

organization for 'massification' i.e. the process of reducing the people to a manageable, unthinking agglomeration (p. 145) — or for liberation. In the latter case, the masses are a dynamic part of a 'critically conscious' organization. Probably more needs to be said on the kind of party structure necessary to provide a clear ideological line and to involve the masses in liberating *praxis*.

The third point is fairly specific. Freire's pedagogic methods refer to a peasantry typical of Latin America — products of a latifundia or feudal mode of production. In such a situation peasants have an immediate empirical understanding of contradictions — the immediate if not primary enemy is clearly identifiable. In Africa, many peasants are self-employed subsistence farmers who may perceive immediate needs but not necessarily the reasons for lacking them. As Cabral states in *Towards final Victory* 'this created a special difficulty in our struggle — that of showing the peasant that he was being exploited in his own country.'²³ The mixed nature of peasantry in Africa indicates that implementation of pedagogy of the oppressed requires specific modification. This is no real problem, in that flexibility and constant revision of techniques is central to Freire's concept of pedagogy: 'in the struggle this pedagogy will be made and remade.' (p. 33) The basic methodology of leaders and masses dialoguing together in cultural action and cultural revolution *is* necessary for authentic liberation anywhere.

Aside from the relevance of *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* to the *praxis* of revolutionary leaders, it is also a major contribution for understanding the dynamics of the formal teaching-learning classroom situation. The 'banking' system of education whereby students are conceived as 'containers' to be filled by the omniscient teacher is all too familiar. Dialogue and problem-posing education for liberation is essential for developing consciousness and commitment in students and teachers. Given a clear ideological framework, it would seem to be directly relevant to the objectives of *Education for Self Reliance*: to develop self-confident, inquiring people able to think and act creatively to transform reality.

A final note: when Freire was asked whether he thought *Education for Self Reliance* was a 'liberating' education, he replied that on paper it looked 'liberating', but the answer could only be found in *praxis*. He said, 'The question is not *is* it, but *do* it'.²⁴

23. *Op. Cit.*, p. 128.

24. Talk at seminar jointly sponsored by the Institute and the Department of Education University of Dar es Salaam, 16 September 1971.

RURAL TRANSFORMATION IN CHINA

China: The Revolution Continued by JAN MYRDAL and GUN KESSLE. Translated by Paul Britten Austin (Chatto and Windus: London, 1971) 201 pp.

Report from a Chinese Village by JAN MYRDAL, illustrated by GUN KESSLE. Translated by Maurice Michael (Heinemann: London, 1965) 374 pp.

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Of the little that is known about the political system in China today, much is incomplete and distorted. Partly in an effort to remedy this situation, Jan Myrdal, a Swedish anthropologist, went to see for himself what was occurring in the Chinese countryside. Myrdal's explorations are recorded in two books; *Report from a Chinese Village* based upon a 1962 visit, and a follow-up study, *China: The Revolution Continued* written after a return to the same village seven years later.

Liu-Ling is a settlement of 50 families in northern Shensi in Yanan. Yanan is a relatively underdeveloped area in China. One reason Myrdal selected Liu-Ling was that it experienced early contact with communism. Mao Tse-tung established co-operatives there in the 1930's. Despite their contact with communism, the villagers required three decades before a truly socialistic system took root. Without making any claim for the objectivity of his choice of Liu-Ling or the representativeness or comprehensiveness of his information, Myrdal charts the villagers' development into committed socialists.

In both books, Myrdal uses a descriptive rather than an analytical technique. As he explains it, his approach is 'a repetition, with explanations, of what people told me.' (*The Revolution Continued*, p. 22) One advantage of this approach is immediacy. The reader, aided by Gun Kessle's sketches and photographs, can picture the physical plan of the village and the faces of the people. The accounts, however, are uneven — precisely because they depend upon the perceptions of the villagers themselves and because Myrdal re-arranges the

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material along principles which are never made explicit. Myrdal also had limited access to important economic materials for the years between 1962 and 1969. Finally, Myrdal spent surprisingly brief periods in the village: one month in 1962 and two weeks in 1969. Despite these limitations, both books provide rare materials on how rural transformation is perceived by Chinese villagers. The books share a common focus. Both address themselves to the problem of encouraging political consciousness as well as economic development.

When Myrdal first arrived in the village many lacked an understanding of the importance of the politicization of the peasants by guerrilla activities in the 1940's. Some doubted the efficacy of labour exchanges and of agricultural co-operatives. Not everyone belonged to the Party. Although efforts were made in 1962 to re-educate persons, they were neither as conscious nor as sustained as they had become at the time of Myrdal's second visit. By 1969, increasing emphasis was placed on 'work attitudes'. The problem in 1969 as in 1962 was to promote a sense of 'collective thrift' while overcoming personal acquisitiveness and bureaucratic control. Myrdal's second book focuses on the way the Cultural Revolution of 1966 thwarted and reshaped individualistic tendencies. 'At Liu-Ling' Myrdal explains, 'the victory of the Cultural Revolution had meant that the masses took back the power which the 'apparat' had begun to wheedle out of their hands.' (*The Revolution Continued*, p. 187) Myrdal, however, tends to give too rigid an interpretation of the connexion between political and economic factors. He ignores Mao's insight into the way capitalistic tendencies continually re-appear. Myrdal, in fact, claims a place for Mao which Mao using his own logic, might disclaim. Myrdal writes that 'What makes Mao Tse-tung so important that he can be regarded as third in line with Marx and Lenin is that he raised and solved the problem how, after the revolution the people can secure the revolution' (*The Revolution Continued*, p. 187, emphasis mine.) Mao's thought on revolution indicates that absolute security or victory requires a different time perspective and a more vigilant approach to the continuing struggle between proletariat and bourgeoisie.¹

Myrdal's tendency to sum up a delicate political process in absolute terms prevents an understanding of the way the villagers translate Mao's thought into policy. The books lack information on how various interpretations of Mao's thoughts are evaluated and applied, in a way that man is motivated to be productive enough to create a surplus and yet remain unselfish enough to distribute the surplus along strict, and to some incredulous eyes, non-rewarding (i.e. non-Western) criteria. Myrdal gives an unsatisfactory account of the way private motivation and collective consciousness intersect. At times he tries to prove to the Western audience that China is developing rapidly in accordance with Western criteria as measured for example by an increase in productive yield. He refers continually to the role of political education, but he does not discuss the ways in which a Maoist view of man, society and development differs from traditional approaches to the same phenomena. Both books lack

1. For an excellent brief account of some of the differences between Maoist and Capitalist approaches to economic growth see John G. Gurley's 'Capitalist and Maoist Economic Development', in *Monthly Review*, (Feb. 1971), pp. 15-35.

a detailed analysis of how the revolution was, in fact, continued. Liu-Ling, for example, rejected Liu Shao-chi's 'black line' approach to socialist transformation. In so doing, the village, like other communities throughout China, rejected the notion that scholars, unaccustomed to manual labour, could govern best, and that women, best equipped to remain at home should not participate in other kinds of work. Liu-Ling came to alter its work arrangements. All members of the village, whether working or not, received basic economic security in the form of grain. All piece work was abolished. The villagers simplified their system of book-keeping; they evaluated their own work in the presence of their fellow villagers; they awarded themselves points on the basis of their political as well as their physical contribution to the work effort of the community. The range between points and thus the difference between individual economic rewards decreased. Myrdal argues that man is motivated to work hard and to involve himself in political study not under threat of starvation or to acquire immense economic benefit. Community pressure based upon shared commitment to Mao's thought provides the impetus for collective work arrangements. Myrdal, however, does not discuss the way in which more than one villager, each citing Mao's thought to buttress his own position, succeeds in persuading other villagers who are committed to different economic and political strategies.

It is difficult to assess the relevance of the Chinese model for the Tanzanian experience. Not only do China and Tanzania differ in cultural background and economic resources, but there is a detailed lack of public information about China, and, as yet, only fragmentary data on income distribution, land-use and workers' participation in Tanzanian village life. From what is known about China and Tanzania it is apparent that the two countries differ in respect to the meaning given to 'revolution' or 'rural transformation' and in respect to the amount of resources, whether political or economic, which is devoted to the rural sector. Despite the fact that almost daily, Tanzanian M.P.'s stress the need for hard work and for stronger TYL and TANU leadership to enrich the socialist content of policy, there is in Tanzania a vagueness about goals and as yet a greater concentration of resources in urban rather than rural areas. Tanzanian leaders are sensitive to disparities in income and opportunity. They are also aware of the dangers of an incipient bourgeoisie in the countryside. They warn of the growth of an unresponsive and self-interested bureaucracy. Moreover, President Nyerere's commitment to *Ujamaa Vijijini*, or collective settlements, is a consistent one. The language however of the *Arusha Declaration* and of the *TANU Guidelines* remains abstract. If policy statements fail to spell out the costs as well as the benefits of *Ujamaa* they are unlikely to produce an organization by which the life-chances of the poor can be increased. Then, too, the creation of self-consciously socialist communities in Tanzania as compared with China is a very recent development. Finally, rural development has not, as yet, been incorporated into a more general plan for economic transformation which would allow Tanzania, like China, to transform the political consciousness and economy of the people.

Myrdal's books are not a blue-print for Tanzanian development. They barely

provide detailed information on how China sustains her own revolution. Myrdal's work, however, does provoke questions which are relevant to a Tanzanian audience because it stresses the fact that in re-distributing land and income those with wealth and privilege will be reluctant to part with their resources and positions. From the Chinese examples one learns that those who speak most enthusiastically about socialism may contradict their ideals in their own behaviour. In applying the Chinese example to Tanzania, a leader is obliged to doubt seriously the effectiveness of persuasion alone in bringing about rural transformation. He must also question the kind of rural economy which is likely to result if political education is lax and if sanctions are not placed upon those who obstruct the way toward a more equal access to facilities and services. To be effective, Tanzania guidelines must anticipate and accommodate the costs of transformation. A vague strategy is not only ineffective; it is dangerous. It ignores the fact that every redistribution of scarce resources implies a reluctant loser. If costs and losers are obscured by policy guidelines, an effective strategy is unlikely to result. Myrdal's books indicate that rural transformation is a complicated and lengthy process. All persons cannot benefit equally at all stages. Both of Myrdal's books can be regarded as a warning about on-going resistance to socialism.

Researchers in Tanzania have already documented the growth of non-socialist economic and political tendencies in rural settlements.² These accounts can also be regarded as warnings. They can be translated into policy. Myrdal's books make one suspicious of simple explanations for underdevelopment. When Dumont, for example, stresses the Chinese capacity for hard work and discipline, he leaves unspecified the circumstances which encouraged the Chinese to work hard.³ In a different way, sentimental pro-Tanzanian accounts of *ujamaa* villages which merely recount the joys of communal life ignore, too frequently, a definition of what communal politics and economics must be, in order to be sustained and developed.⁴ If Tanzania is to achieve a socialist society, each village must be examined and then altered in the broader context of a nationalist and internationalist economic transformation. Myrdal demonstrates the way ideology is set within a comprehensive and consistent economic strategy. If the *TANU Guidelines* and *Arusha Declaration* are to be more than oratory, Tanzanian policy is required to recognise and reshape the inevitable resistance of the less poor and more privileged.

2. T. Van Velsen, 'Staff, Kulacks and Peasants: A Study of a Political Field' and 'Some Obstacles to Ujamaa: A case Study from Rungwe', Afrika-Studiecentrum, (Leiden, 1970)
3. Rene Dumont, *Tanzanian Agriculture after the Arusha Declaration*, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Development Planning, (Dar es Salaam, 1969).
4. K. Wenner, *Shamba Letu*, (Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1970.)