

PADDY FARMING AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE IN A MALAY VILLAGE

— A Social Anthropological Study of
a Community in Kedah —

MASUO KUCHIBA
YOSHIHIRO TSUBOUCHI

This paper is an outline of a social anthropological study concerning the relationship between paddy farming and social structure in a Malay paddy-farming village in Kedah, Malaysia. In particular the following topics are discussed: the influence of natural environment on the peasants' health and labour power; the dynamic relationship of the Malay family and inheritance patterns with the nature of landholding and the tenancy system; the changing aspects of the co-operative labour system; the prospects for formation of co-operative associations, etc.

Paddy farming is the typical form of agriculture in the alluvial plains of Malaya. Irrigated paddy fields are particularly concentrated in the plain extending from Tanjong Karang to Perlis on the west coast, and in Kelantan on the east coast. In the paddy-farming areas of multiracial Malaya, the Malay segment of the population is predominant in number and paddy cultivation constitutes its principal form of economic activity. The present article summarizes the results of a study of the social and anthropological aspects of the Malay population in this area by analysing the relations between paddy cultivation in a village in Kedah and the social structure of the Malay peasants in the village.¹

I. THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

The village studied, Padang Lalang village, is located about 8 kilometres to the north-west of Alor Setar, the capital of Kedah state. This village is roughly in the centre of the Kedah plain, a low-lying area only 2-3 metres above sea level. In the area around the village the land rises only 1-2 metres.² Consequently, at full tide the sea flows inland up the rivers, on

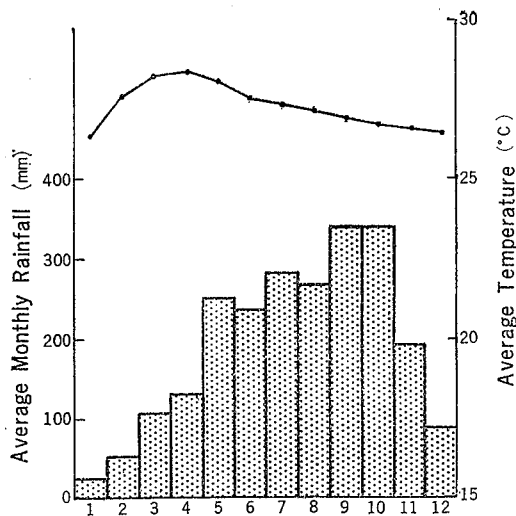
¹ The data used in the present article were collected by the authors in field work conducted during July-December, 1964 and June-September, 1965, under the Malaysia and Indonesia research project of the Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University.

² E.H.G. Dobby, "The North Kedah Plain," *Economic Geography*, Vol. 27, 4, October, 1951, pp. 287-288, and 295.

each of which lock-gates are built as a measure for impeding this inflow of sea water. The lock-gates, by balancing the water-level in the paddy fields, also serve the purpose of irrigation.

In the Kedah plain the amount of rainfall increases sharply from May because of the southwest monsoon, and the rainy season extends to about October. In November a dry east wind begins to blow and the dry season commences. The rainy season is characterized by high temperatures and high humidity, but the east wind of the dry season is very refreshing, producing a pleasant climate in the mornings and in the evenings. Paddy farming is started at the beginning of the rainy season, and the seedlings are transplanted between July and September. If there is heavy rain when transplanting is carried out, water will overflow from the rivers and spread

Figure 1. TEMPERATURE AND RAINFALL IN THE VICINITY OF THE SURVEYED AREA (1955-1964)



Notes: Temperatures at Station Alor Setar; Rainfall at Station No. 18. Alor Janggus.

indiscriminately over low-lying areas of paddy fields, house plots and roads, the lock-gates having been closed at high tide. If the water overflows, the seedlings in the low-lying paddy fields will rot and it becomes necessary to transplant new seedlings in their places.

The soil, which has a high humus content, is of a black-grey colour and very cohesive. In the rainy season it becomes sticky, and there are many places in which one can sink in up to the knees. In the dry season, on the other hand, the soil dries out, becoming so hard that it is impossible to use the land for winter crops. This kind of clay soil is very effective for paddy cultivation because it retains moisture for a long time. However, from the point

of view of health the muddiness of the river water, the brackish water of the wells, the frequent floods (*ayer bar*) during the rainy season and the shortage of water during the dry season do not produce very desirable living conditions. Further, the variations in temperature from day to night are considerable. After sunset, it is not uncommon for the temperature to drop from 32-33°C to around 21°C during the rainy season, especially if rain continues to fall, and from 33-34°C to 18-19°C during the dry season. For this reason the Malay peasants, who do not wear night-clothing apart from the *sarong* and who live in drafty pile-dwellings, are prone to fall victims of respiratory

complaints. Thus the land conditions present a number of environmental problems for the inhabitants. Skin diseases, respiratory complaints, acute conjunctivitis and other eye diseases, diarrhoea, and gastro-enteric disorders caused by parasitic worms are the most common illnesses among the peasants. These diseases exercise no small influence on the labour potentialities and economic lives of the peasants.

II. COMMUNITY, HOUSEHOLDS, AND COMPOUNDS

Administratively the village (*kampong*) of Padang Lalang comes under the sub-district (*mukim*) of Padang Lalang in the district (*daerah*) of Kota Setar in the state of Kedah. Kota Setar district comprises 40 sub-districts, and Padang Lalang sub-district is made up of 10 villages. The district officer and the head of the sub-district (*penghulu*) are appointed by the Sultan. The village headmen (*ketua kampong*) are virtually elected by the elders (*orang tua-tua*) of the villages and assist the *penghulu* with their advice in regard to administrative questions. The officers of the mosque usually perform the functions of village elders.

The settlement form of the village is similar to that found throughout Malaya in general—an agglomeration of Malay pile-dwellings, surrounded by coconut palms and distributed along the river running through the middle of the village area, forms the nucleus of the village. Around this agglomeration the paddy fields extend in checkerboard fashion, and there are no landmarks demarcating the boundaries with neighbouring villages. In the centre of the village there is an Islamic mosque (*masjid*), and the village is at the same time a parish (*kariah*) centred on this mosque.

In the western corner of the Padang Lalang village area is located a commercial centre for the agricultural villages around. Although situated in one corner of the Padang Lalang village area it is a small rural township, called Alor Janggus. As in other towns in Malaya, a number of Indians, Pakistanis, and Malays live here, but principally it is a Chinese town consisting of approximately 80 closely-packed single-storey houses. A police station, a Malay primary school, a Chinese primary school, a dispensary, and a private electrical generation plant which supplied electricity mainly to Alor Janggus, are also located here, and the greater part of the articles of daily use required by the peasants can be obtained in this town. Administratively, Alor Janggus is included within Padang Lalang village, but the Chinese have their own autonomous organization, and they are also markedly different from the Malays in their customary mode of living.³

If we include Alor Janggus, the total population of the village is 1,538; the racial composition of this population includes 978 Malays (63.6%), 546

³ For details see K. Maeda, *Alor Janggus, A Chinese Community in Malaya*, Kyoto, the Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University, 1967. In Maeda's work the Chinese living in the southeast corner of the village were not surveyed, and consequently his figures for Chinese population do not coincide with ours.

Chinese (35.5%), and 14 Indians and Pakistanis (0.9%). Practically all the Chinese, Indians, and Pakistanis are engaged in commerce, rice-milling and related occupations, while the greater part of the Malays, with the exception of temporary residents⁴ living in Alor Janggus, are engaged in agriculture and live along the river.

Generally speaking, the houses of the Malay peasants are not constructed so as to permit the residence of a large number of family members. The capacity of the average structure which consists of one or two rooms supported on piles about 1.5 metres high from the ground is five or six persons at the most. It is therefore not surprising that the nuclear family consisting of the spouses and unmarried children is overwhelmingly predominant among

Table 1. OCCUPATIONS OF HEADS OF MALAY HOUSEHOLDS
(October, 1964)

Occupation	Number of Households
Farmers	135
Non-cultivating landlord	6
Agricultural labourer	27
Day labourer	3
Fishmonger	5
Servant	1
Carpenter	5
Shopkeeper	2
Labourer at rice mill	1
Living off annuities	1
Policeman	7
Civil servant	2
DID labourer	1
Hospital assistant	1
Midwife	1
Unemployed	8
Total	206

Table 2. THE NUMBER OF MALAY HOUSEHOLDS ACCORDING TO FAMILY PATTERN

Family Pattern	Number of Households	(%)
Single family	15	(0.8)
Conjugal family	16	(8.4)
Nuclear family	124	(64.4)
Extended family ¹⁾	38	(19.2)
Total	193 ²⁾	(100.0)

Notes: 1) Families composed of two or more couples.

2) This figure does not include 10 households of temporary residents in Alor Janggus and 2 households which could not be surveyed.

⁴ Such as the policemen, civil servants, hospital assistant, midwife, etc. who have been assigned to the village.

the Malay peasants.⁵ The fact that small families are in the majority leads us to expect that the labour available per household will be comparatively low.

However, the number of households living in their own compounds (*tanah kampung*) is no more than one-third of the total number of households. The others are households in which the parents and married children or married siblings are independently set up in separate houses within the compounds. Such compounds usually include from 2 or 3 households to about 10 households. Since the relationships among families within these compounds are important for an understanding both of the tenancy system in operation among the Malay peasants in the village and of the social character of labour employment, we shall first touch on the subject of how family relations evolve within the compounds through the developmental cycle of the family.

Usually, newly-married couples live in the house of the "parents' family" (the family of procreation) on either the wife's or the husband's side, or migrate between the two "parents' families," providing assistance in the parents' agricultural work. When children are born, if there is a spare room in the house of one of the "parents' families" the couple will live in the same house with them, but if there is no room the "children's family" (the family of orientation) will purchase or lease a suitable compound and set up house on their own. In recent years, however, setting up house in this way has become very difficult because of the shortage of land. Even when a suitable compound is available, because of the lack of economic resources there is a strong tendency for the "children's family" to live together with the "parents' family," building a separate pile-dwelling inside the parental compound, and either to cultivate the parent's land as tenants or to be hired by the parents as agricultural labourers.

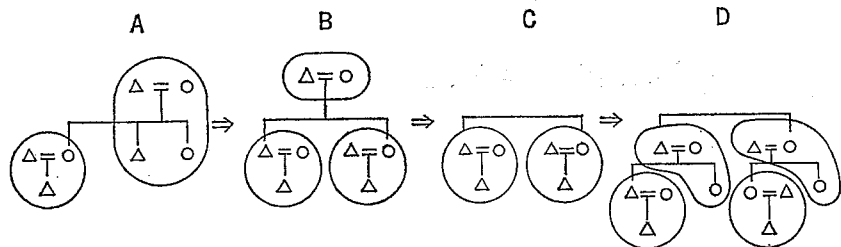
Actually, the case in which two or more families live together in separate houses in a single compound, i.e., the case in which the "parents' family" and the "children's family" live together, is the pattern most generally observed in the village. Other instances are developmental variants of this pattern. For example, as shown in Figure 2, when the parents die the family relations in the compound can assume the form C, and from C develop further to D. However, relations are often more complicated than this. This is because divorced women who have returned to their parents' houses, "siblings" devoid of economic resources, and other relatives are added to the basic family centred on the parents and children in the compound.

These family relationships within the compound are by no means a product of the necessity of co-operation in agricultural work, nor of the

⁵ The average number of members in Malay families in the village is 4.7, which is much less than the average number of members in Chinese families in Alor Janggus, 7.4. Cf. M. Kuchiba and Y. Tsubouchi, "Maraya hokuseibu no inasaku-nōson—konin, rikon, kazoku no tokushitsu ni tsuite" (A Malay Padi-Farming Community in the Northwestern Part of Malaya—A Sociological Analysis of Marriage, Divorce, and Family), *Tōnan Ajia kenkyū* (The Southeast Asian Studies), Vol. 4, No. 1, 1966.

enlargement of the family in accordance with the principles of a system of relationships based on unilineal descent. They are prescribed by such economic factors as scarcity of land or the difficulty of obtaining a job with suitable income. Therefore, family relations such as those described would seem to adapt readily to changes in economic factors.

Figure 2.



III. THE SCALE OF CULTIVATION

Of the 195 Malay households in the village⁶ 88 hold their own agricultural land. (Cf. Table 3.) Considering only the case of cultivating peasant households, within the total number of farming households, 135, the number of farming households owning land is 75 (55.6%), while the remaining 60 households (44.1%) are tenant peasants who own no land. (Cf. Table 4.) Further, the average scale of cultivation among the cultivating peasants is 6.4 *relong* (1.79 hectares).⁷ As we shall describe later in detail, our survey indicated that a cultivated area of at least 7 *relong* (1.96 hectares) is necessary if a Malay peasant in the village is to obtain from agriculture the income required for maintaining a minimum standard of living. However, the peasant households cultivating agricultural land 7 *relong* or more in area amount to no more than 34% of the total.

Such small-scale cultivation is due, on the one hand, to scarcity of land resulting from population increase; on the other, to the form of inheritance among the Malays. There are two forms of the law of inheritance current among the Malay peasantry, the Islamic law and the customary law (*hukum adat*) which is said to have existed before the introduction of Islam. While the Islamic law of inheritance is complex and the disposal of property differs according to the circumstances of the individual case, the principle of equal division of inheritance is emphasized among children of the same sex.⁸ In

⁶ Excluding temporary residents.

⁷ 1 *relong* (small)=0.711 acres=0.28 hectares. While a cultivated area of 1.79 hectares cannot necessarily be said to be a minute scale of cultivation by Japanese standards, because the producer's price for rice is low in Malaya, one cannot obtain an income sufficient for the purposes of livelihood even with an area of 1.79 hectares.

the case of customary law the inheritance is divided equally among all children. The relatives of the deceased decide in accordance with which of

Table 3. AREAS OF AGRICULTURAL LAND HELD BY TYPE OF CULTIVATOR (October, 1964)

Area of Agricultural Land Held	Cultivating Proprietor and Tenant	Cultivating Proprietor Only	Cultivating Proprietor and Lessor	Cultivating Proprietor, Lessor and Tenant*	Lessor Only	Total	(%)
Under 1 relong	—	1	—	—	—	1	(1.1)
1-2	4	3	—	3	—	10	(11.4)
2-3	4	6	1	2	4	17	(19.5)
3-4	2	3	—	—	3	8	(9.1)
4-5	2	4	—	1	—	7	(8.0)
5-6	3	5	1	2	1	12	(13.6)
6-7	1	—	—	—	—	1	(1.1)
7-8	1	—	1	—	—	2	(2.3)
8-9	—	—	3	—	—	3	(3.4)
9-10	—	—	—	1	3	4	(4.5)
10-11	1	—	1	—	1	3	(3.4)
11-12	—	2	1	—	—	3	(3.4)
12-13	—	—	—	2	—	2	(2.3)
13-14	—	1	—	1	—	2	(2.3)
14-15	—	—	2	—	—	3	(3.4)
15-16	—	—	1	—	—	1	(1.1)
16-17	—	—	1	—	—	1	(1.1)
17-18	—	—	—	—	—	—	(—)
18-19	—	—	2	—	—	2	(2.3)
19-20	—	—	—	—	—	—	(—)
20-21	—	—	—	—	—	—	(—)
21-22	—	—	—	—	—	—	(—)
22-23	—	—	—	—	—	—	(—)
23-24	—	1	1	—	—	2	(2.3)
24-25	—	—	—	1	—	1	(1.1)
25-30	—	—	—	1	—	1	(1.1)
30-40	—	—	—	1	—	1	(1.1)
40-50	—	—	—	1	—	1	(1.1)
Total	18	26	15	16	13	88	(100.0)
(%)	(20.5)	(29.5)	(17.0)	(18.2)	(14.8)	(100.0)	
Average (relong)	4.2	5.2	12.3	11.9			

Note: *includes lessor and tenant.

⁸ The regulations of the Islamic law of inheritance are too complicated to allow a simple interpretation. In the case of the nuclear family, for example, if the husband dies, the wife receives one-eighth of his estate and the remainder is divided among the children, the daughters receiving shares which are half of those received by the sons. However, there is equality of division of inheritance among children of the same sex. In the case of customary law, in principle the estate owned by the parents is inherited by and distributed among the children equally regardless of their sex.

the two laws of inheritance they are to dispose of the property. Although the daily life of the Malay peasants is strongly influenced by Islam in general, customary law still persists in case of inheritance and marriage.⁹ Since, however, the tendency to equal division of inheritance is strong, no matter which of the two laws of inheritance is followed, agricultural land is generally

Table 4. TOTAL NUMBER OF PEASANT HOUSEHOLDS BY CULTIVATED AREA AND BY CULTIVATING PROPRIETORS AND/OR TENANTS (October, 1964)

Cultivated Area	Tenant	Cultivating Proprietor and Tenant	Cultivating Proprietor Only	Cultivating Proprietor and Lessor	Cultivating Proprietor, Lessor and Tenant*	Total	(%)
Under 1 relong	—	—	1	—	—	1	(0.7)
1-2	8	—	3	2	—	13	(9.6)
2-3	11	—	4	1	—	16	(11.9)
3-4	11	1	4	3	2	21	(15.8)
4-5	10	—	2	1	2	15	(11.1)
5-6	3	3	5	—	2	13	(9.6)
6-7	6	1	—	3	—	10	(7.4)
7-8	1	5	—	1	—	7	(5.2)
8-9	3	2	—	—	3	8	(5.9)
9-10	2	2	—	1	1	6	(4.4)
10-11	3	1	—	2	—	6	(4.4)
11-12	—	1	2	—	2	5	(3.7)
12-13	—	1	—	—	1	2	(1.5)
13-14	—	1	1	—	1	3	(2.2)
14-15	1	—	—	1	—	2	(1.5)
15-16	1	—	—	1	1	3	(2.2)
16-17	—	—	—	—	—	—	(—)
17-18	—	—	—	—	—	—	(—)
18-19	—	—	—	—	—	—	(—)
19-20	—	—	—	—	—	—	(—)
20-21	—	1	—	—	2	3	(2.2)
21-22	—	—	—	—	—	—	(—)
22-23	—	—	—	—	—	—	(—)
23-24	—	—	1	—	—	1	(0.7)
Total	60	19	23	16	17	135	(100.0)
(%)	(44.4)	(14.1)	(17.0)	(11.9)	(12.6)	(100.0)	

Notes: *includes lessor and tenant.

Average cultivated area: 6.4 relong.

⁹ Our surveys indicate that the greater the area of agricultural land owned by the parents the more common is inheritance in accordance with the Islamic law, but as a whole the instances of inheritance in accordance with Islamic law and in accordance with customary law are roughly equal in number. See Kuchiba, Tsubouchi, and Maeda "Maraya hokuseibu no inasaku-nōson—nōchi shoyū no reisai-ka ni tsuite" (A Padi-Farming Community in the Northwestern Part of Malaya—the Fragmentation of Landholding), *Tōnan Ajia kenkyū*, Vol. 3, No. 1, June, 1965, pp. 48-51.

equally divided among the children with the result that the area of agricultural land owned becomes smaller than that owned by the parents' household. There are even some cases in which it becomes impossible for the inheritors to divide the inheritance of agricultural land because of its small size. In fact, of the 359 householders and/or their wives in Malay households 21.4% have inherited agricultural land; 17.0% have not yet inherited agricultural land; and 60.2% have no possibility of inheriting agricultural land because none was owned by their parents.¹⁰ Further, considering the possibilities of inheritance under customary law those who have not yet inherited land, we find that the greater part of them have the prospect of inheriting less than 5 relong.

Consequently, if there is no room for expanding the cultivated area or no means of obtaining a stable non-agricultural income, the scale of cultivation among the Malay peasants will become smaller with the passage of each generation, and if the present situation continues we may expect that there will be an increase in the numbers of peasant households selling their land.¹¹ It is due to these economic circumstances that there are large numbers of landless agricultural labourers and tenants in the village and that we can discern the particular pattern of family relationships within the compound as we have described above.

IV. TENANCY RELATIONS IN RESPECT TO AGRICULTURAL LAND

Several of the societal characteristics associated with the smallness of the cultivated area and the forms of inheritance and marriage among the Malay peasants are also manifested in tenancy relations. The peasant households in the village can be divided into five categories from the point of view of tenancy relations in respect to agricultural land. (Cf. Table 4.) In addition to the "tenant," "cultivating proprietor," "part cultivating proprietor and part tenant," and "part cultivating proprietor and part lessor," there is the fifth category of the "part cultivating proprietor, part lessor and part tenant" who, after cultivating a part of his own land and leasing out the remainder, also cultivates others' land as a tenant. Also included in the fifth category are those who lease out all of their own land and cultivate others' land as tenants.

Among these five categories the "tenants" (in particular the "part cultivating proprietor, part lessor and part tenant") are not necessarily tenants in the sense that they must lease land because they do not possess any of their own. Rather, there are quite a few among the Malay peasants who own agricultural land acquired by inheritance which is located at some distance from the places at which they are living.¹² Among them there is a tendency,

¹⁰ The remaining 1.4% not known.

¹¹ Concerning the reason for such cases, see p. 483 below.

¹² In terms of the peasants' ways determining residence after marriage (in principle

for convenience of cultivation, to lease out the distant plots of land and to undertake cultivation in tenancy of nearby land owned by others. Selling distant plots and purchasing land near at hand is the ideal solution for such inconvenience, but the scarcity of suitable land for purchase in the neighbourhood makes it difficult to effect such a solution. Thus, under the combined effects of scarcity of land, the question of the peasant's place of residence after marriage, the laws of inheritance, etc., the land owned by the peasants is geographically dispersed, and the result is a strong tendency to fragment the cultivated land holdings. Thus, the tenancy relations in respect to agricultural land are made all the more complicated.

The circumstances in this matter will become clearer if we analyse the kinship relations between the lessors and lessees of agricultural land. As is shown in Table 5, we can classify tenancy relations into three patterns. First, there are the cases in which lessor and lessee are related as parent and child (45 cases); second, the cases in which the parties are related as "siblings" or some other form of kinship (49 cases); and third, the cases in which the parties are not related (51 cases).

Table 5. RELATIONS BETWEEN PARTIES LEASING AGRICULTURAL LAND (October, 1964)

Lender	Borrower	Number of Cases
I { Parent	Child	40
	Parent	5
II { Sibling	Sibling	19
	Other Relatives	30
III Unrelated	Unrelated	51
Unknown	Unknown	2

In the first pattern, instances in which the children are economic dependents of the parents and live in the parents' compound are in the overwhelming majority. Since in these cases the parents lease agricultural land to the children not to enable the children to enjoy an economic surplus but rather to assist the children economically, the area of the tenant-holding in these cases is extraordinarily small. The greater part of the small-scale tenant peasants are cultivators of their parents' land.

The special feature in the second pattern is that the lessors and lessees are dispersed both inside and outside the village. The greater part of the cases belonging to this pattern are cases in which the owner of the land has moved to live at some distance away from the village because of marriage or for some other reason and a "sibling" or other relative living in the village is cultivating the land in tenancy.

neolocal) and also of the law of inheritance the children may reside anywhere after marriage, and no matter where they reside they possess the right of inheritance in respect to their parents' property (principally land).

The special feature in the third pattern, in which the parties are unrelated, is that there are many cases similar to those of the second pattern. More than 70% of the lessors live outside the village. The absentee landlord owning a relatively large area of cultivated land in Padang Lalang village is a Malay who leases 62 relong (17.8 hectares) of cultivated land to eight tenants. This instance, however, is exceptional. On the whole, it is becoming difficult in the village to obtain the lease of agricultural land from others and the tendency to "mutual-aid tenancy relation" between parents and children or between other related persons as we have seen above is being strengthened.

Generally speaking, there are two forms of tenancy found in this region. The first, in which a fixed sum is paid yearly as rent, is called *sewa*, and the second, in which a fixed sum is prepaid as rent in accordance with long-term contract, is called *pajak*.¹³ In *sewa* tenancy, the rent can be paid in unhulled rice or *sewa padi*, or it can be paid in cash or *sewa tunai*. In Padang Lalang village *sewa padi* is overwhelmingly predominant.

In Kedah the maximum rent per relong has been legally fixed at 6 *naleh*¹⁴ since 1955.¹⁵ If this sum is exceeded the consent of the tenant is required when drawing up the tenancy contract. However, it is provided that the rent shall not exceed one-third of the harvested crop. The number of tenants in the village paying rent more than 6 *naleh* or the corresponding sum in cash, M\$54, per relong amounts to 30.5% of the total. In none of these cases, however, have written tenancy contracts been made. This fact is not due to the peasants deliberately refraining from concluding written contracts with the intention of evading the provisions of the law, but is due to the feeling that it is too much trouble to have such written contracts in operation. In fact, approximately 80% of tenancies are not governed by any legal written contract.

Instances in which rents are extremely high or extremely low are conspicuous among the leases of agricultural land between parents and children. Perhaps because the rents paid to the great absentee landlords are more

Table 6. FORM OF TENANCY AND RENT (October, 1964)

Rent	No Rent	Sewa Padi (naleh)					Sewa Tunai (M\$)					Pajak Total				
		5	6	7	8	10	30	40	60	70	80		85	90	100	
Number of Cases	6	4	73	11	1	2	1	2	5	6	4	1	4	2	2	124
(%)	(4.8)	(3.2)	(59.1)	(8.9)	(0.8)	(1.6)	(0.8)	(1.6)	(4.0)	(4.8)	(3.2)	(0.8)	(3.2)	(1.6)	(1.6)	(100)

¹³ The form called *pawah*, in which the landlord and tenant divide the harvest equally between them, is found on the east coast, but not on the west coast. Cf. T.B. Wilson, *The Economics of Padi Production in the North Malaya*, Ministry of Agriculture, Federation of Malaya, 1958, p. 14.

¹⁴ 1 *naleh*=16 *gantang*=16 Imperial Gallons. 6 *naleh* represents approximately one-fifth of the harvest.

¹⁵ For details see Kuchiba, Tsubouchi, and Maeda, "Maraya hokuseibu no inasaku nōson—nōchi-shoyū no reesai-ka ni tsuite," *Tōnan Ajia Kenkyū*, pp. 38-39.

liable to be subject to the provisions of the law, they are paid rather in accordance with the legal prescription. Both high and low extremes in the rents paid in the tenancy relation between parents and children are due to the following circumstances. When the parents have a sufficient surplus to permit them to charge a low rent, they can thus provide a measure of assistance to their children. In contrast, in cases in which the parents have no surplus they also lease agricultural land to their children in order to assist the economic life of the children; but the children pay a high level of rent to their parents in order to help the parents. In both cases the element of mutual aid is present in the tenancy relation.

In the above ways the scarcity of agricultural land and the smallness of the area of agricultural land owned by the peasants have on the one hand made it difficult to obtain leases of land from unrelated persons and on the other hand have had the result of strengthening tenancy relations on a small scale between parents and children and between other related persons.

V. AGRICULTURAL LABOUR AND LABOUR EMPLOYMENT

Paddy cultivation requires intensive labour according to the changes of the seasons. Assuming, as we have said above, that the small Malay peasant family has little labour to spare, how does it deal with the question of labour supply? In Padang Lalang village there is a precisely defined sexual division of labour under which the men undertake the tillage of the land and the threshing of the rice while the women are responsible for transplanting and harvesting. Thus, unless each peasant household retains the labour of at least one man and one woman, even small-scale paddy cultivation will be impossible. Approximately 80% of the peasant households fulfil these conditions, but in the remaining 20% there is clear evidence of the lack of either male or female labour. The bad conditions of health to which we have already referred have a strong tendency to reduce still further the labour available in each peasant household. In fact, the employment (*upah*) of labour is quite common.

Table 7. LABOUR AVAILABLE IN PEASANT HOUSEHOLDS BY SCALE OF CULTIVATION (October, 1964)

Scale of Cultivation (relong)	Available Labour	{Men Women	{0 1	{0 2	{0 3	{1 0	{1 1	{1 2	{2 1	{2 2	{1 3	{3 3	Total
Under 3			3		1	6	18		2				30
3-5			1			5	24		4	1	1		36
5-10						4	24	3	7	5	1		44
10-15				2		1	9		3	2		1	18
More than 15			1		1	1	4						7
Total			5	2	2	17	59	3	16	8	2	1	135
			26				30						

First let us give a brief account of the principal operations in paddy cultivation.

The preparations for the tillage processes are carried out from about April, as the end of the dry season approaches. First the stubble (*jerami*) remaining in the field is burned off, and when the rainy season begins in May the bunds of the fields (*batas tepi*) are made up. This operation takes one morning's work¹⁶ per relong. When the bunds are finished water is let into the fields and the weeds which have grown up in the fields are cut away with a long-handled sickle (*tajak*). The labour required in cutting away these weeds varies according to the thickness of the growth and the physical strength of the worker, ranging from 1 to 5 mornings' work per relong.

There are three distinct forms of the tillage operations which follow the cutting away of the weeds.¹⁷ The most general one in the village is ploughing (*tenggala*) with the water buffalo. The labour required in *tenggala* is 2-3 mornings' work by one person per relong. One week after carrying out *tenggala* the field is levelled with a large rake (*sisir kerbau*) pulled by a water buffalo. Levelling is carried out four times at intervals of three to four days. The labour required in each levelling is approximately one morning's work per relong. Since about 1960 there have been people who have employed tractors in place of *tenggala*.

From about July, by which time the tillage operations are fairly well advanced, work is begun on the preparation of the nursery bed,¹⁸ mainly by women. Transplanting is carried out in a communal operation which we shall describe later. A forked stick for planting seedlings, called *kuku kambing*, is used in the transplanting operation, and the general tendency is to plant the seedlings deep in the soil.

Transplanting is finished by about September and the harvesting of the early varieties of paddy begins from November. Paddy harvesting is mainly women's work, and like the transplanting operation it is carried out communally. The women cut the paddy with a paddy-harvesting sickle (*pisau pengerat*), and the men thresh the sheaves of harvested paddy by beating the ears of the grain against a small ladder-like contrivance (*tangga tong*) set upright in a tub (*tong*) and enclosed on three sides by straw matting. Thereafter the unhulled rice is winnowed with the help of a winnowing-basket (*nyiru*) of plaited bamboo.

¹⁶ Since it is hot in the middle of the day the peasants have a siesta from 1 o'clock to about 2 or 3 o'clock, and the forenoon's labour is referred to as 'one morning's work' (*sa-pagi*).

¹⁷ For details see Kuchiba and Tsubouchi, "Maraya hokuseibu no inasaku-nōson—nōgyō rōdō ni tsuite" (A Paddy Farming Community in Northeast Malaya—Agricultural Labour), *Tōnan Ajia Kenkyū*, Vol. 5, No. 1, July, 1967, pp. 10-13.

¹⁸ In addition to the ordinary nursery bed (*tapak semai biasa*) there is the 'floatable' nursery bed (*tapak semai rakit*), the latter being made in places where the water is deep. The peasants believe that the 'floating' nursery bed is better for the development of the seedlings, but because it involves a good deal of labour few make 'floatable' nursery beds.

Among the above operations in paddy cultivation it is the tillage operation which constitutes the greatest problem from the point of view of the labour required. For this operation the water buffalo and a male worker are required. Approximately 60% of peasant households carry out the tillage operation themselves, and in terms of scale of cultivation these households fall mostly within the group with holdings between 5 and 10 relong in area. This is because peasant households which own a water buffalo and which have sufficient male labour tend also to correspond to those peasant households with holdings of this size.

Table 8. TILLAGE OPERATION BY SCALE OF CULTIVATION

Scale of Cultivation (relong)	Under 3	3-5	5-10	10-15	More than 15	Total
Tillage by:						
Family Labour	8 (26.7)	22 (61.1)	39 (88.6)	10 (55.5)	2 (28.6)	81 (59.9)
Family+Hired Labour			1 (2.3)	2 (11.1)	1 (14.3)	4 (3.0)
Hired Labour	15 (50.0)	10 (27.8)		4 (22.2)	3 (42.8)	32 (23.7)
Tractor	4 (13.3)	4 (11.1)	4 (9.1)	1 (5.6)	1 (14.3)	14 (10.4)
Not Known	3 (10.1)			1 (5.6)		4 (3.0)
Total	30 (100)	36 (100)	44 (100)	18 (100)	7 (100)	135 (100)

The peasant households which, although not owning a water buffalo, carry out the tillage operation themselves borrow a water buffalo from its owner during the tillage season in return for a fee of the order of M\$60-120 or 1-1.2 kuncha of unhulled rice. For example, among the thirty peasant households cultivating holdings of less than 5 relong which carried out the tillage operation themselves, there were as many as 18 which did not own a water buffalo.

Table 9. OWNERSHIP OF WATER BUFFALOES BY SCALE OF CULTIVATION

Cultivated Area (relong)	0	Under 3	3-5	5-10	10-15	More than 15	Total
Number of Water Buffaloes Owned							
0	55 (91.6)	25 (83.4)	26 (72.2)	19 (43.2)	9 (50.0)	6 (85.7)	140 (71.9)
1	3 4 (8.4)	1	2	13	3		22 (11.3)
2	1	2 5 (16.6)	7 ¹⁰ (27.8)	10	5 ⁹ (50.0)	1 (14.3)	26 (13.3)
3		1	1	25 (56.8)	1		3 (1.5)
4		1		1			2 (1.0)
5				1			1 (0.5)
Not Known	1 (1.7)						1 (0.5)
Total	60 (100)	30 (100)	36 (100)	44 (100)	18 (100)	7 (100)	195 (100)

The expenses involved in the cases in which both water buffaloes and workers were hired for the tillage operation were M\$15-30 in cash, 2.5-3.5 naleh

in unhulled rice, per relong. Since, as we have noted above, it is possible for a household to carry out the tillage operation by itself even if it does not own a water buffalo, the frequent occurrence of hiring labour by households cultivating minute-scale holdings for the purpose of carrying out the tillage operation is due to the fact that male labour is not present in sufficient quantity.

The principal operations in paddy cultivation which require communal labour are the transplanting and harvesting operations. The following three forms of communal labour are found in these operations.

The first is the simplest form, consisting of co-operative labour by members of the same family, and the villagers call this *buat bendang sendiri* (doing the field-work on one's own). According to the villagers, if the scale of cultivation is less than 3 relong in area transplanting can easily be carried out with family labour. But when we actually look into the matter we find that among 30 households cultivating less than 3 relong only 8 completed the transplanting operation with the labour of their families alone.

The second is a traditional form of co-operative labour (*derau*)¹⁹ involving the exchange of labour between families. By *derau* is meant a form of labour by which relatives and/or friends living near to one another combine in a group of 5-20 peasant households on the basis of a certain determined area of cultivated land (5-10 relong) and carry out communally and in a pre-determined order the transplanting or harvesting operations. Because transplanting and harvesting are considered in principle to be women's work, it is one woman from each peasant household who takes part in *derau* labour. In the case of the transplanting operation one or two men take part in the role of transporters of seedlings (*ator semai*),²⁰

The third is co-operative labour by a hired work-party. This work-party is composed of women from the households of minute-scale peasant farmers or agricultural labourers living in the village, and because the returns are fairly distributed among the members the villagers refer to such a work-party by means of the English word 'share' or the Chinese-derived word '*kongsi*.' This share group is a form of hired work-party which became conspicuous about 15 or 16 years ago.

Whereas the normal wages for transplanting are stable at around M\$7 per relong those for harvesting vary between M\$7 and M\$10 because the labour-requirement differs according to whether the crop is early rice or late rice and because there are differences in the labour resulting from differences in the dryness of the soil in the fields. Consequently, while *derau* labour is more common in the case of transplanting, co-operative labour in the form of the share group is more common in harvesting.

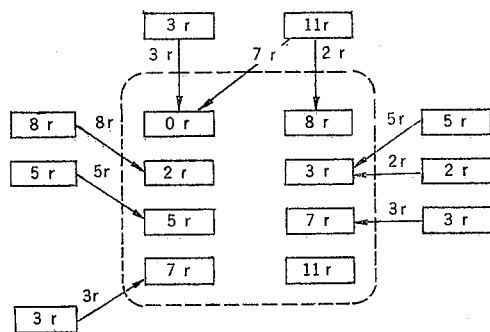
Among the above three forms of co-operative labour the traditional *derau* has in recent years been going out of use in its pure form. This is due to the fact that the formation of a *derau* party among a group of neighbours who cultivate a certain qualifying area, e.g., 10 relong, has become difficult.

¹⁹ This form of co-operative labour is also referred to as '*berderau*.'

²⁰ In general, men consider it shameful to engage in such a work along with women.

In this situation, as is shown in Figure 3, those of the peasants who take part in *derau* labour without possessing the necessary area of cultivated land, acquire the lacking area of land by becoming employees of other peasants. Again, peasants who have no labour may hire someone, causing him to take part in *derau* labour. Consequently, the greater part of the cases called *derau* are actually mixed forms comprising *derau* and employed labour (*upah*). When this kind of *derau* has ceased, the poor peasants and labourers who took part in it form a share group and look about for employers to give them work, and this is the general form of the share group.

Figure 3. DERAU (+UPAH): QUALIFYING AREA 10 RELONG



Notes: Peasant household (figures are for cultivated area, r=relong).
A employs B.

However, there are also some who organize share groups from scratch.

In Tables 10 and 11 are shown the forms in which the various peasant households carry out the transplanting and harvesting operations. The cases in which the work is carried out by family labour alone (*sendiri*) are more numerous in direct proportion to the small scale of the holdings, and the households which participate in *derau* labour are found in greatest numbers in the middle stratum of peasants, those cultivating 5-10 relong. Employed labour (*upah*) is most common among the peasant households which have large cultivated areas. What is to be noted, however, is that labour employment by minute-scale peasants also occurs in no small number of cases. On the whole, the proportion of labour employment is extraordinarily high.

Table 10. FORMS OF LABOUR IN TRANSPLANTING BY SCALE OF CULTIVATION (October, 1964)

Scale of Cultivation (relong)	Under 3	3-5	5-10	10-15	More than 10	Total
Forms of Labour						
S	8 (26.7)	9 (25.0)	4 (9.1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	21 (15.6)
D	8 (26.7)	14 (44.4)	22 (50.0)	4 (22.2)	2 (28.6)	52 (38.4)
Share	1 (3.3)	0 (0)	1 (2.3)	2 (11.1)	2 (0)	4 (3.0)
U	8 (26.7)	11 (30.6)	14 (31.8)	10 (55.5)	5 (71.4)	48 (35.6)
S+D	1 (3.3)	0 (0)	2 (4.5)	0 (0)	0 (0)	3 (2.2)
S+U	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (5.6)	0 (0)	1 (0.7)
D+U	1 (3.3)	0 (0)	1 (2.3)	0 (0)	0 (0)	2 (1.5)
Not Known	3 (10.0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (5.6)	0 (0)	4 (3.0)
Total	30	36 (100)	44 (100)	18 (100)	7 (100)	135 (100)

Notes: S=Sendiri, D=Derau, and U=Upah

Table 11. FORMS OF LABOUR IN HARVESTING BY SCALE OF CULTIVATION (October, 1964)

Scale of Cultivation (relong)	Under 3	3-5	5-10	10-15	More than 10	Total
Forms of Labour						
S	9 (30.0)	10 (27.8)	2 (4.5)	1 (5.6)	0 (0)	22 (16.3)
D	4 (13.3)	7 (19.4)	10 (22.7)	1 (5.6)	0 (0)	22 (16.3)
Share	2 (6.7)	1 (2.8)	5 (11.4)	2 (11.1)	0 (0)	10 (7.4)
U	10 (33.4)	17 (47.2)	23 (52.2)	11 (61.0)	7 (100)	68 (50.6)
S+D	1 (3.3)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (0.7)
S+U	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (2.3)	2 (11.1)	0 (0)	3 (2.2)
D+U	0 (0)	1 (2.8)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (0.7)
Share+U	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (2.3)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (0.7)
S+D+Share+U	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (2.3)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (0.7)
Not Known	4 (13.3)	0 (0)	1 (2.3)	1 (5.6)	0 (0)	6 (4.4)
Total	30 (100)	36 (100)	44 (100)	18 (100)	7 (100)	135 (100)

Notes: S=*Sendiri*, D=*Derau*, and U=*Upah*.

Why is it that cases of labour employment are so numerous in the tillage, transplanting, and harvesting operations? If we would point out the socio-economic conditions relevant to this matter, we may say the following.

1) As a result of the fragmentation of agricultural land deriving from the laws of inheritance and population increase on the one hand, and on the other as a result of the fairly frequent and wide-ranging movements of residence by the peasants deriving from the extensive connubial sphere which extends beyond the village boundaries along the banks of the river and from poor peasants leaving the village altogether, sales and leases of agricultural land are of frequent occurrence and the scale of cultivation among the peasants is in a condition of flux. Consequently, the scale of cultivation among the peasantry has not been reduced to an average, and it is difficult to organize a *derau* party in its pure form among a group of neighbours and fix permanently the relations between the participating families.

2) In principle, family structure among the Malay peasants takes the form of the nuclear family and because a sexual division of labour is still firmly adhered to, there is rarely surplus labour within the family. Consequently, even in the younger households with small-scale holdings situations in which the household is forced to rely on employed labour are apt to arise, as when the wife cannot work because of pregnancy, or when either parent cannot work due to rearing of children, illness, etc.

3) Individual proprietorship is often practised within a family, that is, there is a pronounced tendency for the parents to own and manage their agricultural land to the end of their lives. Consequently, when the parents reach an advanced age they must either have their now independent children cultivate for them as tenants, or employ them in the capacity of agricultural labourers. Again, there are a number of cases of employment which are designed to assist relatives whose incomes are irregular.

The many instances of labour employment among the Malay peasantry cannot necessarily be considered to be due to the laziness generally attributed to the Malays, nor can such employment be said to be due to the influence of modern wage employment. It is due in no small part to economic conditions such as those we have described above and to the character of the social structure of the Malay peasantry.

VI. THE INCOMES OF PEASANT HOUSEHOLDS AND PEASANT INDEBTEDNESS

The minute scale of cultivation and the high frequency of employed labour exert a direct influence on the domestic standard of living of the peasant households. We may then ask, what is the range of income which the Malays of this village obtain from paddy cultivation? Table 12 shows the results of calculations for average incomes of peasant households, arranged in six groups with due consideration given to leases of land, scale of cultivation, etc.

It is first necessary to explain briefly the problems which arose in the

Table 12. AGRICULTURAL INCOMES OF PEASANT HOUSEHOLDS
(Averages of Sample Groups, October, 1964)

	Cultivating Proprietor	Cultivating Proprietor	Cultivating Proprietor and Tenant	Large-scale Tenant	Small-scale Cultivating Proprietor	Small-scale Tenant
Cultivated Areas Taken as Criteria for Sample Groups (relong)	20	9-11	7-10	8-10	1-6	1-5
Number of Samples	2	3	9	8	13	29
Number of Persons per Household	5.0	5.3	6.6	5.0	4.9	5.1
Available Labour (men)	1.0	1.7	1.4	1.3	1.2	1.1
Available Labour (women)	0.5	1.3	1.2	0.9	1.2	1.1
Average Cultivated Area (relong)	20.0	9.7	7.8	9.0	3.3	2.8
Average Total Harvest (kuncha)	60.0	29.1	23.0	27.0	9.9	8.4
Land Held on Lease (relong)	5.0	—	4.7	9.0	—	2.8
Rent (M\$)	325	—	239	506	—	149
Land Leased (Average : relong)	25.0	5.3	—	—	—	—
Rent Income (M\$)	1,470	216	—	—	—	—
Labour Costs (M\$)						
Tillage	250	30	20	0	25	31
Transplanting	140	41	18	40	1	2
Harvesting	430	147	131	169	12	20
Cost of Fertilizers (M\$)	D.K.	204	94	203	59	64
Zakat (religious tax : M\$)	450	198	155	145	82	63
Taxes (M\$)	120	45	11	—	10	—
Net Agricultural Income (including rent income : M\$)	5,155	2,170	1,438	1,327	702	427

process of calculating the incomes of peasant households, figures for which are shown in Table 12.

First, as regards yields, the peasants say in response to our questions that the usual yield is 3 kuncha (480 gantang) of unhulled rice per relong and that the minimum yield is about 1.5 kuncha (240 gantang). According to "crop cutting tests" carried out by the Kedah state government the yield in Padang Lalang district in 1962-63 was 2.7 kuncha (442 gantang) per relong, but the method of calculation employed²¹ is not necessarily an accurate one. Which yield should be taken as the average value is a problem, but since yields differ considerably according to the amount of fertilizers applied and the variety of paddy in question we have chosen to base our calculations on the yield which the peasants think of as the average, namely 3 kuncha per relong.²²

Among agricultural expenditures, we have already spoken about the costs incurred under the head of employed labour.

Practically all the peasants use chemical fertilizers but the amounts paid for fertilizers do not necessarily vary in proportion to the quantities applied. This is because of the following circumstances. Chemical fertilizers began to be used from about 1958, and since 1963 the Agricultural Bureau of the Kedah state government has been supplying fertilizers at 20% discount to cash purchasers only. But although the number of those who have availed themselves of this service has risen rapidly from year to year it still accounts for less than 25% of total peasant households. The fertilizer which has been in use from former times is bats' droppings (*tahi kelawar*) which are obtained from a nearby hill, and the peasants call this '*baja bukit*' (hill fertilizer). The fertilizers supplied by the government are '*baja champoran*' (a mixture of nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium fertilizers) and '*baja urea*' (urea). The fertilizer which can be bought in Chinese general stores is '*baja gula*' (ammonium sulphate). The larger the size of holding the more numerous are the kinds of fertilizers used, but the use of *baja bukit* is still common among the small peasants. The smaller the size of the holding the greater is the proportion of fertilizers bought from general stores. The principal reason for the small peasants not purchasing the fertilizers supplied at a discount by the government is that this involves cash expenditures. The greater part of the small

²¹ In this method of calculation five plots of paddy fields, planted with a variety of paddy with the growing period of six months, are selected in a sub-district, and the average yields per relong are calculated from them as follows.

$$\text{Yield from } 11 \text{ ft} \times 22 \text{ ft} \left(= \frac{1}{128} \text{ relong} \right) \times 128 - 10\% \text{ (area of bunds)} = \text{yield from } 1 \text{ relong.}$$

In this manner the yields for the five places are arrived at, and to the results are added values based on yield-estimates by the heads of sub-districts (*penghulu*), and the average taken. The yield-estimates by the heads of sub-districts, however, are raised by 20% of the average yields of the five places before inclusion in the calculation.

²² According to the peasants the highest yield in the village in 1962-63 was 5.2 kuncha per relong from an early variety *padi burma*.

peasants lack ready cash and must purchase their fertilizers from Chinese shops on credit, even if they must do so at a premium.

Among other agricultural expenses, the landowners must pay to the Land Office (*pejabat tanah*) a land tax of M\$0.75 per relong and an irrigation water rate of M\$2.25 per relong. As an additional item which is similar to a tax, the peasants must pay one-tenth of their harvest as *zakat*, this being a religious duty required by Islam.²³

Again, since the producer's price for unhulled rice varies over time we have taken the average of these fluctuating prices as our conversion rate for yields in our calculations for incomes, and have used the figure of M\$9 for 1 naleh (16 gantang).²⁴

The figures given in Table 12 in respect to peasant households are the average values for incomes of each sample group, and are arrived at on the basis of the above points.

According to our interviews the minimum expenditure required to maintain a family of five persons for one month is around M\$50. Since this amounts to M\$600 in terms of annual expenditure the household must be that of a cultivating proprietor with 3.3 relong at the least if it is to meet these expenses out of agricultural income. But in the case of the small peasants the agricultural incomes are in reality much lower than the figures in Table 12 indicate, because of the methods of calculating yields and the conversion rates used. Furthermore, the M\$50 per month is close to the minimum amount necessary, mainly for food. Thus, the area of cultivation which would allow them a sufficient amount of income would be, in fact, much larger. For example, among the 29 small-scale tenant households with cultivated areas of between 1 and 6 relong only three had an ample reserve of rice on hand throughout the year 1963 and contracted no debts at all during that year. These three households consisted of two or three persons and were carrying on a fairly intensive form of agriculture. According to our surveys a cultivated area of at least 7 relong (1.96 hectares) is required if an income which will obviate the necessity of contracting debts is to be obtained from paddy cultivation.

In fact practically all the peasant households cultivating under 7 relong contract debts for their daily necessities. There are a number of ways of obtaining funds to meet emergencies, but the way most frequently resorted to among the peasants is called *padi timor*. *Padi* means unhulled rice and

²³ There are a number of questions which we should discuss in connexion with the *zakat*, but the peasants on the whole regard one-tenth of their harvest as *zakat*, and give it to the Bureau of Religions in the state administration, to the religious teachers (*guru agama*) in the village, and to the poor.

²⁴ The range of fluctuation in the producer's price for unhulled rice in the village is a broad one, this price being M\$6.5 for 1 naleh in the middle of December when the early varieties are harvested, M\$8.00 in January when the late varieties are harvested, M\$9.50 in May when tillage begins, M\$10.00 in the middle of July when transplanting takes place, and about M\$12.00 in September and October.

timor the east, and the expression refers to the method of paying in unhulled rice, at harvest time in the dry season when the east wind begins to blow, the price of articles purchased on credit from Chinese retail shops. This method is also used in repaying loans of cash. The villagers say that usually M\$4 will be charged as interest on loans of sums under M\$100 for a period of one month. However, the method of calculating the interest is by no means clear. Only a very small number of the peasants gave precise answers when asked how much interest would be charged on a loan of a certain sum for a certain period, and in general they merely replied that at a certain time they had borrowed a certain sum and at harvest time had repaid so much, including the interest. Actually, it may be supposed that the level of interest charged may vary more or less in proportion to the length of the period for which the loan is contracted, but since interest rates are also subject to variations depending on the degree of intimacy obtaining between the creditor and debtor we cannot say in general what level of interest is charged.

Considering the 29 cases in which we were able to confirm how many *padi timor* debts had been contracted in 1963 by peasant households cultivating under 6 relong, we find that in two cases the loans were for sums under M\$100, in 18 cases for sums between M\$100 and M\$300, and in 9 cases for sums between M\$300 and M\$500. Among these there were only 10 peasant households which had an ample reserve of rice on hand for that year, and of the remaining 19 households 9 had eaten all their rice on hand between May and August, and 10 had consumed all their rice on hand by September or November at the latest. Since *padi timor* debts are repaid in unhulled rice with interest added the quantity of rice on hand will decline from year to year, assuming that harvests are constant. If in addition to this there are socially necessary expenditures for weddings or funerals, the indebtedness will rapidly increase and at last the agricultural land will have to be disposed of.

There are also not a few indebted peasant households in the 8-10 relong range. Among the six cases, the sum of the loan was between M\$300 and M\$500 in 4 cases, M\$600 in one case, and M\$1,000 in one case. However, the objects for which these loans were contracted by these peasant households were the purchase of fertilizers, the employment of labour, and the purchase of radios and other articles, not the purchase of everyday food and clothing as in the case of the small peasants. In sum, it would appear that a cultivated area of about 10 relong is necessary if a peasant household is to obtain from agricultural income enough spare economic resources to make provision against emergency expenditures and to invest positively with a view to raising agricultural production. The number of peasant households in the village having a cultivated area of 10 relong or more is only 25 (18.4%).

VII. CO-OPERATIVE ORGANIZATIONS AND A NEW ALIGNMENT OF THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE

In Padang Lalang village there are practically no co-operative peasant organizations which could provide a positive solution to the condition of economic impoverishment afflicting the Malay peasants. In recent years there have indeed been a few moves to create some kind of co-operative organization, but it is inconceivable that there exists any real demand for them.

The co-operative organizations which aim to solve the impoverishment of the peasantry, to some degree at least by mutual-aid methods, are, first, the mutual organizations *sharikat pinggan mangkok* which purchase co-operatively the eating vessels and other utensils used at the assemblies held on the occasion of weddings, funerals and other ceremonies, and, second, the organizations for the co-operative performance of funeral rites (*sharikat mati*) which provide the costs of funerals on a mutual-aid basis out of funds laid by in advance.

These two kinds of *sharikat* were originally co-operative organizations based on geographical affinity. Up to the time of the Second World War, Padang Lalang village was divided into north and south sections, A and B, and organizations of the above-mentioned two types existed in both. But concomitant with population increase and changes of residence among the peasantry the organizations based on geographical affinity broke up, and in 1945 a *sharikat pinggan mangkok* was organized in section A, consisting of 32 households. In the case of this *sharikat* the members accumulated the subscriptions of M\$3 to M\$5 over a period of three years and bought the requisite eating vessels, but by about 1960 it was no longer possible to replace the utensils, and the organization became more or less inactive.

It was the government's encouragement of the formation of co-operative associations (*sharikat kerja sama*) which provided a new incentive for the re-organization of such traditional co-operative organizations, as co-operative associations for the purpose of allowing peasants to obtain the capital with which to improve agricultural production. The associations were financed by collecting subscriptions from the members, paying them into a bank and receiving finance from the bank at low rates of interest. It was influential persons in section B who made the first moves towards forming a *sharikat kerja sama*. But since the annual subscription of the association was M\$30 it was natural that the number of peasants who could become members of it was limited. It was begun in this village in 1961 with a membership of 20, but those who became members were practically peasants with holdings of 7 relong or more.

Again, in 1962 a *sharikat pinggan mangkok* of 21 persons and in 1964 a *sharikat mati* of 43 persons were formed on the initiative of more or less the same membership. The membership in these *sharikat* is by now no longer limited to section A or section B, and they are organizations participated in only by

the relatively wealthy peasants in the village.

In 1964 a certain section of influential persons who experienced some feeling of reaction against these moves organized a *sharikat pinggan mangkok* of 23 persons and a *sharikat mati* of 83 persons, both associations being participated in by the comparatively poor elements.

While the leaders of the two groups are all influential persons in the village, not only do the members of the two groups differ as regards their economic position, but also, during the general election of 1964, they supported different candidates, and deepened the emotional conflict between them. The group composed of the economically opulent stratum supported the Pan-Malayan Islamic Party and the rest supported the United Malays National Organization (UMNO), the main party in the present federal government. Because of the coming into being of these two contending groups a certain section of enlightened village elders, by becoming members of two *sharikat mati* at the same time, have taken their stand in a neutral position.

However, it is worthy of note that, as we have shown above, the economic pressures deriving from population increase and operating through the intermediacy of the social customs of the Malay peasantry have been strengthening the intensification of cultivation and are about to cause radical changes in the social structure of the village. What is more, the government's encouragement of the formation of co-operative associations has had the contrary effect of acting as a factor promoting the differentiation of social strata in the village. Our surveys indicate that the Malay peasants who can stand entirely on their own feet in economic terms with the income they earn from agriculture amount to approximately 20% of the total number of peasant households in the village. Unless some measures are taken for the purpose of enabling the remainder of the peasantry to stabilize economically it will be difficult to form co-operative organizations which will unite all the peasants in the village, and the tendency to the differentiation of social strata among the peasantry may be expected to be further intensified.