

An Exploratory Study of the **Economic and**
Social Problems of Adjustment faced by
Kampuchean Refugees in an Oil Palm Estate
in Sepang, Selangor

Loo Choo Im

No. Matrik 043734

Projek Penyelidikan

Bagi Memenuhi Sebahagian

Daripada Syarat-Syarat Untuk

Ijazah Sarjana Muda Sastera

Jabatan Antropologi dan Sosiologi

Universiti Malaya

Kuala Lumpur

To all the friends I've made during my three years at university ...

Sessi 1985/86

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The writing and completion of this graduation exercise would not have been possible without the help and encouragement of the following people:

- Dr. Raymond Lee, my supervisor, who first gave me the idea of doing this topic, and who has been most patient with me;
- Tuan Haji Mazlan bin Haji Ahmad, the manager of SOPIC estate, who allowed me to conduct my study in the estate;
- Encik Kodori bin Haji Abdul Rakim, the assistant manager of SOPIC estate, who so kindly made the various arrangements for my stay at SOPIC, and who was most helpful in making my study as uneventful as possible;
- Mr. Siow Neit Sin, the chief clerk of SOPIC estate, who so graciously allowed me to take up his time at work to supply me most of the information on the estate that I needed;
- Encik Mohd Yusof bin Mohd Diah, SOPIC estate's dresser, who helped me in my study in whatever way he could;
- Mr. Yap Teck Chang and his family, who allowed me to trespass their home for a month, and who took very good care of me during my stay there;
- the labourers of SOPIC and their families, who were as cooperative as one could expect from the most ideal respondents;

To all these people, I wish to express my gratitude for the parts they played in making this study possible.

SYNOPSIS

The problems that refugees face in adjusting to life in a new country have been studied in many countries. The resettlement of Kampuchean refugees in this country is a relatively new phenomenon, and because it is new, not many studies have been done on it.

This study attempts to explore some of the economic and social adjustment problems that some Kampuchean refugees in an oil palm estate in this country face. The estate where the study took place was the Selanger Oil Palm Industries Corporation (SOPIC) Sdn. Bhd., located in the district of Sepang, Selangor. Also investigated in this study are the attitudes and reactions of the local people who work and live in the same estate, towards the Kampuchean refugees.

This graduation exercise is divided into five chapters. In the first chapter, the objectives and methodology of the study are stated out in detail. The second chapter looks into the background of their situation in their former society and the events that brought the refugees into Malaysia. The third chapter is concerned with their present socio-economic status to determine their level of socio-economic well-being. In the fourth chapter, their attitudes towards their life here and towards their interaction with the local community are recorded. Also recorded in this chapter are the reactions and attitudes of the local workers in the estate towards the Kampucheans. In the final chapter, the conclusions of the study are drawn.

SINOPSIS

Masalah-masalah yang orang-orang pelarian hadapi dalam menyesuaikan diri dengan kehidupan di dalam suatu negara yang baru telah dikaji di banyak negara. Penempatan semula orang-orang pelarian Kampuchea di negara ini adalah suatu fenomena yang relatif baru, dan oleh sebab ianya baru, tidak banyak kajian yang telah dijalankan ke atasnya.

Kajian ini cuba menyelidiki setengah-setengah daripada masalah-masalah penyesuaian ekonomi dan sosial yang dihadapi oleh orang-orang pelarian Kampuchea di sebuah estet kelapa sawit di negara ini. Estet di mana kajian ini telah berlaku adalah Selangor Oil Palm Industries Corporation (SOPIC) Sdn. Bhd., yang terletak di daerah Sepang, Selangor. Juga diselidiki dalam kajian ini adalah sikap dan reaksi penduduk tempatan yang bekerja dan tinggal di estet yang sama, terhadap orang-orang pelarian ini.

Latihan ilmiah ini dibahagikan kepada lima bab. Dalam bab pertama, objektif dan methodologi kajian ini dinyatakan dengan terang. Bab kedua melihat ke dalam latar belakang kedudukan orang-orang pelarian ini dalam masyarakat asal mereka dan peristiwa-peristiwa yang telah membawa mereka ke Malaysia. Bab yang ketiga adalah berkenaan dengan status sosio-ekonomi kini mereka untuk menentukan taraf sosio-ekonomi yang telah dicapai oleh mereka. Dalam bab keempat, sikap mereka terhadap kehidupan di sini dan terhadap interaksi mereka dengan masyarakat tempatan direkodkan. Juga di rekodkan dalam bab ini adalah reaksi dan sikap pekerja-pekerja tempatan dalam estet tersebut terhadap orang-orang pelarian ini. Dalam bab yang terakhir, kesimpulan-kesimpulan kajian ini dibuat.

CHAPTER	TABLE OF CONTENTS	Page
	DEDICATION	i
	ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	ii
	SYNOPSIS	iii
	SINOPSIS	iv
	LIST OF TABLES	vii
	LIST OF FIGURES	vii
	LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS	viii
	LIST OF MAPS	viii
	MAPS	ix - xiii
CHAPTER		
1	INTRODUCTION	1
	1.1 Background of this study	1
	1.2 Aims and Scope of this study	3
	1.3 Bases of this study	3
	1.4 Methodology	5
	1.4.1 Fieldwork Research	5
	1.5 Research Problems	8
	1.6 Limitations of this study	11
2	SITUATIONAL BACKGROUND OF THE KAMPUCHEAN REFUGEES	13
	2.1 The land and People of Kampuchea ..	13
	2.2 Events leading to the exodus of refugees from Kampuchea	13
	2.3 The Cham-Malays and Resettlement in Malaysia	15

CHAPTER		Page
3	SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE OF THE KAMPUCHEANS	
3.1	AT SOPIC	21
3.1	The Setting	21
3.2	The Kampuchean Community	23
3.2.1	Age and Sex Distribution ...	24
3.2.2	Family Type and Size	25
3.2.3	Housing	28
3.2.4	Occupation	31
3.2.5	Income	34
3.2.6	Expenditure	37
3.2.7	Household Luxuries	39
3.2.8	Education	40
4	ATTITUDES AND INTERACTION	42
4.1	Profile of the Kampuchean respondents	42
4.1.1	Attitudes towards work ...	44
4.1.2	Attitudes towards their children's future	45
4.1.3	Attitudes towards Kampuchea and their links to it	46
4.1.4	Attitudes towards interaction with the local community ...	48
4.2	Brief Profile of the local respondents	52
4.2.1	Reactions towards the Kampuchians	52
5	CONCLUSION	
5.1	Findings of the Study	56
5.2	Discussion of the Findings of the Study	60

BIBLIOGRAPHY

APPENDICES

List of Tables

<u>Table</u>		<u>Page</u>
3.1	Residents at SOPIC's labour lines by race/nationality	23
3.2	Kampuchean residents at SOPIC by age and sex groups	24
3.3	Types of families	26
3.4	Family Size	28
3.5	Average Monthly Income of Labourers from Estate Work	35
3.6	Average Total Monthly Income of Families with different numbers of wage-earners .	36
3.7	Monthly Family Expenditure	38
3.8	Household Luxuries	39
4.1	Highest local equivalent level of education achieved by Family heads	42
4.2	Inclinations to Changing present job ...	44
4.3	Language Proficiency of Kampuchean respondents	49
4.4	Transport Ownership	49

List of Figures

<u>Figure</u>		<u>Page</u>
3.1	Kampuchean residents at SOPIC by age and sex groups	26
5	Lay-out of SOPIC estate	xii
6	Housing for staff and labourers of both SOPIC estate and Seriew oil palm mill	xiii

List of Photographs

<u>Photograph</u>		<u>Page</u>
1.1	The low partitioning wall separating the porches of each of the two houses in a house-block	10
3.1	The football field at SOPIC	22
3.2	Houses for the labourers at SOPIC	30
3.3	Some greens planted by one of the families	30
3.4	The home of one of the richer families ..	40
4.1	The car belonging to one of the two Kampucheans parked beside a makeshift garage in front of the respondent's house	50
4.2	One of the three sundry shops in the estate, this one run by a Kampuchean family	51
4.3	The vegetable vendor	51

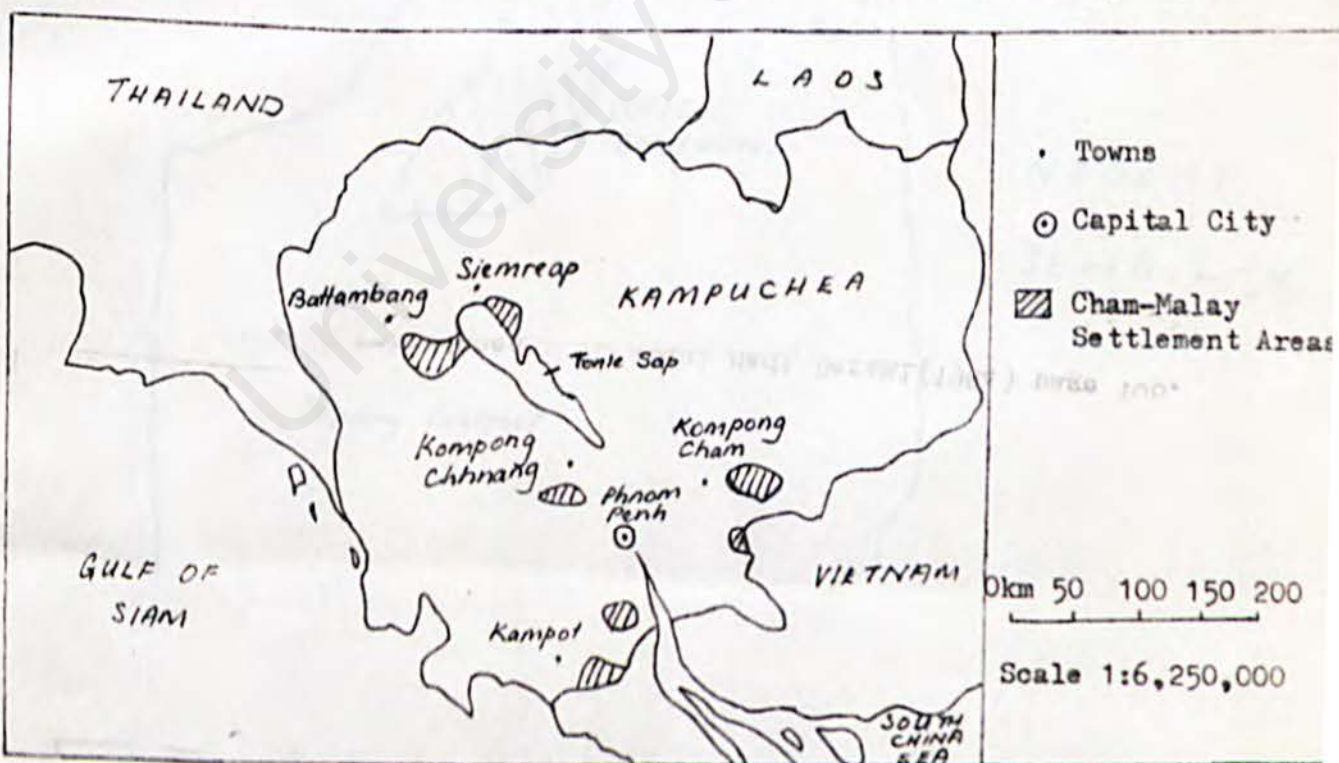
List of Maps

<u>Map</u>		<u>Page</u>
1	Kampuchea : Towns and Neighbouring Countries	ix
2	Kampuchea : Cham-Malay Settlement Areas in 1960s and early 1970s	ix
3	Location of SOPIC and the district of Sepang in Selangor	x
4	Map of the district of Sepang	xi
5	Lay-out of SOPIC estate	xii
6	Housing for staff and labourers of both SOPIC estate and Semisa oil palm mill	xiii

Map 1 Kampuchea : Towns and Neighbouring Countries

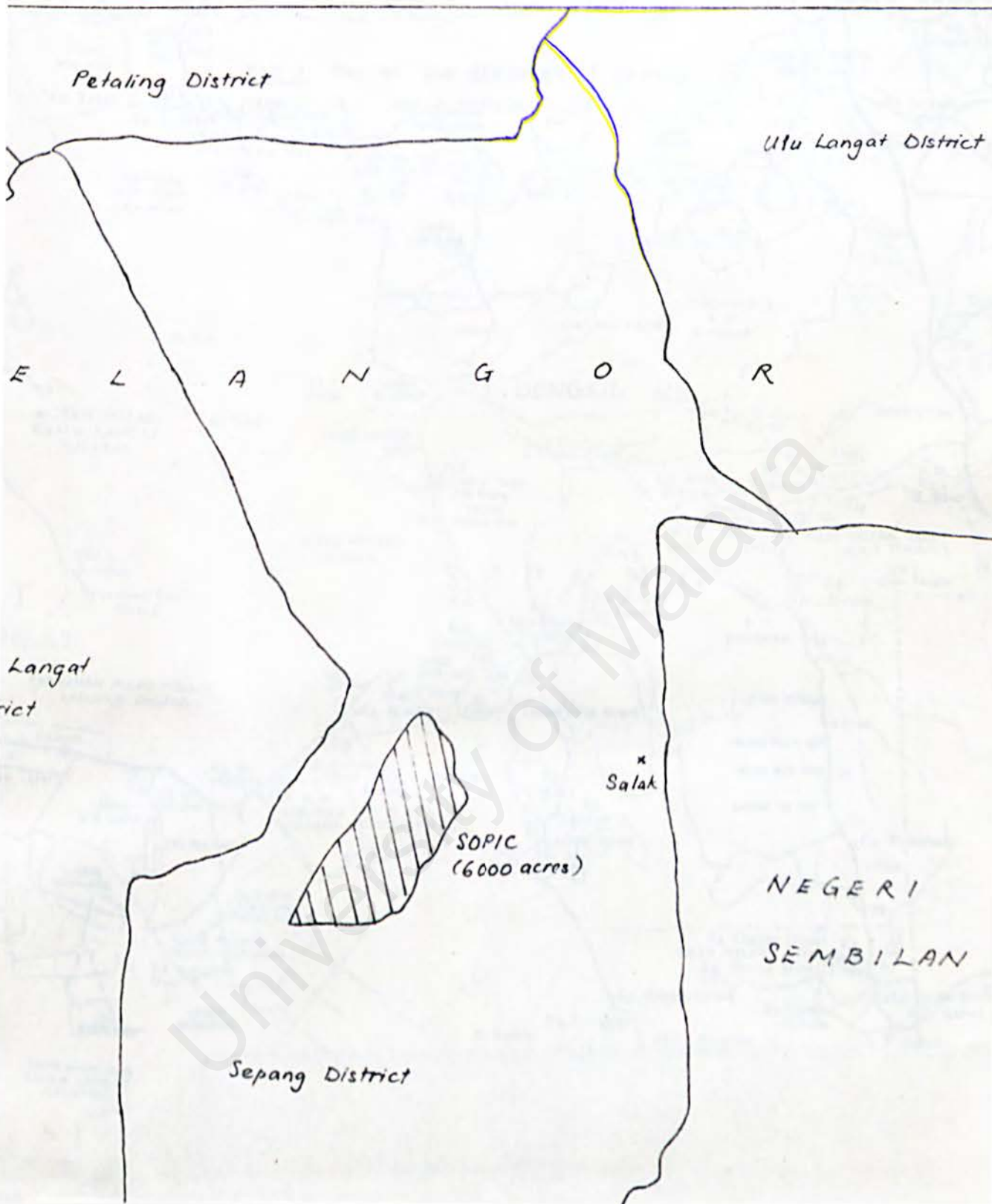


Map 2 Kampuchea : Cham-Malay Settlement areas in 1960s and early 1970s



Note : This map is reproduced from Abdul Hadi Derani(1984) page 108.

Map 3 Location of SOPIC and the district of Sepang in Selangor



CHAPTER 1 : INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of this study

Kampuchea¹ has been very much in the news in recent years. Most people have heard of the bloody Khmer Rouge, the Vietnamese invasion, and the tragic fate of hundreds of thousands of refugees who have fled from Kampuchea to hastily set-up camps in neighbouring countries before the luckier ones are accepted for permanent resettlement by other countries.

The United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (1951) as amended by the Protocol (1967) states that,

'a refugee is a person who owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country, or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it'.²

Malaysia is one of the few countries to accept some of the Kampuchean refugees for permanent resettlement, albeit only ~~only~~ a small number. Up to June 1980, Malaysia accepted some 2150 Moslem Kampuchean refugees. Because they arrived only after 1975, the Kampuchean refugees are a relatively new phenomenon in Malaysia, at best 10 years old today. Research in Malaysia on these refugees are as such, few. In fact, any study on the Kampuchean refugees resettled here can be regarded as a pioneer study. To

compound the situation, the Malaysian Government for some reason or other, has kept this resettlement programme for Moslem Kampucheans as unpublicized as possible. Thus not many people are aware that Malaysia has accepted any of the Kampuchean refugees for permanent resettlement at all.

The problems that refugees face in resettlement have become matters of national and international political importance. Of recent years they have also become the subjects of sociological and socio-psychological research. J. Ex, researching on the process of adjustment of a group of immigrants in the Netherlands, commented that,

'... many psychological studies have been published on the adjustment of strangers. They form a mosaic of scientific contributions. There is in psychology no field that is less systematic in its research. The problem is a new one. It is complex. The migrants differ in education, attitude, sex, in their attachment to their place of birth, to relations and friends. The motivation of their departure is hard to classify. It varies from individual to individual. The living conditions left behind them and the new conditions that await the migrant may vary from very little to very much. Adjustment to the way of life in the new living and working conditions, including the prevalent habits of dressing, eating, behaving, social intercourse and entertainment can be furthered or retarded by all kinds of circumstances. The variety is immense. It requires systematic research and reflection to trace the series of variables involved in adjusting to and fitting into the new living space.'³

1.2 Aims and Scope of this Study

The 'series of variables' mentioned by J. Ex and quoted above cannot be fully explored in any one study and especially not in this study. As such, this study intends to concentrate only on exploring some of the economic and social adjustment problems faced by some of the Kampuchean refugees here. A group of Kampuchean refugees residing and working as labourers in an oil palm estate (SOPIC) is studied for this purpose. As a side issue, the reactions and attitudes of the local people living and working in the same estate, are also investigated.

It should be made clear from the start that the aim of this study is not to test the validity of preconceived hypotheses. The reason for this is that the lack of research into this field in Malaysia means that practically nothing is known with sufficient accuracy with regard to the economic and social adjustment problems of these refugees. This is just then an exploratory study.

1.3 Bases of this Study

There are many bases for a study focusing on the economic and social problems of adjustment such as this. Where economic problems of adjustment are concerned, the refugees are faced with the prospect of establishing an economic foundation for themselves and their families. Minimally, they must develop an adequate income to enable them to survive here. While there are variations among the refugees as to their class, occupation, and education, at the same time, several important economic constraints have generated a number of broad consistencies in how refugees have had to

interact with the economy. Most fled with only a few personal belongings. The only economic resources that most were able to bring with them were their occupational, educational, and linguistic skills, if any. Moreover, few refugees came out of their country with their family-based economic units intact. Wives, husbands, parents, brothers, sisters, and children, who together might have formed a mutually supporting economic entity in their own country, have frequently been separated by the exodus. Whereas there, a common economic strategy was for a family to pool a number of incomes, this option is far less available here. Economic adjustment can thus be one of the more difficult adjustments refugees have to make here.

Another such adjustment would be social adjustment because, as Matthew Suh put it,

'Immigration, a change or shift in residence, involves not only new places, but new faces, new norms, new languages, new environments. Such movement implies the crossing of social system boundaries, whether the systems are defined in terms of national entities, regional subcultures, or immediate friendship and kinship networks. The immigrant leaves behind him the supports and the stresses of the native system from which he departs. He loses the support of social and geographic familiarity, of long-term relationships and values that were built into him while growing up... He is welcomed by the host system or must deal with resistances in the new system to which he comes. He is excited by new stimuli and opportunities and fearful of new threats and the unknown. Between the two systems, en route, he must cope

with a series of transitional factors that colour his perceptions, attitudes, and capacity to deal with the host environment.¹⁴

1.4 Methodology

Since the refugees on release from refugee camps are allowed freedom of movement (refer to Chapter 2), it would probably be true to say that today they can be found all over the country. To study them would therefore involve tracking down the refugees all over Malaysia. Thus when I had the opportunity to stay at an oil palm estate for a period of about a month where some 30 Kampuchean families numbering about 150 persons worked and lived, I grabbed the chance to do a spur-of-the-moment study to take advantage of available and unanticipated respondents. This study then is a non-probability sampling study.

Data collection was done from two groups, namely,

- i) The Kampuchean refugees living and working in the oil palm estate,
- ii) The local people who also lived and worked in the same estate.

For both groups, the research technique was the same, that is, based on fieldwork research.

1.4.1 Fieldwork Research

Fieldwork research took a period of about four weeks, done during the month of April, 1985. Two main methods were used in fieldwork research and they were :

- i) interview schedules
- ii) observation

Interview schedules, where the interviewer asks the respondents questions and then records the answers himself, was chosen as a method of fieldwork research instead of questionnaires where the respondents write the answers down themselves, because less than half of the Kampuchean respondents, the main respondents in this study, could read and write in Bahasa Malaysia whereas the questions were in that language. The respondents for the interview schedules were the heads of the families for both the Kampucheans and the locals.

The questions asked were a combination of closed- and open-ended questions. These questions could roughly be divided into three sections. In the first section, the questions asked were on nominal background variables. The questions for this section were fixed-alternative. In the second section, the questions asked, a combination of closed- and open-ended questions, were meant to discover the respondents' views and thoughts. The open-ended questions were especially useful where possible answer categories were not known or where self-expression by the respondents were preferred. Questions in the first two sections were asked for both the Kampuchean refugee respondents and the local respondents. In the final section, questions were different for both types of respondents. The Kampuchean refugees were asked questions on their subjective experiences when fleeing from Kampuchea, and the problems they faced in adjusting to life here. On the other hand, the local respondents were asked about their opinions of their Kampuchean counterparts to see how receptive they were to the Kampucheans.

In general, the interviews lasted about 1½ hours each. Before beginning the interview, respondents were assured that any information collected from them would be used only for academic purposes. So as to give the respondents time to adjust themselves and gain confidence, the interview was purposely arranged in such a way that neutral questions, such as those on background variables, were asked first before the more sensitive questions, such as those in the third section, were asked.

As an auxiliary to the interview schedules, the observational method was used to glean any relevant information which might not have been covered by the interviews. The observational method can be very valuable in observing non-verbal behaviour, and in contributing towards a better understanding of the respondents.

Since arrangements had been made for me to stay in the estate for about a month, I could observe the respondents both during and outside of the interviews. During the first few days of my stay there, however, I was regarded with a little suspicion and curiosity by the labourers. But by making sure that I was to be seen daily around their quarters, and by trying to chat casually with them whenever possible, in addition to assurances by the management staff to the labourers that I was not sent from any government agencies, their suspicions and curiosity gradually lessened and I was able to move around the estate to observe quite freely the way they went about their daily lives. It was important especially to observe the interaction process between the Kampuchians and the local people in the estate.

During interviews too especially when the more subjective questions were asked, the respondents were keenly observed for any signs of emotion. The answers and reactions of the respondents were registered on the spot so as to prevent any distortion of the original at a later date - the presumed difficulty that such a procedure might impede the natural flow of conversation did not in fact materialize. Also, as the interviews were conducted at the respondents' homes, I had the opportunity to observe their surroundings which could furnish items of information, and also to ensure that the respondents answered truthfully as to the questions touching on the possession of household luxuries.

1.5 Research Problems

As in any other social science studies, this study could not escape from facing certain research problems. This, however, did not mean that they retarded efforts to complete the research but instead made it more challenging to find ways and means to solve them.

The first problem was that of language. While many of the Kampuchean respondents could speak passable Bahasa Malaysia, with some speaking the language fluently, there were a few who could not speak more than a few words of Bahasa Malaysia. I thus had to look for someone, usually a passing person or a neighbour who could speak Bahasa Malaysia, to act as an interpreter throughout the interview. Fortunately such cases were few, and as most of the Kampucheans who were called upon to act as interpreter were helpful and obliging, the language barrier did not seem too formidable a problem.

The second problem concerned the timing of interviews. Although working hours for estate-employed workers were from 6.30am to about 1.30pm, contract workers generally worked on until dark. After getting back from work, the contract workers usually had their bath and their dinner after which most would go for their prayers at the estate mosque. Some would stay on at the mosque after the 'Ishak' prayers (about 8pm) to chat among themselves, or maybe have a smoke. It thus was quite difficult to interview the contract workers as they were seldom at home until late at night. Even on Sundays they were as busy because they carried on working regardless although the estate-employed labourers had the day off. To overcome this problem, appointments were made in advance with the wives of the contract labourers although such appointments were sometimes not kept by their husbands as the wives were not very sure of the comings and goings of their husbands. Sometimes the interviews were broken up into two or even three sittings as the respondents were not able to spare the approximately 1½ hours required to finish the interview in one sitting.

The last problem concerned the presence of neighbours or friends of the respondents during interviews. As there are two houses to each house-block with only a low partitioning wall separating the porches of each of the two houses (see photograph on next page), it was quite usual for neighbours to sit on top of the wall or to lean over the wall to chat with each other, especially so in the evenings. As the interviews, almost all, were conducted in the evenings due to the time constraints of both the contract and estate-employed workers (most of the estate-employed workers take a nap after coming back from work, from about 2pm to 4pm), sometimes



Photograph 1.1 The low partitioning wall separating the porches of each of the two houses in a house-block

neighbours would try to listen in to the interview, or even cross over to the respondent's house and sit in on the interview unabashedly. It had been observed that the lack of privacy tended to inhibit a respondent's answers to certain questions, for example, those pertaining to their expectations of their children's future, perhaps out of fear of ridicule. The step taken to overcome this problem was to try as far as possible to get ~~xxx~~ respondents to close the front door to their houses without making it seem ~~rud~~ rude to the neighbours, or to postpone the interview to another time, but this second option was not much favoured as there was no guarantee that the neighbours would not be around during the second interview. Of course, in the case of those respondents who could not converse in Bahasa Malaysia, of necessity neighbours or friends had to be called in to act as interpreters and thus privacy definitely could not be

secured. But as has been said before, luckily such cases were not many.

1.6 Limitations of this Study

The process of adjustment is a very complex process and its determinates, many and diverse. The problems experienced by a group of Kampuchean refugees may not necessarily hold true for other Kampuchean refugees, not to mention refugees of other nationalities. The hazards of generalizations are well-known. Indeed J. Ex said,

'...generalizations are usually not ventured upon by investigators in this field. Even the comparison of own results with results obtained by other investigators in other circumstances are mostly omitted.'⁵

Moreover, as the respondents were not selected on the basis of random sampling, the ability to generalize any findings beyond the group investigated is greatly limited. The next limitation is related to the inherent weaknesses of the research methodology, that is, that of interview schedules, and of observation. Also, considerations must be made for the fact that the respondents in this study work and live in an oil palm estate where they may be relatively isolated from the outside society - thus the economic and social problems of adjustment faced may be expected to be somewhat different from those of other refugees who work and live elsewhere. Ideally one needs to study the context in which refugee adaptation takes place as thoroughly as one studies the refugees themselves. This again detracts from any justification to generalize for the larger population.

Chapter notes :

1. 'In 1975 the new leadership adopted the name 'Kampuchea', a transliteration of the original Khmer term for the country that the French had called "Cambodge" -
Wurfel, David. Indochina : The Historical and Political Background. In Elliot L. Tepper (Ed.), Southeast Asian Exodus : From Tradition to Resettlement - Understanding Refugees from Laos, Kampuchea and Vietnam in Canada. Ottawa : The Canadian Asian Studies Association, 1980, page 97.
2. Poussard, Wendy. Today is a Real Day : Indochinese Refugees in Australia. Victoria : Dove Communications, 1981, page 123.
3. Ex, J. Adjustment After Migration - A longitudinal study of the process of adjustment by refugees to a new environment. The Hague : Publications of the Research Group for European Migration Problems XIII, 1966, page X.
4. Suh, Matthew. Psychiatric Problems of Immigrants and Refugees. In Elliot L. Tepper (Ed), op. cit. page 210.
5. Ex, J. op. cit. page XV.

2.2 Events leading to the creation of the Khmer Rouge Regime

After almost a century as a French protectorate, Cambodia achieved its independence in 1953 with King Sihanouk (after 1955, Prince Norodom Sihanouk) as the head of the country. The communist insurgency against Sihanouk began after 1967, and in the spring of 1975, Sihanouk was overthrown. For the next five years (1970-1975), Phnom Penh and a few other urban centres were governed by the Khmer Republic under General Lon Nol. In 1975 when the Communists under Pol Pot came to power as the government of Democratic Kampuchea,

'millions of Cambodians were displaced, and hundreds of thousands starved to death or were exterminated by supporters of the new

CHAPTER 2 : SITUATIONAL BACKGROUND OF THE KAMPUCHEAN REFUGEES

2.1 The Land and People of Kampuchea

Kampuchea, with a land area of approximately 69,800 square miles¹ or 181,000 square kilometres occupies the south-western part of the Indo-Chinese peninsula. It is bounded to the north-east by Laos, to the east and south by Vietnam, to the south-west by the Gulf of Siam, and to the west and north by Thailand.

The only nationwide Kampuchean census ever taken was in 1962 when the total population figure produced was 5,740,000.² Using an estimated growth rate of 2.2% annually, official statistics for 1970 and 1971 were 6.8 million and over 6.9 million respectively. The dominant ethnic group, the Khmers, made up about 85% of the population in the early 1970s while 5% were Vietnamese, another 5% Chinese and the rest of the percentage consisted of Cham-Malays, Europeans and others.

2.2 Events leading to the exodus of refugees from Kampuchea

After almost a century as a French protectorate, Kampuchea achieved its independence in 1953 with King Sihanouk (after 1955, Prince) then taking over control of the country. The communist insurgency against Sihanouk began after 1967, and in the spring of 1970, Sihanouk was overthrown. For the next five years (1970-1975), Phnom Penh and a few other urban centres were governed by the Khmer Republic under General Lon Nol. In 1975 when the Communists under Pol Pot came to power as the government of Democratic Kampuchea, millions of Cambodians were displaced, and hundreds of thousands of refugees fled the country. The Vietnamese allowed those who starved to death or were assassinated by supporters of the new

regime. From that point on the entire society was mobilized, under frequently fearsome conditions, to "built and defend" the country first against class enemies, feudal remnants of the Lon Nol period, and then against the outside world, in particular against Cambodia's "traditional enemies", the Vietnamese.³

The victories of the Communist forces coupled with the Khmer Rouge terror campaign against the Kampuchean population forced many Kampucheans to flee from the country in all directions - into Vietnam, into Laos, and into Thailand. The Khmer Rouge tried to prevent the exit of Kampucheans out of the country, but apparently they were not very successful. The fleeing of Kampucheans began even before the end of the war on April 17, 1975 and the first refugees proper crossed the Thai border the next day, mostly in the Aranyaprathet and Pailin areas. By 1977, the total number of Khmer refugees in Thailand had increased to around 20,000.⁴

In the years 1977-78, war broke out between Democratic Kampuchea and Communist Vietnam. During the period December 1978-January 1979, the Vietnamese invaded Kampuchea and took over almost all of the country within two weeks. With the defeat of the Khmer Rouge came a massive exodus of refugees from Kampuchea. By June 1979, there were well over 40,000 people along the border north of Aranyaprathet.⁵ Famine which swept Kampuchea beginning in the brutal Pol Pot years from 1975 to 1978 reached disastrous proportions during the period 1979-80 and led to a further exodus of refugees out of Kampuchea. The Vietnamese allowed those who

wanted to leave the country the freedom to do so, even to the extent of giving the refugees advice and their blessings. (One refugee reported that she was told by the Vietnamese soldiers to 'go carefully and make good in other countries' or words to that effect.) Later, however, this freedom of movement out of Kampuchea was restricted and controlled. Today, Kampuchea is still being occupied by Vietnamese troops while governed from Phnom Penh by a pro-Vietnamese group headed by Heng Samrin.

2.3 The Cham-Malays and Resettlement in Malaysia

Among the people fleeing Kampuchea were the Cham-Malays, the fourth largest ethnic group in Kampuchea after the Khmers, the Vietnamese, and the Chinese. In 1970 the Cham-Malays numbered about 100,000, all of them Sunni Moslems.⁶

The Cham-Malay communities were formed as a result of the early contact between the Chams and the Malays. It has been said that the Chams were militarily expelled from the ancient kingdom of Champa in the fifteenth century and that they were later brought to a rigorous Moslem orthodoxy by the invading Malays, who penetrated Kampot and the interior regions.⁷ The Chams later identified themselves as Malays,

'due to their associations and intermarriages with Malays who visited the area through the centuries.'⁸

Today, with the one exception of language - both, however, belong to the Malayo-Polynesian linguistic family - the two groups are almost completely assimilated. For Pol Pot came to power, and that the Kampuchean leaders tried to convert them to Buddhism. For others, it was because they were fearful

Regarding their life in Kampuchea before the war in the 1970s, David J. Steinberg in 1959 wrote that,

'Most Cham-Malays live in compact villages north and east of Phnom Penh, mainly those in Kompong Cham province. They are also located in cities where they enter into trade and industry. In rural areas they are oriented toward fishing, agriculture, commerce, water transportation, and cattle breeding.'⁹

Also, Abdul Hadi Derani in his study stated that,

'Very few were employed by the government because of their lack of good education. To the majority of the Chams secular education was less important than religious education. The majority were satisfied only to learn the Arabic scripts to read the Koran. Not many pursued secular education beyond primary school.'¹⁰

During the Lon Nol period (1970-1975), many of the Cham-Malays responded to his (Lon Nol's) mobilisation programme by joining the army or supporting the regime, which was ultimately defeated by Pol Pot in 1975. The Cham-Malays, fearful of being victimised for taking the wrong side during the war by a regime known for its atrocities, streamed out of Kampuchea by the thousands.¹¹

Recounting their reasons for fleeing Kampuchea, some ^{at SOPIC} said it was for religious reasons - they claimed they were oppressed and were not allowed to pray after Pol Pot came to power, and that the Kampuchean leaders tried to convert them to Buddhism. For others, it was because they were fearful

of the Communists and their cruelty, and especially for the younger men, because Pol Pot's men frequently raided villages to take away young able-bodied men, usually never to return again - one refugee claimed that sometimes young, unmarried men and women were caught and then randomly married off to each other, maybe with the hope of these people producing children who could be useful to the Pol Pot regime some time in future. For yet others, it was because of the bad economic conditions in Kampuchea where food was hardly ever enough and starvation, common. For most, however, they fled Kampuchea not solely because of any one particular reason, but for a combination of all the above reasons.

A number of the refugees^{at SOPIC} said they were from the Battambang province. To get to the Thai-Kampuchean border, they had to trek through jungle paths, sometimes for days. For those trying to flee before 1979 - the year the Khmer Rouge were defeated - the thought of getting caught by the Khmer Rouge patrols near the border was a nightmare. Yet after reaching the border safely, they still had one more force to reckon with - Thai soldiers. Some refugees alleged that Thai soldiers at the border sometimes forced refugees back to Kampuchea, or just killed them. But if there were foreigners around, especially Westerners- volunteers, workers, doctors etc. - then the Thai soldiers would lead them to refugee camps.

By June 1975, more than 1,500 Cham-Malay refugees had crossed into Thailand.¹² The number increased to some 2,000 in 1976, and by February 1980, exceeded 10,000. At the refugee camps, refugees were asked to indicate their preferences of resettlement countries and the reasons for their

preferences. Although for most Kampuchians of various other ethnicity Western countries were very popular preferences, for the Cham-Malays, most requested resettlement in Malaysia, claiming that it was their country origin¹³ - some stated that their ancestors came from the Malay archipelago, notably Java or Sumatra, before moving on to Peninsula Malaya where they stayed for some years before moving yet again, this time to Indo-China - and that some of them had relatives in Malaysia, especially in Kelantan and Terengganu.

After considering their repeated plea for resettlement, as well as a request by the Malaysian Muslim Welfare Association (PERKIM) which pledged to look after them, the Malaysian government agreed to accept them. In 1975 and 1976, some 1,600 Cham-Malays were accepted. By June 1980, the number had increased to 2,150.¹⁴ The refugees at SOPIC said that the conditions imposed by the Malaysian government were that the refugees must be Moslems and must come from the Malay stock.

After gaining acceptance from the Malaysian government, the refugees were brought in by train from Thailand into Malaysia. Train fares were paid for by the Malaysian government. Upon arrival the refugees were put into refugee camps. Most of the refugees at SOPIC reported having been taken to either the Cherating camp in Pahang or the Pengkalan Chepa camp in Kelantan. (There are altogether seven refugee camps in Malaysia - Pengkalan Chepa, Kelantan; Pulau Bidong, Terengganu; Cherating, Pahang; Pulau Tengah, Johore; Mersing, Johore; Bukit Angus, Sarawak; and Pulau Papan, Sabah.)

Life in the camps for the refugees was relatively relaxed and most did nothing much but marked time there. Some, however, especially those better-qualified, did some work there on a voluntary basis - one refugee said he helped out at the hospital pharmacy, another said he helped to look after the store at the camp. While at the camp, all the refugees were required to learn Bahasa Malaysia. The time spent at the camps ranged from a few months to a year or two. Visits by friends or relatives already re-settled here were allowed although visitors had to send in a written request for permission from PERKIM before doing so. The refugees were allowed to be released after they had secured a guarantor with a job waiting for them. Mostly the guarantors were friends and relatives who had come here earlier. Once released, they were issued red identity cards (permanent resident status) and were free to move about or change jobs. Their where-abouts and welfare are loosely monitored by PERKIM and the association has advised them to keep in touch if they should encounter any problems.

Chapter notes :

1. Steinberg, David J. Cambodia : Its People, Its Society, Its Culture. New Haven : Human Relations Area Files Press, 1959, page 25.
2. Vickery, Michael. Cambodia 1975-1982. Boston : South End Press, 1984, page 185.
3. Chandler, David P. A History of Cambodia. Boulder : Westview Press Inc., 1983, pages 191, 192.
4. Vickery, Michael. op. cit., page 28.
5. Vickery, Michael. ibid., page 30.
6. Tepper, Elliot L. (Ed.). Southeast Asian Exodus : From Tradition to Resettlement - Understanding Refugees from Laos, Kampuchea and Vietnam in Canada. Ottawa : The Canadian Asian Studies Association, 1980, page 50.
7. Steinberg, David J. Cambodia : Its People, Its Society, Its Culture. New Haven : Human Relations Area Files Press, 1959, page 45.
8. Abdul Hadi Derani. Refugees from Indochina 1975-1980 : Their impact on the International Relations of South East Asia. (Doctoral dissertation, University of London) Institute of Commonwealth Studies, 1984, page 107.
9. Steinberg, David J. op. cit., page 45.
10. Abdul Hadi Derani. op. cit., page 110.
11. Abdul Hadi Derani. ibid., pages 65, 111.
12. Abdul Hadi Derani. ibid., pages 114, 115.
13. Abdul Hadi Derani. ibid., page 115.
14. Abdul Hadi Derani. ibid., page 115.

CHAPTER 3 : SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE OF THE KAMPUCHEANS AT SOPIC

3.1 The Setting

SOPIC Estate lies in the district of Selangor in the state of Selangor, close to the Negeri Sembilan-Selangor state border. Because it is bounded to the north by the Sungai Labu, the estate is sometimes referred to as the Sungai Labu Estate by the local people. The estate is relatively isolated although the opening of a new public road cutting across it only a few years back has made the estate more accessible. The nearest village is Kampung Lanjut, 2 miles away while the nearest small town, Salak, is 6 miles away. Bigger towns like Nilai is 11 miles away, Banting is 12 miles away while Seremban is 26 miles away if one travels by the Kuala Lumpur-Seremban highway. Public transport like buses do not pass through the estate but are available, the nearest, at Salak where they pass through at the rate of one every 60 minutes. A mobile post-office comes to the estate once every week.

SOPIC Sdn. Bhd. is a fully-owned subsidiary company of the Perbadanan Kemajuan Pertanian Selangor (PKPS), a corporation founded by the Selangor State Legislative Assembly. Although owned by a public corporation, the estate is run in a similar manner as in the private sector with profit-making its prime objective.

SOPIC estate was opened in 1974 after work on draining a once-swampy piece of land to make it suitable for oil palm cultivation had completed. The land here is flat, and the oil palms, relatively short. The estate covers an area about 6,000 acres out of which 5961 acres are planted areas

with 5186 acres of it matured and harvested. The remaining 39 unplanted acres are taken up as the site for the Semisa oil palm mill (of which the PKPS is the majority shareholder), the SOPIC administration offices, housing quarters for staff and labourers of SOPIC and Semisa alike, a water tower compound, roads, and social amenities like an estate clinic, a mosque, a canteen-cum-sundry shop which was run by a non-resident Chinese family (there are two more sundry shops on the estate - one run by a Kampuchean family from their home in the SOPIC labour lines¹, the other by a Malay family also from their home in the Semisa labour lines, both families having one or more members working in the estate and in the mill respectively), and a football field.



Photograph 3.1 The football field at SOPIC

For labourers working in the estate, of which there were two types - estate-employed and contract - the management provides certain fringe benefits. A dresser employed by the estate provides free basic medical services, houses are rent-free, and water and electricity are supplied free-of-charge.

Labourers working at SOPIC could be divided into those who lived in nearby villages and commuted daily to work, and those who stayed in the estate's labour lines. Those commuting daily were mostly those Malays who stayed with their families in villages around the estate. Those staying in the estate's labour lines, as of the time of this study was conducted (April 1985), numbered 220. Kampucheans were by far the majority, numbering 155 or 70.5% of the total resident² population of labourers and their families at SOPIC. Indians and Malays were equally represented at 10.5% each while Indonesians made up the rest of the percentage at 8.5%. (See Table 3.1)

Table 3.1 Residents at SOPIC's labour lines by race/nationality

Race/Nationality	No. of Residents	%
Kampuchean	155	70.5
Indian	23	10.5
Malay	23	10.5
Indonesian	19	8.5
Total	220	100.0

Source : Interview Schedule

3.2 The Kampuchean Community

The Kampucheans residing at SOPIC were all Moslems, and the heads of the families were all born in Kampuchea. Because the war in Kampuchea

only started in 1975, all the refugees here had been in the country for not more than 10 years. Some were here as early as 1975 itself but there were a few who came into Malaysia as late as 1984. Another notable feature

3.2.1 Age and Sex Distribution

The 155 Kampucheans covered in this study comprised 73 males and 82 females, or 47.1% males and 52.9% females.

Table 3.2 Kampuchean residents at SOPIC by age and sex groups

Age Group Sex	0-9	10-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	Total	
								No.	%
Male	27	13	15	10	2	3	73	47.73	47.1
Female	32	15	20	3	5	6	1	82	52.9
Total	59	28	35	13	7	9	4	155	100.0
%	38.0	18.1	22.6	8.4	4.5	5.8	2.6	100.0	

Source : Interview Schedule

From Table 3.2 it can be seen that there are variations in sex ratio in the different age-groups. In five out of the seven age-groups, females outnumber males. Differences between the number of males and the number of females range from two at the minimum in age-groups 10-19 and 60-69, to seven at the maximum in age-group 30-39. In percentage this will mean that this difference is between 1.3% and 4.5% for any age-group, a difference which is not too considerable.

Age-wise, the number of people in the various age-groups range greatly, from as few as 4 at one end of the scale (age-group 60-69) to as many as 59 at the other end of the scale (age-group 0-9). This will give a hefty

difference of 55 persons between the two age-groups concerned, or 35.5% out of the total population. Figure 3.1 shows more clearly the difference between the number of persons in various age-groups. Another notable feature of the age-structure is that it tends to be heavy at the base, that is, the number of younger people greatly outnumber the number of older people. This is borne out of the fact that more than three-quarters (75%) of the Kampuchians are below 30 years of age and that the average age of the group is approximately 18.8 years ($= \frac{2921 \text{ years}}{155}$).

3.2.2 Family Type and Size

The total Kampuchean population of 155 at SOPIC made up 30 families. These 30 families could be classified under five types - 'complete nuclear families', 'incomplete nuclear families', 'nuclear families with related persons', 'extended families' and 'other-types families'. A 'complete nuclear family' is composed of a man, his wife, and their unmarried children while an 'incomplete nuclear family' lacks one of the three essential components of the nuclear family (a man, wife, unmarried children). A 'nuclear family with related persons' is formed by the addition of one or more kinsmen, by blood or by marriage, to a complete or incomplete nuclear family. Domestic families not nuclear in structure were categorised either under 'extended families' in which more than two generations are present, or alternatively, under 'other-types families'.

There were 20 complete nuclear families representing 66.6% of the total number of families. Thus complete nuclear families was the dominant type of families for the Kampuchians at SOPIC. In all the 20 families, each man had only one wife although their religion allows the practise of polygamy.

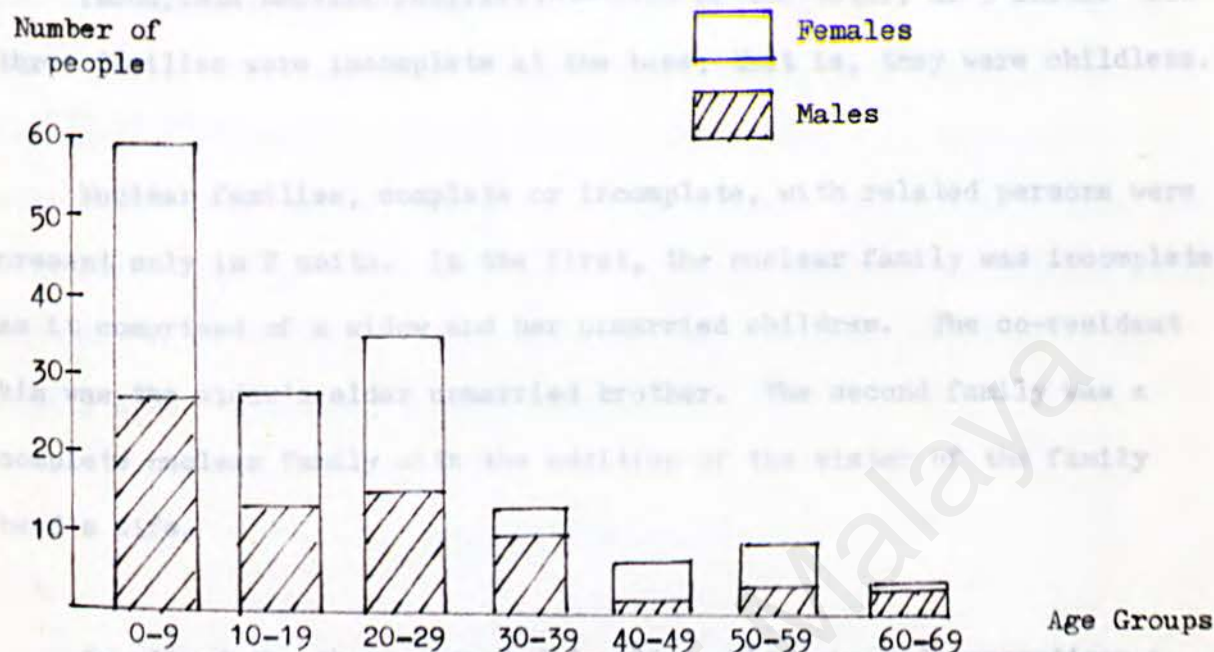


Figure 3.1 Kampuchean residents at SOPIC by age and sex groups

Table 3.3 Types of Families

Types of families	No. of units	%
Complete nuclear	20	66.6
Incomplete nuclear	3	10.0
Nuclear with related persons	2	6.7
Extended	3	10.0
Other-types	2	6.7
Total	30	100.0

Source : Interview Schedule

There were two families classified under 'Other-types families' as they could not fit into any one of the above categories. The first was in 19 out of the 20 families, the children were born out of the union of an incomplete nuclear family headed by a widower and comprising a divorced man and his present spouse. In the twentieth family the man and his present wife did not have any children from their own marriage but both had unmarried children from their respective previous marriages living with them here.

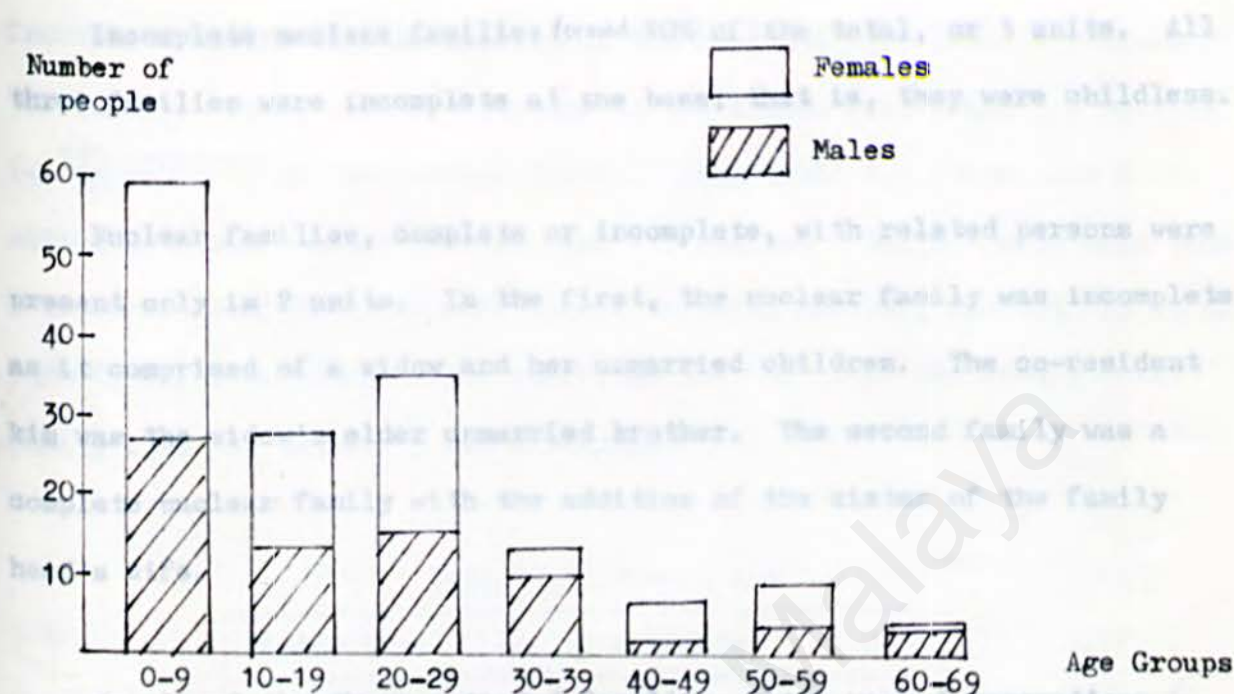


Figure 3.1 Kampuchean residents at SOPIC by age and sex groups

Table 3.3 Types of Families

Types of families	No. of units	%
Complete nuclear	20	66.6
Incomplete nuclear	3	10.0
Nuclear with related persons	2	6.7
Extended	3	10.0
Other-types	2	6.7
Total	30	100.0

Source : Interview Schedule

There were two families classified under 'Other-types' families' as they could not fit into any one of the above categories. The first was in 19 out of the 20 families, the children were born out of the union of an incomplete nuclear family headed by a widow and comprising a divorced man and his present spouse. In the twentieth family the man and his widow, childless daughter, among his other children who were unmarried wife did not have any children from their own marriage but both married. The second was a family of two widows who were mother and had unmarried children from their respective previous marriages living with them here.

Incomplete nuclear families formed 10% of the total, or 3 units. All three families were incomplete at the base, that is, they were childless.

Nuclear families, complete or incomplete, with related persons were present only in 2 units. In the first, the nuclear family was incomplete as it comprised of a widow and her unmarried children. The co-resident kin was the widow's elder unmarried brother. The second family was a complete nuclear family with the addition of the sister of the family head's wife.

In all of the three extended families, there were 3 generations present. Another common feature among all three families was that there was only one member of the first generation present and they were all women. The first extended family was made up of the incomplete nuclear families of mother and daughter who were both widows, with children each, while the second family was formed by the joining of the incomplete nuclear family of a widowed mother with the complete nuclear family of one daughter. The last extended family comprised of the nuclear families of two sisters and the sisters' mother.

There were two families classified under 'other-types families' as they could not fit into any one of the above categories. The first was an incomplete nuclear family headed by a widower and comprising a divorced and widowed, childless daughter, among his other children who were unmarried. The second was a family of two widows who were mother and daughter.

Where family size was concerned, the range was from 2 to 11 persons per family. There were 6.5 persons in the median family and 5.2 persons ($= \frac{155 \text{ persons}}{30}$) in the average family. From Table 3.4, there are 2 families with more than 8 members; and 11 families - 36.7% - with more than 5 members. Families with more than 4 members, however, account for 63.4%, a hefty 26.7% increase. This reaffirms the fact that the most popular family size is between 5 and 6 members.

Table 3.4 Family Size

Family Size	No. of families	%
2	4	13.3
3	4	13.3
4	3	10.0
5	8	26.7
6	2	6.7
7	5	16.7
8	2	6.7
9	1	3.3
10	-	-
11	1	3.3
Total	30	100.0

} 36.7% } 63.4%

Source : Interview Schedule

3.2.3 Housing

The labour lines for SOPIC labourers consist of four rows of houses. The first two rows (called row A and row B respectively) have four house-blocks each while the third row and the fourth row (called row C and row D respectively) have six house-blocks each. In addition, there are four more house-blocks situated across the top of rows A and B. Each house-block

is made up of two units. Thus there are 24 house-blocks or 48 units, but because one house-block is used to house the estate clinic, only 46 units are available for occupancy by SOPIC labourers.

All the houses for SOPIC labourers are standardized in size and design. Built in 1980, each unit in a house-block, symmetrically-designed to one another, occupies an area of about 38 feet by 20 feet. Each unit or house has two bedrooms, a sitting-room, a small kitchen, and a bathroom-cum-toilet. Floors and walls are concrete while the roofing is asbestos. Toilets are modern, operated by flushing. There is piped water supply available 24 hours a day which is pumped from a nearby river. Electricity supply, however, is only available from 5am to 7am, and from 5pm to 1am daily. No house rent is charged but there is an understanding between the labourers and the management that no renovation is allowed without prior permission from the management. Beside and to the front of each house is a small plot of land where the occupants of the house may plant some vegetables, fruits, or flowers, as may be the case. There are no fences to fence up the compounds of each house.

For a labourer to secure a place in the labour lines, approval had to be obtained from the assistant manager who was assisted by one of the estate conductors in deciding the allocation of houses to workers. Generally, workers must be married to be eligible for a house of their own. Bachelors usually had to share a house, sometimes six to one house. Accommodation in the labour lines was provided not only for estate-employed labourers but also for contract workers who numbered quite substantially. It is difficult,



Photograph 3.2 Houses for the labourers at SOPIC



Photograph 3.3 Some greens planted by one of the families

however, to pinpoint the number of houses allocated to contract workers, and the number allocated to estate-employed labourers as there were a number of families staying in the labour lines where one or some of its members were employed by the estate while another or the rest of its working members were contract workers. But as a general guideline, contract workers and their families stayed in houses in rows C and D while the rest of the houses in the SOPIC labour lines were occupied by estate-employed labourers and their families. For the Kampucheans, even though they formed 30 families, they occupied only 29 units (two families had to share one house) due to the lack of houses, out of the 46 available for occupancy by SOPIC labourers.

3.2.4. Occupation

Working in the estate as labourers for cash wages was the major economic pursuit of the Kampucheans. Out of the 155 Kampucheans, 57 or 36.8% were employed either as ordinary estate labourers or as ordinary contract labourers. This excludes one working as a mandore, and another working as a contractor.

There are some main differences between estate-employed workers which includes mandores, and contract workers. For estate-employed workers, officially the minimum working age is 16 years while 55 is the retiring age. The management was noted to observe the rule on the minimum working age, but said that they are more relaxed over the retiring age rule - workers over 55 years of age who feel that they are still capable of working are

allowed to continue working subject to the satisfaction of the field staff supervising them. Estate-employed labourers are daily-rated and receive variable sums as wages twice a month - on payday and on 'advance day'.

The rates paid to ordinary labourers depend on the type of job the labourers are assigned to, for example, the rate for manuring oil palms is \$6.00 per day; for maintenance of roads/drains \$5.50 per day; for spraying of 'lalang' \$7.00 per day; and so on. Other types of job done by estate-employed labourers include pest and disease control, and root-spraying. Wage rates for mandores are higher, naturally, as they have a higher occupational status and as the nature of their job is slightly different. Estate-employed labourers are entitled to paid days off on Sundays and on public holidays, when they do not have to work. They are also entitled to paid sick leave at \$5.50 per day. On rainy days when workers are not able to work in the field, and on days when they are absent from work without a sick leave, no wages are paid. Working hours for estate-employed labourers are from 6.30am to about 1.30pm. As of the time this study was conducted, there was no union on this estate to represent the labourers.

Contract labourers at SOPIC work in groups of about 15 each under each of the contractors (at the time of this study, there were 10 contractors, out of which only one, a sole Kampuchean, was staying in the labour line of the estate) holding contracts with the estate. Contracts rewarded are reviewed yearly, and subject to the satisfaction of the estate management, renewed. Usually the jobs contracted out are the heavier ones like harvesting, weed-control, loading of the fruit into tractors or lorries, and internal transporting of the fruit. Unlike estate-employed workers, contract

workers are not fixed-rated for a certain type of job but are paid according to their productivity. This will mean that in a job like, say, harvesting, workers are paid according to the number and size of fruit bunches picked, and not by the number of days it takes to finish the job. Working hours as such, are not fixed but depend on the worker's initiative. As can be expected, this will induce the workers to work harder and longer at their jobs than their estate-employed counterparts, often from early morning until late evening when the failing light forces them to stop, so as to earn more money. There are of course, no such benefits as paid holidays or paid sick leave. It was noted at the time of this study that contract workers were freely taken in without any regard to the minimum age limit of 16 followed by the estate management. Four contract workers under the age of 16 were taken in, out of which the youngest was only 12 years old.

Apart from those working as labourers in the estate (this includes the mandore and the contractor), no other Kampuchean residents were recorded as holding a regular job, whether inside or outside the estate. Thus only 59 persons (57 ordinary labourers, contract and estate-employed, + 1 mandore + 1 contractor) or 38.1% of the Kampucheans were engaged in major economic activities. One of the 59 labourers was also engaged by the management to act as an 'ustaz' or Moslem religious teacher, for the estate. For this he was given a monthly salary which was in addition to the wages he received as a labourer. One Kampuchean family ran a sundry shop from their home in the labour lines. The family had some members working as labourers in the estate which was the reason why they were able to secure a labour line in the estate in the first place.

Some of the Kampuchean housewives pursued irregular or temporary jobs during their free time to augment the family earnings. One sold materials and clothes to the workers and their families in her spare time. This woman also sold her wares at a weekly 'pasar malam' or night market in a nearby village whenever possible. Another, a widow, acted as a traditional 'medicine woman' to the other Kampucheans in the estate. She was frequently asked to assist in delivering babies (for those who wanted to have their babies delivered at home), and to administer traditional massages, or some other traditional cures, for all of which she received some payments. Other housewives took on some temporary contract jobs like filling sandbags, etc. which was done whenever they had any spare time.

3.2.5 Income

The 59 labourers received from their estate work, varying amounts of income per month depending on their occupational status (the contractor and the mandore earned more than the ordinary labourers); their job attendance; and their job skills. This last variable was more significant for those involved in directly handling the fruit such as in harvesting and loading where incompetent handling may result in spoilt fruits, and thus lower wages (as harvesting and loading of the fruit are done mostly by contract workers, only the contract workers' wages are affected by any such incompetent handling).

From Table 3.5, it can be seen that the majority of the 59 labourers have average incomes of less than \$400.00 per month. Only three labourers earn between \$400.00 to \$599.00, while the mandore and the contractor are the

Table 3.5 Average Monthly Income of Labourers from Estate Work

Average Monthly Income from Estate Work	No. of Labourers	%
Less than \$200.00	22	37.3
\$200.00 - \$399.00	32	54.2
\$400.00 - \$599.00	3	5.1
\$600.00 and above	2	3.4
Total	59	100.00

Source : Interview Schedule

only two who reported incomes of more than \$600.00 per month.

The total monthly income of each family was computed by adding the incomes of all of its working members plus any income received from outside sources, for example, from children working and living in other places. To get the average total monthly income, the computation was the same except that firstly, all income derived from subsidiary occupations were left out as reliable figures were not available for such income, partly because of its irregularity and partly because of the unwillingness on the part of some families to reveal it; secondly, income from outside sources must be regularly received for it to be considered as part of the average total monthly income. With this in mind then, the salary received by the labourer also engaged as a religious teacher was taken into consideration when computing his family's average total monthly income as the salary was regularly received. So too was the income generated from the sundry shop business added to the monthly income of the family running it as it was regularly received and did not vary greatly from month to month. There was only one case of a family regularly receiving income from outside

sources, that is, from the children of the family head working and living elsewhere. Thus the contributions of these children were also added to the monthly income of their parents' family. For all cases other than the three above, the average total monthly income of each family was the sum of the average monthly income of every labourer in the family.

Table 3.6 Average Total Monthly Income of Families with different numbers of wage-earners

Average Total Monthly Income of Families	No. of wage-earners in one family						
	1	2	3	4	5	Total	%
Less than \$300.00	4	-	-	-	-	4	13.3
\$300.00 - \$599.00	8	6	3	-	-	17	56.7
\$600.00 - \$899.00	1	1	2	1	1	6	20.0
\$900.00 and above	-	2	-	1	-	3	10.0
Total	13	9	5	2	1	30	100.0
%	43.3	30.0	16.7	6.7	3.3		

Source : Interview Schedule

From Table 3.6, it can be observed that slightly less than half (43.3%) of the total number of families are single wage-earner families. Families with one and two wage-earners make up almost three-quarters of the total number of families at 73.3%. The average number of wage-earners is 1.97 ($= \frac{59}{30}$) per family. Where the amount of average total monthly income is concerned, more than half of the families fall into the \$300.00 - \$599.00 income bracket. This is because most of the families with one, two or three wage-earners fall into that income bracket. 70% of the families earn less than \$600.00 per month, while only 10% have total monthly incomes of \$900.00 and above.

3.2.6 Expenditure

The monthly cycle of expenditure was dependent upon the payment of monthly wages to the labourers. Just as the family income for each month was roughly determinate, so also, broadly, were the items of regular monthly consumption and the amount of money that must be spent on them. Items of regular monthly consumption in this study included food; clothing; transport; monthly instalments for household facilities like television, video cassette recorder, furniture, etc. bought under Hire Purchase, or for vehicles bought by loans; schooling expenses - school uniforms, books, transport to and from school, pocket money, school fees - for those families with school-going children; and incidentals like expenses for medicine, leisure, etc. For certain items which were not easy to calculate as monthly expenses, for example clothing and schooling expenses, yearly amount of these expenses were taken and then divided by 12 for clothing expenses, 9 for schooling expenses as there are approximately 9 months to the school academic year.

The total expenditure for the 30 families was \$15,574 per month which gives an average of \$519.10 per family per month. From Table 3.7, it can be seen that the majority of the families (70%) have expenditures of between \$300.00 to \$599.00 per month. This is compared with the finding in Section 3.2.5 that 56.7% of the families have incomes between \$300.00 to \$599.00 (see Page 34). By tediously checking the income against the expenditure of each and every family so as to get as accurate a picture of the budget situation of the families as possible, it was found that only 11 families (36.6%) were actually living within their means. The rest

showed monthly budget deficits ranging from \$5.00 to as high as \$418.00.

Table 3.7 Monthly Family Expenditure

Monthly Expenditure	No. of Families	%
Less than \$300.00	3	10.0
\$300.00 - \$599.00	21	70.0
\$600.00 - \$899.00	3	10.0
\$900.00 and above	3	10.0
Total	30	100.0

Source : Interview Schedule

Just how the monthly income was divided up for food, clothing, etc. depended on certain factors like the number, age and sex of the members of the family. In practically all cases food constituted the highest percentage of the total monthly expenditure. However the proportion of the income spent on food ranged from as little as 14.7% for a family with a monthly income of \$930.00, to as high as 88.5% for a family without any schooling expenses or any monthly instalment payments for the hire purchase of any household items. 13 families had school-going children which meant that a portion of their monthly expenditures was taken up by educational expenses, ranging from 3.4% of the monthly family expenditure at the minimum to 18.6% at the maximum, these percentages depending on the number of school-going children in each family. Monthly instalments for items taken under hire purchase or from loans ranged from 6.1% to as high as 43.0% of the total monthly expenditure. Such instalments were undertaken by as many of the families (83.3%) as it allowed them to acquire household items with small regular payments which they could afford.

When the monthly income exceeds the monthly expenditure, savings can be made. Only three families, however, indicated having made any sort of savings, whether in the Post Office, in banks or in the Pilgrim's Fund (Tabung Haji). The amounts of their savings were \$50.00, \$250.00, and \$1200.00 respectively. Three families reported taking loans of cash (amounts were \$50.00, \$300.00 and \$500.00 respectively) for which there were no interest charges as they were made from close friends.

3.2.7 Household Luxuries

Household luxuries here refers to certain household items which are considered non-essentials, and therefore, luxuries. Among the Kampucheans at SOPIC, the most popular way of acquiring these luxuries was through hire purchase as they found the small regular payments affordable.

Table 3.8 Household Luxuries

Household luxuries	No. of families	%
Television	23	76.7
Refrigerator	0	0.0
Electric fan	20	66.7
Sewing machine	6	20.0
Gas stove	1	3.3

Source : Interview Schedule

From Table 3.8 it can be seen that the television set is a popular item among the Kampuchean families and can be found in the homes of 23 families which is more than three-quarters of all the Kampuchean families. The refrigerator, however, is not found in any of the homes. This may be due to the fact that the electricity supply to the labourers' homes is



Photograph 3.4 The home of one of the richer families

not continuous throughout the day and thus having a refrigerator in the house would be useless. 20 families (66.7%) own an electric fan, also a popular item among the Kampuchean families. Only 6 families (20.0%), however, own a sewing machine in their homes while only one (3.3%) has a gas stove in the house. All the other families use either a kerosene stove or a charcoal stove.

3.2.8 Education

Altogether 27 children were receiving education, most of them at nearby national schools while a few were studying at religious schools in Kedah. Between the ages of 7 and 12, there were altogether 24 children out of which 23 were attending school. This shows that all but one of the children in this age-group were receiving education at the primary school

CHAPTER 4 : ATTITUDES AND INTERACTION

4.1 Profile of the Kampuchean respondents

This section hopes to show how the Kampucheans felt about their lives in this country. Specifically, their attitudes towards their work, their children's future, Kampuchea and their links to it, and finally, their interaction with the local community, are examined here.

The attitudes examined here were those of the Kampuchean respondents, that is, the heads of the 30 Kampuchean families. Most of them were male; in fact, only three were female. Their ages ranged from 19 at the youngest to 68 at the oldest, with half (50%) between the ages of 26 and 35. All the family heads were born in Kampuchea and received their entire education, if any, in Kampuchea. The highest local equivalent levels of education achieved by these respondents are shown in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Highest local equivalent level of Education achieved by the Family heads

Highest local equivalent level of education achieved	No. of family heads	%
No education	7	23.4
Standard 1 - 6	14	46.7
Forms 1 - 3	1	3.3
Forms 4 - 5	4	13.3
Religious school education only	4	13.3
Total	30	100.0

Source : Interview Schedule

From Table 4.1, it can be seen that slightly less than half of the family heads (46.7%) have had some primary school level education while only

16.6% have had achieved some level of secondary school education. .

None attained any level of education above the secondary school level while more than one-fifth (23.4%) have had no formal education at all. Five family heads indicated having had religious education, ranging from 5 months to 13 years. (The family head with 13 years of religious education was the labourer employed by the estate to be the estate's 'ustaz'.) Out of these five family heads, four have had no formal secular education while the remaining head received secular education up to the equivalent of Form 3 level.

Where their working life is concerned, most of the family heads who had been working in Kampuchea before the war started were either engaged in running their family's small businesses, or were farmers or fishermen. In Malaysia, prior to working at SOPIC, half (50%) of the 30 respondents had been working in other oil palm estates elsewhere in the country, notably in Johore and Pahang. A variety of factors such as tall palms which made harvesting difficult, hilly terrain which meant exhausting uphill climbs, completion of their work contracts, having friends and relatives working in SOPIC, and so on, were cited as the factors influencing their decisions to look for jobs in SOPIC. Three others were involved in other jobs; two in trade and one as a construction site worker. Another two family heads, both widows, had not worked since coming into this country. The remaining family heads, 10 of them altogether or 33.3%, had never held a job in Malaysia previous to working in SOPIC. For these respondents, SOPIC was their first working place since they were released from refugee camps.

4.1.1 Attitudes towards Work

As two of the 30 respondents, both widows, did not work in the estate for a regular income but were dependent on their family members for economic support, the questions relating to work in this sub-section were not applicable to them and were thus not posed to them but only to the other 28 respondents.

To determine whether the 28 respondents were satisfied with their present jobs or not, they were questioned on their inclinations to changing their present jobs. 50% replied that they did not have any intentions of changing their present jobs, 10.7% didn't know, 7.1% said they would most probably not change their jobs, while 28.6% said they might change their present jobs. Only one respondent (3.6%) was absolutely certain that he wanted to change his job. (See Table 4.2)

Table 4.2 Inclinations to changing present job

Inclinations to changing present job	No. of respondents	%
No inclinations	14	50.0
Didn't know	3	10.7
Would most probably not change	2	7.1
Might consider changing	8	28.6
Sure of changing	1	3.6
Total	28	100.0

Source : Interview Schedule

The 14 respondents who did not definitely rule out all possibilities of changing their present jobs (that is, those who didn't say 'No') were asked further what sort of job they would like to be involved in should they and

when they decide to leave the estate. 4 out of the 14 concerned (28.6%) indicated that they would like to work as estate labourers again. The rest wanted a change of their working line. 7 respondents (50.0%) were in favour of going into trade, while one respondent (7.1%) each wanted to be a construction site worker and a fisherman respectively. Finally, one last respondent said that he didn't mind changing to any job so long as it was lighter than his present job.

4.1.2 Attitudes towards their children's future

Questions in this sub-section were only meant for respondents with one or more unmarried non-working, or working children. Out of the 30 respondents, 26 of them satisfied these conditions out of which two had only unmarried working children. Two questions were asked for this sub-section. The first question however was omitted for the two respondents with only unmarried working children as it was not applicable to them.

In the first question, the respondents were asked how high an education they hoped their children would achieve. Out of the 24 respondents who were asked this question, 58.3% had hopes that their children would study until university level; 16.7%, until upper secondary school level; while 20.8% had very low hopes - they would be satisfied if their children completed just primary school education. A relatively insignificant 4.0% (that is, only one respondent) didn't know how to answer this question.

In the next question, the respondents, 26 of them this time, were asked what jobs they thought would be good or suitable for their children.

19.2% of the respondents wanted their children to be estate labourers as they themselves were - among the reasons given for this were 'the life here is easy and I like it here', 'I want my children to live and work in the same place as I', and 'there's no other place for them to go'. The rest of the respondents, however, were not keen on their children becoming estate labourers. 26.9% of the respondents wanted their children to go into business, 15.4% into teaching, while others gave less popular choices such as being a mechanic, a doctor, a religious teacher, and a clerk. For this second group of respondents, that is those who did not want their children to work as labourers, their reasons included 'I want my children to go to school and get a better job!', and 'this job is too heavy, I don't want my children to do this for a living'.

4.1.3 Attitudes towards Kampuchea and their links to it

All 30 respondents were interviewed for this sub-section. The respondents were firstly asked whether they would like to go back to Kampuchea if and when the war was over and everything was back to 'normal'. With the exceptions of one respondent who replied in the affirmative and another two who said they were not sure, all the rest (90.0%) were not keen to go back to Kampuchea, even if it meant leaving behind any loved ones still in Kampuchea (see next paragraph). They explained that life was different for them here, and much easier - their incomes here were higher than it had ever been in Kampuchea where it seemed they earned just enough to make a living and never more.

Out of the 30 respondents, only one did not have any relatives still

in Kampuchea. A few of the respondents fled from Kampuchea alone while some came out with a few family members. Out of the 29 respondents with relatives still in Kampuchea, 25 (86.2%) did not maintain any correspondence or any form of communication with anybody in Kampuchea. These 25 respondents said that letters either took very long to reach their relatives, or their relatives had shifted from their old address, with their present whereabouts unknown, or else the letters were never delivered - such factors forced many to give up writing letters. Thus these respondents did not have any knowledge of how their loved ones still in Kampuchea were doing except maybe to depend on friends or relatives coming out later than themselves for such news. 4 respondents (13.8%) however said that they were corresponding with their relatives in Kampuchea. Their letters were able to reach Kampuchea because they sent the letters to their friends or relatives in France who in turn re-addressed the letters to Kampuchea. This method seemed to be the only reliable method to send letters to Kampuchea as letters sent from Malaysia direct to Kampuchea more often than not did not reach the intended persons. Although the four respondents may write letters, none reported sending any money back to Kampuchea. As they said, what they earned here were all used up to make a living here. Moreover, as one respondent put it, there are no foreign exchange in Kampuchea anyway and it would thus be impractical to send any money back.

Out of the 30 respondents, only 6 (20.0%) had relatives who were resettled in countries other than Malaysia. The relatives were living in either one of the following four countries - Australia, Canada, France, or the United States of America. One of the 6 respondents did not main-

tain any correspondence with his relatives resettled overseas while the other five were in contact with their respective relatives.

4.1.4 Attitudes towards interaction with the local community

Most of the Kampuchean respondents did not find Malaysian society too difficult to adjust to. They said that there were, of course, some cultural differences between Malaysian society and Kampuchean society as they knew it, but any tremendous upheaval from their former way of life was, for them, cushioned by the fact that Malaysia is an Islamic country and that Moslems around the world live in much the same way, with religion dominating every aspect of their lives.

Asked as to whether the language here was a barrier to their integration with Malaysian society, the majority replied in the negative. Most agreed that Bahasa Malaysia was not a difficult language to pick up, what with the language lessons conducted for them by PERKIM while they were at the various refugee camps in the country. This can be seen from the fact that 80.0% of the respondents were able to at least speak Bahasa Malaysia while 46.7% and 43.3% could read and write respectively in the national language. This is against the 100.0%, 83.3% and 80.0% who could speak, read and write in the Khmer language respectively. A minority were also fluent in languages like English, French and Thai. (See Table 4.3)

Where involvement with the local community was concerned, none of the respondents were members of any local organizations or clubs, not even religious ones. Also, except for one or two, most did not read the daily

Table 4.3 Language Proficiency of Kampuchean respondents

Languages	Speaking		Reading		Writing	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Khmer	30	100.0	25	83.3	24	80.0
Bahasa Malaysia	24	80.0	14	46.7	12	43.3
English	1	3.3	2	6.7	1	3.3
French	3	10.0	3	10.0	3	10.0
Thai	4	13.3	2	6.7	2	6.7

Source : Interview Schedule

newspapers and were quite ignorant of local happenings.

Most of the Kampuchean respondents said they were without much contact with Malaysians outside the estate community as they were relatively isolated in the estate. While there were some who did go into the neighbouring villages or the nearby towns regularly for shopping, marketing or entertainment, they were limited to those with transport to get out of the estate as the nearest bus-stop is 6 miles away, while taxis are hard to come by in the vicinity of the estate. Although a high percentage, 90% of the respondents owned either a motorcycle, or a car and a motorcycle, (as can be seen from Table 4.4) none however, ventured out of the estate for the purposes stated above more than twice a week.

Table 4.4 Transport Ownership

Transport	No. of ownership among respondents	%
Motorcycle alone	25	83.3
Both motorcycle and car	2	6.7
Total	27	90.0

Source : Interview Schedule



Photograph 4.1 The car belonging to one of the two Kampucheans parked beside a makeshift garage in front of the respondent's house

Instead, there were a few families which hardly ever went out of the state, sometimes for months on end, as the estate was more or less self-sufficient where daily needs were concerned - the three sundry shops in the estate sold an assortment of sundry goods, there were vendors coming in to sell fish and vegetables daily, and salesmen with vans also came in quite regularly to sell all sorts of consumer products - although the prices for such goods bought inside the estate were usually much higher than if they were bought in nearby towns.



Photograph 4.2 One of the three sundry shops in the estate,
this one run by a Kampuchean family



Photograph 4.3 The vegetable vendor

4.2 Brief Profile of the local respondents

This section hopes to show how the local people in the estate felt about the Kampucheans. Specifically, their reactions towards the Kampucheans mainly in the areas of interpersonal interaction and work are examined here.

Altogether there were eight local families living and working as labourers in the estate. The reactions examined here were those of the heads of these eight local families. Three of the families were Malay while the other five were Indian. Seven of the family heads were male with only one female head, a widow. The ages of the local respondents, that is, the local family heads, ranged from 26 to 52. Their length of stay in SOPIC ranged from 2 years to 10 years, with the average length of stay being 4.75 years. All the local respondents were employed as ordinary labourers by the estate.

4.2.1 Reactions towards the Kampucheans

All the eight local respondents were asked five similar questions. In the first question, the respondents were asked how well they got along with the Kampucheans in the estate. Four respondents (50.0%) said that they did not have any problems getting along with them. Out of the four, it had been noted that two of them stayed in houses in row B which faces row C where the houses were all occupied by Kampucheans. These two respondents, together with their families, had been observed to be quite friendly with the Kampucheans and to mix rather well with them. Especially the womenfolk were friendly with each other and could be seen in the even-

ings gathering together for a leisurely chat. The other two respondents stayed in houses in the house-blocks situated across the top of rows A and B which are the furthest SOPIC labourers' quarters from rows C and D where most of the Kampucheans stayed. It had been observed that these two respondents actually did not mix much with the Kampucheans and were seldom seen with them. Another four respondents said that they did not get along very well with the Kampucheans. These respondents all lived in houses either in row A, or in the house-blocks situated across the top of rows A and B. Out of these four respondents, two were seldom at home after work as they had parents or in-laws staying in the villages surrounding the estate whom they visited often. One of these four respondents said that the relationship between the Kampucheans and the local people on the estate did not go very deep and that most did nothing more than pass a few words of greetings whenever they met.

To another question, six respondents (75.0%) found the Kampucheans close-knitted as a group, and that they kept to themselves very much. Having their homes close to one another, it seemed, allowed the Kampucheans to create a 'mini-Kampuchea' in the estate, the most obvious sign of which was the use of their own language among themselves. Two other respondents instead, said that the Kampucheans did mix freely with the local workers and their families. These two respondents were the same two respondents staying in houses in row B mentioned above.

The respondents were next asked whether they would like to mix with the Kampucheans more and get to know them better. Three respondents (37.5%)

replied in the affirmative, one (12.5%) in the negative, two (25.0%) didn't know while another two (25.0%) wanted the initiative to come from the Kampucheans. Of the three who replied in the affirmative, two stayed in houses in the house-blocks situated across the top of rows A and B, while the third respondent stayed in one of the houses in row B. The sole respondent who replied in the negative and who was vehemently sure that he didn't want to get to know the Kampucheans better, stayed in one of the houses in row A.

The respondents were fourthly asked questions relating to their work. Asked as to whether they thought that the Kampucheans earned more or less than the local workers here in the estate, all eight respondents replied that the Kampucheans, most of them being contract workers, on the whole definitely earned more than they themselves did. But then, as one respondent put it, their (the Kampucheans') jobs were more insecure and that most of the local workers would prefer a job that was more secure although it paid less. All eight also agreed that the Kampucheans were overall, richer than they themselves were. Some of the local respondents were obviously envious of them, saying that although the Kampucheans had been in the country working for such a short time as compared to some of themselves, they were already richer and could afford certain luxuries like television sets or even cars which they themselves could not afford.

In the final question, the local respondents were asked whether they thought that the Kampucheans ought to be given Malaysian citizenships. Only two (25.0%) thought they ought to be so given, especially since they were already here; one (12.5%) didn't understand the question while the rest (62.5%)

avoided answering the question in one way or another although one did specifically mention that he would prefer the Kampucheans to be sent back to their country when things were 'back to normal' again there.

Some towards them. This type of inquiry can be of some importance in shedding light on a relatively new phenomenon in this country such as that of the adjustment problems of Kampuchean refugees resettled in Malaya.

5.1 Findings of the Study

From the economic point of view, the Kampuchean refugees at SOTTO did not face many adjustment problems. Being young, they were able to earn a living in the estate here and not very much different from the situation in their former society where the majority of the Kampuchean respondents who had been working there had been largely in lower-status work, also dependent on the use of manual labour, such as farming, fishing and petty trading. Moreover, 25.4% of the respondents had had no formal education at all while slightly less than half (46.7%) had had some level of primary school education only. Even those who had had some secondary school level education had beyond that level, none of the respondents reported any formal education or training. With their low levels of education and the lack of any professional skills, the Kampucheans could not undertake any demanding economic activity. On the contrary, many respondents had continued in an upward economic mobility and have achieved an upper life with more material comforts than previously. Of the Kampuchean population at SOTTO, 58.7% were gainfully employed on a regular basis with an average of 1.97 wage-earners per family. 56.2% of those working earned between RM20.00

CHAPTER 5 : CONCLUSION

The aim of this study is to explore some of the economic and social problems of adjustment of a group of Kampuchean refugees in an oil palm estate, with an eye on the attitudes and reactions of their local counterparts towards them. This type of inquiry can be of some importance in throwing light on a relatively new phenomenon in this country such as that of the adjustment problems of Kampuchean refugees resettled here.

5.1 Findings of the Study

From the economic point of view, the Kampuchean refugees at SOPIC did not face many adjustment problems. Using manual labour to earn a living in the estate here was not very much different from the situation in their former society where the majority of the Kampuchean respondents who had been working then had been involved in lower-status work, also dependent on the use of manual labour, as in farming, fishing and petty trading. Moreover, 23.4% of the respondents had had no formal education at all while slightly less than half (46.7%) had had some level of primary school education only. A mere 16.6% had had some secondary school level education but beyond that level, none of the respondents received any formal education or training. Thus with their low levels of education and the lack of any professional skills, the Kampucheans could not complain of any downward economic mobility. On the contrary, many experienced and admitted an upward economic mobility and thus achieved an easier life with more material comforts than previously. Of the Kampuchean population at SOPIC, 51.1% were gainfully employed on a regular basis with an average of 1.97 earners per family. 54.2% of those working earned between \$200.00

and \$399.00 while 56.7% of the families had average monthly income between \$300.00 and \$599.00. This was compared with the fact that 70.0% of the families had monthly expenditures between \$300.00 and \$599.00. Although working in the estate entitled them to rent-free quarters with free water and electricity supplies provided which could mean a lot of savings made, only 36.6% of the families had been found to be actually living within their means. This meant that most of the families were spending more than what they earned. The reason for this was that while food and education (for those families with school-going children) may comprise a large part of the monthly expenditure, as many as 83.3% of the families undertook to buy consumer non-essentials such as television (found in the homes of 76.7% of the families), electric fan (66.7%), and sewing machine (20.0%) under hire Purchase, or where transport was concerned, motorcycles (83.3% + 6.7% = 90.0%) and cars (6.7%) from loans, from which monthly instalments or payments had to be made as part of the monthly expenditure. If 83.3% of the families could afford to pay for the eventual acquisition of one more of such items, it followed then that their incomes must be higher than the minimum amount needed to cover their basic needs. This was surely an improvement to their former situation in Kampuchea where their earnings were just enough for them to survive and never more.

That the Kampucheans were satisfied economically could also be shown by the fact that as many as 50.0% of the presently-employed respondents were satisfied with their jobs and had no intentions whatsoever of looking for another job. Only one respondent (3.6%) was certain that he wanted to change his job. Those who did not shut out the possibility of changing their pre-

sent jobs mostly either aspired to be in the trade line (50.0%) or to be estate labourers in some other estates (28.6%), these jobs being not very far off from their present line of work, thus testifying again to the fact that the Kampuchean respondents were more or less happy career-wise as they were all quite close to doing the sort of job they wanted or aspired to in the first place. The possibility that the Kampucheans might be ignorant of the opportunities in the job market and therefore be easily satisfied with any job was limited because, except for some 33.3% of the respondents who were working for the first time in this country, the other two-thirds, ^{except for two widows,} had working experience in Malaysia before. Moreover, 50.0% of the respondents had worked in other oil palm estates before and were, as such, very much aware of the working conditions even among different estates in the country.

Socially, the picture was a little more complex. On the surface, overall the Kampucheans seemed to have few problems in adjusting to the society here. Language did not pose much of a problem as most found the language easy to learn, with 80.0% of the respondents able to speak Bahasa Malaysia. Where religion was concerned, there was even less problem. Coming from a minority group in Kampuchea with a religion different from that of the majority of the population, they now found themselves in a country where more than half of its people profess the same religion as they themselves and had made that religion as that country's official religion. Thus, with no differences of religion and minimal problems with language, it was not surprising that they said they did not find Malaysian society too difficult to adjust to. Moreover, the fact that their links with Kampuchea

were not very strong contributed towards their favourable adjustment here. Out of the 29 respondents with relatives still in Kampuchea, only four (13.8%) maintained any form of communication at all. Where ties outside of Kampuchea and Malaysia were concerned, only six respondents (20.0%) had relatives resettled overseas. Thus the overwhelming majority were happy to be here with 90.0% of them not harbouring any intentions whatsoever of going back to Kampuchea ever even if the situation there returns to 'normal'. They had come to accept their lives here and saw their future in this country. Where their children were concerned, overall they had healthy hopes for them. The majority of their children had been put into local schools - 23 out of the 24 between the ages of 7 and 12 were attending school, while between the ages of 13 and 15, two out of five were in school although school for one of these two children was a religious school. More than half of the respondents (58.3%) had hopes of their children studying until university level although some 20.8% said they would be satisfied if their children finished just primary school education. Where jobs were concerned, among others, 26.9% thought that it would be good for their children to go into business although 19.2% didn't aspire anything higher for their children than being mere labourers.

Yet at the interaction level, all was not so well. The estate, being relatively isolated, prevented the Kampucheans from interacting to the fullest degree with the outside society. They had never, therefore, been really put to the test as far as actual interaction was concerned. Even in the estate itself, their houses were physically relatively far away from those of the local workers. Moreover, having their houses close to

one another allowed the Kampuchians to retain to some degree their cultural identity, including the use of their language. They thus led quite a closeted life away from society in the estate. As if to prove this, none of the respondents were members of any local society or organization, not even religious ones. Very few read the daily newspapers with knowledge of local happenings practically nil.

On the other hand, it was found that the local people were not very receptive to the Kampuchians. Only 37.5% of the local respondents wanted to know the Kampuchians better, without any conditions like wanting the Kampuchians to make the first move, while 12.5% didn't like the idea of getting closer to them. Also only one-quarter of them thought that the Kampuchians ought to be given Malaysian citizenship while the rest avoided answering or didn't know how to answer. Moreover there were some who were envious of the Kampuchians as, as agreed by all the local respondents, the Kampuchians earned more and were therefore able to buy certain consumer goods which they themselves could not afford. It had been noted that those who stayed physically closer to where most of the Kampuchians stayed tended to have fewer problems interacting with the Kampuchians. These people found getting along with the Kampuchians quite easy and they did not think the Kampuchians were close-knit but thought they mixed freely with everyone in the estate. The reverse was true for those local respondents who stayed further away from the Kampuchians.

2. Discussion of the Findings of the Study

From the above findings, we may say that the sample of Kampuchians

in this study were at a stage where they had achieved satisfactory economic adjustment but not satisfactory social adjustment. Such a stage is possible because, according to J. Spengler,

'Economic absorption can proceed more rapidly than cultural integration because fewer changes in roles and institutions are involved in the former than in the latter.'¹

It has been noted by J. Spengler that there is an interrelation between economic and non-economic factors at each stage of the adjustment process but while economic absorption may be taken as the essential first condition to cultural integration, it does not follow that once the former is achieved, the latter will automatically ensue. Where the Kampucheans in this sample were concerned, this differential patterning of the overall adjustment process was due to the fact that the work and living conditions provided the Kampucheans the opportunity for interaction mainly among themselves because of two factors - the adjacent location of their houses to one another, and their relatively large number in the estate. Instead, there was limited interaction with the local people from whom local norms could be learned as the relationships formed between the two groups tended to be formal, instrumental and provided little overlap with the more informal spheres.

To conclude, because the Kampucheans were at such a stage of their adjustment process, their adventures into the realm of Malaysian society had thus far been chiefly functional only, involved in work, expenditure, education. As for the local people in the estate, their overall unacceptiveness could only delay any deeper interaction with the Kampucheans.

Spengler, J. Cultural Integration and Employment (Conf/36) - Rapporteurs' Statements on Sessional Papers and Discussions in W. D. Borrie, The Cultural Integration of Immigrants and Minorities.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books :

1. Bailey, Kenneth D. Methods of Social Research. New York : The Free Press, 1978.
2. Brown, S.R. and Block, R.O. Statistics as applied to Accounting Data. Sydney : The Law Book Company, 1975.
3. Chandler, David P. A History of Cambodia. Boulder : Westview Press Inc., 1983.
4. Ex, J. Adjustment After Migration - A longitudinal study of the process of adjustment by refugees to a new environment. The Hague : Publications of the Research Group for European Migration Problems XIII, 1966.
5. Furfey, Paul Hanly. The Scope and Method of Sociology. New York : Cooper Square Publishers, Inc., 1965.
6. Gamble, Sidney D. How Chinese Families Live in Peiping. New York and London: Funk and Wagnalls Company, 1933.
7. Garry, Robert. Cambodia. In Elliot L. Tepper (Ed.), Southeast Asian Exodus : From Tradition to Resettlement - Understanding Refugees from Laos, Kampuchea and Vietnam in Canada. Ottawa : The Canadian Asian Studies Association, 1980.
8. Gomes, C. M. The Kampuchea Connection. London : Grassroots Publisher, 1980.
9. Jain, Ravindra K. South Indians on the Plantation Frontier in Malaya. Kuala Lumpur : University of Malaya Press, 1970.
10. Spengler, J. Cultural Integration and Employment (Conf/36) - Rapporteurs' Statements on Sessional Papers and Discussions in W. D. Borrie, The Cultural Integration of Immigrants : A survey based upon the Papers and Proceedings of the Unesco Conference held in Havana, April 1956. Paris : Unesco, 1959.
11. OECD The OECD List of Social Indicators. Paris : OECD, 1982.
12. Poussard, Wendy. Today is a Real Day : Indochinese Refugees in Australia. Victoria : Dove Communications, 1981.
13. Steinberg, David J. Cambodia : Its People, Its Society, Its Culture. New Haven : Human Relations Area Files Press, 1959.
14. Suh, Matthew. Psychiatric Problems of Immigrants and Refugees. In Elliot L. Tepper (Ed.), Southeast Asian Exodus : From Tradition to Resettlement - Understanding Refugees from Laos, Kampuchea and Vietnam in Canada. Ottawa : The Canadian Asian Studies Association, 1980.