of urbanization.

Four elements contribute to these concerns. First, the erosion of socialist power which has led to a collapse of the grand designs of the Cold War. Secondly, the discontent with the modernist project of which classical and Marxist theories of economic development assumed some closure and success in achieving the state of "development." Thirdly, the increasing skepticism that the world can be ecologically sustainable if the developing countries were to follow the same growth trajectories and assume similar levels of fossil fuels consumption to those operating in the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries.⁴

While I do not want to engage this debate here, I do suggest that it is necessary to engage this paradigmatic shift from grand theory to local specificity by attempting to develop theoretical paradigms that fuse the best elements of both approaches.

One other element must be introduced into this discussion, which is the explanation of the meaning of the Southeast Asian region. The discussion which follows focuses upon "one geographical region" of Asia, namely Southeast Asia, which is immensely diverse culturally and politically. It has only recently been recognized as a geographic entity during the Second World War and before that was often described as an extension of the more powerful Sinic and Indian cultures. Today, it includes the countries of Myanmar (Burma), Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei and Indonesia which are increasingly being brought together under the auspices of Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) which hopes to include all Southeast Asian states by 2005.⁵

These political developments reinforce a larger historical thrust that portrays Southeast Asia as a distinctive cultural formation in the configuration of Asian regions.

The view of the region current in the nineteenth century as an underdeveloped cultural extension of the large society cultures of China and India has been vigorously contested by scholars in the

period since 1945. The works of Fisher, Reid and Lombard have clearly established the indigenous roots of Southeast Asian culture and the capacity for the absorption and assimilation of the many outside influences of Hinduism, Islam, and Sinicization that have impacted on the region.⁶ This interpretation presents the region as a *foyer* for the intervention of local and outside forces in which the local forces are portrayed as in a constant state of "negotiation" with the outside. The implication of accepting the position is to recognize that Southeast Asian cities have persistent "historical features" unique to the region.

Of course, this unifying image of a region which in 1990 was approaching 500 million people, located in ten states of immense linguistic, religious and cultural diversity is somewhat problematic. Some writers have argued that Southeast Asia is better understood as a "cellular society" or plural society⁷ in which a plethora of cultural cells interact in a way that acts against the unity of the region. This was certainly a prevailing view at the height of colonialism in the 1920s and 1930s. In the current period, there is also a view that the region of Southeast Asia may lose some of its regional identity by being drawn into much closer relationships with larger emerging regional organizations, such as the Asia Pacific Economic Community or the East Asia Economic Caucus.⁸

In the post-Second World War period, as the Southeast Asian countries became independent, the fault-line between the state socialist countries of Myanmar, Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia and the market economies of the remainder of Southeast Asia posed a major division. However, the opening up of the socialist economies to market forces has forced a convergence of the Southeast Asian identity. Thus, the regional organization of ASEAN established in 1967 was gradually expanded to include Brunei (1984) and Vietnam (1995), and the remaining Southeast Asian countries have indicated an intention to join by the year 2005. The formation of the ASEAN ten will give an institutional reality to the geographical fuzziness of the region and create a region in which free movement of people and commodities will be similar to other large trading blocs, such as the European Union (EU). This has

important implications for the cities of the region which will experience greater international migration and be forced to become more economically competitive.

This paper is organized into two main parts: the first part analyzes the changing patterns of Southeast Asian urbanization between 1960 and 2000. The second part discusses the future of urbanization in Southeast Asia and the challenges that the urbanization process poses for the development of sustainable city life.

The Changing Patterns of Southeast Asian Urbanization: 1960 to 2000

Introduction

Four main trends have characterized the Southeast Asian urbanization process since 1960. First, the ongoing increase in the proportion of people living in urban areas. Between 1960 and 2000, the levels of urbanization are estimated to have increased from 17.6 to 35.5 per cent which will continue increasing until 2020 when it reaches 50.6 per cent.⁹ Secondly, the rapid incorporation of the ASEAN components of Southeast Asia (namely, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Brunei and the Philippines) into the global economy is producing rapid structural transformations in the economies which have major impacts on urbanization. The four mainland countries of Myanmar, Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam which still retain, to a varying degree, mixed economies only partially open to foreign investment, have much slower rates of urbanization and structural change, but all indications are that they will follow the paths of other ASEAN countries in the first two decades of the twenty-first century.

A third trend which is characterizing Southeast Asian urbanization is the emergence of large mega-urban regions which dominate the urban hierarchies of most of these countries. Finally, in most of these countries, there are growing social changes occurring in urban areas which are characterized by the emergence of a

consumption orientated middle class who adds distinctive new elements to the social life of the cities. Over the last 50 years, these trends have been accentuated in each of the decades.

This emphasis upon the overreaching trends through the five decades is somewhat homogenizing. It is even more problematic if the diversity of Southeast Asia and particularly the urban centres of the region are taken into account as Bert Hoselitz has reminded us:

The difficulty in constructing even an ideal model of urban culture is due to the fact that its outstanding characteristic is its heterogeneity and that, therefore, sets of culture traits found in urban centres of one country may not be repeated in another.¹⁰

The First Decade

The 1950s: Pseudo-urbanization

In the end, this problem of seeking a common unified element for the cities of Southeast Asia did not prevent me from attempting to find unifying themes in Southeast Asian urbanization. Thus, in *The Southeast Asian City*, published in 1967, but essentially drawing material taken from the 1950s, the censuses of 1960 and travel in the region between 1958 and 1965, I was fascinated how the political process, characterized by colonial devolution and vigorous nationalism, of the post-independence era was affecting the large cities of the region. In this period, the political elites were mainly interested in establishing the "custody" of their countries, and economic goals were less important. Only in the Philippines, where this phase of nationalism had been more protracted, was this perhaps not the case. The reaction of the political elites was a desire to turn the capital cities (in virtually all cases also the largest city and port) away from what they perceived as a parasitic role developed during the colonial era, in which the cities were to assume "orthogenetic" roles as the "concrete symbols" of the national ethos; in some ways, the desire was to turn them into "cult centres" harking back to the model of Ankor. Interestingly, this process was also accomplished by a rapid increase in the civil

service and defence forces, which allowed the indigenous populations to increase their numbers in the cities.

The economic function of these cities was essentially based upon merchant capital controlled by foreign and Chinese interests. At this point, new political elites were generally more interested in establishing political control; and, their relationships with the merchant classes were continued largely in a colonial mould. Because of the dualistic structure of the economy, there were quite large populations of low-income people engaged in what later came to be called the informal sector. These were still essentially alien cities in which immigrants (Chinese and Indians) formed significant groups.

Given the rapidly accelerating rates of population growth in the 1950s, slow agricultural growth and thus limited employment prospects in rural areas, along with continuing political instability based on regional, political or ethnic discontent, there were considerable flows of population to the cities at the time. The economic structures of these cities were ill-equipped to cope with this influx for there had been very little growth of manufacturing. As a consequence, new migrants crowded into low-income service occupations and often settled in poorly-serviced squatter settlements. This reinforced the social and economic dualism of the cities and led me to label this phase of Southeast Asian urbanization as "pseudo-urbanization." By this, I meant the tendency for the large cities of Southeast Asia to grow without changing the economic base they had inherited from the colonial period.

It must be emphasized that the above-mentioned study focused on the changing character of the largest cities in the region. The colonial period had seen the emergence of a large port city in each country: Rangoon, Bangkok, Singapore, Jakarta and Manila, and smaller capitals such as Kuala Lumpur, Hanoi, Phnom Penh and Vientiane, and in these cities much of the urban activity of these countries was focused. They were invariably exhibiting a dominance of the political, economic and urban cultural life of their respective countries. In concentrating on these large cities, I was very influenced by two seminal papers published in the early

1950s by Fryer (1953) and Ginsburg (1955), which developed an early thesis concerning the dominance of the "primate cities" in Southeast Asian countries.¹¹

The Second Decade

The 1960s: From Homogeneity to Diversity

By the early 1970s, it was clear that this picture of Southeast Asian urbanization was no longer adequate. The preceding decade had seen some Southeast Asian countries begin to show dramatic increases in economic growth, while others remained much as they had been in the 1950s. Whereas I had been able to seek the unifying concept of "colonial inheritance and political nationalism" to capture the unity of the cities of Southeast Asia in the late 1950s, by the early 1970s the characteristics of the Southeast Asian cities had become much more diverse, as they reflected varied trajectories of economic, political and social growth in the different Southeast Asian countries. This seemed to support the accuracy of Akin Mabogunje's statement: "For cities exist as points of economic articulation on the landscape and their *raison d'être* can only be understood in terms of the economic system they grew up to serve."¹²

I attempted to grapple with this diversity in two papers published in 1971.¹³ Table 1 shows selected Southeast Asian cities at this time. I included Hong Kong because of its crucial relationship with the Chinese community and commodity and capital flows of Southeast Asia (a point elaborated later in the paper). As Table 1 shows, all the selected cities showed considerable numerical increases in the 1960s, although the factors contributing to this increase varied markedly. For instance, in-migration contributed the major part of Bangkok's increase in the 1960s. On the other hand, in Singapore as in Hong Kong, in-migration has ceased to be a significant element in population growth since the mid-1960s. This has been associated with a decline in the birth rate in both cities which has been an important factor in slowing the rates of natural increase. But, although the growth of the larger cities has

Table 1 Population Increase of Selected Southeast Asian Cities

	Year	Population	Annual % increase	Year	Population	Annual % increase	Year	Population
Greater Bangkok	1947	781,662	8.4	1960	1,633,346	8.6	1969	2,900,000(E)
Kuala Lumpur	1947	176,000	8.0	1957	316,000	7.5	1969	600,000(E)
Singapore ¹	1947	680,000	14.0	1957	1,634,100	2.0	1968	1,987,900(E)
Greater Jakarta	1931	533,015	15.0	1961	2,933,052	5.8	1969	4,300,000(E)
Hong Kong ¹	1947	1,750,000(E)	6.1	1960	3,133,131	3.2	1969	4,039,700(E)
Saigon M.A.	1947	111,000(E)	77.4	1962	1,400,000(E)	31.0	1968	4,000,000(E)
Manila	1948	1,366,840	4.7	1960	2,135,705	5.8	1969	3,000,000(E)

Notes: 1. Entire area.

(E) = Estimate.

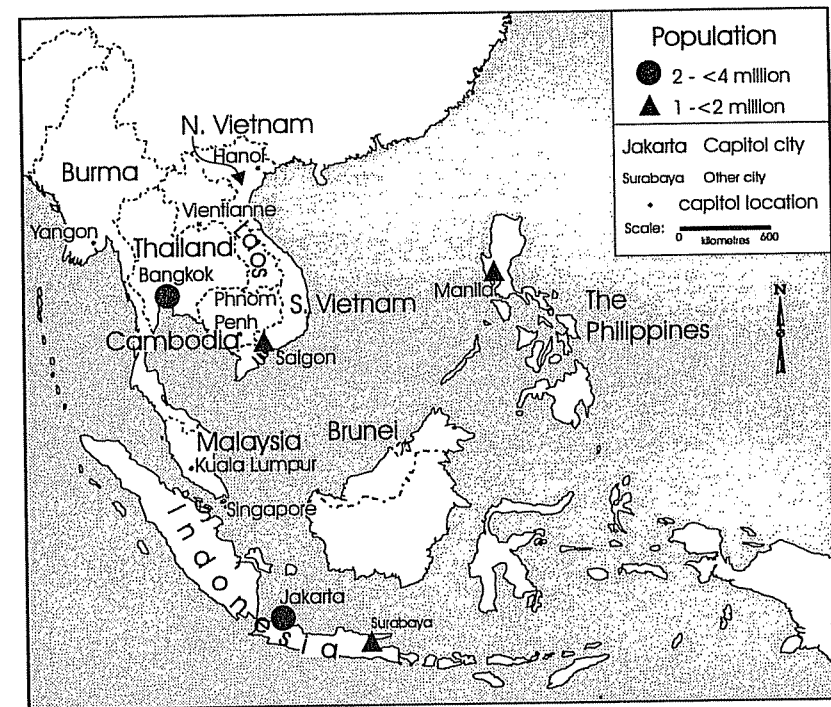
Sources: Various official statistics.

continued at a rapid pace, the changes in the region mentioned earlier have broken down the relatively homogeneous features of the cities as they appeared in the late 1950s.

Of course, this growth of cities has been associated with continuing high rates of population growth throughout the region, but here too the homogeneous picture appears to be breaking down. The falling birth rates of Singapore in the 1960s appear to have characterized some other Southeast Asian nations (although not to the same marked extent), and the Malthusian prospects of food supplies being inadequate for these growing populations did not occur, except in isolated pockets of countries, such as Indonesia. In part, this may be attributed to the increased productivity resulting from the introduction of new strains of rice and other technological innovations, particularly the increased use of fertilizers which has led some writers to describe these changes as a "green revolution."

Other factors also led to changes in the region in the decade of the 1960s. First, the geopolitical conditions of the Southeast Asian region were now much more polarized (Figure 1). In the immediate post-war period, the nations of Southeast Asia were struggling to create an independent image which culminated in the Afro-Asian Conference in Bandung in 1954. But in the late 1950s and 1960s, a marked polarization occurred. At that point, only Burma really adhered to a fragile neutralism. The reasons for this polarization were not always clear and must await the analysis of the historians, but the effect was to draw the lines between the socialist states, particularly North Vietnam, and the remainder of the countries (with the exception of Burma) which, while they had various mixes with the public sector, adhered to the capitalist free enterprise system. In the former French Indo-China territories, the lines had been drawn in military terms in the Vietnam War, which dominated the patterns of urbanization. In the remainder of the countries, these lines had not been so clearly drawn in military terms, and the close relationships of these countries to the developed capitalist societies (in which I would include Japan) had

Figure 1 The Urban Pattern in Southeast Asia Circa 1960



important repercussions on the character of the cities, particularly with respect to foreign investment.

A second consequence of this polarization was the relative growth of foreign capitalist investment in the region. Japan was the leader in this respect, but the United States and European countries, such as West Germany, were also active. While a considerable part of this investment was in raw materials, the growth of industrial investment was important and played a significant

role in the growth of industries in the Philippines, Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore. But, generally these industries were import-substitution based and did not solve the problems of employment. However, the increase in industrial production was certainly greater than would have been thought possible in the late 1950s.

A third and related point, particularly as it affected the character of the big cities of the region, was the growth of tourism. At the beginning of the 1960s, most of the cities of the region received below 100,000 tourists a year; by the early 1970s, many received half a million. The impact of this influx of tourists on the economies of the cities was immense. These developments were obvious in the burst of hotel building, the tourist-oriented shopping complexes and the considerable employment and foreign exchange it provided.

The consequences of these trends suggested that, while some of the basic features of the 1950s remained, the homogeneity of this picture had been broken down. Broadly, there was now a fourfold pattern of urban development in the region. Firstly, two "city-states" — Singapore and Hong Kong — emerged as the two fastest-growing cities in the region in economic terms. Central to an understanding of this growth was their "city-state" character. Secondly, in the smaller nations such as Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand, each dominated by one large city, while economic growth had been occurring, institutional and social problems were still a grave hindrance to economic growth and had an important effect on the character and pattern of urbanization. Thirdly, the pattern of the 1950s had continued in Indonesia and Burma — high rates of rural-urban migration and little economic development based within the cities. In these countries, a pattern of "urban involution" prevailed. Finally, the continuance of the Indo-China War had produced a pattern of urbanization typical of the early phases of military decolonization, for the cities became refugee camps with an economy based on the war and a large influx of foreign funds.

The Third Decade

The 1970s: New Forms of Integration into the Global System

By the early 1980s, the Southeast Asian urban system had begun to change even more markedly. The very significant changes that occurred at the global level in the production process, the rapid growth of communications and the increasing flows of capital into the region all had major impacts on the urban system of Southeast Asia. Together with Warwick Armstrong, I attempted to document these changes through the concept of the "convergence divergence" hypothesis, which on one hand argued that the great cities of the market economies of Southeast Asia were converging in terms of their consumption patterns and lifestyles, as the middle and upper classes began to adopt the features of a global urban culture. On the other hand, because production features of the cities often remained quite different, there was great variation in the lower income inhabitants of the city.¹⁴

At issue here is the manner in which the major cities of Southeast Asia are being integrated into a wider global system of trade, transportation and marketing of consumption lifestyles. The suggestion that the middle and upper class inhabitants of large cities in Southeast Asia are becoming more similar because they see similar films and television programmes, wear the same clothes and adopt western-style food, is not widely accepted. In part, this view does not take sufficient account of the forces of national culture which underlie these "global lifestyles," or of the elements of synthesis that may accompany this global impingement. I would argue that, international forces are increasingly becoming a major element in the collective consumption features of the Southeast Asian city, like office buildings, universities, airports, transit freeways, etc. This is also occurring in the rapid suburbanization that has characterized the cities in the last few years, and the internal household consumption patterns of the middle class are remarkably similar. In this section, I attempt to document some elements of these changes.

Table 2 sets forth the basic data on population urbanization and the economic features of Southeast Asian countries, reflecting

Table 2 Selected Data on Southeast Asian Market Economies, 1960-1982

	Population (mid-1982, 000,000s)	Average annual population growth (%)		Urban population as % of total	
		1960-70	1970-82	1960	1982
Type I					
Hong Kong	5.2	2.5	2.4	89	93
Singapore	2.5	2.4	1.5	100	100
Type II					
Malaysia	14.5	2.9	2.5	26	40
Philippines	50.7	3.0	2.7	32	39
Thailand	48.5	3.1	2.4	13	18
Type III					
Indonesia	152.6	2.2	2.3	16	22
Burma	34.9	2.2	2.2	19	24
Type IV					
Vietnam	61.7	2.6		16	20

Source: Armstrong and McGee (1985).

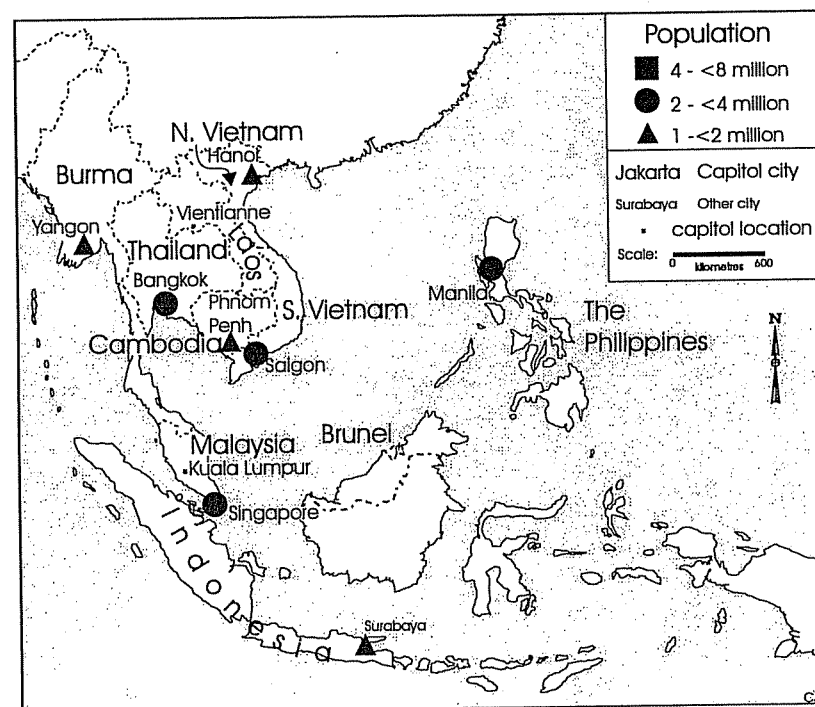
Average annual urban growth rate (%)		Proportion of labour force in main economic sectors (%)					
1960-70	1970-82	Agriculture		Industry		Services	
		1960	1980	1960	1980	1960	1980
3.1	2.4	6	2	53	51	41	47
2.4	1.5	6	2	27	38	68	61
3.5	3.4	59	42	13	19	29	39
4.2	3.8	58	52	16	16	26	33
4.7	4.3	82	71	5	10	13	19
3.7	4.5	71	57	9	13	21	30
3.7	3.9	68	67	11	10	21	23
4.1	3.4	79	68	6	12	15	21

changes in the period of our discussion. Generally, it reinforces the patterns which we defined in the decade of the 1960s. Of the four types of urbanization as reflected in Table 2, the case of Vietnam is most interesting, for the State has attempted to intervene strongly in the urbanization process. With the reunification and formation of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam in 1976, the major problem was in merging the "socialist economy" of the north with the "south," which focused on its swollen cities, particularly Ho Chi Minh City (formerly Saigon-Cholon), where a planned movement of people out of these cities was carried out "... to convert the urban economies from consumer to 'producer' orientation."¹⁵ Analysts reported that the deurbanization strategy, "... while not successful in bringing down the population to the 2.5 million level hoped for, the size of Ho Chi Minh City has been contained, reaching 3.29 million in 1985, well below its estimated population of 1975. Hanoi has grown to 2.67 million."¹⁶ Efforts to achieve an "enduring transformation" to a producer economy have been less successful, and the State appears to control only a limited amount of the goods traded.

With respect to the market economies of Southeast Asia, their continuing integration into the world system of trade and production has reinforced the patterns of the early 1970s (see Figure 2). At the level of industrial production, one of the most important trends has been the emergence of Malaysia and Thailand as important industrial exporters. The import-substitution policies of the last two decades have led to the growth of large industrial estates outside many of the major cities, but in addition new free export zones have been developed, sometimes located in secondary cities, such as Penang in Malaysia, now one of the largest centres of semi-conductor assembly in the world. This has introduced new patterns of labour force formation, leading to an increase of women in the industrial workforce.

While the proletarianization trend was important in Southeast Asian urbanization in the 1970s, it should not be over emphasized. As it was occurring, there still remained a significant portion of the Southeast Asian cities' population engaged in the

Figure 2 The Urban Pattern in Southeast Asia Circa 1970



activities of the informal sector which has persisted as a major element of employment until the present day. During this decade, I carried out several studies of the activities of street vendors, an ubiquitous and prominent component of the informal sector. Studies in Hong Kong, and selected Southeast Asian cities such as Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, Manila and Jakarta, indicated that the economic contribution of these street vendors through the sale of food and other commodities was considerable. They also indi-

cated that the capacity of these micro-entrepreneurs to accumulate capital and expand their operations was important. At the same time, these studies also indicated that the economic life of these street vendors was often precarious. Urban government policy saw them as essentially illegal, posing problems for transportation and hygiene. As the economy of the Southeast Asian cities began to develop and more formal shopping outlets, such as malls, developed, so the hawkers were squeezed out and often evicted from the central city.¹⁷ This dilemma is described with much sympathy in Lea Jellinek's life history of a Jakarta hawker, *The Wheel of Fortune*.¹⁸

It is, however, at the level of the movement of capital and investment that the international impacts of this period of integration have been dramatically imposed. Despite the realization that urban patterns of individual countries are at least partially shaped by the flows of international capital, there has been surprisingly little focus on how this process operates in the developing world. David Harvey's interpretation of this process is of considerable help in providing a theoretical framework for this type of analysis. As he points out, capital can be seen to be operating in three circuits. First, there is the circuit of *primary capital* which involves the appropriation of surplus value from labour. Secondly, there is the circuit of *secondary capital* which involves the flow of capital into "fixed assets," where it is important to distinguish between fixed capital engaged in the production process and that which functions as a physical framework for production (the "built environment" for production). Within the secondary circuit, capital also flows into a consumption fund which is "formed out of commodities which function as aids rather than direct inputs to consumption."¹⁹ Some items are directly enclosed within the consumption process (consumer durables, such as cookers, washing machines, etc.) — the built environment of consumption. Some items in the built environment, such as the transport network, function directly for both production and consumption. Thirdly, there is a *tertiary circuit of capital* which consists of investment in science and technology, and social expenditures designed to im-

prove the processes of reproduction of labour power (e.g., education).

Harvey's main purpose in this analysis is to show how crises within these various circuits of capital can be resolved by the switching of capital between the circuits, in particular in cases of overaccumulation in the primary circuit. This switch of capital can only be created if "the various manifestations of overaccumulation can be transformed into money capital which can move freely and unhindered into these forms of investment."²⁰ This needs a money supply and credit system creating "fictional capital" in advance of production and consumption, in both the consumption fund (housing mortgages, etc.) and fixed capital. Thus, financial and state institutions act as a "kind of collective nerve centre governing and mediating the relations between the primary and secondary circuits of capital."²¹

This theoretical exploration is set within the empirical context of the analysis of long waves of capital accumulation and contraction in the world economy.²² In this particular approach, the long boom between 1945 and 1973 is now said to be entering a phase of contraction, involving a period of decline of the American hegemony and a form of merger between state and private corporations which will undermine the power of multinationals.²³ Perhaps, of more interest is how this period of boom, which might be more accurately extended to the end of the 1970s (1973 being the important date of the start of the downturn), precipitated a "switching crisis" and involved the spatial movement of capital as one response to the problem within, what may be labelled, "networks of capital."

Broadly speaking, these flows of capital (which will be equated with financial resources) may be divided sectorally and geographically. Sectorally, three sectors characterize financial flows (capital): (1) official development assistance, such as bilateral grants; (2) private flows, consisting of direct investment, bilateral portfolio investments, multilateral portfolio investments and export credits; and (3) grants by private voluntary agencies. During the period between 1960 and 1976, there was a marked shift in

financial flows from developed to developing countries; in that sector, official development assistance declined from 60 per cent to 42 per cent of the total, while private flows increased from 38 per cent to 54 per cent.

Geographically then, we may recognize that at the level of direct net foreign investment there is an international network of capital flowing into the Southeast Asian market economies dominated by the United States, Japan, Germany, France and the United Kingdom. The role of the international banking system is crucial in this flow of capital. Its importance in the Asian region may be gauged by the dramatic increase in the number of international banks active in the region. For example, in Singapore the number of international trading banks and investment banks increased from 60 in 1970 to more than 100 by 1983.

Within the region, there are also networks of capital that may be labelled regional networks, in which the overseas Chinese in particular are operating, mainly out of Hong Kong and Singapore. As Wu and Wu point out, "there is ample reason to believe that over the years sizable amounts of capital owned by ethnic Chinese in Asia have been deposited"²⁴ in these city states, awaiting reinvestment. For instance, "Hong Kong financial authorities have estimated the annual flow of Chinese funds from Southeast Asia since 1964 at HK\$ 1 billion (US\$ 80 million) a year," and Singapore has played a similar role through its Asian dollar market (see Table 3). This network of capital is facilitated by a financial network in which overseas Chinese banks play a highly important role. Taiwan also plays an important role in the flow of capital as is shown in Table 3.

Thirdly, there is the capital network at a national level where national capital is invested within the nation. Finally, there is the sub-regional capital network where provincial capital is invested within a province.

These geographically defined networks are, of course, artificial, for financial flows recognize no boundaries except those imposed by political intervention. In simple terms, what this indicates is a substantial growth in the fluidity and availability of

Table 3 Foreign Investments in Selected Southeast Asian Countries by Investors in Hong Kong, Singapore and Taiwan (US\$ million)

		Total from all countries	Hong Kong	Singapore	Taiwan
Indonesia ¹	(1968-75)	2,828.3	267.4	100.5	16.0
Philippines ¹	(1968-75)	500.7			85.1
Thailand ²	(1960-75)	197.1	11.2	2.3	22.6
Malaysia ³	(1966-75)	535.5	26.0	144.5	2.8

Notes: 1. Approved investment projects.
2. Total required capital.
3. Total approved investment.

Source: Wu and Wu (1980), p. 102.

capital (whether through direct investment or indirect investment) in the market economies of Asia, the flow of which has been greatly facilitated by the growth and development of a wide variety of financial institutions. Part of the "switching crisis" of the developed countries has been resolved by a geographical shift in investment to the developing countries. How has this facilitated and impacted on the urbanization process and labour force formation process in Asia?

A comparison of the diverse strategies adopted by the Japanese in investment in Malaysia and Indonesia indicates how the flows of capital affect internal patterns. In the early 1970s, Japanese business and government authorities made decisions designed to restructure slowly the Japanese economy over the next two decades. This called for exporting low value-added manufacturing and high pollution manufacturing processes "offshore," while continuing to develop high technology industries in Japan. In Malaysia, this led to a very rapid growth of Japanese invest-

ment in electronics and labour-intensive firms. By 1977, there were 489 firms with a culminative capital of US\$ 425 million, located mostly in the developed western states. During the 1970s, there was also investment in natural gas and other developments by firms. The reaction to a "switching crisis" by Japan has thus been the basis of a remarkable growth in manufacturing in Malaysia, shifting the proportion of people engaged in industrial activity from 12 per cent in 1960 to 20 per cent in 1977.²⁵ Japanese and other foreign and national investment in industry has also influenced the urban system quite markedly, particularly leading to the growth and significant change of secondary cities, such as Penang and Johor Baharu.

In the case of Indonesia, a different pattern of Japanese investment has been exhibited, with over two-thirds of its investment up to 1977 in the mining sector, much of it in some form of joint venture with Indonesian state or private companies, to the extent that Indonesia is now Japan's most important trading partner. A high proportion of exports are made up of oil and minerals, but in the period since 1975 there has been more investment in processing industries, such as the Asahan Aluminum Smelter. One consequence of this pattern of investment has been that Indonesia's urbanization has been slower, and it has experienced a slower growth of the industrial labour force.

Another response to the "switching crisis" is to invest capital in the built environment of consumption, such as offices, hotels, transportation, residential building, etc. This can be greatly facilitated by the ability of financial institutions to loan money and by a state legislation and monetary policy which encourages this activity. During the decade of the 1970s (particularly in the late 1970s), virtually every major Asian city experienced a very rapid growth in office and hotel buildings, which transformed the central business districts of these cities into mini-Manhattans, much of this the result of generous loans from the banking system and a combination of both national and regional capital (particularly that of the overseas Chinese). As one writer in *Far Eastern Economic*

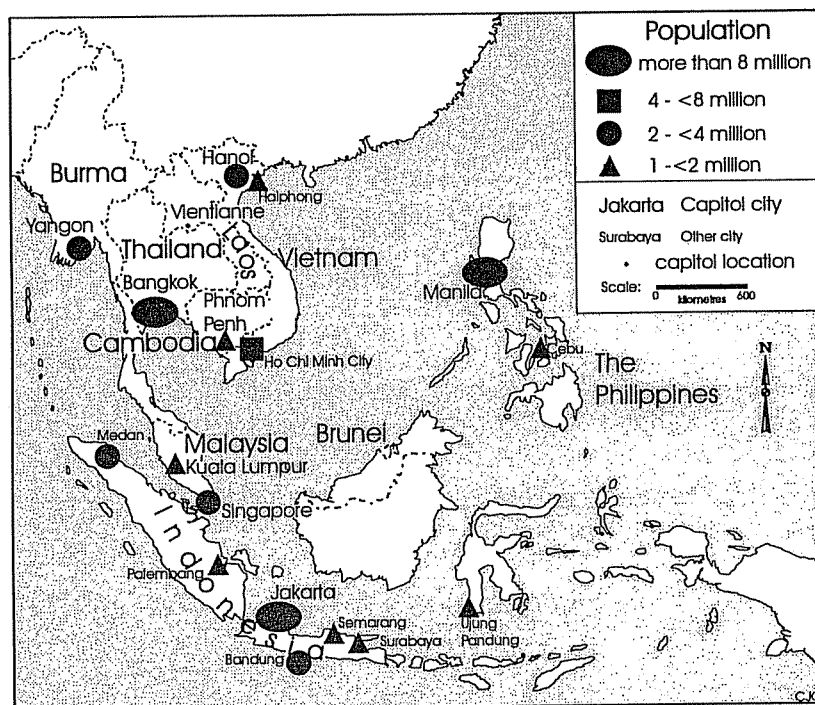
Review commented, "Overseas Chinese... seem to have an innate faith in the ownership of bricks and mortar."²⁶

This situation as with many other Asian countries, had its origins in the late 1970s when very rapid rates of economic growth, together with the government's own modernization programmes, encouraged many developers to invest in the property market. Banks, pursuing Asian dollars and other regional businesses, as well as multinationals, snapped up the space made available by property development. Thus, the increasing integration of Southeast Asian countries in the global systems of production and capital movements has changed the character of the Southeast Asian cities considerably.

The Fourth Decade

The 1980s: Deepening Globalization and Mega-urbanization

Given the rapidity of change and the diverse trajectories of urbanization in the 1970s, it is perhaps surprising to find that the decade of the 1980s has seen a generally marked convergence in the patterns of Southeast Asian urbanization. Once again, my research focused upon a central thematic of the patterns of urbanization in Asia which resulted in a series of papers²⁷ and edited collections.²⁸ What fascinated me about the era of the 1980s was how the processes of globalization were emphasizing the emergence of the mega-urban regions of Southeast Asia (see Figure 3). In the introductory essay of *The Mega-Urban Regions of Southeast Asia*, I analyzed the underlying changes that were bringing about the growth of mega-urbanization. While many of the processes were already deeply entrenched from earlier decades, as for example the major structural changes in the ASEAN market economies which included a decline in agriculture, (both in employment and contribution to the gross domestic product (GDP)), and increasing industrialization with the service sector remaining fairly stable. It was the rapid changes in the transactional systems and the growth of globalization which were of most importance.²⁹

Figure 3 The Urban Pattern in Southeast Asia Circa 1990

Urbanization and the Transactional Revolution

Central to the processes creating extended mega-urban regions (EMRs) is a constant series of transactions flowing through national and international space. In a very general way, these transactions can be grouped into four categories: (1) people; (2) commodities; (3) capital; and (4) information. Thus, commuting is a form of geographic transaction performed by *people*, usually daily; shipping spices from, say, Manado to Rotterdam is a *com-*

modity transaction; transferring funds from New York to Singapore represents a *capital* flow; and, the news programme on national television beamed to all parts of a country represents an *information* transaction.

Flows of information and capital are now increasingly less subject to the constraints of space. Thus, funds can be moved from New York to Singapore almost instantly through electronic transfer. On the other hand, moving people and commodities still involves a time-distance relationship. Nevertheless, developments in transportation have increasingly collapsed that relationship.³⁰

Most planners realize that the implementation of this transactional revolution is emphasizing the process of centralization in the urban systems of their countries. In the case of Thailand, for instance, the proportion of urban population living in the Bangkok EMR has steadily increased over the past few decades.³¹ In Indonesia, the proportion of urban population living in urban areas of more than one million has risen from 32.6 per cent in 1971 to 41.5 per cent in 1990.³² In the Philippines, the proportion of urban population living in the Manila Metropolitan Region has risen from 29.4 per cent in 1970 to 33 per cent in 1990.³³

The transactional revolution is also leading to new configurations in the total urban systems of ASEAN countries. Douglas has shown, for example, how the pattern of transactions has emphasized the emergence of an urban crescent stretching from Medan through Palembang to Jakarta and the north coast urban centres of Java, and on to Ujung Pandang, Manado, and the Kalimantan main urban centres.³⁴ Firman shows this corridor developing in Java in an analysis of the 1980-90 census data. In Malaysia, urban growth is occurring in the north-south corridor stretching from Penang through Ipoh to Kuala Lumpur and through to Johor Baharu.³⁵

At the level of the urban region centred on one large urban core, the transactional revolution produces a form of urbanization that takes place in leaps and bounds, creating a discontinuous pattern of land use. This is most marked in the urban periphery

where agriculture, industry, leisure activities and residential developments are juxtaposed. Expansion can occur across water too, as can be observed in the Singapore Growth Triangle.

Of course, other factors are at work besides transactional changes. In part, outward expansion of urban centres is encouraged by increasing land costs and changes in economic activity in the central city. The process is also encouraged by government policies directed towards industrial decentralization away from the congested city cores. The growth of middle-class housing developments and a growing need for recreational space contribute as well. Opportunities for leisure are important for many firms and individuals who move to the outer fringes of these cities, where life is less regulated. These developments are also fuelled by improved information flows, which cut down transportation costs.

Urbanization and Globalization

All the transactional processes described as operating at a national level also operate at the global and subglobal, or regional, levels. These are comparatively well known and the research can be summarized as follows.

The Emergence of the New International Division of Labour

At the global level, industrial activity has either been established in or relocated to some of the developing countries. ASEAN has been a major focus of this investment over the past two decades. The new international division of labour (NIDL) takes advantage of advances in communications, transport and production technologies allowing major international investors to identify niches in various locations within a global production system for export. Finding lower labour costs, away from the industrial core economies, is part of the logic of this process. Although establishing export zones is an important part of the NIDL, it is also characterized by the assembly and production of consumer goods in ASEAN countries for a growing domestic market.

The organization of production and marketing has changed significantly to focus on managing the logistics of purchasing, production and marketing in order to minimize costs and maintain high levels of quality control. During the 1980s, order-cycle times in developing countries were reduced by 400 per cent and "just-in-time" (JIT) delivery continued to increase. It is estimated that one-quarter of "logistics costs" are made up by transportation. Of course, this logistical management is made possible by improvements in telecommunications and information systems.³⁶

These changes now permit the procurement of raw materials for manufacturing and production of goods and market products at a global level. Developing countries are vigorously competing to be chosen as sites in this global system. This is one reason why export zones, such as the semi-conductor assembly zone in Bayan Lepas in Penang State, Malaysia, remain globally competitive even though wages have begun to increase.³⁷ Thus, globalization creates pressure to make the transactional space more efficient.³⁸

Thus, it is hardly surprising that the majority of international investors, encouraged by various forms of state initiatives (tax holidays, etc.), choose to concentrate their investment in the mega-urban regions of ASEAN. Figures on manufacturing investment in Malaysia in the 1970s, during the first wave of export-oriented industries, show that over 50 per cent of international investment in manufacturing occurred in the Klang Valley-Kuala Lumpur urban region. With 10 per cent of Malaysia's population, this area was responsible for generating some 60 per cent of manufacturing employment.³⁹ Data on Indonesia for the 1970s and early 1980s reveal a comparable emphasis.⁴⁰ McGee and Greenberg record similar data for the Bangkok EMR for the 1980s.⁴¹ Thus, the operation of the NIDL reinforces a tendency for economic activity to focus on the mega-urban regions.

The Emergence of Global Mega-urban Regions

A second facet of these accelerating global forces is the establishment of global mega-urban regions, which have become the major nodal points in the movement of capital, people and commodities.

Within the ASEAN region, there is much competition between member countries — Thailand and Singapore compete to act as a major air transportation node, for example — but at present Singapore is certainly emerging as the leading global urban region.

Singapore has aggressively set out to make itself the financial and information centre for the region. One statistic shows how successful this has been: in 1990, Singapore outward and inward international telephone calls were more than the total international calls of Indonesia and Thailand. The Singapore figure had increased dramatically in the last four years before 1990.⁴² The advantages of a stable city vigorously following a policy of internationalization undoubtedly helped this development, but government policies that included radical changes in the internal distribution of housing, industry and recreation were no less important. Within the ASEAN region, the proximity of the states of Johor, Malaysia, and Riau, Indonesia, has facilitated decentralization of industry, housing and recreation from Singapore. This process has been encouraged by the governments of Malaysia and Indonesia, which have made substantial investments in infrastructure to expedite it. The emergence of the Singapore Growth Triangle (Singapore, Johor and Riau) is an interesting example of how the forces of globalization and structural change are creating a mega-urban region that transcends national boundaries.⁴³

The Emergence of Intense Global and Regional Competition

The development of ASEAN mega-urban regions has involved intense global and regional competition between regions for a share of the global market. For instance, almost all the ASEAN mega-urban regions have now built world-class convention centres and world trade centres. In a similar manner, ASEAN mega-urban regions compete to capture a larger proportion of tourist visits, which have accelerated over the past ten years. This involves building telecommunication networks, airports and road networks to attract visitors. In addition, there is a need to create an aesthetically pleasing built environment that incorporates histori-

cal and cultural elements of the city. Singapore's rehabilitation of parts of its old Chinatown and Kuala Lumpur's riverside "yuppie" markets in the old vegetable and meat market are examples of the process. Emphasizing the competitive strength of a particular urban region on the global market increasingly involves marketing cities and their urban regions.

The end product of these changes in the decade of the 1980s were to create a situation in which the major challenges of urbanization were focused upon the large mega-urban regions of Southeast Asia.

The Decade of the 1990s: Towards an Urban Future for Southeast Asia⁴⁴

While it is difficult to forecast the future of Southeast Asian urbanization, it is reasonable to assume that certain assumptions concerning technological change and the development of human resources will continue to accelerate the urbanization trade. In the following section, I draw upon a recent publication to give a picture of the consequences of these trends.

2020: An Urbanized Region

By 2020, the ASEAN region had moved to become one of the largest and most prosperous of the Asian trading blocs. During much of the period after 1995, the growth of GDP for the original six members — Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei Darussalam and the Philippines — continued at between 4 and 7 per cent per annum. For the three additional members — Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam — rates of GDP growth had been lower but began to accelerate in the period after 2010 to catch up to the original ASEAN six. The region benefited from the opening up of the world trading system, from a less-regulated global financial environment, and particularly from the growth in Southeast Asian demand, as the nine ASEAN countries exhibited rapid

growth and became a free trading bloc with a population of close to 690 million.

Structurally, the original six ASEAN countries experienced continuing change. Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia and the Philippines demonstrated growth in export-oriented manufacturing in the 1990s and early twenty-first century. Increased local and regional demand within the ASEAN market also led to the production of an increasing volume and variety of consumer goods. Globalization of world trade permitted each of these countries to establish product specialization in goods, such as semi-conductors and automobiles, and in the aerospace industry. At the same time, agro-processing and the export of raw materials, such as timber, oil, gas and mineral resources, still provided an important part of export earnings. Brunei Darussalam, using income from oil and gas revenues, became an important joint venture capital location in the region, relying increasingly on income generated from these sources. While all the countries developed their urban-based service sectors in such areas as banks and finance, insurance, communications and tourism, Singapore took advantage of its investment in global positioning in the 1980s and 1990s to become a global centre for the region.

Agriculture had changed substantially in the region. Rice growing was carried out mostly by part-time households, and other agriculture was devoted to industrial crops for which there was a continuing global demand: rubber and, increasingly, tropical food crops, particularly fruit. Most fishing activity was carried out in highly specialized, capital-intensive ponds and processing factories.

Economic changes were also reflected in the distribution of employment in 2020. The proportion of people in agriculture had shrunk to only 12 per cent; manufacturing remained steady at 30 per cent; and, services had continued to grow. Of course, these patterns showed variations both between and within countries. In Indonesia and the Philippines, the proportion of people engaged in rice growing remained high and a large number of people held lower-order service occupations because of difficulties in creating

sufficient employment in urban areas. In Thailand and Malaysia, however, the proportion engaged in agriculture fell to below 10 per cent. In Singapore, higher-order service employment dominated.⁴⁵

These significant changes in the structure of the economy and employment had provided the basis for a substantial increase in household income, which now averaged \$6,000 per household at constant 1990 prices. Growth of income had been accompanied by high levels of domestic savings, fostered at least in part by government fiscal measures, and these provided the basis for a rapid increase in ownership of cars, houses and other durable consumer goods.

By 2020, most people in the ASEAN core region lived in urban areas. Projections of urban population growth made in the early 1990s proved to be underestimates, and close to two-thirds of the population now lived in urban areas, most in the five mega-urban regions: the Bangkok mega-urban region (30 million); the Kuala Lumpur-Klang mega-urban region (6 million); the Singapore Growth Triangle (10 million); the Java mega-urban corridor (100 million); and the Manila mega-urban region (30 million). These five contained almost 66 per cent of the urban population of ASEAN.⁴⁶

The major urban centres had become the nodes for transportation systems linking the region: fast arterial highways, roll-on roll-off ferries, fast train systems and air transportation. Investments in regional transportation systems had, of course, started in the 1980s. Singapore's dominance as the central node for air traffic had been established by that year, for example, but in the early twenty-first century, funds provided by joint ventures between government and private sectors had been used in a major push to create a regional system of fast land transportation. It had greatly facilitated the increased mobility of goods and people. The banks of the Asian region had been more than willing to lend funds for these developments, which assured good returns on investment.

The remaining components of the urban system consisted of secondary cities, such as Cebu, Manado, Penang, Chiang Mai,

many of which had more than one million people and played an important role in regional interactions at both national and international levels. Finally, there were myriad small towns acting as market and service centres in rural areas. These had not grown greatly in numbers or size.

Thus, dominating each ASEAN country was an EMR. During the latter part of the twentieth century, many planners had predicted that the uncontrolled growth of these EMRs and their attendant problems of congestion, environmental deterioration and service provision would prove to be intractable. Yet, the introduction of vigorous urban management, an adequate infrastructure and mass transit based on electrical rail systems enabled these large urban regions to function effectively, attracting international investment and a large proportion of each country's services. Indeed, each EMR generated a significant proportion of its country's income, in most cases exceeding 60 per cent.

Ecologically, the patterns of land use for the EMRs were rather similar. With the exception of Singapore, all had opted for low-density, spread-out patterns of settlement. In the late 1990s, a major debate had emerged over whether high-density, high-rise housing should dominate, as in Singapore, or low-rise, expanding housing in a spatially expanding city. Although virtually all planners had agreed that high-rise commercial development, already well advanced, was the only economically feasible option in the face of inner-city land costs, there was less agreement on low- and middle-income high-rise housing. Rapidly expanding development of housing into the urban peripheries in the 1990s largely usurped this debate, leaving little alternative but to accept a low-rise, physically expanding urban region built around a number of nodal points that included shopping malls, office complexes, and so on. This was very much the Los Angeles model, with one exception. The introduction of a fast, intra-urban transit rail system in the first decade of the twenty-first century presented a viable alternative to the car for commuting travel in most of the EMRs.

The internal land-use patterns of the EMRs reflected these developments. Much of the central urban core was now given over to high-rise office buildings, shopping centres and government departments. These activities were located in a number of central business districts in what came to be called by developers a city within a city. Typical of such areas were the Sudirman Central Business District in Jakarta and the "city" within Kuala Lumpur.

As these developments occurred, many of the low-income inhabitants moved out to new housing estates close to the industrial estates established on the periphery of the regions. Upper- and middle-income dwellers also lived on the periphery as well as in more expensive estates. Interspersed between new towns, housing estates and industrial zones were leisure developments: golf courses, entertainment centres, and so on. Within the cores of the cities, some of the older housing had been rehabilitated and gentrified. This process had already begun in Singapore in the 1990s.

This picture of the ASEAN urban world is, of course, only one vision, and it is highly conjectural. Nevertheless, it is almost certain that the ASEAN countries will be predominantly urban by 2020.

Conclusion: Policy Challenges for the Future of Southeast Asian Cities

It is important to spell out the implications the continuing growth of large mega-urban regions and urban corridors for the future of urbanization in Southeast Asia, for the kind of scenario described above rests upon the successful implementation of major strategic planning initiatives. While it can be argued that such zones are catalytic regions for economic growth, it is also a fact that such regions are extraordinarily difficult to plan and manage.

The mixture of activities often creates serious environmental, transportation and infrastructural problems, particularly if such regions are treated with conventional city planning. In a conventional approach, the capital requirements for infrastructure alone seem totally out of reach to most national governments in developing Asia. On the other hand, the very mixed, decentralized, intermediate and small scale of economic organization and the persistence of agriculture in these EMRs offer exciting prospects for recycling, the use of alternative energy sources, and so on, which are difficult to introduce into conventional city space. The challenge to planners is to take advantage of the growth feature of these regions, while ameliorating the costly side-effects of growth and the problems of regional inequality that will emerge as the areas grow.

The sustainability of these regions is even more important if one accepts the rather gloomy predictions based on the unilinear model of Western urbanization. As many writers have often observed, if the cities of China and Indonesia alone were to reach the levels of energy consumption of New York or London, the demand on world fossil energy sources would be impossible to fulfill. Similar arguments can be presented with respect to food supplies. Many writers have commented on the likely food demands of large Asian cities and the problem that future growth poses to national food supplies. Increasing food imports is a viable option, but the opportunity to maintain a high level of national food self-sufficiency through increasingly intensive agricultural production in the *desakota* regions is very attractive. Finally, the extraordinary range of activities in these regions offers many opportunities for employment of able-bodied household members, resulting in increased household income and consumption.

It is, of course, a legitimate question to ask how persistent these EMRs will be. Will the processes of concentration ultimately triumph and lead to a reassertion of the conventional city? For the reasons already cited, particularly those relating to the collapse of time-distance and the mix of transportation technology available, I believe that such regions will be remarkably persistent. Indeed,

data becoming available from the 1990 round of censuses support this claim.

This assertion has important implications for planning and policy formation for the regions. There appear to be six priorities for most ASEAN countries, and these I group under the term "metrofitting."⁴⁷

First, governments will have to decide the policy priorities to be given to the urban regions. Careful analysis of the geographical extent of the regions and collection of data on population, employment, economic growth and infrastructure and welfare needs of their populations are necessary. If the regions are as important to economic growth as has been suggested here, then governments will have hard decisions to make about their explicit spatial policies, such as industrial dispersal or regional development. This does not mean that governments should discontinue policies designed to improve the quality of life and economic growth of less-developed regions. Rather, they should carefully reconsider explicit policies designed to force economic activities away from centralizing mega-urban regions.

Secondly, ASEAN governments will need to develop an integrated approach to the management of these urban regions. At present, they are administered by a plethora of administrative units and sectorally responsible departments. As a consequence, the possibility of developing an integrated response to, for example, waste management is very difficult. This is where the package of policies that is part of metrofitting comes into play. These include the following:

- integrated national, regional and local strategies for national development;
- institutional changes including a shift from sectorial management to metropolitan management, involving decentralization of decision making and control;
- increased capacity to generate income, particularly from land and property taxes;

- human resources at all levels capable of managing urban regions;
- adequate policies to deal with environmental problems.

Only by developing the institutional, management and human resource capacity to manage urban regions can ASEAN governments respond to the many challenges they face in the coming years.

Thirdly, governments will need to improve access in these zones of intense interaction. One can argue that building fast, major arterial routes, such as the Shinkansen, the Seoul-Pusan Highway and the Taipei-Kaoshiung Freeway, was crucial in the development of Japanese, Korean and Taiwanese mega-urban regions, respectively.⁴⁸ In a similar manner, the completion of fast arterial highways between Bangkok and Singapore will change the economic landscape of Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore. The network of pre-existing feeder roads flows very easily into these fast central transportation routes. Governments should also take every advantage of pre-existing systems, such as water routes, and encourage flexibility in transportation modes.

Fourthly, governments will have to monitor environmental and land-use problems carefully to keep conflict to a minimum. The development of fast systems of data collection is crucial to this activity, as are responsive, decentralized implementing agencies.

Fifthly, governments will need to develop policies to cope with the welfare of the inhabitants of the region. Highly flexible labour regimes, varying types of work and the maximum input of a majority of the households place considerable strains on central social institutions, such as the family, as well as on the educational and cultural institutions that characterize these regions.

Finally, it will be necessary to address the activities of the private sector and its role in these regions. It must be clear from the previous discussion that private capital pursuing labour has stimulated developments within an envelope of state and international policy decisions. From the point of view of private capital, the regions are attractive because of cheaper labour, cheaper land

and a more flexible work environment. Here, capital is deployed in an extraordinarily diverse set of ways: capital intensification in chicken rearing; subcontracting of production processes; industrial estates and upper-income housing estates; and so on. The “planning trick” will be to make these regions continue to attract capital and still avoid the grave social, economic and environmental problems of rapid growth. But, what seems important is that the fundamental features of the regions — flexibility in economic and political organization, facilitative transactive networks and a constant acceptance of change — be incorporated into the planning process.

I envisage persistent extended metropolitan regions in many ASEAN countries, in which flexibility, mobility and change are constant elements. The physical planning and design response will involve radical departures from current ways of thinking. For instance, shopping for basic commodities might incorporate elements of the “periodic markets” traditionally part of such regions. One could extend such thinking to entertainment, education and virtually any sphere of service activity. The regions are, after all, an amalgam of pre-existing high densities and juxtaposed technology.

Of course, not all ASEAN countries are going to be characterized by identical responses, and therefore policy responses will vary from country to country. But, even in the city state of Singapore, it is obvious that urban expansion is at work, extending into the Johor and Riau portions of the Singapore Growth Triangle. In this case, developments need both national and international planning policy responses. The challenges are daunting, but ASEAN urbanization in the 1990s and beyond requires a new urban-economic agenda. This is the challenge that must be taken up by ASEAN governments in the move towards an increasingly urban-dominated future by the year 2020.

In the introduction of this paper, I spoke of the “fragmentation of research” and suggested that it leads to a greater emphasis upon the local. But, as I believe this paper has shown, this tendency may not necessarily lead to this direction. The growth of

mega-urban regions cries out for "grand design," interdisciplinary study and the development of new institutional forms of management. While the understanding of the local life will undoubtedly make management and planning decisions more meaningful and humane, to focus entirely on the local is to ignore the vast complexity of these mega-urban regions. I hope the broad approach presented in this paper will restimulate a more directed and, perhaps, singular research paradigm. Too fragmented research directions will not provide a solution to the immense challenges of the mega-urban regions of Southeast Asia.

Notes

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3. Richard Stren and Yue-man Yeung (1994), *Urban Research in Developing Countries*, Hong Kong: Hong Kong Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Occasional Paper No. 33, p. 13.
4. See T.G. McGee (1995), "Geography and Development: Crisis, Commitment and Renewal," *Cahiers de géographie du Québec*, 39(108):527-35.
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7. See John S. Furnivall (1944), *Netherlands India: A Study of Plural Economy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
8. See Richard Stubbs (1995), *Legitimacy and Economic Growth in Eastern Asia*, Toronto: Joint Centre for Asia-Pacific Studies, University of Toronto-York University, Eastern Asia Policy Series No. 10.
9. See United Nations (1991), *World Urbanization Prospects 1990*, New York: United Nations.
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13. See T.G. McGee (1971a), "Catalysts or Cancers? The Role of Cities in Asian Society," in Leo Jacobson and Ved Prakash (eds), *Urbanization and National Development, Vol. I: South and Southeast Asian Urban Affairs Annual*, Beverly Hills: Sage, pp. 157-81; and (1971b), "Tête de pont et enclaves: le processus d'urbanization dans l'Asie du Sud-est depuis 1945," *Revue Tiers Monde*, XII(45):115-44.
14. See W.R. Armstrong and T.G. McGee (1985), *Theatres of Accumulation: Studies in Asian and Latin American Urbanization*, London: Methuen.
15. Dean Forbes and Nigel Thrift (1982), "Territorial Organization, Regional Development and the City in Vietnam," Dean Forbes and Nigel Thrift (eds), *The Socialist Transformation: Urban Development and Territorial Planning*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 114.

16. Ibid., p. 122.
17. See T.G. McGee (1973), *Hawkers in Hong Kong*, Hong Kong: Centre of Asian Studies, University of Hong Kong; T.G. McGee and Y.M. Yeung (1977), *Hawkers in Southeast Asian Cities: Planning for the Bazaar Economy*, Ottawa: International Development Research Centre; T.G. McGee (1996), "On the Utility of Dualism: The Informal Sector and Dualism in Developing Countries," *Regional Development Dialogue*, 17(1):1-15.
18. See Lea Jellinek (1991), *The Wheel of Fortune: The History of a Poor Community in Jakarta*, Sydney: Allen and Unwin.
19. David Harvey (1982), *The Limits to Capital*, Oxford: Blackwell, p. 96.
20. Ibid., p. 92.
21. Ibid., p. 97.
22. See N.D. Konratieff (1935), "The Long Wave of Economic Life," *The Review of Economic Statistics*, 17:105-15; E. Mandel (1980), *The Long Waves of Capitalist Development*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; and A.G. Frank (1980), *The Crisis in the World Economy*, New York: Homes-Meier.
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- Extended Metropolis: The Settlement Transition in Asia*, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, pp. 3-25.
28. See N.S. Ginsburg, B. Koppel and T.G. McGee (eds) (1991), *The Extended Metropolis: The Settlement Transition in Asia*, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press; T.G. McGee and Ira Robinson (eds) (1995), *The Mega Urban Regions of Southeast Asia*, Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press.
29. For a wider discussion of these processes, see Fu-chen Lo and Yue-man Yeung (eds) (1996), *Emerging World Cities in Pacific Asia*, Tokyo: United Nations University Press.
30. It should be emphasized that travel time sometimes actually increases despite technical innovation. An excellent example is traffic congestion. The Japan International Cooperation Agency published a report in 1988 claiming that the Bangkok's jammed roads may amount to almost 60 per cent of Bangkok's regional product (cited in *Asiaweek*, 28 February 1990:32).
31. See T.G. McGee and Charles Greenberg (1992), "The Emergence of Extended Metropolitan Regions in Asean 1960-80: An Exploratory Outline," in Amasa Pongsapich et al. (eds) *Regional Development and Change in Southeast Asia in the 1990s*, Bangkok: Social Research Institute, Chulalongkorn University.
32. Imran Bukin (1992), "The Dynamics of Urbanization in Indonesia from 1971-1990," unpublished MA Thesis, Syracuse Cornell University.
33. See T.G. McGee and Om Mathur (1993), "Urbanization Trends, Patterns and Impact," in *State of Urbanization in Asia and the Pacific*, New York: UNESCAP, pp. 1-66.
34. Mike Douglas (1984), "National Urban Development Strategy Scenarios," National Urban Development Strategy Project I, Jakarta, (mimeographed).
35. Tommy Firman (1992), "The Spatial Pattern of Urban Population Growth in Java, 1989-1990," *Bulletin of Indonesian Economic Studies*, 28(2):95-109.

36. See Ahoron Kellerman (1993), *Telecommunications and Geography*, London: Bellhaven Press, for a discussion of this point.
37. See T.G. McGee, Kamal Salih and Mei-ling Young (1991), "Silicon Island, Household Change in Penang State, Malaysia," unpublished report to International Development Research Centre, Ottawa, Canada.
38. See Fu-chen Lo and Yue-man Yeung (eds) (1996) for an excellent discussion (see note 29).
39. See T.G. McGee (1988), "Industrial Capital, Labour Force Formation and the Urbanization Process in Malaysia," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 12(3):356, 374.
40. The data do not include investment in mining, gas and the oil sector. See Hall Hill (1990), "Indonesia's Industrial Transformation: Part I," *Bulletin of Indonesian Economic Studies*, 26(2): 79-120.
41. Op. cit. (note 30).
42. Singapore Department of Statistics (1991), *Singapore Statistics 1990*, Singapore: Department of Statistics, Government of Singapore.
43. See Scott Macleod and T.G. McGee (1996), "The Singapore-Johor-Riau Growth Triangle: An Emergency Extended Metropolitan Region," in Fu-chen Lo and Yue-man Yeung (eds), *Emerging World Cities in Pacific Asia*, Tokyo: United Nations University Press, pp. 417-64.
44. Some portions of this section are taken from McGee's contributions to McGee and Robinson (1995) (see note 2). The author is grateful to University of British Columbia Press for permission to reprint them.
45. I realize that the kinds of employment projections could be substantially out of line, but in both Indonesia and the Philippines there is much greater commitment to food self-sufficiency than in Malaysia or Thailand.
46. These estimates are based on projections produced annually by the United Nations, Department of International Economic and Social Affairs (1991). UN predictions are based upon various estimates of rural and urban population relative

- growth rates. After reviewing Indonesian urban population projections carried out by experts, I find it likely that the UN estimates of urbanization levels may be some 20 million too low in this case because of underestimates of actual urban areas. If this were the case for other ASEAN countries, the urban population would be approximately 300 million by 2020 with a level of urbanization of 61 per cent.
47. "Metrofitting" is adapted from the term now being used in Singapore for rehabilitation of older buildings, which is called "retrofitting." I have simply taken the first letter from the word mega-urban. This term carries the conceptual meaning I need, for it suggests a comprehensive rehabilitation and renewal, which is certainly the case in large urban areas.
 48. See T.G. McGee and Lin Chisheng (1991), "Footprints in Space: The Production of Space in the Asian NICs, 1950-1990," in David Drakakis-Smith and Chris Dixon (eds), *Growth and Development in Pacific Asia*, London: Routledge, pp. 128-51.

Five Decades of Urbanization in Southeast Asia: A Personal Encounter

Abstract

As the title implies this paper represents the personal experience of the author who, since he first arrived in Southeast Asia in 1958, has made the study of Southeast Asian urbanization the central focus of his research. The length of this encounter provides a superb opportunity to analyze the changing patterns and features of urbanization in the region. In this paper, these changes are organized around each decade since the 1950s. In each decade, the author has tried to capture a central process which has dominated urbanization. In the 1950s, it was the instability of political devolution from colonialism that fuelled a process which the author labelled "pseudo-urbanization." The 1960s were a decade when the Southeast Asian countries variously attempted to put in place economic plans. The uneven success of these plans encouraged a diversity in Southeast Asian urbanization. By the 1970s, all the countries that were not part of the socialist block were experiencing increasing integration into the global system, growing rates of urbanization and increasing economic growth. This process was even further deepened in the 1980s as the previously socialist countries became more marketized. One symptom of the globalization was the emergence of large mega-urban regions in Southeast Asia centred upon the central cities of the nations. Finally, the paper discusses the likely future of these patterns of Southeast Asian urbanization, arguing that the process will be dominated by the mega-urban regions. This poses a major challenge to management of the urban transition with which governments of the region are still struggling.

東南亞城市化五十年

一個個人經歷

T.G. McGee

（中文摘要）

一如題目所示，本文陳述作者自一九五八年首次抵達東南亞，以此地區之城市化為其研究重點以來之個人經歷。此漫長接觸提供極佳之機會，以剖析此地區城市化之變化模式與特徵。在文內，此等自五十年代以來之變化以每十年為一段落，作者試圖捉摸每一段落之城市化核心程序。在五十年代，此核心程序為殖民統治權力下放所造成之政治不穩定，作者將由此引發之程序稱為「假城市化」。在六十年代，東南亞各國分別推行經濟計劃，成效不一，從而令此地區之城市化甚為參差。至七十年代末，不屬於社會主義集團的國家皆愈益融入全球體系，經歷了顯著之城市化和經濟增長，此一過程在八十年代由於前社會主義國家之推行市場經濟而有所深化；全球化之徵兆之一，為若干特大城市區域在東南亞形成，這些區域建基於各國之中心城市。最後，本文討論東南亞城市化之前景，認為將受到特大城市區域之支配，因此之故，城市化轉變之管理將受到考驗，目前各國政府正為此而努力。