

Capitalist Development Without ‘Westernisation’?

The Political Economy of Inequality in Singapore

by

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Preface and Acknowledgements

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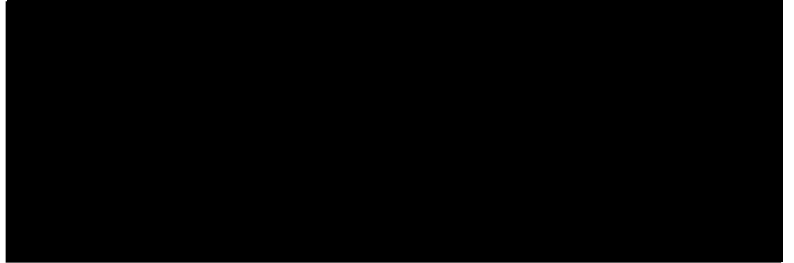
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J.B.W.

Certificate

I certify that the substance of this thesis has not already been submitted for any degree and it is not currently being submitted for any other degree or qualification.

I certify that any help received in preparing this thesis, and all sources used, have been acknowledged in this thesis.



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Abstract

This study sets out to expose the deficiencies of the orthodox analysis of capitalist development. In particular, it takes issue with the World Bank’s *East Asian Miracle* report (World Bank 1993), which claims that capitalist development in East Asia has produced relatively equal outcomes.

The focus for the study is Singapore, arguably the most successful of the East Asian newly-industrialised countries. Evidence is submitted which shows that rapid economic growth has not caused Singapore society to become more equal as claimed by the World Bank. Moreover, unlike other capitalist nations at a similar stage in their development, the authorities are quite resolute in their rejection of so-called Western liberal solutions to the problem. Instead, the strategy has been to appeal to citizens’ ‘Asian values’ in a bid to head off what are considered the morally and financially bankrupt practices of the welfare state.

This thesis rejects the idea that there is a cultural solution to inequality, and argues that the Asian values theme is part of an ideological formulation devised by the Singapore Government in an attempt to legitimate its authoritarian rule.

List of Acronyms

ACIE	Action Committee on Indian Education
AMCJA	All-Malaya Council of Joint Action
AMP	Association of Muslim Professionals
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
AWARE	Association of Women for Action and Research
BG	Brigadier-General
BMA	British Military Administration
BS	Barisan Sosialis
CASE	Consumers' Association of Singapore
CCCs	Citizens' Consultative Committees
CDAC	Chinese Development Assistance Council
CEC	Central Executive Committee
COE	Certificate of Entitlement
CPF	Central Provident Fund
CPI	Consumer Price Index
CRC	Cost Review Committee
DCs	Deliberation Councils
DCAC	Directorships and Consultancy Appointments Council
ECA	Employment Conditions Abroad Ltd
EDB	Economic Development Board
EOI	Export-oriented Industrialisation
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNP	Gross National Product
GLU	General Labour Union
GLC	Government-Linked Company
GST	Goods and Services Tax
HDB	Housing and Development Board
HPAEs	High-Performing Asian Economies
HUDC	Housing and Urban Development Corporation
IMF	International Monetary Fund

IRS	Information and Referral Service
ISC	Internal Security Council
ISD	Internal Security Department
ISEAS	Institute of Southeast Asian Studies
ISI	Import-Substitution Industrialisation
LDC	Less Developed Country
LF	Labour Front
MCA	Malayan Chinese Association (later renamed Malaysian Chinese Association)
MCD	Ministry of Community Development
MCP	Malayan Communist Party
MDU	Malayan Democratic Union
MIC	Malaysian Indian Congress
MHE	Minimum Household Expenditure
MNC	Multinational Corporation
MND	Ministry for National Development
MP	Member of Parliament
MRT	Mass Rapid Transport system
MUA	Malay Union Alliance
NCSS	National Council of Social Service
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
NIC	Newly-Industrialised Country
NII	National Information Infrastructure
NUSS	National University of Singapore Society
NSS	Nature Society of Singapore
NTUC	National Trades Union Congress
NWC	National Wages Council
OB	'Out of Bounds'
OCBC	Overseas Chinese Banking Corporation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PAP	People's Action Party
PERC	Political and Economic Risk Consultants Ltd

PKMS	Pertubuhan Kebangsaan Melayu Singapura
PM	Prime Minister
PMFTU	Pan-Malayan Federation of Trade Unions
PSLE	Primary School Leaving Examination
PUB	Public Utilities Board
RUAS	Rent and Utilities Assistance Scheme
SAF	Singapore Armed Forces
SATU	Singapore Association of Trade Unions
SBWU	Singapore Bus Workers' Union
SDP	Singapore Democratic Party
SFSWU	Singapore Factory and Shop Workers' Union
SFI	Small Families Improvement scheme
SFTU	Singapore Federation of Trade Unions
SHS	Sample Household Survey
SINDA	Singapore Indian Development Association
SLP	Singapore Labour Party
SPAP	Singapore People's Alliance Party
SPP	Singapore Progressive Party
SM	Senior Minister
STUC	Singapore Trade Union Congress
UMNO	United Malays National Organisation
VWO	Voluntary Welfare Organisation

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