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Analysis of Population of Southwestern Saudi Arabia-Its
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From 1960-1980**

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Abstract:

Most of the developing countries in the world have witnessed a rapid movement from rural to urban areas where the process of social changes is more available. . One of the important problems of internal migration is the decrease of opportunity of social and economic change in rural areas. Saudi Arabian society can be classified as an aggregation of modes of production that shape the social formation as well as its economics and social relations. This coexistence of these contradictory modes of production is known as Asian mode of production. The Saudi economic structure has been shaped up by the oil-based economy.

The purpose of this paper is to provide a a historical analysis and interpretation of human social mobility . I contend that inequality in development plans between rural and urban areas one of the forcing drive of rural urban migration.

الحراك الاجتماعي من المناطق الريفية إلى المناطق الحضرية: تحليل تاريخي لسكان جنوب غربي المملكة العربية السعودية: دوافعه وأغراضه من عام ١٩٦٠-١٩٨٠

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قسم الاجتماع والخدمة الاجتماعية – كلية العلوم الاجتماعية

جامعة الإمام محمد بن سعود الإسلامية

ملخص البحث

شهدت معظم الدول النامية عمليات نزوح وتنقلات بين الريف والمدينة ويعود هذا إلى التغيرات الاجتماعية السريعة والتي كان لها بالغ الأثر على العلاقة بين الريف والمدينة من ناحية وحركة الناس من ناحية أخرى والذي يعرف في التنمية بالتغيرات الاجتماعية والحراك الاجتماعي. مشكلة الهجرة بين الريف والمدينة بدأت مع وجود فرص العمل ونمط الحياة الاجتماعية الجديدة في المدن مما أدى إلى نزوح عدد كبير من الأسر والأفراد وخاصة الشباب إلى المدن بحثاً عن تحسين الأوضاع المعيشية والاجتماعية والاقتصادية والثقافية والتربوية. إن هذه الحياة الجديدة جعلت المنافسة مفتوحة بين أفراد المجتمع في الريف والمدينة. فالهجرة في خدمات التنمية بين الريف والمدينة جعل فرص العمل في الريف تنحسر مما أدى إلى هجرة الكثير من الشباب والأسر إلى المدن لتحسين نوع الحياة وهذا أثر بشكل سلبي على مستقبل النشاطات الزراعية في الريف ونوع الحياة مما وسع الفجوة بين المجتمعين الريفي والحضري. إن الهدف الأساسي لهذه الورقة البحثية هو تحليل تاريخي لأوضاع الهجرة من الريف إلى المدينة في المجتمع السعودي وتركز بشكل كبير على الهجرة من المناطق الجنوبية الغربية باعتبارها تمثل الجزء الأكبر من الريف السعودي. ويزعم الباحث أن غياب العدالة في التنمية بين الريف والمدينة يعتبر من العوامل المهمة الدافعة للهجرة.

Introduction

Migration from rural areas to urban areas is a very common and perpetual phenomenon in the whole world. The incentive behind any kind of migration is principally, seeking a better life. One of the major problems attributed to such a movement is the overpopulated cities. On the other side of the problem is the decline of the mean of agricultural production(Cincott & Engelman 2000a,2000b,).

Rural-to-urban is not the only type of migration in any society. Other kinds of population movements are rarely discussed in the demographic literature. Most of the developing countries in the world have witnessed a rapid movement from rural to urban areas where availability of the process of social changes is more available such as more job opportunities, higher wages, better facilities and better lifestyles (Wood 1994, Borrini-Reyerabend 1997, Bilsborrow 2002,Istanto 2011,Hunnes 2012). The problems of internal migration are unquestionably obvious whether with regard to the migrants themselves or the urban areas to which they migrated. Elaboration for such problems is not the focus of this study, but I should mention one of the important problems in terms of internal migration which is the decrease of opportunity of social and economic change in rural areas.

Saudi Arabia as one of the world developing countries, which has been known as a clear instance of experiencing both internal and international migration. Concerning international migration to Saudi Arabia, there is a large and extensive literature about this topic by many authors, reporters, and scholars from all over the world. But, what is really needed is a study regarding the migration from rural to urban in Saudi Arabia. One might say, there are different kinds of studies about the migration of Bedouins to urban areas. In this case, I would like to explain that the Saudi Arabian society cannot be divided into only two groups: Bedouins and Metropolitan. Bedouins are the majority, but there are also rural communities

which are scattered in most of the southwest district, and in part of the western and eastern districts of the country.


In my point of view, the rural area in Saudi Arabia (and what I mean by rural is the people who settled and farmed the land or raised animals) can naturally be divided into two categories. The first one is the people who live in a village and cultivate the agricultural lands surrounding the village. This type of rural community is very common in the southwestern part of Saudi Arabia, and also in the western and eastern provinces. The second type is similar to those the United States which consisting of one farm with the house in the middle. This type is less available than the previous one. Fifteen to 20 years ago, people who engaged in such farming used wells for irrigation and exclusively planted vegetables for marketing.

Methodology:

The research is a documentary study. The researcher decided to use three techniques for collection information. These techniques were (1) historical documents and records, (2) personal experience of the region, and (3) natural observation.

Main question of this research was: why people are moving from rural to urban areas?

A brief background about the movement of rural population in the southwestern region in Saudi Arabia, its motivation and its impact on farming and the lifestyle in the village. Also, the purpose is to give general facts about the government aids to promote and develop the agricultural activities in the country. The southwestern regions of Saudi Arabia comprises four administrative units called emirates--Jazan, Asir, Al-Baha and Najran. Also, there are two other areas



that follow the emirate of Mecca administratively but actually are part of the southwestern regions.

In 1974 almost 1,440,000 people, 21 percent of the total population, inhabited the southwest region. It consisted of about 9,425 villages and cities. Fifty-seven percent of its population is rural area, 25 percent is Bedouin, and the rest are urban (Saudi Arabia, the 1974 Census). The southwestern district was certainly the only example of an agricultural region in the country. The reasons for that is the availability of many valleys and also the rainfall as the direct irrigation in most of the area. Yet, the agricultural activities are no longer became the source of living in most of this region because of the national development and tremendous social and economic changes as a result of the discovery of oil.

Economic and Planning Structure


The Saudi economic structure has been shaped up by the oil-based economy. This reflects Olsen's (1984) view of the nature of the Saudi state and economy; he discussed the latter as highly capitalist and the state's regime as pre-capitalist. Within this context, the Saudi economic structure is characterized as being dependent on the export of a single commodity, oil. The structure-transformation process that has taken place in the Saudi Arabian economy over the past two decades was the direct outcome of oil-based economic planning and development. Emphasizing the Saudi oil-based economy, El-Mallakh, 1982 stated:

Saudi Arabia has a single-commodity economy. The dominance of oil in the country's foreign exchange earnings, government revenue, and as a source of growth of the national income, is the most obvious characteristic of the economic system (27).

To understand the patterns of change and development in Saudi Arabia, it is necessary to examine the historical evolution of the oil industry. Structural changes in the oil industry can be clearly seen in the historical evolution of the relationship between the multinational oil companies and the nation-states of major oil producers. Saudi Arabia has been connected to the world capitalist system through the oil industry channels.

Tanzer (1989) explained the relationships between the multinational oil corporations and the nation states in the following passage:

Historically, the oil industry has always been both international and dependent upon state power. Thus, the overriding economic, political, and military forces which determine the balance of power among nation-states have




generally been crucial in determining which companies and groups of national capital have controlled the world's oil resources and profits (225).

This argument describes exactly the period prior to the creation of OPEC and the events of the 1973-74 oil crisis. In Saudi Arabia, this early stage was marked by conflict between U.S. and British oil companies over the control of Middle Eastern oil. This conflict continued up until World War II, and the U.S. represented by Aramco, won the war and the Saudi oil. Lackner (1978) described this scenario:

As the war drew to a close, U.S. supremacy over Britain in Saudi Arabia became clear. The struggle between the two had forced the U.S. government to take some commitment to assisting the Saudi regime. This was meant both to protect Aramco (Arabian American Oil Company, the name adopted by Caltex in 1944) and to ensure the survival of a pro-Western conservative regime in a world where opposition to imperialism was gathering momentum (37).


Up until the birth of OPEC, the Saudi government and Aramco went through various phases of relations, from the 1933 concession agreement up until the government's complete ownership of the company. However, such ownership was only in the shareholding and did not mean the possession of the company (Lackner, 1978; Rawls, 1987). During this period, Aramco's role in Saudi Arabia was more than an oil company. It assisted the government in building the basic infrastructure of major cities in the country. These "extracurricular" activities included building roads to link the capital, Riyadh, with the Eastern Province; building airports and seaports; and helping the "local commercial enterprise by assisting in the establishment of service industries" (Rawls, 1987: 139).



The next stage in the relationship between Saudi Arabia and the oil companies was characterized by continuous negotiation on the share of the oil price until the birth of OPEC in 1960. However, the formation of OPEC was not good news for the oil companies, which continued to ignore its existence until OPEC was able to raise its oil price in 1969 (Lackner, 1978). During this period and prior to 1973, Saudi oil revenue was estimated to reach \$1.2 million. This amount increased to \$29 billion in 1975 (Birtes & Sinclair, 1986).


The above brief historical evolution of the Saudi relationship with the oil companies was highlighted by the events of the pre-1973 era in which the companies set the price through their manipulative nature. After 1973, oil became a scarcer resource with the consequent increase of the importance of the oil industry in world affairs and the decreasing power of the oil companies vis-à-vis the oil producing states. Hence, the rise of OPEC's power and the following increase in oil prices set the next stage of two decades of instability in the oil market and a continuing struggle between the oil producers and the oil companies. This second period can be clearly seen as the beginning of full internalization of the oil-based economies. Feagin (1985) emphasized this trend in the nature of Houston's world economy in the 1970s. "The relationship between Houston's prosperity and economic shifts in the larger world economy can be seen in the history of OPEC" (1220). Also, this shift in the international oil industry, from once dominant oil companies to that of OPEC producers, has "laid the basis for the optimism in the Third World that it was not yet in a position to wrest control over the enormous profitability of oil away from the multinational companies" (Tanzer, 1989: 227).

In the case of Saudi Arabia, the oil boom of post-1973 set the stage for an unprecedented economic and social transformation. This transformation



included the building of the infrastructure, improving human and social conditions through education and urbanization, developing communications, and improving the material condition for the population. During the first period, the massive construction of the infrastructural base of the country was visible in the rise of three major urban centers—Riyadh, Jeddah on the west coast, and the two major cities of the Eastern province, Damman and Dahrhan. These three urban centers have experienced a massive growth due to their strategic position in the country during the oil-boom.


The Eastern province's urban growth, in modern Saudi Arabia, can be very much associated with the discovery of oil. This was the area in where oil was first discovered and the location of subsequent oil-related operations by Western companies, especially Aramco. The Eastern province has experienced the impacts of both oil-related activities and the overall changes in the Saudi economy (Bowen-Jones, 1980). Riyadh is the city with the largest population, with an estimated 1.5 million inhabitants in 1982 projected to reach 2.0 million in 1990 (Arab Institute for City Development, 1986). Because of the concentration of the government's agencies, the central banks, real estate, and the modern urban structures, Riyadh's growth can be attributed to the massive flow of people from both outside the country and from the rural and Bedouin areas. This urbanization process occurred due to the early concentration on urban development and neglect of rural areas. For the outside migrants to Riyadh and other cities in the country, the major reason has been the Saudi dependence on foreign labor in areas other than the oil industry (Islami, 1984; Lackner, 1978. Here, Grill (1984) argued,



These high levels of migration have created extremely rapid rates of population growth, reaching 8.2 percent per annum -----, resulting in the expansion of the city in spatial terms. This expansion has been of two basic types, either a coalition of surrounding villages or a natural expansion dictated by particular man-made location (50).

The implications of this urbanization process in Saudi cities shares common features with many developing countries. The economic gap between rural and urban areas (Islami, 1984), the “inhospitable” conditions in the desert and some rural areas (Abu-Lughad, 1984), and the backward agricultural production have contributed to the rapid increase in the Saudi urban population. Walton (1982) linked this urban process to that of the peripheral type of urbanization. Although Walton did not directly address the urban process in the oil-based economies, he acknowledged the effects of a global economy. One of these global effects, he argued, is “an expanding urban population in a few cities such as the capital, provincial centers, or port cities that would be difficult to absorb in the occupational structure under ‘normal’ (i.e., indigenous growth) conditions (121). However, in Walton’s argument, especially that of “amending” the dependency—a theory which views peripheral urbanization, the global economy is an influential factor, but “local” forces should be considered in understanding the process of urbanization in the Third World. Here, he argued,

The theory of urbanization under peripheral capitalism assumes, correctly, that the global (or core) economy determines and constrains the course of Third World development. I would amend that to say that the global economy is one among several powerful forces that has direct, indirect, and remote effects, all of which interact with concrete local influences, including social organization and cultural tradition (125).



Walton's emphasis on the importance of the local or national forces can be seen in the case of Saudi urbanization, given the dominant role of the state in the distribution of oil revenues among urban and rural areas.

Types of Migration in Southwestern Saudi Arabia

Southwestern Saudi Arabia has experienced three types of migration in recent years.

A. Rural-to-Urban Migration

Rural-urban migration is the normal one, and it is visible in each country in the world. Sometimes it can be described as long range migration, such as delayed and family migration and the chain migration. Mass migration to the big cities—such as Riyadh, Dammam and Jeddah—and the frequent visits by many villagers to their home towns have brought rapid inflation to the villages as the money earned in a place like Riyadh flows into the village's stagnant economy. Therefore, it becomes cheaper for the lone male migrants to bring their families to the city than to support two households, one in the village and another in the city, travelling between them several times every year.

Young males seeking temporary employment have provided the bulk of migration to the big cities. The chain migration is not peculiar to Saudi Arabia. It has been observed in other parts of the world as well. Tilly studied this migrational phenomenon in the United States, indicating that migrants from Appalachia were recruited by relatives and friends at the place of destination. These newcomers would in turn recruit more migrants from back home (Tilly, 1970:160). So it can be deduced that economic factors caused these kinds of migration along with the social factors such as the attachment to relatives and friends.

B. Rural-to-Rural or Circular Migration

What actuates this type of migration is the age-old land hunger of peasant populations. In Southwestern Saudi Arabia, rural – to- rural rarely occurs because of changes in the organization of agriculture. Partially due to a failure to “make the complete circle”, ties between family and community have become less integrated in the rural area of destination.

C. Urban-toRural or Semi-Circular Migration


This is the movement of young male workers who leave their village intending to earn enough money to return to their birthplace to open private businesses or to buy land, water pumps, and other farm equipment. Since they do not intend to stay in the big cities permanently, and since they have no long-range occupational goals, they simply work at available jobs which will supply them with their most immediate needs and desires. Thus, they usually enter the urban class structure at the bottom. But their social status should normally rise with their length of residence, education, and experience. The pattern of migration is basically dictated by economic motives and by instability of the work that new migrants usually experience.

Motive for Migration

1) Economic Transformation as a Principle Motivation

This section's focus is on why people migrate from the countryside to the cities. Many of these migrants voluntarily leave their villages to seek the greater economic and social opportunities available in the urban industrial centers. Still others are essentially victims of excess population growth in the rural areas—a population growth rate greater than the increase in opportunities.

The factors motivating this rural-urban migration have been classified as “push” and “pull”. The “push” comes from the decline in the need for farm labor—



due mainly to drought, from pressure on the land, or from farm mechanization. Then the “pull” factors are due to the city attracting many people to work in different sectors. There is also the lure of better living conditions, of higher wages, and of a greater chance for better jobs (Kempinski, 1950:70-73). These two categories of factors—“push” and “pull”—are mutually dependent. The “push” factors are those that push the destitute peasants, forcing them to leave their land and leave for the city and its “pull” factors, such as expected employment, relatives, friends or better living conditions. However, pure “pull” factors can be traced when migration occurs between two places, both having sufficient occupational opportunities to support their populations. Similarly, pure “push” factors can be recognized when migration occurs between two settlements with job deficits. When there is a high disparity in the number of opportunities two places offer, there will be a large volume of migration. For example if Place A has more jobs than people available to fill them—job surplus—and if Place B has more people available for work than jobs for them to work at—a job deficit—we should expect migration from Place B to Place A to increase.


The drought that prevailed for many years was responsible for ruined crops and starving animals in rural areas. The poor farmers, having no sophisticated tools to drill for underground water, and the nomads, having no experience in reclaiming and developing the pastures, and the small town dwellers, having lost their profitable contact with nomads and the farmers, have been forced to leave their place of origin for urban areas. They are seeking jobs for which the rural refugees may qualify. Vance states that:

As new areas develop and old ones decline, workers must migrate in order to develop the new resources and to relieve older communities of surplus workers.

The 'push' of stranded communities resulting from shifting work opportunities are accentuated by the 'pull' of new developments in industry (Vance, 1951:191).

Economic factors have been viewed by many scholars as the primary motivation that causes people to move from one place to another. Economic conditions can be a "push" factor where employment opportunities are stagnant and a "pull" factor where jobs are expected to be available. Donald Bogue points out that there are three key variables involved in migration flows: employment, income and rapid population growth with no corresponding increase in opportunities. Tilly also says that there are three factors which increase migration magnitude—occupational information, job opportunity, and cost of moving. Tilly indicates that migration volume positively correlates with occupational information and with job opportunity available at the destination. The volume of migration is negatively correlated with the cost of mobility. Thus, when the cost of migration is high, migration magnitude is low. If two places are near each other, with one place having a high employment rate and the other with a lower employment rate, provided that information about job information was widely dispersed, migration will be at its highest (Tilly, 1970:154). Beshers also underscored the significance of the job available information dissemination as the basic constraint on individual mobility (Beshers, 1967:136). These migration factors emphasized by Bogue, Tilly and Beshers are applicable to Saudi Arabian migration.

The three key variables, underscored by Bogue and noted above, obviously apply to the situation in Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabian rural areas are characterized by low-wage jobs, low incomes, high population growth rates, and relatively low death rates. Urban employment's lure lies not only in higher wages but also in the fact that workers are paid regularly, month by month, in contrast to agricultural



workers, who are basically paid seasonally. Rural workers' earnings are also unpredictable because of fluctuations in both weather and world market prices.

Without a doubt Saudi Arabian rural migration incentive is predominantly a product of a desire for money income and material wealth unavailable in the desert or in the village. The villages offer little incentive to work, because payment is either meager and/or irregular. In the larger cities, a higher standard of living is within reach of the rural migrant. Churchill states that sixty-five percent of the rural migrants to Beirut, Lebanon had been prompted to move because of economic factors (Churchill, 1954:49). Similarly, El-Saaty and Hirabayashi indicate that sixty percent of the migrants to Alexandria, Egypt, had been similarly motivated (El-Saaty and Hirabayashi, 1959:72).

Bogue also concluded that non-economic factors are significant migration motivators, and that especially social and psychological factors should be considered as important reasons for migration. The presence of relatives or friends in the big cities has encouraged rural people to migrate to the city. In his study of migrants to Wilmington, Delaware, Tilly noted that kinship-actuated migration was the most common among rural groups who possess the least facility and skill in dealing with impersonal urban life (Tilly and Brown, 1967: 143). Help or hope for help from relatives and friends makes the migrants hopeful that the problems anticipated on their arrival in the city will be solved. Beshers notes that rural areas have a social structure organized around kinship patterns, so it is expected that kinship will play a significant role in patterns of migration (Beshers, 1967:139).

Because of the discovery of oil, Saudi Arabia as a whole witnessed a significant economic development. This development in the beginning took place in the larger cities of the country. Consequently, most of the young people in the southwest district started moving to the cities for better jobs. Afterwards the movement took


another direction to the cities inside the region, which caused an increase in the region's population as seen in Table 1.

Table 1

The Increase of Population in the Cities of Southwest Saudi Arabia Because of Internal Migration from Rural Areas Between 1974-1982

City	Population Estimate			Avg. Ann. Rate of Increase
	1974	1978	1982	
Jazan	32,792	37,775	43,516	3.6
Kamismushit	48,197	55,320	66,349	4.7
Abha	30,354	38,630	47,134	5.1
Najran	29,600	34,895	41,114	4.2
Al-Baha	15,300	19,663	25,413	6.5
Sabya	13,462	16,053	19,144	4.5
Abu Arish	12,272	14,357	16,795	4.0
Source: Saudia Arabia, Statistical Yearbook, 1982				

Modernization and the continued expansion of the economic development in the whole nation attracted individuals from inside and outside to work in the industrial and economic projects. Those in the southwest area of the country were attracted by another motive which necessitated their moving particularly the young people who inhabited the rural area. This was the relative lack of economic, industrial, or agricultural projects in the region.



There were some other motives that related to the difficult conditions in the rural and nomadic areas. Also, the young people having an ambition to achieve a better life and progress to a good future contributed to the vast movement from rural to urban areas. Finally, another additional stimulus to the movement was the development of various transportation facilities between every part of the nation.

2) Lack of services:

Most of developing countries experienced a huge gaps between rural and urban areas as a result of inequality development that forced so many people to leave their homes in small villages seeking a better life.. Inequality of development planes between the two areas have caused more lack of services for instance, poor electricity and power supplies, clean water, employment opportunities, transportations, poverty, poor education and health provision , poor sewerage systems, poor rubbish collection were the main reason which forced villagers to leave their homes.

The Impact of the Movement on Rural Life

Generally, migration from a rural to an urban area has problems of impact not only for the rural life, but also on the quality of urban life. The impact on urban life is not covered so much in this paper, but I shall address it briefly. With respect to the impact on the cities of the southwest, there is the rising standard of living in the cities, disparity in wages because of the increasing attraction for the labor force, problems for planning of general services, and other problems of housing communication, social welfare, traffic accidents, etc.

The first and most important problem of impact on rural communities in the region is the decline of agricultural production. As a result of this decline, the great portion of unused lands emerged. In the Jazan Valley, for example, the agricultural

area was estimated at 1.1 million hectare (Saudi Arabia, Ministry of Agriculture 1977). Also, there has been a shortage of labor in the agricultural sector.


In my point of view, there are many facts regarding the impact of migration on rural life. As I cited, I could attribute the problem of impact to these major situations:

1. The Decline of Agricultural Production

The southwest region generally contains the most agricultural area in the country. The rural area in this region occupied the most area. Agriculture was the only source of living in the area. I lived in a village in which all of its residents were farmers or engaged in other activities related to farming. I shared planting, irrigating, and cultivating in the field with my father and grandfather. Yet, after the vast economic and social change, the situation changed and people started moving to the life of the city. The region was known as the food basket of the country and self-sufficient regarding agricultural crops. After the movement from farm to the industry and from village to the city, the area became mostly dependent on imported food. Also, the decline in agricultural production resulted in the increase in the agricultural products prices. Now, you can see two things around the village, either unused lands, or uncultivated lands and the immediate cause is movement from the rural areas to the cities.

2. The Change of Social and Environmental Conditions in the Village

Gradually, most of the people returned to their villages after they had made their retirement in the cities, and they came back after having adopted city ways. Some of them continued with their occupation which they had learned in the city, some others invested their money in diverse businesses. Few people, of those who came back, were still interested in farming, and some out of that minority started some agricultural production with great aid from the government.




Villages in rural areas are very similar to small cities. For many years we used primitive ways for illumination and we had sandy streets, now we have electricity and asphalted roads in every village. Moreover, the relationships between people in the rural area are less interrelated and became similar to those in urban areas. Most of the people in the village go to work in the nearest city center every day and they are less likely to practice any kind of farming.

3. The Principal Trend for the New Generation: Gravitating Toward City Life

In other words, it is very rare to observe younger people going into farming in the southwestern district. Some of them engaged in education, police work, and administrative/governmental work. Some others combined education and trading independently or with their fathers. The adoption of farming in the southwest region in general, conducted by older people between 40-60 is a part-time occupation. These groups of people do not work directly as farmers but as supervisors because the agricultural labor is done by foreign workers. The immediate reason for that is to get the government aid on one hand and to benefit from agricultural profits on the other hand.

The Government Policy Toward Farming


In fact, one can hardly find an official of rural development in Saudi Arabia. However, it could be gathered from informal statements, on one hand, and particularly in the second five years' development plan, on the other hand, that the aims of rural development are: (1) Raising the level of living standards of rural people, and (2) detribalization of rural people and creating a sense of nationhood and perpetuating the feeling of national identification among rural villagers and particularly among the Bedouin sector.



In furtherance of this first goal, the government had begun a series of agricultural development programs. Water, the magic wand, is the chief limiting factor. Surveys for underground water resources, construction of dams, irrigation and drainage network, combined with distribution of fallow land, settlement of Bedouins and introduction of mechanization are aimed at eventually raising agricultural production in the Kingdom to near self-sufficiency in food. During the second plan, irrigated farmland will be expanded by 50,000 hectares over its present area of 121,000 hectares. It is believed that there is a large potential for considerably increasing agricultural production in nearly all areas under cultivation by improving water distribution and drainage systems.

The government had established the Al-Hasa Irrigation and Drainage Plan, which was inaugurated in December, 1971. Its costs exceeded 260 million riyals (around 78 million dollars). It will lead to the reclamation of 12,000 hectares and about 50,000 persons will benefit from it. The Wadi Jizan dam, inaugurated in March, 1971, has a reservoir with a capacity of 71 million cubic meters of water and was built at the cost of 42 million riyals (around 12 million dollars); it is hoped that the irrigated area will increase by 8,000 hectares. The Abha dam, a smaller one, was opened in 1974 with a reservoir capacity of 24 million cubic meters. (Ali 1984) The key, of course, to expanding agricultural production in Saudi Arabia, is increasing the water supply. Saudi Arabia has a climate much like the arid West in the USA, somewhat like Southern California in our wettest region, the southwestern district, but most of the Kingdom is more like desert regions of Nevada and surrounding states of the USA.

Therefore, one of the principle constraints on farming in Saudi Arabia is the lack of water. Rainfall in the country is slight and irregular, with the exception of the southwest region, especially in the mountains. In the beginning of the 1980s,




the government of Saudi Arabia was providing a vast array of incentives in order to inspire agricultural production.

According to the latest edition of Saudi Arabia, A Country Study, published by American University in Washington D.C., distribution of government land was free on approval of projects. Interest free loans were to be made available for seasonal purposes and for a longer term for such projects as machinery and herd improvement. Free air reight was provided for milk cows, although with a minimum of 50 cows per shipment. Subsidies of 30 percent on the cost of poultry and dairy equipment and 50 percent on engines and pumps were provided. Fertilizers and animal feed had 50 percent of cost subsidized and pesticides 100 percent. Up to five tons of potato seeds were provided free. Agricultural roads, government installed wells, and extension and veterinary services were reaching more isolated farm communities each year.

The governmental urgency to support agricultural projects took place despite the problem of dispersed lands and the lack of water. The government spent a huge amount of money to achieve this goal, but unfortunately by 1983 observers noted some problems, such as low prices for some products, poor local products, etc.

In my point of view, the problems of poor local products is not exactly true. The real fact of the matter is that people have been accustomed to depending on imported products and they have a notion that local produce is not that good. There is another issue, the price of local production is not a problem for farmers like Japan's for rice would be unpopular because oil purchasers want to sell food in return, but in fact, it is high and the imported products are sold at a relatively low price, therefore, people buy the imported products because of their low price and the local products remain on the store shelves and in the market stalls.



In accordance with the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources (MAWR), there were three principle objectives for agricultural development in Saudi Arabia: to increase the per capita income of the farmer, to improve rural life and prevent migration to the cities, and to decrease the country's dependence on imported food stuffs. (Ministry of Agriculture). "On October 14, 1981, the Minister of Agriculture told a group of Western businessmen in Geneva that Saudi Arabia was committed to developing its agriculture to the point of self sufficiency." (Ministry of Agriculture).

In terms of cereals and grain production, Saudi Arabia is one of the few countries in the area to grow both wheat and rice. Now, Saudi Arabia is known as an exporter of wheat and other related crops.


In regards to dairy production, there were 17 dairies in operation, about 10,000 cows giving 37 million liters of milk per year, according to 1982 estimates.

In the southwest region, there are two agricultural projects conducted under the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources in the Kingdom. The first one is located in the region of Jizan Valley (Hakimah) which produces sorghum, cotton, sesame, sunflower and alfalfa; and, in addition, papaya and Sudanese Mango trees. The second one is located on the north side of the southwest district. Because of the moderate weather in this area fruit is appropriate crop.

The Saudi Arabia Agricultural Bank (SAAB) has been established to provide credit to farmers. Almost every major city in all districts in the country has a branch of the Saudi Arabia Agricultural Bank.

There are three types of loans provided by the Saudi Arabia Agricultural Bank: loans for production inputs such as seed, loans to acquire farm machinery, and loans for land purchase and development.

A major purpose of the Saudi Arabia Agricultural Bank during the Second Development Plan, 1975-80, was to expand credit in support of agricultural



development. In order to achieve this goal, the Saudi Arabia Agricultural Bank provided loans for:


- Seed, fertilizer, labor, and other production inputs.
- Transporting, marketing and processing of agricultural products.
- Agricultural machinery and irrigation equipment.
- Purchasing and developing of agricultural land. (Second Development Plan, 1975-80, p. 136).

Comparative Perspective on Rural Migration and Development

This section seeks to discuss the nature of Third World to urban migration in general, and then proceed to the specific examples West Java (rural-urban migration), Sri Lanka (rural-rural migration), and South Korea (return migration). West Java is part of the nation of Indonesia, a far-flung archipelago under Dutch rule during the Colonial era, a foreign occupation lasting until shortly after the Second World War (1939-45). Java is the most populous part of Indonesia, and one of the most densely populated parts of the world. The religious faith of most Javanese, as well as most Indonesians in general, is Islam.

Sri Lanka, formerly known as Ceylon during the years of British rule, the same that endured until shortly after the Second World War, is an island immediately south of the Indian subcontinent. The religious faith of the Sri Lankans is split between followers of a local variety of Buddhism and Hinduism (the Tamil minority).

South Korea, formally, the Republic of Korea, is part of the fast developing Pacific Rim, and is hot on the heels of the Japanese economic colossus. It can almost be said that whenever the Japanese established a market share in the USA, for example petroleum-carrying tankers, automobiles, consumer electronics, etc., the South Koreans sought to provide the goods at an even lower price. Hyundai




automobiles and consumer electronics are rapidly becoming as well known in the USA and throughout the Third World as those famous Japanese names such as Honda and Mitsubishi. South Korean self-determination was upheld during the United Nations action of 1950-53, in which a North Korean (Peoples Republic of Korea) invasion was repelled by forces consisting primarily of American troops under American commanders. Other countries such as Britain, and Turkey, which sent a very decorated contingent, also helped in the U.S. effort in South Korea. Ever since 1953, a state of war has existed between South and North Korea, an armed truce. The predominant religious faith of the Korean people is based on the predominant Chinese Confucian tradition, and the written language of the Koreans is derived from Chinese characters. Korea is a peninsula off the Chinese mainland, and during the modern era was under Japanese colonial domination.

Rural-Urban Migration in the Third World Generally

Rural population movements are very noticeable features of Third World countries. Third World countries are considered as less developed and many will remain so for the next several decades. Migration is among the many processes changing the rural areas to urban places, others are moving from one rural area to another. Sometimes, the move is permanent; sometimes it is not. Some movement is based on the decision of individuals and their families in response to social and economic opportunities. (Findlay 1987:29)

In the first part of this research we have discussed the migration from rural communities in Saudi Arabia, especially in the Southwest part. The reason for this kind of movement is because of the economic development that took place in the larger cities of the country. Consequently, most of the young people in the southwest district started moving to the cities for a better job. Another reason is the hard condition in rural, and nomadic areas, which influences the people to move out



and go to the cities. These movements brought some negative impact on the quality of life in the small villages such as the lack of able-bodied men who can provide the necessary labor in the villages. In my opinion, there are several kinds of migration in the southwest of Saudi Arabia, rural to urban, rural to rural, and return migration to rural society. In this part of the research, I will derive some comparative study from areas that have environmental factors in common with Saudi Arabia. The focus will be on Indonesia as a rural-urban migration, Sri Lanka as a rural-rural migration, and finally South Korea as a return migration.

The Nature of the Rural-to-Urban Migration in West Java

Migration from rural to urban is the normal one, and it is visible in each country in the world. In West Java in Indonesia people are moving from small villages to the larger cities looking for a better jobs and to improve their economic status. Modernization and the expansion of the economic development attracted the village people in West Java to leave the rural villages and come to the cities. In Southwest Saudi Arabia, the same thing has happened. Here we have to ask one question, what are the social and the economic impacts on the villages in West Java and in Southwest Saudi Arabia. In both societies, "village social organizations have been based on the strength of the family unit and a body of traditional relationships among the people. The major impact in both societies is the lack of able-bodied men because most of the immigrants are the young people. It was clear especially during the off-season for agriculture. The absence of the large number of able-bodied young men would affect the movement of leadership in the village, and it would affect the economic and social activities." In West Java the absence of the husband, or the impact of separation of husbands from wives and children raises the rate of divorce, but it is not that clear in Southwestern Saudi Arabia. Other effects of the absence of economically active males, is participation of women and children


in day-to-day agricultural and household tasks in both societies. The economic impact on both societies is that villages in West Java and Southwest Saudi Arabia have become economically dependent on the urban centers. (Pryor, 1979:204-210)

In summary, migration in both cultures, West Java and Southwest Saudi Arabia is based on two reasons, the economic and the educational. Both the overall Javanese and Southwest Saudi Arabian cultures have had the same impact on the village, except in Southwest Saudi Arabia where the increase in the divorce rate due to the separation of the husband and wife is not as clearcut a result of the social changes that have taken place.

Rural-to-Rural Migration in Sri Lanka

Rural-to-rural migrants are likely to improve their farming situation by coming to own and cultivate more of their lands as a result of the move to the new rural area. In Sri Lanka, moving to other rural areas is very important because the move is organized by the government. But in Southwest Saudi Arabia it has rarely happened. The potential, however, is there, for resettlements in rural areas as the government irrigation projects are completed. The major consequences of rural-rural migration are the changes in the organization of agriculture. In both societies, one feature of the migration to the new rural areas, and the resultant change in the mode of agricultural production, is the changing levels of social and economic differentiation. One of the key similarities between rural-rural in both societies (Sri Lanka and Southwestern Saudi Arabia) is that ties between family and community have become less integrated in the rural area of destination. There are a number of differences between the two societies.

In Sri Lanka, the growing differentiation and increased commercialization make it easy for the people to see the economic activity of the migrants particularly in the production. In Southwest Saudi Arabia this factor is not visible in the society,




perhaps because this kind of migration is not organized by the government as in Sri Lanka. The second difference is the rural areas of destination in Sri Lanka have become more modern than the areas of rural origin. But in Southwest Saudi Arabia both rural areas are in a similar condition, because this kind of migration is very rare in Saudi Arabian society and rural societies in Saudi Arabia are like small cities. (Goldschneider 1984:242,298,299)

Urban to Rural Re-Migration in South Korea

Most of the people who come back to the villages of South Korea have done materially well in the city. They come back adapted to city ways. Here we have to ask ourselves this question, how does the urban experience influence those returning to rural areas. In our comparison between Southwest Saudi Arabia and South Korea, it is very important to know that, in South Korea the evidence clearly indicates that rural return migrants are not negatively selected; they are not failures in the city returning to their place of origin. Rural return migrants are better educated than in-migrants who remain in the urban area. Return migrants had jobs that were less tied to urban occupational networks. They are more likely to work for themselves. Return migrants have more links to their place of origin, less ties to their place of destination, and are more likely to move back to their rural origins after having attained their education and income goals in the city. They move back to the areas of origin not because of the family tie obligations, or enforcement from the government. They moved to improve the economic life in their rural areas, and to pave the way for more educated urban-skilled people to come in and participate in the development of their home areas.


Return migrants to rural areas in South Korea fit in with government policies to ease the gap between the rural and the urban and to help to create new opportunities for the rural areas to catch



up with the urban areas. In Southwest Saudi Arabia, the government tries to encourage the people who have the abilities to work in their own culture through providing the farmers (or people in the urban societies who have an interest in farming) more substantial credit facilities such as farm loans (Goldscheider 1984:291-292).

A key difference between return migrants in Southwest Saudi Arabia and return migrants in South Korea is the education factor. In South Korea, many people move from rural areas to the city to obtain an education. Those who return to their place of origin have a higher level of education than those who remain in the city. Return migrants use their urban educational attainments as means of obtaining good jobs in their place of origin. In contrast, formal education does not have a major place on the agendas of rural-urban migrants in Southwest Saudi Arabia. In Southwest Saudi Arabia, people who return to their place of origin have the lowest educational levels. These people who have the higher educational levels will not come back to their own place of origin except for visits. Therefore, education is positively associated with return migration in South Korea but it is unrelated to return migration in Southwest Saudi Arabia. These contrasting relationships between education and migration in rural South Korea and Saudi Arabia are not general factors. So we can say that the education of South Korean rural migrants is associated with differentiation and modernization. But the absence of educational differentiation in Southwestern Saudi Arabia rural migration is less tied to processes of social and economic development associated with education. (Goldscheider 1984:292,299).

In South Korea, the social ties stimulated migrants in urban places to consider returning home; ties in rural places of origin conveyed information and provided networks to facilitate the return of former residents. In Southwestern Saudi Arabia,



the loss of the social ties in migrants from rural to urban areas put more pressure on the people to leave the rural area and not think about coming back to their place of origin.


Finally, we can say that the comparative evidence from return rural migration in both South Korea and Southwest Saudi Arabia points to the conclusion that migration improves the standards of living of the migrants. Rural migration is associated with opportunities and results in some forms of structural differentiation and development.

Conclusion

The preceding pages have provided a brief background about the rural community in Saudi Arabia in general and the southwest region in particular, internal migration from region to region. Emphasis is placed on various categories of internal migration within Saudi Arabia, rural to urban because of social change that took place in the whole nation. The writer has sought to describe the impact this movement has had on rural life and provide some general information about governmental aids to prevent migration and improve agricultural production. Throughout this paper, there has been particular consideration of the movement of rural population in the southwest region to the cities inside or outside the region and its impact on farming and other aspects of life in the rural community.

During the second half of this century, Saudi Arabia has witnessed vast development in all aspects of life because of the discovery of oil. Agricultural sectors have received great attention from the government in order to implement the progress of agricultural development. The development of agriculture took over two major objectives: one was to improve the agricultural production, and the second one was to prevent the movement of rural population to the cities. Concerning the southwest region, most of the farmers in the district received various forms of assistance from the government to improve and increase the quantity and quality of agricultural products. Yet, there are two principle inquiries that should be raised.

First, has agricultural production really improved, and if that be so, to what extent? Does rural population stop moving to the cities and adopt farming as an occupation? The accurate answer to these questions and other related ones may be obtained in a research project that should be conducted in the area in question. As I have seen in some sections of the region, Saudi residents



have the lands and receive the subsidies but unfortunately they come to the farm just to visit or take a look because the people who work these farms are all foreigners who do not have enough experience in farming and that reflects the continuity of the problem. People are still moving to the city, most of the agricultural products are still imported, and villages have turned out to look almost like cities. But, it may be anticipated that some of the young residents who study at agricultural colleges in the country or outside will adopt some agricultural activities as a job and direct them according to the scientific basis which would solve some of the problems, especially the reliance on imported foodstuffs.

Second, in rural development in Saudi Arabia there are some of the same problems and obstacles that hold up the development. One of the major constraints on rural development is the human factor. The absence of young men from the rural societies is holding the development back. The second constraint is the lack of formal education among rural dwellers, meaning it is not possible to get a new technology in the society because of the lack of education of the people.


The third constraint is that there is no communication between the developers and others in different parts of the country. The fourth constraint is one of participation, there is no participation between the residents and project management and this is very important to have successful development. Finally, people who are in charge of the project are from outside the region and this makes the people inside the region have a very negative attitude toward the development. (D. A. Katze, F. C. de Beer, H. J. Swanepoel, T. J. Behnbridge 1987:30)

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