

THE CITY IN THE VILLAGE

THE *IN-SITU* URBANIZATION OF
VILLAGES, VILLAGERS AND THEIR LAND
AROUND KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA

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Preface

This book addresses two issues. The first is global in domain, and in the form described here is common to many countries in the developing world. It concerns the effect of explosive growth of great cities on their rural peripheries. City growth has drawn large numbers of in-migrants from rural areas to feed the demand for industrial and service employment and, very often, has created a large 'reserve' of unemployed. As they expand, cities absorb rural communities, but before they do this, they transform the life and economy of rural communities still lying beyond the limits of urban growth. This *in-situ* urbanization of rural communities—as described in this book—has in modern times, especially since the 1950s, extended over wide peripheral areas around cities, in a rapid transforming explosion made possible by the modern revolution in transport.

The second issue is specific to Malaysia, even to Peninsular Malaysia, though it has parallels in some other countries. It relates to peculiarities of the Malaysian land code, in the context of *in-situ* urbanization. Arising from this, many kinds of rural communities cease to be rural without yet becoming part of the urban fabric. In Malaysia they include communities of both indigenous and immigrant ethnic groups: Malays, Chinese and Indians, as well as some of the aboriginal *orang asli*. Codification of land tenure was an early object of the British colonial administration, initially with the purpose of creating a land market and of regulating and deriving revenue from that market. A concern that indigenous Malays were too readily parting with their land for cash under the new system led early in this century to the creation of Malay reservation areas, within which land could not be transferred to non-Malays. A significant group of these reservation areas is now caught up in the process of *in-situ* urbanization in which the labour market knows no land boundaries, but in which the land code, until now little changed for more than fifty years, has greatly restricted the land market. Particular and distinctive types of peripheral urban development and underdevelopment, have evolved in the reservations