

MAN IN MALAYA

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## *Foreword*

IN THIS, his first book, Mr. B. W. Hodder details the results of his studies and inquiries in Malaya over the period when he was with me as a lecturer at the University of Malaya in Singapore. He sets out to examine the two-way interaction between peoples and places which has contributed to the pattern of settlement and development of Malaya. He includes more detail of the physiological and dietetic factors than is common among geographers and this alone must command attention because of its relevance to the development of other parts of the Humid Tropics.

Malaya has given us many examples of the manner in which different cultures, each in the process of adapting to a new environment, interact. There the arid tropical culture of the Muslims merges with the wet tropical island culture of Melanesian and Polynesian origin. These have more recently been modified by the large-scale commercial activities of firms using European techniques and who mainly employ Chinese and Indian labourers, as well as by the Oriental cultural practices brought by large numbers of Chinese from the maritime evergreen environment of Kwangtung and Fukien, and by Indians from the drought-ridden areas of Tamilnad and South India. Mr. Hodder unravels these elements to indicate their impact on the surface of Malaya and on the several races exploiting it.

The wide range of references which Mr. Hodder has used is a guide to the steady stream of specific and detailed scientific literature which has come from the many earnest professional workers who have focused their skills on the study of Malaya over the last decade, to provide the basis for what Malaysians may achieve in scholarly study under their new condition.

I am indeed most happy to recommend this work by one who was a sympathetic teacher and loyal colleague in the Department of Geography which he helped to make a centre of geographical teaching and research.

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