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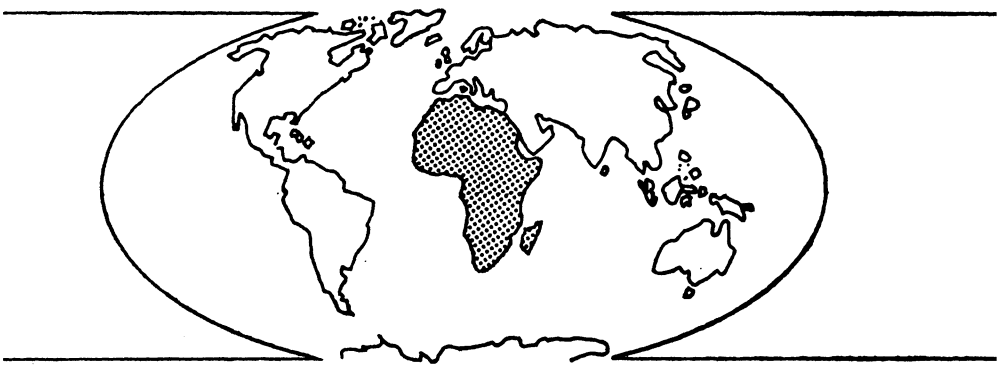

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Book reviews

Revue bibliographique

A.H.M. MAHFUZUR RAHMAN: *Export of Manufactures from Developing Countries*, Rotterdam University Press, 1973.

The Author's aim is that to find out the exports of developing countries contributing more to the formation of their GDP and to the creation of new jobs, as well as to a better distribution of their national income. In this study, he undertakes various separate analyses of the developing countries' manufactures exports, taking account of the Factor Proportions Theory.

In the first Chapter — which represents a mere introduction — the Author shows the fundamental objectifs and methods of his analysis.

In the second Chapter, availing himself of data pertaining to a developing country with abundant reserves of manpower (in this case India) and to a developed country with conspicuous financial means (USA), he finds out a linear relation between the two variable quantities and a correlation with the production of the two countries involved. It results that a country with a large reserve of manpower can obtain great advantages from the cost of manufactures containing a high proportion of labour.

The Author then (third Chapter) analyses the variable factors influencing the import demand: capital per unity, demand for consumer goods, customs duties, etc. And in the fourth Chapter he expresses criticisms of the "Leontieff Paradox". As attested by such a theory, USA would export manufactures containing a high proportion of labour and would import on the contrary manufactures containing a high proportion of capital. But the Author taking account only of the trade between USA and developing countries changes the terms of such a Paradox and proves the validity of the Factor Proportions Theory.

The fifth Chapter contains a deep analysis of exports of developing countries in favour of the developed ones. Here, the Author underlines the different policies of the countries involved, which may be either in favour of the concentration of production or of the concentration of markets. He also explains the reason why the diversification of markets is so important: it would represent a factor of success of all productive processes linked with exports.

In the sixth Chapter of the book, which is the final part, the Author comes to the conclusion that exports of developing countries are higher than their imports, imports of developed countries from the developing ones are still too low, but they contain a high percentage of labour.

In an open economy where priority is given to the economic development, the Author's analysis represents indeed a great contribution, since all his theoretical hypotheses are verified by means of logical criteria of investigation.

It is however hard to accept all the Theory of proportional factors as it appears from the study of Rahman. The assertion that a manufacture contains more labour than capital and vice versa depends on the evaluation criteria of the countries involved. Besides, the analysis does not consider the fact that there is no perfect competitive market in the international trade and there are so many elements influencing it.

Gianfilippo Maiga

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