

THE CHANGING ROLE OF ANTHROPOLOGY IN THE FACE OF  
DEVELOPMENT AND UNDERDEVELOPMENT  
IN THE THIRD WORLD

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BY

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## PREFACE

First of all, I would like to thank my family, without whom this thesis would never have been written. Especially much love and appreciation goes to my daughters Kathleen and Jenny who have helped me so much and coped very well with a part-time mother.

Much thanks is also due to my advisor, Dr. Louise Sweet, for all her advice and moral support. Of course, any errors or content or omission in this work are completely my own.

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## CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

The last two decades have seen the world undergo a considerable transformation in all spheres of human living: environmental, economic, social and political. The last remnants of empire have joined the Third World as independent nations. The affluent have felt the burden of inflation, while the poor have stumbled under its weight. The world's cities have burgeoned and the last wild places, such as the Amazon River Basin, have been opened up to exploitation. These are but a few examples of the on-going process which is shaping the world of the twenty-first century. In all areas the demarcation lines between the "have" and the "have not" nations have continued to expand and hopes in the inevitability of the development process are now very much in doubt.

The world of anthropology was not unaffected by the escalation of change in the post-war period. The very nature of the discipline faced anthropologists with change in the field as even the most isolated peoples of the world are being drawn into the maelstrom of development. Nomads are being settled; peasant farmers are being commercialized or dispossessed, often taking refuge in urban ghettos; and,

tribal peoples are being rapidly modernized or exterminated. The role of the anthropologist as one who studies mankind, is inextricably linked to the fate of the peoples he/she studies. This thesis is an attempt to investigate the position of the anthropological profession in the face of such dramatic and irrevocable change.

To do this I have focused my attention on change and development in the Third World, using sources dealing primarily with Latin America, and have given special emphasis to rural development.

Even though anthropologists are as diverse as the peoples they study, Sol Tax once defined anthropology as "an association of people who have agreed to continue in communication with each other" (Tax 1955, cited in Hymes 1972:7), some general trends in their reaction to the theory and practice of development can be identified.

One influential group is lead by the economic and cultural ecology anthropologists who see anthropology as merely one part of an interdisciplinary team, often working through the established national and international development agencies, providing information concerning their specific areas of expertise which can be used to facilitate the development process. Then there are anthropologists who want either to initiate change or to prevent it for the peoples they study. The former are applied anthropologists who want either to initiate change or to prevent it for the

people they study. The former are applied anthropologists who wish to initiate the control development projects; the latter are represented by those who cherish the romantic origins of the discipline and want to help people retain their culture and avoid the negative effects of development. This is especially evident in those studying "primitive" peoples.

Within the last fifteen years, other anthropologists have sought alternatives to these views by attempting to develop a new theoretical base which sees anthropology in a more historically relevant theory of social change using the concepts of underdevelopment and the articulation of modes of production.

Because the topic of this thesis does not revolve around a single anthropological problem, but rather hinges upon a reaction to a process which originates outside of the discipline itself, I have altered the traditional format slightly in order to first clarify the diverse aspects of this process, i.e., development. An understanding of the role of anthropology begins with an understanding of the historical processes and ideological stances which have molded the present forms of development.

Chapter II will use one problem of development, the provision of adequate food supplies for those living in the Third World countries, as an illustration of the complexity of what many choose to see as a relatively simple unilinear

progression, in which the inevitable spread of capitalist development throughout the Third World will result in a better life, and in this case, an adequate diet for all people.

Chapter III will then briefly discuss the widely accepted traditional definition of development which sees all the factors involved, both economic and social, as being the inevitable result of the continued evolution of Western industrial society. Then the literature will be reviewed which shows how anthropologists who accept this definition have reacted to and interacted with the present development process. Finally the radical approach to development which criticizes the traditional definition and sees development in its present form as actually causing underdevelopment in the Third World rather than true development, will be discussed and its connections with anthropology explored.

Chapters IV through VII will each focus on particular areas of specialization within the discipline and examine how the role of anthropologists in these areas has been affected by their views on development or conversely, underdevelopment. Chapter IV will explore the relationship between anthropologists and the major agencies which plan, finance, and initiate development projects. Chapter V will discuss how development has affected primitive peoples, the traditional area of anthropological interest, and the role



of anthropologists. Chapter VI will review the participation in development studies by some anthropologists specializing in cultural ecology, health and nutritional biology.

Chapter VII will discuss the effects of development on the world's peasants and how anthropologists have been and are involved in this area.

The conclusion, Chapter VIII, will explore the validity of the more traditionally oriented approaches to development and then examine the radical alternatives, drawing from the material presented in the preceding chapters and give tentative conclusions concerning the future path which the discipline of anthropology should take.

## CHAPTER II

### DEVELOPMENT AND THE WORLD FOOD SITUATION:

#### POLITICS, POLICIES AND IMPLICATIONS FOR ANTHROPOLOGY

Most programs of agricultural and rural development are intended, directly or indirectly to improve the nutritional status of disadvantaged populations, but the gap between intent and accomplishment is often wide.

(Fleuret 1980:250)

Why this gap between intent and performance happens cannot be explained within the confines of any one academic discipline or even the whole of the social sciences. Contributing factors lie in the political, economic and environmental arenas.

Much interest in development originated in the realization in the 1960's that the dream of world development was faltering. The glaring inequalities in the world were obviously increasing and in no other area was this more apparent than in the fact that a very large number of the world's people were not only just poor but were chronically malnourished and hungry.

One writer of the 1960's who received much publicity was biologist Paul Ehrlich. The cover of his book bears a quotation from the text:

While you are reading these words four people will have died from starvation. Most of them children.

(Ehrlich 1968: cover)

His book advocated wide-scale and heavily enforced birth control.

Since the 1960's there has been a growing concern in Western society focusing on the finite nature of the resources of the world, the lack of regard for preservation of these resources and the pollution which modern "civilization" has spread over the globe. One writer even went so far as to dub mankind a "maladapted" species. Wershow said that we may

very well destroy ourselves before the invention of humane new social arrangements. So mankind is not only destroying the earth, but himself as well, for we are bound up with the destiny of this earth just as much as any other animal species.

(Wershow 1975:23)

Of course, seeing humans in solely biological terms as members of a world biosphere totally ignores the fact that we are indeed unlike any other species of the biosphere in our capacities.

Birth control, especially in the Third World, was seen by some such as Ehrlich as the cure-all for the world's ills. He says in his conclusion that

If I'm right we will save the world.  
If I'm wrong, people will still be better  
fed, better housed, and happier, thanks to  
our efforts.

(Ehrlich 1978:198)

Georg Borstrom, a food scientist, focused his attention on the world food supply in his widely read book, The Hungry Planet (1965). He took care to have accurate and well researched data. Unfortunately, he rarely made any effort to

examine more closely the causes that produced his statistics, and when he did, it was with a purely cause and effect logic. For example, in describing the appalling conditions of Latin America's rapidly growing slums, he simply concludes that

This is certainly a dismal picture for a rich continent, but one which has been overtaken or overrun by too many people. (Borgstrom 1973:74)

Nevertheless, Borgstrom's major service to the study of world food availability has been to explode the myths long held in the developed countries that these have been propping up the rest of the world with their shipments of food aid. Borgstrom unmasks the charade of European and Japanese agricultural self-sufficiency by showing the true figures for food and agricultural products imports which they are drawing in from all over the globe. The figures clearly uphold his assertion that

The ironical outcome of world trade is that two-thirds of the world's agricultural production is consumed or utilized by less than one-third of the world's people. The same wide discrepancy applies to the oceans with only one-fourth of the ocean catches reaching consumers in the poor world. (Borgstrom 1973:65)

But even Borgstrom does not attempt to advocate some re-allocation of the world's resources, but rather emphasis is upon ever increased production. Reliance is placed upon new technological innovations to carry this out. Lester Brown and E.F. Schumacher are two popular writers who stressed technological solutions to poverty and hunger in the Third World. Their works represent the two main

theoretical approaches in the development drive from the Western capitalist countries.

Brown sees no need to alter the status quo except perhaps for some small-scale land reform of lands held on a feudalistic, non-commercial basis. (See Brown 1970 and 1974) Schumacher would like to see far-reaching changes in all social systems of the world directing them away from large-scale, capital intensive development to a small-scale, more ecologically aware approach, but without any violence or revolution being involved. (See Schumacher 1975 and 1977)

Schumacher seeks to introduce improved technology but to tailor it to the immediate need of the producer, not as an adjunct to a wide ranging modernization scheme. He wants to provide a technical knowledge only, one which can utilize the already available resources of the producer with perhaps only a small initial capital investment. He offers something which has no strings, needs no outside inputs after the initial introduction; most importantly, the use and control of the technology remains in the hands of the producer. Schumacher believes that there is no such thing as a "neutral" technology such as the supporters of the Green Revolution, like Brown, have claimed.

Schumacher's view, with which I agree, is that

The underdeveloped countries want to import the West's technology ... but avoid the accompanying ideology. They believe that

they can have a technological transplant without getting at the same time an ideological transplant. But that is not possible....

(Schumacher 1977:93)

Schumacher seeks social change as well as technological improvement, for he believes that technology forms the base of society and that providing a technology which can be controlled by the people is a first step in changing the other structures of society which create inequality, which in turn, causes poverty and hunger. He says

I suggest therefore that those who want to promote a better society, achieve a better system, must not confine their activities to attempts to change the 'superstructure' - laws, rules, agreements, taxes, welfare, education, health services, etc. The expenditure incurred in trying to buy a better society can be like pouring money into a bottomless pit. If there is no change in the base - which is technology - there is unlikely to be any real change in the superstructure.

(Schumacher 1977:93)

Lester Brown, on the other hand, sees technology merely as a neutral way to improve the volume of production, for he sees scarcity as the reason for hunger. Brown's book By Bread Alone (1974) reads like a handbook of American Liberalism's views on world food. He calls for the simplification of diets for the affluent from an emphasis on meat sources to plant foods, thereby eliminating the large wastage of protein caused by feeding grain to cattle (p. 13); and he proposes the usage of "appropriate technologies" (p. 217), agrarian reform (p. 219). He has modified his

position on the Green Revolution from his earlier book, toning down the "miracle" results expected (p. 146). This sounds very enlightened; however, upon closer examination the picture clouds somewhat. The following inconsistencies become apparent.

Concerning the high consumption of meat products, he merely states the present situation and calls for a "simplification" of diets but without saying how this is to be done, and he totally ignores the reasons behind this state of affairs. Similarly there is no effort made to investigate the reasons for the admitted unequal consumption of the world's resources. Brown offers a modified view of agricultural mechanization by suggesting that in some cases such as in parts of Africa and India, human and animal power could be used more economically than forms of mechanization. However, this "appropriate" technology is seen only in conjunction with a type of development based upon capital intensive mechanized agriculture. The assumption is that as the horse disappeared from Canadian agriculture, so too will these variations as increased food production from commercial agriculture and increased employment in industry eliminates the need to retain small land holdings, the primary users of this type of technology.

Brown only advocates changes in existing structures in order to improve the distribution of technical knowledge, fertilizer, water, seed, pesticides, and machinery, so that

the package technology of high yield seeds, fertilizer, adequate water and pesticides, developed by American research scientists and generally known as the "Green Revolution", can be used to better advantage. Brown sees the introduced technology as being neutral. The problems of increased inequality attributed to it by some writers (Byres 1972; Cleaver 1972, 1974, 1976; Frankel 1969, 1970, 1971, 1972; Gough 1978; and many others), Brown sees as the result of archaic social structures failing to adapt and being replaced by more democratic structures. Unfortunately, there is little evidence of this occurring, but rather social inequality and increased class stratification are following in the wake of the Green Revolution. (See Byres 1981) Brown sees the need for land reform only in commercial agriculture inhibit rural development. He makes no mention of already existing large commercial enterprises like cattle ranches and plantations which often do not provide food intended for most people who cannot afford their products.

In summary then, Brown's total emphasis in By Bread Alone (1974) is upon increasing production without altering a status quo which involves great inequalities in income, land distribution, political freedoms and life-styles. Brown's theories are very much in line with Western government and business backed aid and development programs.



In the late 1960's, early 1970's, many writers from various disciplines began to question loudly the validity of this high technology oriented, capital intensive, "Western" (capitalist) style of development with its emphasis on increased production and no social change. (For example see, on nutrition, Berg 1973; on the Green Revolution, Frankel 1971 and Palmer 1972; on foreign aid, Hayter 1971; on the world economy, Jalée 1968 and 1969; on population control, Mamdani 1972; on resources, Commoner 1971.)

One of these writers, Frances Moore Lappé, in her book Diet for a Small Planet (1975, revised edition, first published 1972), documented the fact that there is enough food to go around on a world-wide scale and that one can eat a well balanced diet sufficient in protein from plant sources. One must simply combine complementary protein sources since plant foods often contain an unbalanced amount of amino acids rather than complete proteins. Lappé went on to show how the American diet was overloaded with animal products, refined sugars and overprocessed foods. We have all seen the increased incidence of obesity and cardiovascular disease this has caused.

Lappé traces the history of American agricultural development and finds that rapid increases in production caused a glut of food beginning in the late 1930's and that income inequalities made it "impossible to sell profitably all our

newly enlarged food resources." (Lappé 1975b:2) The solution to this problem in a free enterprise system should have been to lower food prices. However, the choice was made, in the name of the small farmer, to institute a policy of crop reduction and waste.

Farmers were paid to take land out of production, "surplus" supplies of some commodities were dumped, stockpiled, or used as food aid. The whole of the economic process of food production shifted from basic supply to a quality product, higher priced and thus more profitable, for the processors and retailers. Meat and milk are still graded on fat content which results in large quantities of grain being fed to animals as opposed to lean, range-fed animals who could make use of marginal lands. This process of waste has become so accepted that Lappé says

waste is a concept only in relation to unmet need. And since our economic system does not recognize need, but only 'effective demand' (an economist's euphemism for ability to pay), we have been totally unable to recognize (real) waste.... In truth, waste is so much a part of the given in American food production and in our diet that the prospect of merely reducing waste provokes cries of scarcity.

(Lappé 1975b:3)

Frances Lappé began to delve more deeply into the structural mechanisms of food supply and demand both at home and in the world as a whole. In collaboration with Joseph Collins (who had helped in writing Global Reach: The Power of the Multinational Corporation with R. Barnet

and R. Muller) and Gary Fowler, Lappé looked to the fields of development economics and sociology as well as the wider field covering the demise of colonialism and under-development. They explored the extent of the global utilization of food production resources and the actors in this process, the multi-national corporations, which are often invisible in the purely statistical nature of traditional economic research. George Borgstrom had pointed the way and the time had come to go from figures to the reality behind them. Thus was born Food First: Beyond the Myth of Scarcity by Frances Lappé and Joseph Collins with Gary Fowler.

The major point of Food First is that increased production alone is not the answer to alleviating world hunger, but rather "the issue is who controls the agricultural resources and who therefore benefits from them." (Lappé and Collins 1978:A)

One reviewer, anthropologist John Young (1978), pointed this out by reviewing Food First along with another publication, a collection of articles by "nutritional analysts, political scientists, agricultural economists, ethical and social philosophers, farmer's representatives, congressional staff members and government officials." (Young 1978:513) Basically, Young says, one can class these articles into two sections, the distinction being between conservative and liberal viewpoints. The former included articles extolling

the virtues of an unfettered international market economy which has been hampered already by too many constraints. The latter included articles advocating compensation for the inadequacies of a largely unconstrained market system which results in severe maldistribution of food resources. (Ibid:514) Although there are differences between these two viewpoints, these are only of degree, for both refuse to admit the primary importance of the political in any solutions and only see technical roadblocks to be overcome. Young says

The institutional circumstances under which the American food system is being transported to underdeveloped countries are accepted as given. Liberals would like to compensate with other means for bad side effects of the international market, but like conservatives, they take no cognizance of the corporate interests being served by the system at the expense of the hungry people throughout the world.

(Young 1978:525-6)

By the use of factual examples, the authors of Food First unmasked the myth behind the beliefs of the conservative-liberal powerhouse which is controlling American food policy and that of the developed countries and many Western dominated governments of "developing" countries. They have helped expose the invisible giants - the multinational corporations.<sup>1</sup>

They document how so much of the world's food production is channeled into the markets of developed countries from underdeveloped countries:

In Central America and in the Caribbean, where as much as 70 percent of the children are undernourished, at least half of the agricultural land, and the best land at that, grow crops for export not food for the local people.

Lappé & Collins n.d.)

And this situation is repeated in various degrees all over the world.

They show that technology is only part of the picture for improved conditions.<sup>2</sup> While agreeing with Schumacher in saying that introduced technology must be controlled by the people, they go past this in showing just how powerful and farflung are the powers that now control so much of the world's production.

Food First confronts such issues as the fact that AID (U.S. Agency for International Development) is actually in business of aiding the spread of American business interests throughout the world; that land reform as supported by American development plans usually exempts existing large commercial farms already considered productive and that re-allocation emphasizes viable production units, totally ignoring the large numbers of very small plots and the masses of landless rural poor. It emphasizes export crops when export crops are really not a good investment for poor countries because of the inequality of world trade.<sup>3</sup>

Food First's authors put forward the following principles to counter the "myths" that are locked into the conservative-liberal viewpoint:

hunger can only be overcome by the transformation of social relationships and is only made worse by the narrow focus on technical inputs to increase production ...

Our food security is not threatened by the hungry masses but by the elites profiting by the concentration and internalization of control of food resources ...

Escape from hunger comes not through the redistribution of food but through the redistribution of control over food-producing resources.

(Lappé & Collins n.d.)

They are calling for a different interpretation of "development" from the present predominant strategy which supports the belief that

the world food problem is amenable to solution if people with professional training continue to work in the context of traditional roles, e.g., economists build production models, nutritionists set dietary requirements and anthropologists examine the cultural context for accepting innovations (emphasis added).

(Young 1978:526)

The assumption that the above statement contains applies equally well to most other aspects of the development process. Therefore, it is necessary, when examining the present-day role of anthropology, to confront the issues that this controversy represents.

## NOTES

1. For more intensive studies see especially the works of Susan George (1976) and (1979a). Other sources, - Perelman (1978), Ledogar (1975) and Burbach and Flynn (1980), deal with the spread of agribusiness. Of special interest for Canada as a major wheat exporter is Dan Morgan's Merchants of Grain (1979).
2. Other sources include references listed on page 12 above concerning the failures of the Green Revolution. Also one should see Hewitt de Alcantara (1975), (1978), Palmer (1975), Pearse (1975) and (1979), and Griffin (1974).
3. They have expanded upon this topic in a publication put out by the institute they helped found. See Institute for Food and Development Policy, The Aid Debate: Assessing the Impact of U.S. Foreign Assistance and the World Bank, Working Paper Number One (1979). For a Canadian perspective see Harley D. Dickinson's "Canadian Foreign Aid" in Fry (1979). Many other references which refer to the issues raised in Food First have been compiled by the staff of the Institute for Food and Development Policy, in their Food First Resource Guide (1979).

## CHAPTER III

## DEVELOPMENT AND ANTHROPOLOGY

Defining "Development"

Before looking at the literature on how anthropologists see their role in relation to the field of development studies and practice, it is first necessary to examine just what is meant by this widely used term "development".

In a recent article, Brazilian economist Celso Furtado traced the historical traditions of the development concept and the resulting definition confusion. He says that

The sources of the notion of development may be detected in three currents of European thought in the eighteenth century. The first of these arises from the philosophy of the Enlightenment, with history being viewed as a gradual advance towards the supremacy of reason. The second is linked to the idea of the accumulation of wealth, in which it is taken for granted that the future holds out promise of increased well-being. The third is related to the idea that the geographical spread of European civilization means access to superior modes of life for other peoples of the world, considered as being more or less 'backward'.

(Furtado 1977:628)

He calls this the "optimistic view of history". (Ibid:628)

Development came to be seen as having three different criteria with a complex interrelationship, which are, in Furtado's words

the criterion of an increase in the efficiency of the production system; that of the satisfaction of the population's basic needs; and



that of the attainment of the objectives sought by various groups in a society, which are linked to the use of scarce resources.

(Ibid:636)

Eventually another concept became linked to "development" in the Third World, that of the dual economy. Keith Griffin says that this view consisted basically of

the division of the economy into two broad - largely independent sectors ... In some cases the division is between a 'capitalist' and a 'non-capitalist' sector (Lewis); in other cases it is a division between an 'enclave' and the 'hinterland', between a 'modern' and a 'traditional' sector of society or more generally between 'industry' and agriculture (Jorgenson).

(Griffin 1973:15)

The "traditional" sector was seen as being based upon subsistence agriculture which was tradition bound, inefficient and thus economically irrational since "leisure preferences of producers are high and they do not follow maximizing behaviour" (Griffin 1973:17).<sup>1</sup>

Dual economy theory has influenced many within the development field such as Lester Brown. They view development, in Frank's words,

in terms of largely domestic problems of capital scarcity, feudal and traditional institutions which impede saving and investment, concentration of political power in the hands of rural oligarchies and many of the universally known supposed obstacles to the economic development of supposedly traditional underdeveloped societies.

(Frank 1969, revised edition: xvii)

The corresponding lack of development has been termed underdevelopment. The problem of quantifying levels of development and conversely underdevelopment has never been

adequately solved by traditional economics. The most common solution, the compilation of statistically based ranking systems, based upon Gross National Product (GNP) and Per Capita Income, as well as other related social and economic indicators, has resulted in a scaling approach that, as Stavenhagen points out,

by ranking nations according to their higher or lower positions the implication is drawn that an upward movement by any unit along the scale (or scales) represents the process of development, and that this process necessarily follows similar patterns whenever it has taken place. Much of the recent literature on the countries of the Third World takes this line of reasoning, whether it refers to the 'stages' of economic growth, the sociology of modernization or the process of political development. (For example see Rostow 1960, Apter 1965 and Almond and Powell 1966)

(Stavenhagen 1975:4)

Therefore, in its basic form, development has traditionally been seen as a process bringing improved standards of living and increased complexity to the societies of the Third World and that a central part of this process is the transformation of the "traditional" sector centered in the rural hinterland. (Of course there are many differences of opinion concerning the finer points of this definition but this is sufficient for the purposes of this discussion.)

#### Anthropological Approaches to "Traditional" Development

The quantity of anthropological literature dealing specifically with economic development is rather small, although a great many ethnographies or studies have touched

upon it, largely the result of the "classical" anthropological ethnographic approach which "attempts to define the sphere of the economic as distinct from other areas of social life." (Clammer 1978:4) As a result development has been left to the sphere of the "economic anthropologist".

It is an area fraught with controversy, encompassing both the debate over development theory and practice borrowed from the economists as well as the many differences of opinion concerning anthropological theory and practice.

#### Formalists and Substantivists

One major anthropological difference of opinion in recent years of interest to the area of development is that of formalists vs substantivists,<sup>1</sup> the controversy surrounding the validity of applying concepts derived from "classical" or conventional economics to the anthropological sphere. (Clammer 1975:209)

This debate raged fiercely in the 1960's but now has become a sort of non-argument, with the battlelines becoming blurred. As a result you can find an anthropologist, Harold Schneider, saying that he sees the

aspect of it (development) which deals with classical methodology, the so-called formal aspect, focusing on exchange as the area in which most precise and probably most powerful gains are being made.

(Schneider 1975:272)

also stating that

formalists have accepted that some of the apparently noneconomic characteristics of the economic behaviour of non-Western people - such as slowness to change, unresponsiveness to change in demand, supply, and prices, or preference for labour rather than capital intensive operations - are explained by viewing that behaviour as ultimately economic, balancing costs against benefits.

(Ibid:273)

This apparent contradiction lies in the fact that both positions share the same premises. The first is the failure to move in any systematic way from the recognition that in small-scale societies economics is deeply embedded in the other forms of social life, to an analysis of the actual articulation of such "relationships of embeddedness". (Clammer 1978:3) They also share an overriding preoccupation with the mechanisms of distribution rather than those of production or with the larger structural features of the economy. This preoccupation includes: 1) the "economics of the gift", the central role of gift-giving transactions, particularly reciprocal ones, in the economic and social life of many primitive and archaic peoples; 2) the material dimension of the economy is regarded as a basic feature with the significance of the economy being in the transactions and in the quality of relationships which these transactions create, express, sustain and modify the basic feature; 3) the market occupies the central role, both in the sense of the physical location in which exchange transactions take

place, and in the sense of the principle of the market economy which views the economy as being the institutional area dominated by, or composed essentially of, exchange relationships. (Clammer 1978:3-4)

The differences between these two factions are more in the minds of the anthropologists than is apparent to anyone outside of the conflict attempting to establish definite demarcation lines. Dalton (1971:7) lays the blame on "ingrained semantic difficulties", and Clammer sees the dispute as being "a philosophical one, but one not recognized as such." (1978:5)

Whether one accepts economic development as being "set firmly in the matrix of marginal analysis" (Schneider 1975:283) in the formalist tradition or rather rejects the "cross-cultural applicability of marginal analysis" (Ibid:283) as a substantivist, the approach to the study of development differs only slightly since both approaches are grounded within the above outlined premises with emphasis being upon distribution and the market rather than production.

Schneider, in his recent paper, "Economic Development and Anthropology" (1975), refers mainly to formalist sources in reviewing the topic. Some works which he includes are Epstein (1962 and 1973), Pitt (1970), Richards, et al. (1973), Salisbury (1970) and his own (Schneider 1974).

The substantivists in the field of development studies are primarily followers of Polanyi, with Dalton (1971 a and b) being one of the more prominent.

### Applied Anthropology

In the field of development studies the approach of applied anthropology has held a prominent and often controversial position. Grounded in Substantivism, it tried to use the knowledge of a culture obtained by anthropologists in fieldwork to initiate change, with the belief that "culturally constituted and shared socialization experiences or cognitive orientations are critical determinants of responses to change opportunities." (Schwartz 1978:244)

The most famous example of the applied approach was the Vicos Project, directed by Alan Holmberg (see Dobyns, et al. 1964). The desire of anthropologists to go it alone in recent years has dwindled. However, the spirit of applied anthropology is very much alive among some anthropologists who work for such agencies as the Rockefeller Foundation's Plan Puebla Project in Mexico to promote adoption of Green Revolution farming technologies. (See Christina Gladwin 1976, 1977 and 1979)

### Ecological Anthropology

Of the diverse aspects of this approach, one direction very concerned with development is from the legacy of Julian Steward, in connection with peasant studies in Latin America. He moved from Redfield's "folk" culture emphasis to a more materialist environmental-ecological approach with an evolutionary-historical one, later developed more fully

and modified by his students, especially Sidney Mintz, Eric Wolf, Stanley Diamond, Morton Fried and Elman Service. (Silverman 1979:62)

Their studies of peasant communities laid the groundwork for a break with the acceptance of the "traditional" definition of development. Silverman (1979:64) suggests that "Redfield's approach led in the direction of modernization theory while Steward's led towards interests in power, political economy and Marxist theory."

The other ecological anthropology approach which has direct connections with development studies is the cultural materialist approach of Marvin Harris, with its emphasis on technological determinism. He has used his approach to explain the existence of certain food preferences and practices in Third World countries (see Harris 1966 and 1977), which indirectly lends support to certain types of development practices and projects such as the emphasis on protein requirements for nutritionally directed projects.

#### The Role of the Anthropologist

Two books which deal specifically with the role of the anthropologist within the confines of the "traditional" definition of development are Glyn Cochrane's Development Anthropology (1971) and David Pitt's Development from Below (1976).

In his book Cochrane claims to be advocating a new approach for anthropologists in development studies and projects, but from reading his book I get the definite impression that he is advocating a modification of the British colonial use of anthropology. He says that

Anthropology had grown under the wing of the Colonial Office in Britain, and academics were restrained when dealing with overseas policy matters. Administrators received training in anthropology, and had a fairly good idea of limitations of its practical use .... Their virtue has always been their ability to subject facts - regardless of the personal reputation of the author - to the acid test of common sense.  
(Cochrane 1971:5)

Nowhere does he go into the forms, reasons for and beneficiaries of development programs.

The closest he comes to defining development is in his opening paragraph:

'Development' is an emotive term: it appeals to feeling rather than intellect. Hopes, doubts, fears, and conflicts generated by its use are not confined to citizens of new nations, they are part of the academic scene. It is important to realize that the term means different things to different people.  
(Cochrane 1971:3)

However, he clearly accepts the "traditional" definition of development. He sees it as a series of problems to be solved, "the agonizing problems of developing countries" (p. 36), within the present world socio-economic structure. He asserts, "Let us be pragmatic because that is what development is all about." (p. 114). He is interested in development only as an administrative process and how



anthropologists can mold themselves to fit into an employable niche within it.

Cochrane attacks applied anthropology energetically throughout much of the book, seeing it as misguided and misconceived. He says that

A major difficulty with applied anthropology is its promise to do. And obviously a good deal of the work done in the 'applied' area is not going to be used to do anything but is simply collected for its own intrinsic value as part of an ongoing scientific process. Two functions are unforgivably mixed up under the 'applied' umbrella. Analysis and study of problems belongs in academia; doing things, giving advice, taking action, on the basis of university training and in the light of personal experience is the professional role of a general practitioner.

(Cochrane 1971:26)

He is more upset about applied anthropologists' ivory-tower exclusionist tendencies than their theoretical stance.

As an alternative to applied anthropologists, Cochrane advocates the training of a core of anthropologists with academic training who will also be taught administrative and bureaucratic skills enabling them to fit into the development agency process. In his words, "Their discipline will have come more into line with development administration and development economics." (p. 32). He stresses three points:

- 1) altering traditional data collection methods in the field to fit into a shorter timespan and to enable anthropologists to "develop statements of broad application";
- 2) increased knowledge by anthropologists of work of other disciplines in the development field and, as he puts it,

"a knowledge of organizational delivery systems"; and, 3) anthropologists must "appreciate the practicalities of administration." (p. 108)

Cochrane to a point is right. Things do not just get done by themselves and a knowledge of political and bureaucratic processes is essential not only for those seeking a position within the present system or, on the other hand, for those advocating a change in that system. But Cochrane's narrow view of development rules out any criticism of the status quo. His "general practitioners" are merely development technicians, who may exert some beneficial influences within the system but who can only have a limited effect since their theoretical stance denies the involvement of profit motivated business interests, local elites and class conflicts, and international politics in the present development process.

Pitt's book, Development from Below (1976) is much wider in scope than Cochrane's, being a collection of fifteen articles. However, one reviewer finds that although

It is the stated intent of this collection to explore the role of the anthropologist in the development programs, to ask 'why the appropriate knowledge of anthropologists and sociologists is not used much more in such programs and what anthropologists might do to make what they know more useful' (p.v.). Few of the articles address these issues clearly and critically. Over one-third of the contributors do not discuss the role of the anthropologist at all, and most lack a deep understanding of the development process.

(Tudiver 1978:485)

Even though Pitt says that development has been called "the greatest failure of the century" (p. 7), he and most of the authors in his book are content to concentrate on symptoms rather than causes. The emphasis is upon attempting to make the present process work better and most articles deal with governmental approaches to development and changes which have taken place: Apthorpe on East Africa, Borgstrom on Nepal, Mathur on India, Rutz on Fiji, Robineau on the Society Islands and De Goede on Pakistan. There are two articles on possible anthropological involvement in the functioning of the World Bank, one by Cochrane in the same vein as his book. The others stress interdisciplinary studies such as Den Hartog and Bornstein-Johansson on nutrition studies. Although several authors express doubts about their generally optimistic pictures of well-meaning, co-operative administrations and two, Galeski and Huizer, do go into the area of social conflicts, they fail to relate it directly with present development planning.

All the authors echo the vague hope expressed by Den Hartog and Bornstein-Johansson, that when

policy makers and planners of a country do not have a genuine interest in the welfare of the population ... we see the role of the social scientist as most useful at the grass-roots level. His presence as an outsider, with contacts and access to information from both sides may help the people to analyze and understand their own situation in relation to the wider context of the society and to act accordingly.

(Den Hartog & Bornstein-Johansson 1976:117-8)

They see development in the above mentioned, "optimistic view of history" (Furtado 1977:628).

Only one author, Salisbury ("The Anthropologist as Societal Ombudsman", p. 255-66) advocates that an anthropologist use his/her skills in the direct interests of and to inform the peoples affected by a development project rather than as an adjunct to the development agency initiating it. Development from Below is not an appropriate title for a volume which scarcely recognizes the people affected by development projects other than as clients whom development agencies must somehow deal with. Accordingly Pitt sees development problems as being confined to the fact that

communication is greatly restricted between those who work in development agencies and those in academia, between disciplines within academia and across national, cultural, theoretical and ideological boundaries. The breakdown in communication has contributed to the relatively poor performance in many areas of development programs.

(Pitt 1976:1)

### Re-defining Development

The conventional or, as I have used, traditional definition of development has been challenged by many social scientists and one of the first to do so was Raul Prebisch, one of a group of social scientists who met at the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA) - a group known as the Latin American structuralist school, in the immediate post-war years. Prebisch concluded, in Furtado's words, that

there is a structural tendency in the capitalist system towards concentrating income in the hands of countries which have a more advanced form of social organization. Disparities in the rate of accumulation, due in part to the system of the international division of labour and its impact on social structures, have produced a structural heterogeneity in the capitalist system which cannot be ignored in any study of international relations. Thus, underdevelopment came to be regarded not as a stage on the road to development but as a permanent structural feature.

(Furtado 1977:645)

Andre Gunder Frank<sup>2</sup> drew from the ECLA's concepts of a world consisting of a developed "centre" and an under-developed "periphery", as well as those of the neo-Marxists, especially Paul Baran, who, Foster-Carter says,

was able to expose the inadequacies and above all the ideological nature of the conventional development theory, insisting that development was inevitably a revolutionary and not an evolutionary process, and that despite all illusions of 'partnership', there were, and had always been, deep conflicts of interest between western capitalism and the progress of under-developed countries.

(Foster-Carter 1974:80)

Adopting and lightly modifying ECLA's concept ... Frank pointed to a constant in the region's economic development since the Conquest. That was that, although it had taken a variety of forms, it had always been satellite development. Not only did Latin America have a specific history which rendered virtually useless interpretations and prescriptions based on the experience of the now developed countries - a point which, among non-Marxists, ECLA itself had done much to advance - but this specificity affected the possibility as well as the form of progress under capitalism.

(Booth 1975:63-4)

Frank also saw that

contrary to the claims made by the theory of the 'dual society' (as well as by 'Orthodox Marxism') most of Latin America had been thoroughly incorporated into world capitalism during the very first phase of its colonial history ... Hence it made no sense to speak of feudal, 'semi-feudal', or archaic elements which would give meaning to the idea of a 'bourgeois - democratic' revolution. There were only seemingly feudal or archaic formations thrown up by the capitalist development of underdevelopment.

(Ibid:66)

All this is in direct contradiction to conventional or "traditional" economic theory which maintains that the "backwardness" of the "traditional" economy must be transformed by the introduction of "advanced" Western technology which will increase production and bring about development. This derives from the perfectly logical assumption that "for people to have more food, clothing, medicine and other necessities more has to be produced." (Magdoff 1976:1)

This coincides with the above mentioned criteria of development (p. 20) concerning increased production efficiency and satisfaction of basic needs. The problem arises when these reasonable assumptions are abstracted from the concrete, historical circumstances in which they have to be applied. So increased production is simply equated with technological innovation, which in turn is equated with beneficial changes for the majority of peoples involved. (Magdoff 1976:2)

This analysis is advocated by such people as Lester Brown, many governments and development agencies which hold similar views, and, in slightly modified form, by Schumacher and

those advocating more ecologically competent development, such as the editors and contributors of Ecology magazine. However, it leaves out one important fact. The fact that production is a social activity. Magdoff explains that

This means that to get at the heart of the problem of production, we must first and foremost focus on people and the social relations into which they enter. Unless we put people, people as producers and people as consumers, at the center of our analysis, we lose sight of what it is all about.

(Magdoff 1976:2)

With this Lappé, et al. would certainly agree.

The re-analysis of development away from the narrow production focus was propelled forward by the works of certain French Marxists,<sup>3</sup> using historical materialism, based upon Althusser and Balibar's interpretation of Capital.<sup>4</sup> This French influence coincided with Frank's analysis of underdevelopment, and the meshing of the trains of thought involved in each has led to a "revolution" in the study of development. This of course did not happen overnight, but was an on-going process which still ignites much controversy. The re-analysis of development had a very profound effect upon the study of the Third World countries, taking them out of their isolated backwardness and placing them within the context of a world capitalist system. However, as Kahn says, many researchers have been

largely content to repeat the original assertions of Frank, that capitalism causes underdevelopment, and then fall back on more traditional theories and methods of data collection.

(Kahn 1978:111)

The failure to develop effective analytical methods using Frank's theories is now seen as being the result of inadequacies in them. Frank sees the world economy as being

a whole chain of metropolises and satellites, which runs from the world metropolis down to the hacienda or rural merchant who are satellites of the local commercial metropolitan centre but who in their turn have peasants as their satellites.

(Frank 1967:146-7)

The basis of Frank's argument is that Latin America has been capitalist from the time of the Conquest. Granted the so called "traditional" sector does not have the same structure as the pre-Conquest society, but is it therefore capitalist? How can we explain the situation revealed by Meillassoux that capitalism appears to perpetuate and even reinforce economic structures which have many pre-capitalist characteristics. He says that

The 'dual' theory is intended to conceal the exploitation of the rural community, integrated ... as an organic component of capitalist production to feed the temporarily unproductive workers of the capitalist sector and supply them with the resources necessary to survive. Because of this process of absorption within the capitalist economy, the agricultural communities maintained as reserves of cheap labour, are being both undermined and perpetuated at the same time, undergoing a prolonged crisis and not a smooth transition to capitalism. (Meillassoux 1972:103)

If these structures are not "traditional" as in the context of "duality" theory, as Frank says, why have they not been obliterated? Indeed, how can one explain their continued existence? In his critique of the applicability



of Frank's theories, Norman Long says that

the research by Frank has pointed the way but it is weak in that it tends to overstate the uniformities in the pattern and does not address itself adequately to the variations that arise except in so far as it treats these as the result of the concatenation of highly specific historical circumstances.

(Long 1975:265)

In response to this lack of theoretical rigor in Frank's "metropolis-satellite" concept, the most widely accepted alternative was put forward by Ernesto Laclau in his article "Feudalism and Capitalism in Latin America". He feels that Frank makes an important mistake in basing his theory on the market, for

by trying to situate the fundamental contradiction in the field of circulation rather than production they (Frank, et al.) can go no more than half-way towards why development generates underdevelopment.

(Laclau 1977:34)

He believes that this error lies in the confusion of "the two concepts of the capitalist mode of production and participation in a world capitalist economic system"

(Ibid:41). Laclau's article, in order to clarify this

1. sought to try and separate the concept of mode of production from any historical connotation, that is to say, from any link with a necessary stage of development. 'Mode of production' is an abstract concept and not a stage of concrete historical development. There is, therefore, no historical transformation that can be explained exclusively by the logic of a determinate mode of production. (and) 2. ... sought to conceive concrete economies as systems of relations constituted by the articulation of different modes of production.

(Ibid:42)

It is this theoretical framework, offering a radical definition of development based upon the articulation of modes of production, which some anthropologists are now attempting to use as a basis for analyzing fieldwork observations and the effects of the development process. Thereby they hope to avoid what Wolpe calls "Frank's failure to base his analysis on the concept of relations of production." (Wolpe 1975:242)

Although this methodology is in its infancy, two volumes which contain attempts in this direction are Oxaal, et al., Beyond the Sociology of Development (1975) and Clammer, The New Economic Anthropology (1978).

#### A Discipline Divided

The "optimistic view of history" contains the element that development eventually is a good thing, despite often negative effects in the initial stages. Within this conceptual framework, it is believed that anthropologists can use their knowledge to minimize these negative effects, to help perpetuate "positive" features of traditional cultures and facilitate the development process for Third World peoples. The most accessible avenue for this approach is through established development structures operated by government, international and business interests. They are seen as essentially well-meaning, but not well enough informed concerning the peoples they are dealing with. Filling this information gap is the role which anthropologists such as Cochrane and those in Pitt's book hope to forge for the discipline.

Connected to this way of thinking, but a kind of mirror image of it, is that of some anthropologists who are directly involved with the world's vanishing primitive peoples. The tendency for them has been to react in accordance with the "romanticism" associated with anthropology since its inception, and equate "civilization" with bad, contaminated and bound, and "primitive" with good, pure and free. Turnbull says in the final paragraph of The Mountain People

We pursue those trivial, idiotic technological encumbrances and imagine them to be the luxuries that make life worth living, and all the time we are losing our potential for social rather than individual survival, for hating as well as loving, losing perhaps our last chance to enjoy life with all the passion that is our nature and being.

(Turnbull 1972:295)

This "doomsday" mentality is very prevalent and has been given impetus by the concern in recent years for the environmental consequences of our present lifestyle in the "developed" countries. Bodley describes industrial civilization as

a culture of consumption ... a culture whose major economic, social, and ideological systems are geared to nonsustainable levels of resource consumption and to continual, ever-higher elevation of those levels on a per capita basis.

(Bodley 1976:64)

However, anthropologists in this area appear to be doubtful as to the direction they should take. So far they seem to be straddling the theoretical fence between,

on the one hand, co-operating with the powers-that-be in the traditional manner in order to try and alleviate the worst aspects of the inevitable, and, on the other, viewing the position of the primitive in the light of the radical interpretation of development.

The use of radical theory requires a much more critical and analytical approach, which does not lend itself to institutionalized development practice in its present form. The radical approach necessitates not only a different theoretical stance but a move away from the traditional stand of anthropology which is apolitical and attempting to be neutral, to one which must face the necessity of being critical, highly analytical and accepting the ideological consequences of this position.

The conflicts between these two approaches will be dealt with in more detail in the following chapters focusing on various areas of specialization within the discipline which are especially involved with aspects of development.

## NOTES

1. For further discussion on this controversy, see Kaplan (1968a) and (1968b); Cook (1966) and (1969).
2. Frank's works include: Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America, Monthly Review Press, 1967; Latin America: Underdevelopment or Revolution? Monthly Review Press, 1969; Lumpenbourgeoise: Lumpen-development - Dependence, Class and Politics in Latin America, Monthly Review Press, 1972; Dependence and Underdevelopment: Latin America's Political Economy (with J. Cockcroft and D. Johnson), Doubleday, 1972.
3. See John Clammer's, "Economic Anthropology and the Sociology of Development: "Liberal Anthropology and its French Critics", in Clammer (1978).
4. See Althusser and Balibar's Reading Capital, London, NLB, 1970.

## CHAPTER IV

### ANTHROPOLOGY AND THE DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES

In Chapter III, we saw that the role which many anthropologists see for themselves is in connection with the established national and international development agencies. Although all are not as strident as Cochrane, others, as represented by Pitt's book, see their role as providing information and facilitating a flow of ideas between the disciplines involved to make development projects more relevant to the localities in which they are situated. Ciparisse, an employee of FAO sums up this approach:

This is in fact a matter of knowing the living conditions of the people, evaluating the extent to which they can assimilate the technology proposed, and either tailoring the intervention to suit the constraints of the situation of planning phases of preparation of the people for the assimilation of this technology. Only by spending the necessary time of the procedure can a genuine introduction of the technology be achieved ... the need for extensive studies of behaviour, motivation, and social and economic ties, and this at the very beginning of any development project.

(Ciparisse 1978:41)

Therefore it now seems appropriate to take a closer look at these development institutions. The sorts of questions which need to be examined are: What is their record to date? What are their actual priorities with regard to development? Are they as basically philanthropic

as these anthropologists appear to assume and their public relations departments unfailingly project? and, Are they actually merely lacking in the proper information mix to make development "work"?

#### Aid and Agencies

Over the last twenty-five years, aid and development programs have been directed toward the Third World countries. Costing over \$118 billion, they have succeeded in raising the per capita income in the underdeveloped countries by about 2 or 3 per cent, which when inflation is considered represents a net decline in real income. (Dickinson 1979: 97) Of course, population increase must be considered. However, the reasons behind the failure of such a prolonged and heavily funded development effort to even make a small dent in the inequalities of the world lie in the very nature of the development aid and the institutions which have been formed as vehicles for its placement and use.

The fact is that a great deal of this total figure is not given as such. Much is actually in the form of long-term loans or is "tied" to the donor country by agreements that the recipient will buy goods and services and hire employees from the donor country. Also much aid is focused towards the building of infrastructure within the receiving country which helps corporations from the donor do business there, such as airports to help deliver tourists to the West Indies. (Dickinson 1979:130)

C.I.D.A.

The aid agencies of Canada and the U.S. are closely tied with the business interests of these countries. In Canada this agency is CIDA (Canadian International Development Agency), whose role is stated as being "to promote economic and social development, particularly among poorer developing countries." (CIDA' 1977:99, cited in Dickinson 1979:129) However, Dickinson has found that the board of directors of CIDA has many members in common with the EDC (Economic Development Commission) whose mandate is to promote "the export of Canadian goods and services" and to facilitate the growth of Canadian business at home and abroad. (Dickinson 1979:129) By its own admission, "most of its budget goes to private contractors, consultants, suppliers and manufacturers in Canada". (CIDA 1977:107 cited in Dickinson 1979:132)

However, the fact that foreign aid benefits the donor country in the process does not fully explain the real purpose behind it. Nor why, since it obviously does not benefit the majority of the peoples in the receiving countries, it is still being perpetuated. The fact that the relative positions between the developed and under-developed countries has generally worsened over the last twenty-five years, points to causes within the present world system. As we have seen in Chapter III, those who have critically examined this condition have concluded



that development under the present conditions is not possible because of the very structure of world capitalism.

Dickinson explains that

One clear conclusion that can be drawn from the available data is that Canadian foreign aid does not promote development of the recipient nations' economies, but it does promote development in these economies. The key distinction to be made between development of an economy and development in an economy is one of control. Foreign aid in general, and, for the purposes of this study, Canadian foreign aid in particular, supports foreign control rather than indigenous control over the recipient nation's economy. This results in a situation in which independent development of the host nation's economy is stifled.

(Dickinson 1979:142)

#### A.I.D.

The above conclusions can also be drawn concerning aid from the United States, whose controlling agency is AID (Agency for International Development). However, another dimension must be noted because the United States since the time of the Marshall Plan, has used its foreign aid as an adjunct to its foreign policy more than any other Western nation. It does this by concentrating aid to friendly regimes and using the threat of being cut off as a mechanism for retaining the support of governments. Recent examples are its cut-off of funds to Allende's regime in Chile and its continued backing of the Marcos regime in the Philippines. In Haiti, AID has a project in operation to turn food producers who grow some coffee into fulltime coffee producers who will then have to buy their

food. The major benefactor will be the "Baby Doc" dictatorship which heavily taxes coffee sales. (Institute for Food and Development Policy 1978:39-40) Also,

In Bolivia AID acknowledged that its loan programs were going to the large landholders ... it explained that 'this target group could most effectively use production credit'.  
(Ibid:40)

The Institute for Food and Development Policy has found that funds listed under the heading of "Food and Nutrition", in AID's budget included: 1) massive hydro-electric plants which mainly benefit industry, the well-off with electrical wiring, and large landowners; 2) funding space satellite studies of environmental conditions for a poverty stricken country like Cameroon; 3) local government in the Philippines; 4) a road in Liberia which will primarily benefit the Firestone rubber plant there. (Institute for Food and Development Policy 1978:41-44)

USAID is now very active in the area of food aid and agricultural development, but this was not always the case. Hoben says that

During the 1960's, development assistance was largely concentrated on the urban industrial sector on the assumption that this would stimulate such higher savings and growth rates that the benefits would eventually 'trickle down'.  
(Hoben 1980:342)

However, in the late 1960's and early 1970's, the development of the Green Revolution technology and the circumstances discussed in Chapter II, ushered in a change in policy aimed at helping the small farmer. (This will be

examined more closely in reference to the World Bank further on.) This policy appealed to the sentiments of the American public, in the vein of "helping them help themselves". Widespread social changes, such as land reform, were not looked upon favourably by most governments within the American sphere of influence, and so, as Harrison says,

A great deal of interest was being generated in the possibilities of integrating progressive, small-scale technologies with the conservative, 'small is beautiful' property framework of the peasant family farm. There was also interest in reforming and adapting the peasant institutional framework through the intervention of state agencies, and the co-operative organization of distribution. But the predominant thrust among practitioners of Western development economics was towards agricultural development on the existing peasant basis.

(Harrison 1979:87-8)

However, even though this new policy may have been considered desirable for some purposes of AID, and even though it was politically popular at home, political expediency is still the primary motivation behind AID's programs. This makes the impact which any individual anthropologist can make highly questionable. This leads me to point out that an officially stated policy of AID, in this case aid for small farmers, has often been changed in actual practice to adapt to the more primary factor of facilitating the implementation of U.S. foreign policy. Its major concerns are to retain political support of governments in politically sensitive areas and to protect American business interests.

The official stated policy is that AID should

give greater attention ... to income distribution and employment, to agriculture and rural development, to food crops, and to the use of more labor-intensive appropriate technologies in agricultural development ... (as) incorporated into the U.S. Foreign Assistance Act through amendments in 1973 and in 1975 ... (motivated by the) Recognition that small farmers are reasonable decision makers.

(Hoben 1980:342)

Anthropologist Allen Hoben, in a study published in 1980, says that this policy did not appear to him to be in effect for most of AID's projects and even then to be riddled with inconsistencies. (Hoben 1980:342) An example of this is noted by the Institute for Food and Development Policy in their 1978 study

An AID loan in Panama to build co-operative credit groups defines a small farmer as one owning 50 acres or less and having assets of less than \$15,000. But 50 per cent of the land-owners in that country work 12 acres or less. (Inst. for Food & Dev. Policy 1978:40)

In his article, Hoben then describes how he tried to discover the reasons behind this apparent failure to apply official policy consistently and then gives his findings. Hoben applied the same methods to studying AID that he would use in the study of any community or group. He views it as a bureaucratic microcosm. His thesis is that

bureaucrats are as rational as peasants, and that the ways they use and do not use information in their work can be understood by examining the institutional contexts in which, and the processes through which, they make policy, program, and project level decisions about agriculture.

(Hoben 1980:338)

Briefly, he sees any problems in the implementation of new small-farmer directed programs as being due to the cumbersome institutional framework in which AID employees must work. Their jobs center on the putting of money into projects in a timely and efficient manner, which can override stated policy or individual employees "professional judgements and personal values". (p. 339) He attributes the fact that "an agricultural officer is ... not necessarily trained or experienced in agriculture" (p. 347), to a top-heavy, geographically scattered, "old boys" bureaucracy, whose primary function of "money spending" results in emphasis on designing projects, rather than evaluating them, and the fact that they must accommodate the host countries political leadership or the U.S. ambassador or particular members of Congress. (p. 353) As a result there is no attempt to go past a basic cause and effect methodology in planning and no feed-back from past project experience.

Hoben notes that about half of AID's budget is "Security Supporting Assistance" which goes primarily to Egypt, Israel and the Philippines. He also found that in practice the new legislative directives were responded to by general policy statements which "because of their generality ... seldom place rigid restriction on what AID missions can do in particular cases." This provides the means through which official policy can be overstepped if

"the higher-order common AID goal of obligating funds" is threatened. (p. 361)

Despite this, Hoben feels that the situation can be altered by a "re-education" of AID officials. He says that

By June of 1977, the number of anthropologists working fulltime with AID under a variety of contractual arrangements had risen from 1 to 22 .... Whereas formal training may have modified stereotyped conceptions of the 'tradition-bound' peasant, the most significant learning has occurred when AID employees have had a positive experience working with individual social scientists solving AID problems in an AID context.

(Hoben 1980:365)

Hoben clearly saw the bureaucratic by-passes through which an official policy can be turned into a non-policy. However, because he failed to go beyond the confines of AID's bureaucratic village, he failed to see the real reasons behind this apparent failure to implement stated official policy. The reality is that there is much more at stake here than can be solved by a few anthropologists giving sage advice.

This fact is illustrated by a study of the history of a hydro-electric dam in the Dominican Republic by anthropologist Nancie Gonzalez (1972). In the early 1960's, when AID was still in its large project period and should have supported such a project, Dr. Bosch's government arranged a loan from a European consortium to build the dam, which was widely supported by the country's citizens,

rich and poor. The U.S. objected to the dam as being too expensive for the benefits projected. Indeed, Gonzalez determined that the dam, although supported by the peasants as a god-send, would actually primarily benefit large land-owners, for in the area 99 land-owners possessed 43.3 per cent of the irrigated land while 14.5 per cent of the total area is owned by 2,000 agriculturalists. (p. 357) How much the high cost, or the inequality involved, or the fact that Europeans would receive the jobs and Dr. Bosch the credit for the building of the dam, influenced the U.S. position is open to speculation. However, Gonzalez says that

The U.S. at first backed Bosch's regime, but did nothing to help him when he was overthrown and, as is well known, actively opposed his attempted return to power in 1965.

(Gonzalez 1972:358)

In 1967, a loan was granted by the International Development Bank and AID to build an earth and concrete dam at this site - forced on them, in one AID employee's words, by "public opinion". (p. 357) But why did they reject the same proposal which was just as well supported when Bosch was in power? Why do they continue to support the present regime despite the change in legislative policy to "small-farmer" development when, Gonzalez says

The development of the Dominican Republic under the present Balaguer regime which seems firmly in power, is inevitably moving in the direction of increasingly industrialized and highly mechanized agriculture.

(Gonzalez 1972:359)

Gonzalez concludes that

At the present time the Dominican Republic is definitely a satellite of the United States, and its economic development is being determined along lines which that country finds suitable, even though there is mounting evidence that the existing policies do not relieve poverty in either the rural or the urban areas. Political factors beyond the control of planners and social scientists have determined the present course of events.

(Gonzalez 1972:359)

Another example of this can be found in Bangladesh. The following is taken from an interview with an un-named "foreign development worker" by anthropologist Michael Scott (1979) and published jointly by Oxfam-America and the Institute for Food and Development Policy.

Bangladesh is in a highly politically important zone for U.S. foreign policy and it also has large untapped natural resources, such as very large natural gas reserves. (p. 17) In 1979 aid commitments were projected to reach \$1.6 billion with the U.S. being the leading donor. (p. 4) Much of this is in the form of food aid which provides the government with revenue through its resale and provides "cheap, subsidized food to the urban middle class, particularly the army, police, and civil servants." (p. 6) This occurs even though some officials of USAID oppose it because of the negative effect on local production. The informant says that, "Some of the people who have made the strongest arguments against food aid have been inside the USAID ..." (p. 7) However, AID is supporting the building of large electric rice mills, even though this will cause



the immediate unemployment of literally millions, mostly very poor women, who now do this job. (p. 9-10)

Another example comes from the Institute for Food and Development Policies (1978) report which says that

In Bolivia AID acknowledged that its loan programs were going to the large landholders ... it explained that 'this target group could most effectively use production credit'.  
(Institute for Food & Dev. Policy 1978:40)

These examples clearly show that even officials within AID cannot prevent the implementation of certain policies and that stated official policies and mandates of AID, as with CIDA, can be overruled by economic and political considerations when projects are put into effect. Under these conditions the probability of increased anthropological knowledge having any impact on the present functions would certainly have to be considered negligible.

#### The World Bank

Now let us turn to the World Bank with which Cochrane (1977) wishes to work. It operates much like a private stock corporation with 120 countries as stockholders. However, it is dominated by the U.S., Great Britain, West Germany, France and Japan through its voting policy (see Feder 1976:343 and Dickinson 1979:101). The same is true of the closely allied IMF (International Monetary Fund) in which the above five "control a total of 42.97 per cent of the voting power of the IMF". (Dickinson 1979:102) By tradition, the president of the World Bank is always a U.S.

citizen of distinguished business or finance background.

(Feder 1976:343)

Teressa Hayter (1971) described the structural workings and political motivations of the World Bank and the IMF. She concluded that their primary concerns were "the repayment of debt of the underdeveloped countries and the maintenance of the existing capitalist economic order".

(Hayter 1971:32, cited in Dickinson 1979:101)

The World Bank, along with USAID, has, since the early 1970's been the primary promoter of a small farmer oriented development policy. It had previously only dealt in loans to large landowners and large irrigation projects, mostly in connection with the Green Revolution technology.

(Feder 1976:344)

Green Revolution technology was directed towards optimal growing conditions. In the Third World the necessary factors which involved ready access to assured water supply, preferably irrigation, mechanization, fertilizer, and large tracts of good land, were controlled by a small segment of the population. Feder claims that it was developed primarily to avoid land reform; he says

Its purpose was to rapidly increase agricultural output and to engage even previously unproductive estates to make important contributions to agricultural output, and thereby to counter the argument that agrarian reforms are needed because the estates monopolize land and water without using it, or without using it intensively.

(Feder 1976:346)

However, even though this was probably a contributing factor, I do not agree that this is such an important ingredient. The Green Revolution was simply part of the push for increased production by capitalist business and governments.

As the results of the Green Revolution caused more hardships for the rural poor than had been anticipated, "trickle-down" theory had obviously failed, the spectre of peasant revolution loomed ever larger in Western and Third World elites' minds, reinforced by the lesson in the effectiveness of guerilla warfare which Vietnam had so painfully hammered home. Interest in small farmers became good politics and increasingly good business.

It is important to understand that this is not a condemnation of the Green Revolution strategy. The objectives of the Green Revolution were to increase production; to put more land into commercial production; to prop up the status quo; and to be correspondingly good for business. It did all of these things. Those who presume that the Green Revolution was ever meant to be a social service vehicle, despite all the rhetoric, had better think again. Such a misconception is largely based upon a too quick acceptance of a supposedly universal definition for "development". For example, in Cheryl Payer's critique of the World Bank, she says that

What is happening, in reality, is that  
this small minority of farmers, insofar

as they are successful, acquire more land from their less 'progressive' and less fortunate neighbours.

(Payer 1980:43)

But this happens every day in the United States and Canada and I am sure that many feel that this is why we have the most productive and profitable agriculture in the world.

Edwin Wellhausen is a former head of the Rockefeller Foundation's corn-breeding program in Mexico, the birthplace of the Green Revolution. The caption of his article (1976) in Science magazine on the agriculture of Mexico ready

The Green Revolution has been a notable success among Mexico's larger, more commercial farmers. Its benefits must now be extended to the majority of rural workers in the traditional farming sectors.

(Wellhausen 1976:129)

So the Green Revolution has not failed in its originators' expectations. It just goes on evolving and modifying its form but not the basic objective, which always was to increase the marketable agricultural surplus. A key statement in Wellhausen's article shows the direction this will take

The central highlands constitute only about 15 percent of the total area of Mexico, but they include not only half of the country's total crop-land but also more than half of the total population.

(Wellhausen 1976:134)

This then includes the two real assets of the poor, their labour and their land. Herein lies a potential resource which is now beginning to be tapped, and the source of small-farmer oriented policy.

A great many small-holders are only marginally commercial, growing a small proportion of their crops to sell; the rest is used for their own subsistence. In the past this system worked very well for some by supplying money for taxes, giving the people a food supply, and, among the poorest with the least land, providing cheap labour for plantations because they do not have enough to adequately feed the whole family. (Meillassoux 1972) Now in many countries their parcels of land or small farms are also sought for commercialized production. They are being "targeted" to provide a larger proportion of their crops to the market or they are being made "cottage" producers for large corporate interests. It is no coincidence that, Cheryl Payer says,

The (World) Bank's new interest in the productive potential of the small farmer comes just at the time when large agribusiness firms are realizing that direct ownership of large tracts of land is expensive and counter-productive; and that their best strategy for the future lies in control over production through contracts with the producer-suppliers.

(Payer 1979:15)

In each step the small-holder incurs more and more of the risk in supplying the world market. At worst by being dispossessed, at best, by losing all independence and facing degradation of his family diet. The pattern of risk shifting has been highly developed by the multi-nationals; see especially Susan George's latest book, Feeding the Few (1979a). Her article, "The Risk Shifters" (1979b), explains how

The House of Bud in Senegal began with a plantation leased from the government but soon realised that an effective small farmer scheme would provide cheaper produce. This was because labour was, in effect, provided at a rate below the wages paid on the plantation. The family farm structure is preserved, with all its advantages to the dominant firm, including the willingness of all family members to work long hours for a low return. Farmers, in such schemes, are tied to the company by credit; the firm supplies inputs or other technology; sometimes as in the case of Nestle it also insists the farmer must pay for these.

(George 1979b:11)

Price guarantees and input subsidies by government also have a poor record of easing this risk burden, especially in poor countries with large urban populations who demand cheap food. (Payer 1980:36)

#### The United Nations

The United Nations agencies have a better record. The UNRISD (United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, Geneva) has sponsored studies on agriculture and technology which are among the best available and are highly analytical.<sup>1</sup> However, in some areas, the U.N. also has problems with special interest groups. For example, the FAO (Food and Agricultural Organization) of the U.N. has "more than 1,600 projects going in 127 countries and territories" (George 1977:215). But FAO's credit and co-operative programs rely heavily on the private banks and agribusiness firms for expertise, personnel, and funding. Susan George concludes that these employees will tend to dictate their methods because

agribusiness and private banks cannot be expected to invest in anything that is not profitable - this is simply not the nature of the beast.

(George 1977:234)

Can more and better information make development work?

Are the national and international agencies really in need of information from anthropologists? The World Bank certainly did not seem impressed with what Cochrane had to offer, even when the convincing was done at his own expense. (Cochrane 1976)

Actually, all the volume of information from all the sciences and social sciences is not sufficient to ensure that the benefits of projects will be the needy, when political and economic considerations intervene. This is amply illustrated by the whole history of the Sahelian Drought situation - before, during and after. This has been well documented in a recent book by sociologists Richard Franke and Barbara Chasin (1979). They trace the exploitation and mismanagement that led up to the drought, the bungling and profiteering during, and the development planner head-scratching that came after. One tends to see a vision of aid agency bureaucrats falling over each other to plug into projects to "prevent another disaster", without ever fully examining the causes, both environmental and social. Franke and Chasin conclude that

Whatever the intentions of the planners and administrators, and the project directors and technical experts of the donor countries,

the Sahel Development Program is a captive to the overall negative relationships between the Western capitalist nations and the people of the Sahel. Whether it be the trivial bickering of French and U.S. scientific and technical personnel, the profit-seeking of multi-national corporations, the ill-considered rush to 'get things done', or the subtle pressures exerted on a project by international political alliances, the results of a program created and carried through under current relations between the Sahel and its Western Donors may end up being the very opposite of what the program officially intended.  
(Franke & Chasin 1979:197)

One example they give concerns an anthropologist who was contracted by USAID, only one of the many agencies involved in the Sahel Development Program. This anthropologist, Teitelbaum, provided them with an analysis of the Bakel Livestock Project in eastern Senegal. (See also Teitelbaum 1977). Franke and Chasin explain that

The Bakel Livestock Project is a small component of a much larger scheme for livestock development in Senegal, first proposed in 1968 but apparently delayed by the drought .... The idea is to use the nomadic and semi-nomadic herders to produce calves. These will then be transferred to growth sites under strict management closer to Dakar, the capital city.

(Franke & Chasin 1979:194)

Officially it was planned as a means to bring the Fulani and Tukulor herders in the project area into the national cash economy. However, the authors found that

A more immediate justification for the project, however, was provided by several different observers and project personnel, who saw it as a means of re-establishing the legitimacy of Senegalese President Leopold Senghor in a region where his political popularity has diminished in recent years. Senghor has been a major



supporter of French and U.S. policy in Africa, allowing French military bases in Senegal, from which air operations have been conducted against POLOSARIO guerillas in the Western Sahara and Mauritania and the FROLINAT rebels in Chad. (Franke & Chasin 1979:194)

In his study, Teitelbaum found that these herders depend heavily on milk, especially during the dry season, when, he says, it is

desperately needed to offset nutritional shortage. This is particularly important for infants, who under current conditions have a less than 50 percent chance of surviving their first year .... However ... 'Cow's milk will be devoted to hastening calf growth in the early stages (of the project) and calves will be kept with their mothers permanently'.

(Teitelbaum 1977:127 cited in Frank & Chasin 1979:196)

This observation was noted by the project planners, who recommended the creation of a separate milk herd. But, Franke and Chasin note that

as recently as May 1978, there were no indications for the planning or creation of such a herd in the project as it unfolded on the ground in the Bakel region.

(Franke & Chasin 1979:196)

Therefore, even this simple recommendation which could help prevent unnecessary malnutrition for the herders' children is not being made a part of a project which on the surface is put forward as a means to better their lives. Actually, Franke and Chasin conclude that

Teitelbaum (1977:136) reports that the main supporters of the project in the area are 'government officials, foreign experts, and the Soninke cattle-buyers'. But no doubt

the political and commercial elites who see the marketing of the calves as a source of increased income for themselves will be the main beneficiaries of the project.

(Franke & Chasin 1979:196)

### Anthropologists and Agencies - Conclusions

We see that aid projects result in increased inequality and sometimes very detrimental changes for the people they are supposed to help. Anthropologists can certainly work within the system and hope to alleviate some of the worst effects, but we have also seen that this is often not possible, simply because in their advisory position they have no power to turn their advice into action. This futility has prompted Cochrane (1971) to advise anthropologists to become employed by agencies directly and thereby be directly involved with the planning process. However, we have seen that even agency officials themselves cannot effectively oppose economically or politically expedient action.

In a recent article by Susan Almy of the Rockefeller Foundation, entitled "Anthropologists and Development Agencies", Almy makes it very clear that anthropologists must modify their methods and attitudes to the agencies' specifications if they wish to be employed by them. She states emphatically that

Anthropologists beginning agency work within this negative attitude ... current in American ideology which equates power with abuse, and bureaucracy with corruption by the rich and exploitation of the poor ... however unconscious, guarantee both themselves and their agencies a bad time.

(Almy 1977:281)

Anthropologists who have or do work with agencies react to their experiences in different ways. Raymond Apthorpe, an anthropologist who has worked for the FAO at various times remembers, with rather cynical humour:

Once, after I had proposed, to the U.N. that 'an economic anthropologist' would be an ideal recruit for, as it happened, a local marketing appraisal, the response was, 'What is that, a cheap anthropologist?'  
(Apthorpe 1978:58)

Another reaction is that of I. de Garine, a French anthropologist who is Senior Researcher in the Centre National de la Recherche Scientific in Paris and who was, from 1967 to 1970, head of the FAO's Division of Food Habits and Nutrition. The following quotes give an insight into his experience as an anthropologist employed by a large development agency and a conclusion to this chapter:

Any objective report taking into consideration the cultural aspects of a development project or even showing an intimate knowledge of the problems, is likely to anger the political representatives, who consider such questions thorny and strictly within their own territory. If the anthropologist is tolerated, it is only to endorse technical decisions and get them accepted.  
(De Garine 1978:55)

Briefly, he (the anthropologist) is a spoiler, a brake, and he meets a united front of technicians who consider it their duty to provide the most elegant or sophisticated technological solution, to make up for centuries of backwardness .... The human material to whom knowledge must be transmitted is implicitly regarded as different and inferior, because otherwise, why is it underdeveloped, and why should it need 'technical assistance-cooperation'?

(De Garine 1978:56)

... quantifiable data are found, and they can be manipulated according to the most fashionable methods; this allows dialogue between technicians and the holders of power and interpretation in harmony with everyone's preconceptions.

(Ibid:56)

Development agencies have archives filled with reports marked, 'Strictly confidential, for restricted internal use'.

(Ibid:57)

Turnbull (1972) could not do much for the Ik, and one can understand the angry nostalgia of some (Jaulin 1970).

(Ibid:57)

## NOTES

1. See Ingrid Palmer, Science and Agricultural Production, UNRISD' Geneva, 1972; The Social and Economic Implications of Large-scale Introduction of New Varieties of Foodgrains, UNRISD, Geneva, 1975. A study consisting of 18 individually authored volumes.

## CHAPTER V

## DEVELOPMENT AND PRIMITIVE PEOPLES

Underdevelopment as a structure and as an ongoing process can only be understood as the implantation or imposition of a capitalist economy on precapitalist and non-industrialized societies. (Stavenhagen 1975:6)

This process as defined by Stavenhagen, can be clearly seen in the history of European colonial contact with the primitive peoples of the world. The following example as told by John Renshaw is all too familiar:

One example concerns the Hadza of Tanzania, a nomadic hunter-gatherer population, who in the early 1960's were taken from the bush, settled in government run camps and provided with government food rations ... the Hadza soon found themselves living as professional beggars and lost all pride in their culture. Outbreaks of disease caused by the inadequate diet decimated the population, and some people simply seemed to lose all interest in living ...

(Renshaw 1977:24)

This description bears a striking resemblance to Turnbull's depressing ethnography on the Ik, who were moved from their lands to make way for a national park. (Turnbull 1972)

John Bodley, in his book Victims of Progress (1975), discusses the methods and rationale by which primitive peoples have been dominated by colonizing powers. He uses illustrative historical examples from all over the world and comments upon the role anthropologists have and continue to play in this process. However, he does not mean

this to be a definite historical sequence, but rather, he says that his

book is an attempt to dispel some of the widely held ethnocentric misconceptions concerning the disappearance of tribal cultures and to focus attention on the most basic causes ...

(Bodley 1975:2)

His primary argument is that primitive peoples have never willingly sought the "benefits" offered by civilization and have always fought either actively or passively to retain their own cultures. Those offering civilization's "benefits" have done so either "by the sword" or through supposedly neutral methods such as education systems so that, Bodley says,

the people could freely decide whether or not they wanted their cultures disrupted:

it is the responsibility of the governing people, through schools and other means, to make available to the native an adequate understanding of non-native systems of life so that these can be ranged alongside his own in order that his choices may be made.

(Keesing 1941:84)

Such a program of education might sound like a sort of 'cultural smorgasbord', but in fact there is really only one correct choice allowed - tribal peoples must choose progress.

(Bodley 1975:16)

The first feature in the domination process which Bodley discusses is the "Uncontrolled Frontier", the period of initial contact and minimal official control where entrepreneurial greed often runs rampant and where laws protecting the native inhabitants are either non-existent or

poorly enforced. The implication has always been that the "wild frontier" is impossible to tame except after a long initial period of violence and chaos. However, Bodley shows that governments have never chosen to exercise control in this initial period while making sure that there is no real challenge to their sovereignty. When this is challenged by the original inhabitants, usually when larger numbers of settlers begin moving in, military forces are moved in very swiftly.

As I write, my mind automatically goes to the East India Company or Wounded Knee, but the following quote from Bodley's book smashes this illusion of historical distance:

Thanks to modern technology, punitive raids can now be conducted more easily and much more effectively. In 1965 newspapers reported that Brazilian air, naval, and ground forces were used against the Marubo, a small Indian tribe in Amazonas that attacked settlers who had invaded their territory .... At about the same time in the Peruvian Amazon, the Peruvian airforce used napalm to punish Campa Indians who were thought to be in support of leftist rebels. Bombing raids and armed patrols were also used by the Indonesian government in 1965-1966 to control four thousand 'disaffected' Arfak people in West Irian (Indonesian New Guinea); they reportedly left twelve hundred dead.

(Bodley 1975:46)

Bodley goes on to describe the next phase, the extension of government control. He says,

Military force brought government control which ended the lawless frontier process and initiated the formal and orderly process of native administration designed to continue native exploitation through legal means.

(Bodley 1975:61)



The primary motivation was

The maintenance of law and order ....  
 If settlers were to successfully acquire land and utilize native labour, the government had to provide security, because native unrest and uprisings could quickly sweep away their economic gains.

(Ibid:62)

And though "in some areas humanitarian concerns prompted the use of peaceful pacification techniques" (p. 61), the potential for violent retaliation for unco-operative behaviour was always present. All methods, be they humanitarian or otherwise, had basically the same outcome no matter how good the intentions of the individuals involved. Natives were often forced to settle in permanent locations for either government or religious purposes where introduced pathogens, aided by unsanitary living conditions and inadequate food supply, decimated the population.

Bodley takes issue with anthropologists who have described such social change as being a basically peaceful evolutionary process. He says that

Even recent anthropology textbooks still attribute acculturation to demands for change coming from tribal peoples themselves due to their exposure to higher standards of living or the idea of progress - as if such 'demonstration effects' were the basic cause of culture change .... Considered in a different light, giving full weight to the historical record, acculturation can in many cases be seen as the direct outcome of the defeat of individual tribes in separate engagements in a very long war fought between all tribal peoples and industrial civilization throughout the world.

(Bodley 1975:44)

The next phase of domination Bodley describes is a bureaucratic process which begins in conjunction with the use of force and carries on after the need for armed confrontation is no longer necessary, when threats and isolated arrests suffice as control measures. His examples include the "peaceful pacification" practices of FUNAI (National Foundation for the Indian) in Brazil (p. 71); and from the colonial era, French "direct rule" (p. 75) and British "indirect rule" (p. 76). Of anthropologists' roles he says,

During their association with colonial governments anthropologists generally assumed a neutral position in their work and limited themselves to providing data while they avoided direct involvement in policy-making. (Bodley 1975:81)

One of the major ingredients in the extension of government control was the imposition of private ownership of land. In some areas such as Canada, small areas have been granted to tribal peoples as "reserves". In other places, natives could register lands and so hold title to them, but if they failed to do so due to ignorance, fear, illiteracy or any other reason, anyone could claim their lands out from under them. In many areas of the world they were and are given no special considerations and their land simply taken over. This has been the case in much of Asia and South America, and Bodley explains that

Tribal peoples are presumably on equal terms in regard to land as other citizens. This no-special-policy is probably one of

the simplest ways of accomplishing the usual goal of replacing tribal peoples and their tenure systems with what the government might consider to be more productive populations and ownership systems.

(Bodley 1975:100)

He then describes what he calls "Cultural Modification Policies" and says that

From their positions of coercive power and authority, government administrators, their agents, and missionaries methodically set about to destroy tribal cultural patterns in the name of progress in order to make the natives more amenable to the purposes of the industrial state.

(Ibid:102)

Anthropologists have often been involved, willingly or not, in this process. Bodley takes many in the applied field of anthropology to task for their "blind-eye" approach to the coercive elements of "peaceful change" and the stubborn belief in their ability to judge for all concerned the consequences involved. He believes their position to be that

Action that might adversely affect the lives, well-being, dignity and self-respect of targets is considered unethical, unless efforts are made to minimize such adverse side effects, and unless such action is thought to be beneficial.

(Bodley 1975:109-10)

and he goes on to clarify his opposition to this belief by saying

Change is being deliberately initiated by outsiders. In the final analysis, blue-prints are being handed down from above, by individuals and agencies in the dominant culture who are making the basic policy

decisions for a submissive target culture that ultimately has no power to resist. The critical problems here are that not only are basic human cultural rights being threatened, but the changes themselves, while they may be well intentioned, have all too often been tragically destructive. What is really being questioned here is what Foster has called the 'rationale' for directed culture change programs:

that technical experts can and should evaluate the practices of other people and decide which ones should be modified.  
(Bodley 1975:111-2)

The final phase of this domination process Bodley calls "Economic Development", meaning the channeling of primitive economy into a market-oriented economy. Although this has been associated with all colonizing activities, he says that

following World War II, government pressures on tribal economies were greatly intensified as a result of a new worldwide campaign for rapid economic growth .... Elaborate programs were devised to bring unwilling tribal peoples fully into national economies, to further raise their agricultural productivity and per-capita incomes, and to promote whatever socio-economic transformations deemed necessary to achieve this goal.

(Bodley 1975:125)

At this point, I will leave Bodley's book for the present and go to Davis' Victims of the Miracle which deals with a specific geographical area and its peoples, Brazil and especially the Amazon region. Although Davis begins with a historical overview of Brazilian Indian Policy, he is more interested in developments since 1940 which he divides into three time periods: 1940-1970, 1970-1975, and 1975-1979.

In effect Davis is documenting for a single area what Bodley has described in general terms by using worldwide examples for the various aspects involved. Davis goes past the depth which Bodley's analysis reaches. Whereas Bodley describes what happened and why generally, Davis describes what has happened and why specifically.

In Brazil the coastal and southern Indian tribes were swept away in its long history of European colonization. The vast expanses of the Amazon Basin had been, for the most part, left relatively alone, with inroads being made on the fringes only. Even though there was some interest during the years of World War II, Brazil's post-war boom centered upon other, more accessible areas and in developing industrialization of the coastal cities. Characteristic of this period, Davis says, was the fact that

The Brazilian government maintained a protectionist attitude toward foreign companies who were interested in exploiting the rich natural resources of Brazil

...

(Davis 1977:30)

However,

the position of the Brazilian government in relation to foreign investment in natural resources changed radically following the military coup of 1964. After several decades of nationalist struggle, the government reversed its position on foreign investment in the Amazon and set the groundwork for the penetration of foreign capital into the rich petroleum and mineral resources of Brazil.

(Ibid:31)

The point which Davis wishes to make is that the policy of a government towards its native peoples is not shaped by the problems of bringing native peoples into the national economy for their own benefit, as has often been put forward. But rather, it is shaped by the economic incentives and rewards this would provide to government and other powerful interest groups within the national and international economic systems.

The Amazon had been spared only because of the great natural obstacles which made it less favourable for development projects than other areas. Technology soon caught up with the pioneer's dreams. The huge caterpillar tractors and cargo planes, vaccines and antibiotics absent in the past became readily available for the right price and the huge resources of the Amazon promised profits large enough to pay the price. The only thing lacking was a business oriented political climate and this was provided in 1964.

Much has been written on the plight of the Amazon's Indians. Even before 1964, a great many had felt the impact of development schemes and introduced diseases, which has accelerated rapidly since that date. However, even the best reports, Davis feels,

have overemphasized the bureaucratic blunders of national Indian policies in Brazil and have failed to analyze the relationships that exist between the policies and the more global 'development strategy' for the occupation of the Amazon Basin.

(Davis 1977:17)

He does mention one person, anthropologist Darcy Ribeiro, who "as early as 1957 ... argued for a political and economic perspective on the so-called Indian Problem in Brazil" (p. 17). Davis hopes that his book will carry on from Ribeiro's early studies of Brazilian Indian policy and

demonstrate how the present situation of Amazonian Indians ... is closely related to the institutional factors that have brought about what a number of observers have termed the 'economic miracle' in Brazil.

(Davis 1977:17)

To do this he reviews the historical development of Indian policy in Brazil and relates it to the wider field of the evolution of the Brazilian economy.

In the early expansion into Indian lands during the initial years of this century, the violence of the tactics being used caused a humanist reaction which brought about the creation of the Indian Protection Service. Its first director was Cândido Mariano da Silva Rondon who was influenced by French social philosopher Auguste Comte's philosophy of social evolution. Davis explains that

For Rondon, these Indian societies were neither savage nor barbarian, but merely one stage in the overall development of human civilization. Rondon argued that the authenticity and value of these tribal societies could not be doubted and that it was the responsibility of the government to provide aboriginal peoples with the conditions for survival.

(Davis 1977:3)

Rondon developed pacifist methods for contacting Indian tribes and convincing them of the government's good

intentions, but no matter how honourable the intentions of the Indian agents involved, Davis concludes that

as Ribeiro also notes, 'the job of pacifying Indians was designed less for them than for Brazilian society as a whole'. In case after case, Indians accepted the gifts and promises of the Indian agents only to find that their territories were later invaded by rubber collectors, nut gatherers, cattle ranchers, and settlers along the Brazilian frontiers. The IPS tried to mediate in these encounters by establishing Indian posts in several areas, but more often than not Indian agents were ineffective in holding back settlers and in influencing state governments to provide legal titles for Indian lands. As a result, in almost every area in Brazil where the SPI functioned, Indians were wiped out by disease or became marginalized ethnic populations on minuscule parcels of land.

(Davis 1977:5)

The conflict between protection and exploitation of the Indians and their lands even entered the ranks of the IPS and led to wide-spread corruption among its officials, as shown in the Figueirido Report of 1968. (Davis 1977: 10-13) The IPS was then disbanded and replaced by a new government agency, the National Indian Foundation (FUNAI). However, this agency was made responsible to the very ministry in charge of developing the Amazon's resources. So the conflict between protection and exploitation in Brazil was not resolved, but only altered somewhat, as Davis explains,

When the Brazilian National Indian Foundation (FUNAI) was created in 1967, two opposing models of Indian policy existed in Brazil. One ... was radically protectionist in nature .... According to this model, Indian tribes should be protected by the federal government



from frontier encroachments in closed Indian parks and reserves, and be prepared gradually, as independent ethnic groups, to integrate into the wider society and economy ... a second model of Indian policy was developed ... in the final days of its (IPS) existence and later assumed by FUNAI. This model was developmentalist in nature and was based on the premise that Indian groups should be rapidly integrated, as a reserve labor force or as producers of marketable commodities, into the expanding regional economies and rural class structures of Brazil.

(Davis 1977:47-8)

In the Second World War years and until the military coup of 1964, nationalistic policies of the Brazilian government helped the protectionist cause. In 1952 the Xingu National Park was established and the Villas Boas brothers named as its directors. (p. 51) Since then, other parks have been created or proposed.

Since its inception this protectionist policy has been plagued by disease for the Indian inhabitants of the parks, by lack of adequate funding, and especially since 1964, government backed encroachments on their land base. An example is the building of Highway BR-080 within the borders of Xingu Park. Between 1970 and 1974 there was a deliberate building of a series of highways through Indian parks and reserves in an attempt to speed up the process of "national integration". (p. 73)

In 1970 two important policy changes for FUNAI were announced. First was the creating of a special fund made up of income gained from the sale of Indian products and the leasing of Indian land. Secondly, the incorporation

of Indian policy with the massive road-building program being planned for the Amazon. Indian agents would be expected to insure that Indians did not serve as obstacles to the rapid occupation of the Amazon and to provide highway workers with protection against a supposed Indian threat. (p. 58)

Davis then seeks to discover whose interests were being served by this massive road building scheme, which so often invaded established parks when, Davis says,

The Amazon Basin is such a vast geographical area that other Indian parks and reserves could have been created on the model of the Xingu National Park. The Brazilian government in other words, could have intervened to protect these Indian land areas against outside encroachments, and could have planned highway and development projects so as not to have threatened the integrity of Indian tribes.  
(Davis 1977:74)

The answer he finds is, in brief, the interests were those of the huge multi-national corporations, in co-operation with the Brazilian government, some large Brazilian owned companies, and several international lending institutions such as the Export-Import Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, and the World Bank. (p. 160)

The forestry as well as the mineral resources are beginning to be mined in the Amazon, and agricultural development, after some initial rhetoric about providing new lands for the poor peasants of the Northeast, is now being directed towards highly mechanized, large scale agribusiness projects in the Amazon as it has already in the rest of Brazil.

Davis says that

Over the past decade, large-scale cattle ranching has replaced peasant small-holding as the basic pattern of land occupation in Mato Grosso and central Brazil. The introduction of these new ranches has had the full support of the military government and has received significant financial inputs from industrial capitalists and agribusinessmen in the South of Brazil. Among the foreign companies now involved in agribusiness enterprises in the Amazon are the King Ranch of Texas, Daniel Keith Ludwig of National Bulk Carriers, the Liquigas firm of Italy, and the German automobile manufacturer, Volkswagen.

(Davis 1977:161)

Both Bodley's (1975 and Davis' (1977) books show that an "integration" policy for native peoples has all too often been synonymous with annihilation. The "integration" approach has been advocated by many anthropologists, Bodley says, since the days of "indirect rule". He says that it is based upon the belief that

Through careful direction of the modernization process, it is hoped that progress will bring the best of both worlds to tribal peoples.

(Bodley 1975:166-7)

This theory has been used in Brazil to attack the protectionist policies. Davis says that

High officials of FUNAI responded to these protests (to a proposed highway) by claiming that the Xingu National Park was a 'false experience' that was holding back the 'progress and development of Brazil' .... The Xavantina-Cachimba Highway ... would be a 'vital terrestrial link in the development and security of the country' and would 'carry the Indians into a more intense participation 'in the national economy'.

(Davis 1977:59)

The historical record, examined by both Bodley and Davis, clearly shows that such "integration" is not in primitive peoples' best interests. Both Bodley (p. 172) and Davis (p. 54) advocate some kind of protection for the world's remaining native peoples, to allow them, in Bodley's words, "cultural autonomy" (p. 172), despite protectionism's often negative paternalistic tendencies. However, the prospects for this happening are not very good, and both authors realize that even this is only a damming procedure to allow for contact on a decreased scale of intensity.

In conclusion, Bodley places the blame on industrial civilization as a "culture of consumption" (p. 4) which may end up destroying itself as well as those who have the misfortune to stand in the way of its race towards "development". By doing this, he fails to properly identify the actors involved, other than as being abstract forces such as governments or as individual greed-oriented entrepreneurs. In contrast, Davis shows the institutional framework which forms the capitalist mode of production to be the primary factor. In Brazil, a highly repressive military regime, supported by local business interests and international corporate and banking interests, is concentrating on extracting as much income as possible from the Amazon Region, despite the great cost to the original inhabitants and the environment. This has created a new

frontier, which, Davis says,

has speeded up the pace of economic expansion into the last refuge areas inhabited by Indian tribes and has begun to replace the several diverse, but relatively backward, economic frontiers ...

(Davis 1977:160)

However, unlike Bodley's fatalism, he emphasizes that there does not have to be anything inevitable about what is taking place. He states that although

it may appear as if the immense suffering in the Amazon Basin is one of the inevitable costs that must be assumed by any country that wishes to experience rapid economic growth. This position, I believe, is a mistaken one .... Nor are there any compelling reasons for believing that the Amazon development program will benefit the vast majority of the people of Brazil. The silent war being waged against the people and environment of the Amazon Basin is the result of a very specific 'model of development'.

(Emphasis added)

(Davis 1977:167-8)

# CHAPTER VI

## ANTHROPOLOGY, HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT

The popular and academic literature on food production and development has been dominated by economists, sociologists and agronomists. Anthropologists have tended to stay on the fringes. However, anthropologists have at the same time sought to establish their discipline in an equal position with the more influential and better funded fields. Marvin Harris hits the nail on the head when he says that

The mounting interest in techno-environmental and techno-economic relationships reflects a broad movement aimed at strengthening the scientific credentials of cultural anthropology within the prestigious and well-funded natural sciences.

(Harris 1968:655, cited in Diener, et al., 1980:186)

One area in which anthropologists have attempted to do this has been in the study of the ecological aspects of development in regards to human populations. The idea of scarcity embodied in the "World Food Crisis" brought with it an almost manic compulsion to quantify and qualify the scope and degree of malnutrition in the world, and this continues in the statistical and biological-nutritionist fields. Information of this type is needed to a point; however, the factor often lacking is the social and the emphasis is often upon biological-environmental determinism.

### The Protein Requirement Controversy

The negative side of this type of research is well illustrated by the attempts of scientists to determine exactly how much and what quality of protein is needed to keep humans healthy. From a very high intake level advocated in the early 1960's, as reflected in Georg Borgstrom's books (1965 and 1969), the general consensus has been to lower this figure and to give more acceptance to vegetable sources which were originally thought to be always inferior to animal sources.<sup>1</sup>

However, the theory supporting a high protein level needed in the diet or as a supplement did play a role in development policy and nutritional projects and continues to exert some influence to this day.<sup>2</sup> As Diener, et al., explain:

It now appears that the emphasis upon protein, the dominating theme of multinational nutritional planning since the end of the Second World War, was highly dysfunctional in terms of the welfare of the poor and the hungry who populate the Third World.

(Diener et al. 1980:174)

Much of the work done by anthropologists in this context was never aimed at development as such but has been used by others in that field. Anthropologists have used this theory as a means to determine the reasons for behavioral traits and cultural formations. Some examples are: in an historical situation such as Aztec cannibalism and its purported nutritional significance by Harner (1977);

or in studying primitive societies such as Rappaport's (1967 and 1968) interpretation of pig rituals in New Guinea, in part, mechanisms for protein production and distribution. However, the most prolific anthropologist supporting the importance of protein needs in determining human actions and the most vocal with his many publications and public appearances is Marvin Harris. He has applied it to a wide field, as well as his more anthropological interpretations of India's "sacred cow" and Islam's pig prohibition.<sup>3</sup> Such anthropologists seek to explain cultural phenomena with the use of natural science concepts based upon assumptions of positive function and technical objectivity. (Diener et al. 1980:172; see also Orlove 1980:243-4)

The cultural ecologists, to various extents, continue to use the rationale of protein need and cultural consequences to explain human social practices. Diener, Moore and Mutaw (1980) refute this "Great Protein Fiasco". They found that "recent research in the nutritional sciences makes such a 'protein hypothesis' untenable" (Diener et al. 1980:171). On the contrary, they say,

Protein did not determine past political forms; rather, the present political and economic pressures have shaped our conceptualizations concerning protein. (Diener et al. 1980:172)

The theoretical basis of the ecological anthropologists involved in this controversy is based upon the belief that, as Diener et al. see it,



The protein gap is said to be measurable by objective scientific observers; hence, the 'positive functions' of many cultural traits are assumed to be impartially measurable in terms of dietary improvement.

(Diener et al. 1980:172)

and is seen as being "the crucial nutritional problem for human populations." (Ibid:172)

While these anthropologists are still largely accepting this "protein gap" and its consequences as given, "WHO/FAO protein requirements have been revised drastically downward over the last decade" (Diener et al. 1980:172), and other anthropologists<sup>4</sup> are openly criticizing the conclusions of the "protein determinists". Much of the work refuting this theory has originated from more intense studies by nutritionists on just how nutrients are used in the body, especially in the need for a balancing of protein and caloric intake. In the absence of sufficient calories, proteins are burned by the body as a fuel and so are not available for the important role of repair and maintenance, the primary need for protein in the first place. Diener et al. explain that

and naturally-occurring diet (8.e., outside the laboratory of other artificial situation) is likely to be adequate in protein as a by-product of caloric sufficiency.

(Diener et al. 1980:180)

Also, as we have seen from Lappé's Diet for a Small Planet (1975b) mentioned above (p. 13), plant sources can not only promote better utilization of animal protein but also are themselves an important source of protein if foods

with complementary amino acids are used together. This is found in many Third World cooking styles such as using corn or rice with legumes.

However, Marvin Harris sees "the search for meat" as an historical constant, a condition to which mankind can only react, for he says that

human beings can never change these laws.  
We can only seek to strike a balance between reproduction and the production and consumption of energy.

(Harris 1979:56 cited in Diener et al. 1989:183)

To counter this determinism, Diener, Moore and Mutaw (1980:184-7) document how the belief in animal protein superiority is founded upon the same developments as described above (p. 14) where Frances Lappé traces the basis for the evolution of American Dietary, production and distribution practices into the present situation of the "institutionalization of waste." (Lappé 1975b:3) On an international scale this took the form of food aid disposal systems and, at the same time, the creation of commercial markets for American products, originally for surplus skim milk powder, and then branching into soybean products and other "high protein-high technology dietary supplements." (Lappé 1975b:2)

One well-known example is the production of meat analogues from soyabean protein, which Colin Tudge calls "one of the great food developments." But then Tudge goes on to say that

All Third World cuisines already make extensive use of pulses, and of necessity have rarely made extensive use of meat. To suggest that it is better to use an expensive imitation of something they have never had in great quantity, rather than using the same thing in its original form as they have done for thousands of years, seems merely perverse.

(Tudge 1977:126)

### The "sacred cow" debate

Marvin Harris actively advertises his "cultural materialist" methodology outside the usual confines of the discipline of anthropology. In the past year I have seen twice on local television the documentary illustrating his "sacred cow" theory.

Harris contends that the present situation in India, which prohibits the eating of cattle that are allowed to roam freely, is a cultural adaptation to environmental circumstances. This has been achieved through "the cumulative result of the individual decisions of millions and millions of individual farmers" (Harris 1977:147), that results in a state of affairs whereby "in India, men and cattle do not compete for existence." (Harris 1966:55)

Of course, the people of India use the cattle's dung for fuel, drink their milk and thereby obtain protein, and make their hides into leather, but can such facts adequately be used to explain the origins and continuation of the present cattle raising practices? Friedman contends that

This neofunctionalism of Harris is fundamentally the same as the old functionalism except ... the interest now being to show the rationality of institutions with respect to their environments rather than to other elements in society ... 'the function of x is to do what it does', but now the 'what it does' is not an observed datum, and we are left with what is basically a description of imaginary relations, where the 'function' is assumed rather than demonstrated.

(Friedman 1974:457)

Diener (1979) agrees and uses extensive historical, ecological and political evidence to refute Harris' theory. In just one example, Diener found that rather than being a benefit to the poor as Harris contends, wandering cattle can result in a situation whereby

It is the rich castes, and the rich families within castes, who benefit most from cattle who 'stray'. It is they who dominate village life. Cattle in such conditions not only effect the transfer of surplus from village poor to village elite, they may act as a mechanism of social control; the threat of cattle invasion may be sufficient to quiet the dissent of the restive poor, or 'stray' cattle may destroy the livelihood (crops) of those who do not show proper respect for 'tradition'. Simoons (1979) has demonstrated that damage to crops and conflict over cattle policy is extremely widespread in India.

(Diener 1979:123)

Diener concludes his critique by saying

A mechanical and simplistic materialism such as Harris employs ... obscures both the operation and origin of cultural traits. By speculating about environmental causation in a world that never was, Harris leads us away from seeing India as it really was, as it is, and as it should be. The wide acceptance of Harris' 'explanation' of India's sacred cattle complex suggests that, although Harris may not provide an accurate view of Indian history, he does provide a view consonant with contemporary biases (Thapar 1977).

(Diener 1979:142-3)

### Nutritional Anthropology

An example of a very different application of anthropological ecology techniques is found in an article by Daniel Gross and Barbara Underwood (1971). It is a study in which statistical and ethnographic data has been used to analyze the health of a group of people in relation to a recent technological change introduced into their environment. However, the authors do not consider this group a microcosm adapting to a localized intrusion into their ecosystem and representative of all groups experiencing technological change, but rather as one part of the world economic and environmental system. The topic is the health related consequences of the introduction of the sisal agriculture into Northeastern Brazil.

The authors explain that

The field research included an attempt to measure and/or estimate accurately caloric intake, body height and weight as a relative index of nutritional status and the energy costs of jobs. These data were incorporated into an analysis of the socio-economic structure of an underdeveloped region undergoing technological change.

(Gross and Underwood 1971:726)

Sisal cultivation was introduced into Brazil in 1903 from Yucatan and fiber from it is used to make twine for baler and binder machines used in temperate zone agriculture. It experienced a boom in 1951, during which prices climbed and led to the first plantations supported by government incentives and

subsequent boom years in 1960-62 further stimulated expansion of the crop and, in some areas today, as much as fifty percent of the total land is planted in sisal.

(Ibid:727) (emphasis added)

The plantations are largely owned by local landholders. Many small landowners, in the years of highest prices, were motivated to fill all or most of their small plots with sisal plants. They then had to join the labour market during the four years required for the plants to reach maturity. When harvesting time finally came, Gross and Underwood say

smallholders usually discovered that the price of sisal had fallen sharply since planting or that they could not harvest at a profit because decortivating unit owners discriminated against small fields.

(Ibid:728)

and sisal, once planted, is very difficult to eradicate.

Thus smallholders were forced to work for owners of larger holdings and/or sisal decortivating unit owners in harvesting sisal; work which is very hard and energy draining. Gross and Underwood explain that

The average worker on an eight-man crew produces about 20 kg. (dry weight) per day which has an export value of about (US) \$2.00. The worker himself receives less than one-fourth that amount in wages, yet the energy cost of the principal jobs is astronomical.

Gross and Underwood 1971:731)

They maintain that in a worker's household with children it is just not humanly possible to feed all its members adequately by buying food because

the caloric cost of sustaining activity of a residueman (type of job) is so great that, at present wage and price levels, the only way in which the worker's energy requirement could be satisfied was to deprive the dependent, non-productive members of the household of needed food.

(Ibid:733)

This was born out in their studies of the children of such households; they showed retardation in their growth rate. Gross and Underwood also studied the better-off households and failed to find a similar situation.

The authors conclude that the introduction of an export crop may have a deleterious effect on the population who physically help produce it, but that

benefit was evident in an increased level of living for the minority which owns and controls the means of production ... at the expense of the laborers, whose wages are inadequate to meet the subsistence needs of their families.

(Ibid:733)

However, they continue,

we should be aware of the contributions which production of sisal and other items make to the welfare of the developed nations which import them at extremely low prices, enforced to a large degree by the political pressure they can bring to bear on the producer countries. Sisal, for example, contributes to milk and beef production in North America and Europe since it is used to bind animal fodder on grain fields. Thus sisal production is part of a system whose effect is to expropriate energy in a form of manual labor in one part of the world and apply it to the general welfare of another people thousands of miles away.

(Gross and Underwood 1971:737)

The approach of Gross and Underwood shows that although many in the development field consider paid employment, i.e., wage labour, to be superior to subsistence farming, it can actually leave the "modernized" worker and his family worse off than in the traditional system.

A very similar situation is reported by Olga Stavrakis from Belize in Central America. She describes a Maya Indian village where an economic boom, resulting from the rising sugar prices of the 1970's, created many jobs in the sugar industry and increased cash income for smallholders.

However, she says that

As more and more men took jobs in the sugar industry and more and more smallholdings were planted with cane, local food production steadily declined. In one year alone, consumption of local maize and rice declined 15 percent and wheat imports rose 62 percent. Soon there was a national shortage of staple foods.

(Stavrakis 1980:12)

Other consequences are evident besides the nutritional loss, such as the degradation of soil fertility and changes in the social and economic structures of the village. She says that

It is the women who have paid the heaviest price. The food crop used to be brought into the home and jointly owned by the family. Its preparation, storage and distribution was the responsibility of the woman and formed the basis of her social and economic role.

(Stravrakis 1980:12)

The women used to raise pigs, turkeys, chickens or pigeons with the refuse or spoilage from the crops, providing their families with a source of cash and meat, and



giving them a degree of economic independence. Stavrakis quotes one older woman, Dona Ettelvina, as saying

In the old days ... we were poor but there was plenty of food. Now, we have money but nothing to eat.

(Stavvakis 1980:12)

Now the loss of food crops and animals has left the women of the village almost entirely dependent upon the men, creating internal conflicts. However, Stavrakis points out that

the men's incomes have not risen enough to pull families out of poverty. And although the illusion of prosperity is widespread, persistently high child malnutrition shows that it is only an illusion.

(Ibid:12)

And she concludes that even though

In the eyes of the economists in the city, development has come to this corner of Belize. Income per capita has undoubtedly risen. But who has benefitted? The large landowners certainly. Some of the men maybe. But Dona Ettelvina not at all.

(Stavvakis 1980:12)

Another example, M. Taussig (1978) discusses the high incidence of malnutrition in the fertile Cuaca Valley in Columbia which is the target of a USAID malnutrition project costing a half-million dollars and begun in 1974. In 1971, this valley had witnessed an uprising among the peasants trying to reclaim land from the large sugar plantations. Taussig explains that

In this food-rich area where the expansion of intensive large-scale farming has driven the bulk of the peasantry off the land in

recent years, fifty percent of the children six years and under are said to be suffering from malnutrition.

(Taussig 1978:101)

The researchers of the AID project determined that the cause of this malnutrition was a misallocation of "community" resources, and suggested that the people eat a larger percentage of the soya bean production. Taussig says, firstly, that the AID researchers grossly overestimated soya bean production; secondly, that this beleaguered class of poor people have no real community - there are no social facilities for redistributing this production if it actually existed; thirdly, that the people who grow soya beans need them for the cash they bring and how do the hungry pay? Fourthly, that soya beans are not a local food staple; they are seen as being cattle food and unappetizing. Laying the blame on the victims covers up the fact that the real cause of malnutrition is the dispossession of the peasants, the expropriation of their lands by the sugar plantations over the last seventy years, aided by American investment. Taussig concludes that

the research and its application are constrained by the interests of the powerful, and that it is so tied to economic incentives that knowledge and creativity become market commodities like any other.

(Taussig 1978:119)

These three articles by Gross and Underwood, Stavrakis, and Taussig, all have in common the suggestion that there is more involved in the problems of development in its present form than can be attributed simply to the lack of

technological inputs, or the educational deficiencies of either the planners or the recipients. In each case a type of development is occurring. The people are being drawn into an economy which produces more saleable products for the world market. More money is available than ever before and yet they are worse off when it comes to having sufficient good quality food to maintain adequate health and growth.

Even in the face of this evidence, it is not possible for some writers to admit that the hope of this form of development benefitting the majority of the world's poor is unrealistic. A fatalism exists, as we have seen in Pitt (1976) and Cochrane (1972), in seeing the world on the roller coaster of development. The only alternative they see is to somehow influence the "man" at the controls, to keep the cars from running off the rails.

This methodology is aptly illustrated by a recent article by Patrick and Anne Fleuret<sup>5</sup> (1980), entitled "Nutrition, Consumption, and Agricultural Change". In it they attempt a brief review of studies, anthropological and otherwise, which

show how modernizing communities (or specific categories of people within these) become malnourished through the introduction of novel methods of food production, distribution, and consumption ... in order to identify some important implications of development policy.

Fleuret and Fleuret 1980:251)

Therefore, from the onset, the perspective is focused upon development policy and not what development actually means for the recipient peoples. The misfortunes of peoples in

development situations as presented in their review, and there are a great many examples, come across as being unfortunate accidents or the result of specific sets of factors which can be prevented in the future by alterations in policy. They state that

These unfortunate consequences are not inevitable. If greater attention is given to refining definitions of the rural poor; if greater respect is given to the value of traditional production and consumption practices; if greater heed is paid to the widely ramifying community-level consequences of change in agricultural production; and if care is taken to upgrade the efficiency of markets in staple and nonstaple foods before rural producers are encouraged to begin purchasing nutrients they formerly grew, then it should be possible for effective long-range and long-lasting agricultural development to take place without undermining the health and nutritional status of poor people in rural areas.

Fleuret and Fleuret 1980:256)

Their article is well researched and informative concerning certain aspects of the present development situation. For the sake of brevity, they restrict their attention to three facets of agricultural change: "changes in crop inventories, changes in agricultural labor and changes in market relationships." (p. 252), and how they relate to the nutritional status of the peoples involved. They review sources which show that increased monocrop commercial production often leads to a decline in nutritional status. This is often accompanied by increased energy output for those in the population who "are least able to withstand the negative nutritional consequences" (p. 253) (They cite both Underwood and Gross (1971) and Taussig (1978.)

They also discuss negative consequences of production for an unstable market on peasants who are vulnerable to the risks of price fluctuations, inadequate or uncertain income levels, unequal access to infrastructure, to name but a few. The negative nutritional consequences of this kind of agricultural change, they realize, are not merely of transitory significance. They say that

Unfortunately, it is rather rare for malnutrition following upon the introduction of new income strategies to be transitory; much more frequently, attendant institutional changes embed malnutrition in the new patterns of production, distribution, and consumption. (Fleuret and Fleuret 1980:254)

The authors give two excellent examples of how the priorities of development policy have been largely unaffected by the recommendations of social scientists. Firstly, they say that

The disadvantageous ramifications of agricultural change are many, and the complexity of the issue had led Brown and Parisier (1975), May (1974), and others to recommend that, in the best interests of Third World producers, Western technology should be applied to improve the productivity of existing crop regimes and staple foods, rather than to introducing exogenous cultigens and methods of production. These cautions may be unrealistic; in any event they have been largely ignored. (Ibid:254)

and secondly:

The clearest lesson is that the land allocation effects of economic development programs must be carefully watched to make sure that inequalities in landholdings are not encouraged. Unfortunately, this is not often done. Dewey (n.d.) reviewing materials from Latin America and Asia,

has observed that "A major effect of agricultural development in many parts of the world has been drastic changes in the distribution of land and in land tenure relations. Very often the result has been less land for small farmers."

Irrigation, mechanization, the introduction of fertilizers and hybrid seeds, and other novel technologies that lead more or less directly to economies of scale, tend to lead simultaneously to inequitable land redistribution. It cannot be assumed that the landless laborers and small farmers created by this process will be able to make up consumption shortfalls by taking up new (adequately remunerative) jobs made available through technological advance .... It is then very disappointing to discover that, even where agricultural development has been successful in terms of traditional measures, such as overall growth in income, there is no necessary improvement in general nutritional status.

(Fleuret and Fleuret 1980:255)

In spite of this, they go on to define a number of policy and program issues "which should be considered carefully by those who determine and implement agricultural development policy" (Ibid:256). These are, in brief: 1) the nutritional consequences of introduced technological packages should be considered by planners; 2) there is a critical balance between being poor and being desperate, and developers must be aware that they can tip this balance in a negative direction; 3) monocropping should not be encouraged; 4) continued production of adequate traditional foods should be encouraged; 5) "care must be taken to ensure that the critical activities of subsistence food production, distribution, processing, and child feeding are not unnecessarily disrupted." (Ibid:256) However, they fail to define what constitutes a "necessary" disruption; 6) the urban bias of

development policy should be reconsidered, due to its negative consequences for rural regions; and, 7) monitoring of nutrition should become a matter of course, and appropriate action should be taken if negative nutritional factors emerge in the process of a project.

Certainly these are very reasonable suggestions, but there is very little hope that their advice will be heeded any more than it has been in the past. They do nothing towards investigating the true nature and direction of economic development as set forward within the present world economic system which is dominated by the capitalist mode of production.

This article, as well as much of the ecological and nutritional literature on development, illustrates the fact that although dissecting specific causes and consequences of development failure helps in pin-pointing factors within certain situations, if there is no attempt to place these factors in relation to each other and to the wider social and economic institutional framework in which they play a part, there can be no real understanding of how or why these "failures" keep recurring.

# NOTES

1. Some of the many sources Diener et al. cite are:  
McLaren (1974); Crawford and Rivers (1975) and  
Olson (1975).
2. See Taussig (1978)
3. See Harris (1965) (1966) (1972a) 1972b) (1973) (1974)  
(1975) (1977) (1978).
4. See Ortiz de Montellano (1978); Chagnon and Hames  
(1979); Beckerman (1979); Price (1978); and Sahlins  
(1978.
5. Patrick Fleuret is an anthropologist at the Social  
Process Research Institute, University of California,  
Santa Barbara, and at the Agency for International  
Development, Washington, D.C. Anne Fleuret is an  
Associate Professor of Anthropology, California State  
University, Los Angeles, and is Associate Director of  
the Anthropology Program, National Science Foundation.



## CHAPTER VII

### DEVELOPMENT, PEASANTS AND RURAL PROLETARIANS

#### Peasants and Anthropology

Anthropologists "did not invent the study of peasants" as Sydel Silverman (1979:49) points out, but it is one of the two areas of study where they have definitely left their mark; the other is the study of primitive peoples. However, Roseberry says that although

Anthropologists have been interested in peasants for over twenty years ... we have seldom been explicit about the conceptual issues involved in the study of them and have seldom offered much reason for studying them other than the fact that they are numerous and accessible to graduate students.  
(Roseberry 1976:46)

In consequence, much discussion on peasants has been spent on definitional disputes.<sup>1</sup> "Peasant" generally means a person who takes part in farming primarily for subsistence, but has also been applied to fishermen by Firth (1946) and Forman (1970). Often in development studies, Burbach and Flynn say that "peasant" is

a catch-all grouping that included anyone from minifundistas (small farmers who possessed their own plots of land), to sharecroppers (tenants who paid rent in crops), to colonos (resident estate workers allotted a piece of land for subsistence farming), to ejidilarios (indigenous small holders who farmed their communal lands).  
(Burbach and Flynn 1980:142)

However, putting a rigid definition on the term only makes for argument and not understanding. I must agree with Orlove who found in studying agrarian production in Andean Peru that

Both productive activities and sociopolitical status are too complex to permit simple dichotomization into peasant and nonpeasant.

(Orlove 1977:34-5)

And Leeds offers a similar argument, concluding that

Latin America should not be examined in terms of the notion of peasant at all, but rather that one look at it as a dynamic interaction of all forms of agrarian - and even urban - labour as part of a societal power system.

(Leeds 1977:252)

Roseberry also objects to a rigid classification of peasants; he suggests that

We can define peasants as persons who, owning or controlling land and resources, produce primarily agricultural crops for their own subsistence, but who also produce a surplus product, a portion of which is appropriated, directly or indirectly, by representatives of a larger economic system. Such a definition is only useful, however, for the abstraction of certain structural principles (i.e., it should not be used simply for empirical classification). Theoretical and empirical analyses of peasants must examine those principles in relation to the larger (nonpeasant) system(s) which incorporate and/or transform peasant communities.

(Roseberry 1976:47)

I prefer this qualified definition. In it can be included the many variations within the peasant economy. Completely landless workers, I see as belonging to a rural proletariat.

The "Peasant Community"

Robert Redfield is a name often associated with peasant studies in anthropology, especially in the North American schools. He saw peasants in a cultural context. Silverman says that Redfield consistently laid

a stress on values, meanings, and understandings; and a view of social relations primarily as a vehicle of communication of ideas .... The central interest of Redfield's work appears to be in the quality of life and the quality of human relations, as these are shaped in communities of different kinds and in different phases of the human career.

Silverman 1979:53-4)

Redfield's emphasis was on the community, not so much as a geographical location, but as a way of life or a state of mind which is shaped by tradition. The community study approach pioneered by Redfield has been the primary method of study for anthropologists in peasant areas. Chambers (1979) lists 149 sources alone covering the decade 1967-77 in Mesoamerica, excluding European sources and non-book publications. Community development studies are a direct result of the joining of the community culture approach of anthropology with traditional development ideals. Schwartz comments that

The recommendation that development personnel respect the integrity of a community is in part a moral call and in part an observation about communities and how best to change them. They are (or ought to be helped to become) relatively well-bounded, self-sufficient entities internally cooperative, well-organized, and integrated. It is often assumed that CD

(community development) works best in the type of 'little community' celebrated by Redfield. It is as if CD experts, within and outside anthropology, favored the spread of Jeffersonian farmer virtue and idealized New England towns throughout the Third World.

(Schwartz 1978:238)

This was added to by Foster's "well-known contributions to CD (community development) (e.g., his depictions of limited good, peasant mistrust, and noncooperation ...." (Schwartz 1978:241) Community studies concerning development have been classified by Chamber, firstly as those viewing "the Community as Obstacle", which are influenced both by Foster's concept of the image of limited good and by Lewis's approach to the culture of poverty, which, he says

support the hypothesis that the values of rural peoples, especially those at the bottom of the rural stratification system, hinder their ability to respond to opportunities for change.

(Chambers 1979:51)

And secondly, those concentrating on "Positive Responses to Change", which, he says

in the tradition of Tax and Redfield emphasizes the positive and apparently successful changes that have occurred at the community level, or at least tries to identify those conditions under which positive responses to development opportunities are most likely to occur.

(Chambers 1979:51)

Schwartz concludes that, "In the last analysis, for many scholars cultural change and CD (community development) begin in the hearts and heads of people." (Schwartz 1978: 241) This psycho-cultural perspective<sup>2</sup> has been taken to the extreme by Roger's (1969) Modernization Among Peasants - The Impact of Communication, a book aimed specifically

at "development" practitioners. The contents can be briefly inferred from such chapter headings as: "Literacy"; "Mass Media Exposure: The Magic Multiplier"; "Achievement Motivation"; "Cosmopoliteness"; "Change Agents, Clients and Change"; "Fatalism"; and, "Computer Simulation of Innovation Diffusion in a Peasant Village." He appears to see most development situations in terms of a communication gap. For example, he says that "A key problem in all less developed countries is the lack of adequate communication between "power-elite" and the majority of the population - the peasants." (Rogers 1969:362)

#### Cultural Ecology and Peasant Studies

The concept of the tradition bound peasant has been strongly criticized. Rather than being in backward isolation, the peasant is now seen as having many diverse links to the national economy. The cultural ecology of Julian Steward and his students was and is a primary influence on this shift in emphasis.

In his study of Puerto Rico in the early fifties, the focus was, Silverman says

The 'productive processes' - land use, land ownership, organization of production, and related phenomena - were taken as primary; variations in the 'way of life' were assumed to be corollaries of these processes.

(Silverman 1979:61)

However, this study was carried out by "his students - particularly Eric Wolf and Sidney Mintz." (Ibid:61) The

result was a refinement of Steward's theories when Wolf and Mintz came face to face with the development of agribusiness in Puerto Rico. For example, they rejected Steward's view of the coffee hacienda as a "survival of old Hispanic patterns" (Steward 1950:138). Instead, they saw haciendas and plantations "in the context of European capitalist development and world market competition." (Solverman 1979:62)

Nevertheless, the community and cultural factors played a large role in the earlier works of Wolf and Mintz. In later works, a shift is evident to an emphasis on the importance of political power and the state.<sup>3</sup> Schwartz has examined this ecological-society approach in relation to conventional community development philosophy (which is essentially conservative) and concludes that

from an ecology-society perspective, CD (community development) cannot be based primarily on community action or village culture. Rather, local level behavior is constrained by external conditions and superordinate groups; and culture change follows social and material change. Insofar as this is correct, then anthropologists interested in CD either must operate at the level of national or supranational policy making ... or mobilize political action groups at the grass-roots level .... In the process of going beyond the limitations of community-culture methods, anthropologists may be developing theories and implied therapies which seriously challenge their involvement in conventional, that is most, CD programs.

(Schwartz 1978:256)

### Problem Solving Anthropology

The adaptive concept of the ecological approach can nevertheless be conservative for it assumes that "people will not alter their behaviour unless induced to do so by demographic or environmental material forces." (Schwartz 1978:255) Some anthropologists are using this adaptive concept in combination with actor-based models as put forward by Firth who "underscored the importance of variability in decision making and individual behavior." (Orlove 1980:246)

The utility of this approach for problem oriented development research is being shown by many anthropologists employed to study the reasons for adoption or non-adoption of new agricultural technology by peasant farmers. The rationale behind this approach is discussed by Peggy Barlett in her recent review of the literature in this area:

With an increasing awareness of worldwide inequalities in the distribution of food and productive resources and of food shortages in some countries, attention has turned to the small farmers of the world, whose lands employ the majority of the world's people, but whose productivity is rapidly outstripped by recent increases in population. The failure of the 'development decade' of the 1960's to ameliorate these conditions or to improve standards of living in most rural areas has led to a greater concern, both within international development agencies and within national governments, to understand the agricultural decisions of these peasant farmers.

(Barlett 1980a:545)

Thus we see that the concept of "peasant" has gone from a tradition bound, economically irrational peasant who needs modernizing ideas, to a "rational" (in his own context) peasant who requires the right technology, education and

infrastructure inputs to become more productive. However, a Redfieldian aspect is retained in this methodology by what Barlett calls "the role of cognition" which supplies "the lack of the farmers' point of view and an ethnographic context with which to interpret survey results." (Barlett 1980a:562) A good example of this is found in Christina Gladwin's studies of decision making by farmers of the Rockefeller/Ford Foundations' Puebla Project.<sup>4</sup>

The primary aim of anthropologists in this relatively new area of change strategies, Barlett says, is to

stress the complexity of variables that can affect agricultural strategies and develop improved methodologies for determining, in any context, which are more important in understanding and predicting behaviour. Current research is moving away from asking yes/no questions like 'is risk important?' and 'is access to land the key?' and toward questions that seek to define when and in what way risk and land resources are important. Within such a perspective, the issues of cognition, the statistical behaviour approach, and the utility of models and measures from other fields can be evaluated for their contributions toward answering these kinds of questions.

(Barlett 1980a:565)

Therefore, this approach is problem oriented and thus suited to answer specific questions which arise in development situations. It does not relate to the social structure in which this situation occurs, but only to the specific social, economic and physical environments of individuals or communities; inequality is then only one of many variables being examined. This narrow view excludes any critical



examination of the impact of the technology package, or whatever change is being introduced, on the receiving society as a whole. Research of this type places all questions concerning the benefits of change and to whom, if any, these will primarily go, out of the scope of the anthropologist.

I must stress that this is by no means a unified methodology, as Barlett says in her review

Research on peasant production strategies has  
been characterized by a wide range of goals.  
(Barlett 1980a:561)

However, she continues by saying

Most studies have focused primarily on  
individual households within a community  
or a group of communities, though some  
have taken a more regional focus.  
(Barlett 1980a:561)

So although there is variation, a major theme is the isolation of groups of communities for the purposes of intensive study, and often any regional focus centers on market relations.

Even though I have been referring especially to such anthropologists as Barlett and Gladwin who work closely with development agencies, the same can be said in a general sense about many anthropologists who have been influenced by conventional economic theory. Many have joined in the revival by economists of Chayanov's works on the peasant economy of Russia during the 1920's.

Mark Harrison believes that this revival stems from the shift in emphasis in "Western development economics towards agricultural development on the existing peasant basis."

(Harrison 1979:87-8) This emphasis on individual peasant households "based predominantly on input-intensification" (Ibid:87) is favoured by capitalist national and international interests, as we have seen with the World Bank in Chapter IV.

Chayanov argued, Harrison says, that

the family was 'the basic unit of production and consumption' .... The unitary conception of the family economy meant, also to abstract from the national economy, and to analyze the family farm as an enterprise unaffected by the wage category, wage labour and labour markets ... Chayanov and his colleagues accepted that the changing conjuncture of population pressures and market forces necessitated a constant restructuring of peasant property and production ... they also argued that this restructuring went forward automatically and in an unconstrained way, through the normal mechanisms of peasant choice and the family labour-consumer balance. Therefore their view of the restructuring of production was crisis-free; 'Peasant Economy' did not know structural problems or encounter general crises. There were only specific, technical problems and individual crises affecting individual farms. These problems must all be approached with specific, locally and technically adapted problem-solving agencies, not with generalized solutions or sweeping proclamations.

(Harrison 1979:89)

Thus the peasant family is seen as being basically isolated within the rural economy, although some linkages are recognized. The primary concern is on specific questions concerning change factors, combined "with practical theory (a theory of strategic intervention in peasant production)" using the role of "Agricultural Officer" as a "catalyst of change". (Harrison 1979:90)

Although across the board acceptance of all Chayanov's theories is a rarity, the concept of change based upon the present economic basis is most appealing to those who wish to avoid disruption of the status quo and yet bring about "peaceful change".

In response to this renewed interest in Chayanov, I must agree with Joel Kahn, who offers the view that

Chayanov makes interesting reading not so much because his observations on the Russian peasantry can be generalized to some vast portion of humanity, but because they are based on a wealth of detail about the socio-economic behaviour of a specific group of rural producers in a particular historical period.

(Kahn 1980:252)

#### Peasants and the State

Throughout history the peasant has always been closely connected with the state which their labour helped to build and support. As a result, peasants have always been "exploited" to a greater or lesser extent. The problem of identifying the relationship between the peasant community and the state has always confronted anthropologists.

Redfield pondered that

It may be that a peasant village, related as it is to people and institutions outside of it, is so incomplete a system that it cannot well be described as social structure.

(1956:23-4, cited in Smith 1979:261)

Smith points out that this unresolved problem leads to the peasant community being viewed

as a schizophrenic system containing two relatively autonomous parts, the one based in the past and founded on 'tradition', the other confronting the realities of the present in the form of an incipient 'urbanism' ... the majority of ethnographies of 'peasant communities' assume that there exist, side by side in the community, a 'folk' social/cultural system and a national social/cultural system, each with its own, relatively autonomous, elements and relationships. These systems are supposed to interact with each other while in some way maintaining their own integrity, and the anthropologist's job becomes one of extricating the one 'system' from the other and then examining the separate rationality of each .... The solution was to keep the idea of 'community' and then place it within, alongside, beneath or against the other idea of 'nation state'. Although those who chose to see this interface along specifically cultural lines are most easily identifiable (Redfield and Foster), the image underlies the work of those interested in economics (Dalton, 1971: Firth, 1952) and the exercise of power (Wolf, 1966).

(Smith 1979:262)

A classic example of this are the Indian and ladino stereotypes, which have even been equated to castes by Tumin (1952). These groups are seen as being culturally distinct and having mainly market linkages to each other; the differences between them are seen "not in the light of economic and political inequality, but rather as evidence of divergent cultural patterns and world views." (Wasserstrom 1975:472) Contrary to this, Stavenhagen says that

the Indian and the ladino are both integrated within a single economic system, in a single society. It is for this reason that inter-ethnic relations, insofar as commercial activities are concerned, bear the characteristics of class relations. The ecological aspect of interaction between city and countryside, or between urban metropolis and community, in fact conceals specific social relationships

between certain kinds of persons who hold differential positions with respect to the means of production and the distribution of wealth.

(Stavenhagen 1975:189)

Just as the dual economy theory of development can no longer be accepted,<sup>5</sup> the concept of the peasant as an independent factor in the rural economy must be put to rest. The economic and political inequality of the rural poor should be viewed within the dynamics of class conflict based on an analysis of the structures and relations of production. At the core of this conflict lies the mechanisms by which a surplus is extracted from the primary producers of society.

The emotional and moralistic connotations of the term "exploitation" have been put to rest by Roseberry in his reply to Dalton (1974). He defines the term simply as referring to

the appropriation by non-producers of a portion of the total product of direct producers. This appropriation is of course necessary for the operation of many modes of production with which we are familiar; exploitation would therefore be a basis for them. 'Coerced payments' then, is not a definition of exploitation; it is simply one of many forms exploitation may take. In a particular mode of production the appropriation of a portion of the product will follow certain patterns which can be objectively analyzed.

(Roseberry 1976:45)

However, any study which hopes to come close to a realization of how this process of exploitation occurs must grasp the importance of not portraying a stagnant picture in time or merely a fragment detached from a whole. As Laclau

pointed out,<sup>6</sup> it is essential to distinguish between a mode of production and an economic system. One can study peasants within their present mode of production but one must also explore the articulations between it and the dominant capitalist mode of production of the world economic system.

By placing the peasant within a dynamic dialectic rather than a stagnant perspective, we can trace the paths of people rather than definitions. So peasants who become rural proletarians do not suddenly vanish, as is so often the case in "liberal" North American social science literature. As Feder so dramatically states, it

Is astounding that so little attention is now given in the industrial countries to the fate of hundreds of millions of poor ex-peasants, perhaps the largest single new proletariat of the twentieth century; and I point specifically at academics, who seem to ignore that we are witnessing not a slow process of peasant eviction from societies unable to absorb more members of a wasted labor force, but a worldwide genocide by starvation let loose by an aggressive agricultural capitalism dominated by cynical power- and profit-hungry investors out to control the human and physical resources of the agricultures of the Third World.

(Feder 1978:202)

At the centre of this process, the articulation with, domination and final destruction of lesser modes of production by the dominant capitalist mode of production in the world economic system is, in Cleaver's world

capital - as a social relation of struggle between those who would impose work as a condition of life and those on whom it is imposed ... we can understand the world capitalist system as the global imposition of these relations.

(Cleaver 1976:A9)

Capitalist development often results in decreased well-being for the poorer peoples involved, as Fleuret and Fleuret sadly note (1980:255).<sup>7</sup> Their disappointment lies in their belief in the "optimistic view of history", that capitalistic development with increased production holds the key to a better world for all mankind; and they continue to examine symptoms rather than to face the true causes.

### The Green Revolution

One glaring example of this inability or unwillingness to grasp the consequences of capitalist development for the Third World can be found in the story of the Green Revolution. In his recent thesis on the comparative results of the Green Revolution technology in India and North Vietnam, Dewan (1978) notes the almost total lack of interest on the part of anthropologists in a phenomenon which, since the 1960's, has had profound repercussions for millions of the world's rural poor.

Green Revolution is a term with two distinct meanings. Firstly, it is a technology package of high-yield seeds which produce optimum yields only when used in conjunction with specific inputs, i.e., water, fertilizers and pesticides, in a predetermined volume and sequence. Secondly, the Green Revolution refers to a development strategy "for growth based on the exploitation of the technology for increasing agricultural production." (Pearce 1974:387) In this context then the Green Revolution is seen as, according to Pearce,

the promise of de-fusing agrarian tensions resulting from extravagant inequalities in land holding by promoting increased production, leading to an increase in the circulation of consumer goods ... the phrase connotes a specific policy aimed at political stability which often implies the conservation of the 'ancien regime' of landlords, tenants and 'minifundio'.

(Pearse 1974:387)

The Green Revolution is only one part of the transformation in agricultural production which began with the Industrial Revolution and has since spread around the globe. This process has accelerated in the twentieth century, especially since World War Two. However, this transformation is inextricably linked with the social, political and economic transformations which have also occurred.

#### A Case Study - the Cauca Valley of Colombia

For any visitor to Latin America today, the surface signs of the agricultural revolution are in some regions both impressive and dramatic. Driving through the rich Cauca Valley of southwest Colombia, for example, one passes through mile after mile of lush new sugar and sorghum fields, punctuated by billboards advertising the latest in tractors and pesticides.

(Burbach and Flynn 1980:84)

Behind the outward appearances of successful development which Burbach and Flynn observed lurks the reality of the Third World today; fifty percent of the children of the Cauca valley, six years and under, are said to be suffering from malnutrition. (Taussig 1978a)

The sugar in the fields goes to the American market which opened up to Colombian exporters after Castro came to power in Cuba. The sorghum is processed with soya-beans into animal feed concentrates by Ralston Purina. Taussig



says that

Ralston Purina is credited with the introduction of sorghum as an animal-destined crop in Colombia, which, like the other components of the concentrates, occupies land that could be used for the direct feeding of human beings. There was no sorghum cultivated in Colombia as of 1950 ... in 1975 it covered 134,000 hectares of prime agricultural land. (Taussig 1978a:114)

Colombia has been the recipient of a great deal of United States aid, from both government and business sources, for agricultural development. The Rockefeller Foundation has had a long term involvement with agricultural policy in Colombia. Taussig notes that

since 1941 when it set up the government's agricultural extension service (now ICA), encouraging its orientation toward the capital- and energy-intensive production of new, often exportable, and more profitable crops such as sorghum, cotton, sugar, irrigated rice, and sesame. (Taussig 1978a:113)

The result of such development has been

a decrease in the per capita availability of lower-class staples, which could be cultivated on the land now occupied by the new crops. The average annual rate of growth in food production between 1950 and 1970 was 3.3 percent, which was slightly higher than the rate of population growth. However, disaggregation reveals that there has been a decrease in the per capita production of peasant-produced and lower-class consumer foods such as cassavs, plaintains, beans, panela, corn and potatoes. The conditions have been well-laid for malnutrition and development to go hand in hand. (Taussig 1978a:113)

Anthropologist Michael Taussig has spent considerable time studying the people and production of this region.<sup>8</sup>

He presents a picture with historical depth which reaches across the modes of production and class structures of the region to the articulation between these features and outwards toward the wider national and international scenes. I will limit this discussion to an analysis of the effects of the introduction of Green Revolution technology for the peasant producers of the Cauca Valley, drawing primarily from Taussig's works.

The people of the Cauca Valley are there as the direct result of Spanish colonialism. They are the descendents of slaves brought from Africa. After slavery was abolished in 1851, they developed a thriving subsistence economy based on the growing of cacao and plaintain trees. They took over parts of the old haciendas which were unable to obtain sufficient labour to keep up production. This was not a peaceful transition, for "armed struggle between peasants and the faction-ridden large landowning class characterized the entirety of this period." (Taussig 1978b: 65)

A series of events since the turn of the century have lead to the peasants being forced off the lands for good. The linking of the valley by a railroad to the Pacific coast in 1914 and the influx of U.S. capital at approximately the same time, gave the large landowners sufficient cause for a consolidated push toward the take-over of the peasant lands - either legally, through the courts, or via coercive practices which were ignored or abetted by the police. In

Colombia's turbulent history, culminating in the infamous Colombian violencia or "civil war" (1948-1958), the peasant had little recourse for unified resistance. As a result, Taussig says,

the modal peasant farm size decreased from 7.5 plazas in 1933 to half a plaza in 1967 (a plaza equals 0.64 of a hectare). This decrease of 15 times was accompanied by no more than a twofold natural increase of the local population (and there was little out-migration); land shortage cannot be blamed on the 'population explosion' .... Peasant holdings did not suffer equally, for although the vast majority now have less than a subsistence-size holding of three plazas, around 5 percent have more than ten plazas and can be classified as 'rich peasants'. By 1970 ... about 80 percent of the cultivatable land was in the possession of four sugar plantations and several large-scale capitalist farmers growing other crops, while 90 percent of holdings were less than 15 plazas. (Taussig 1978b:67)

As the above quote shows, changes in land concentration and peasant proletarianization began long before the introduction of any changes in peasant production practices. The effect of the Green Revolution on the area was directly affected by the historical circumstances of the existing class and production dynamics.

Even though the Green Revolution has been advertised as being the salvation of the peasant farmer - keeping him on the land and out of the cities, Taussig concludes that, at least as far as the Cauca Valley is concerned, and

As for efforts such as those of the World Bank to sustain peasants through expanded credit and technification in lieu of land reform, this case study indicates that the logic of such attempts

is to strengthen and perpetuate such an articulation (between large-scale capitalist farming and small-scale production), while the practical consequence shall be to further pauperize the bulk of the peasantry into landlessness.

(Taussig 1978b:65)

He is of course referring to the apparent contradiction of capital intensive large-scale agriculture in the Third World often being found side by side with enclaves of peasant farming, usually with a less than subsistence-level land base. The large farms draw labour from these peasant enclaves and the cost of reproducing this labour supply is lessened by the fact that the peasants produce part of their own needs and thus wages can be kept to a very low level. (See page 38 above.)

The most important factor in the economy of the Cauca Valley by 1970 was sugar production. The expansion of the sugar plantations, begun in the 1930's, had a devastating effect on peasant production. Taussig says that

The production of cocoa, one of the mainstays of peasant cash income, dropped by around 80 percent in the eight years between 1950 and 1958 .... With the aid of World Bank and U.S. financing ... the sugar plantations have been able to continue their remorseless expansion over the flatlands: whereas only 2,000 metric tons of sugar were produced in this region in 1938, some 91,000 tons were produced in 1969.

(Taussig 1978b:67)

Also during the 1960's several large food processing plants owned by large multi-national corporations were built. These companies bypassed small peasant producers and contracted directly with "an emerging group of agricultural entrepreneurs many of whom had come from other regions

to invest in the valley's booming agriculture." (Burbach and Flynn 1980:145) Burbach and Flynn say that

The peasants were caught between the large growers who had wanted more land for sugar and those who wanted to continue producing crops for the food processors. Some were forced to sell their land to expanding commercial operations. Others lost their lands as a result of renting their plots to large producers who at the expiration of the rental agreement demanded to be paid for the improvements they had made on the land. Most small peasants could not afford the exorbitant charges, and were forced to forfeit their lands. Still other peasants were pushed into bankruptcy when their crops were purposely destroyed by chemical sprays and their irrigation waters polluted.

(Burbach and Flynn 1980:146)

For the newer commercial crops, labour is exclusively obtained by the contractor system, which includes a large percentage of women and children. The predominantly male labour force of the sugar plantations is approximately 30 percent locally contracted and the remainder are semi-permanent immigrants from the coast who come for one or two years and then go home. This 30 percent fluctuates according to labour needs and so does not offer permanent employment. (Taussig 1978b:68) The contractors are usually local peasants and they make 100 percent profit on the labour that they sell. (Ibid:83)

The differentiation in the peasant communities has been increasing steadily over the years. Also the local social structure has been altered. Although kinship ties of descent and marriage still provide some social cohesion, wider community activities have largely died out. (Taussig 1978b:73)

By 1970, the peasants lived in small enclaves between the plantations, where the population density was very high: 260 per square kilometer. (Ibid:73) In 1971, a number of peasants attempted to "invade and reclaim land appropriated by expanding sugar plantations." (Taussig 1978a:101) At approximately the same time, USAID and the Colombian government began actively promoting Green Revolution technology package production for peasant landholders. This was followed in 1974 by the huge malnutrition project mentioned above in Chapter Six.

So the peasant smallholders of the valley were already under seige by the expansion of export oriented capitalist agriculture when the Green Revolution push began. They were not a "traditional" self-sufficient peasantry and their ranks were not homogeneous by any means.

The peasant holdings had shrunk to the point where replenishing the cocoa and plaintain trees as they aged and became less productive, became increasingly more difficult. This was intensified by the time gap of three years between planting and production for cocoa trees and the expense or unavailability of credit for small holdings.

The government's rural bank and extension service actively encouraged the uprooting of the cocoa trees and the planting of the new seasonal crops. They provided credit for this. The peasants were lead to believe that they could thereby increase their income and avoid wage labour. However, Taussig says that

the ICA (Instituto Colombiano Agropecuario) agronomists granted USAID funds to provide peasants with low interest loans, fertilizer, seed, and tractors at low rentals. But once the perennials were uprooted, and the first or second seed crop in the ground, this 'service' was largely withdrawn.

(Taussig 1978b:78)

The results were disastrous. Many peasants "became heavily indebted, and when they could not repay loans they were compelled to sell their lands." (Burbach and Flynn 1980:146) This caused a "snow-ball effect" for those who had not converted all their lands for they sought to pay off debts by converting even more land to seasonal crops. By "1976 around 40 percent of all households had converted most of their land." (Taussig 1980b:81)

The rich peasants benefited by using their more ready access to credit which they used to acquire small second-hand tractors to rent to poorer peasants. Also they often acted as guarantor for the loans of poor peasants which placed them in "a favoured position to buy or rent the land of those peasants who fail to make a success of the new agriculture." (Taussig 1978b:78)

Taussig describes the outcome for one community

the new form (of production) has resulted in 40 percent reduction in annual income per plaza for the cultivating household, regardless of size of holding, and an enormous increase in indebtedness and dependence on the capital market .... The sexual division of labour changes, diminishing women's power and range of employment opportunities. Class differences widen and take new forms; a larger proportion of people enter the labor

force of the plantations and large capitalist farms, and peasant land passes much more rapidly into the large-scale farming sector as people are forced to sell out or lease to cover their mounting debts.

The sugar plantations ... had acquired around one third of the land that had been in peasant cultivation in 1972 .... Labor contractors now employ around half the neighbourhood's women .... Most of the men are now spending most of their time as contracted labourers working the new sugar cane fields spreading over former peasant lands.

(Taussig 1978b:81)

### The Green Revolution in Retrospect

The results of the Green Revolution must be observed in the light of the class dynamics already functioning when it was introduced. In much of the Third World, these were the result not of a disintegration of a "feudal" landowning class, as Lester Brown (1974) would have us believe, but the historical and on-going process of the penetration of the dominant capitalist mode of production into the agricultural production of the Third World. In this Frank is completely justified in his emphasis "on world unity" (Cleaver 1976:A9) of global capitalism and attacks on the assumption of the "traditional" sector as being static and unaffected by the global transformations of the last three hundred years.

The mechanisms of colonialism and neo-colonialism cannot be ignored in the search for the causes and consequences surrounding the Green Revolution.<sup>9</sup>



"Peasant" Studies - footnote

The study of the rural poor as opposed to "peasantries" offers an area of great potential for anthropologists. However, anthropologists will have to cast off their tendencies to merely define and classify. The masses of transient workers in the Third World today evade statistics and ethnography alike. They offer a real challenge for the development of anthropological theory and practice. The dispossessed must be given their place in the "study of mankind".

## NOTES

1. For a review of peasant definitions see: Rogers 1969: 20; Feder (1971); and, Enner et al. (1977).
2. For an anthropological example see Gates (1976).
3. See Mintz (1973).
4. See Gladwin (1976) (1977) (1979). For a more analytical view of Plan Puebla see Alcantara (1973).
5. See above, Chapter 3, page 34.
6. See above, Chapter 3, page 39.
7. See quote, Chapter 6, page 103.
8. Taussig did fieldwork in the Cauca Valley for eighteen months between 1970 and 1971, for six months in 1972, and for another eighteen months in 1975-1976.
9. For an excellent study of the results of the Green Revolution in India see Byres (1981).

## CHAPTER VIII

## ANTHROPOLOGY AND THE THIRD WORLD

## - REFLECTIONS AND ALTERNATIVES

Anthropological Contradictions

The evolution of the "science" of Anthropology contains some very basic contradictions. Their origins lie, in Helen Lackner's words, in the fact that

The traditions of Anthropology are rooted in European colonialism. Even though colonies have become independent and there is no more need for colonial administration, Indirect Rule, and the anthropology that they brought about, the tendency remains for anthropologists to work for and support the current form of imperialism, while at the same time attempting a liberal concern for the welfare of the natives.  
Lackner 1973:149)

The use of anthropologists in Thailand by the CIA during the Vietnam years clearly brought home the position in which anthropology was placed. It was not by mere chance that the "ethics debate" came to the forefront in the early 1970's.

Kathleen Gough explains that

From the beginning, we have inhabited a triple environment, involving obligations first to the peoples we studied, second to our colleagues and our science, and third to the powers who employed us in universities or who funded our research .... There is little wonder that with all these demands many anthropologists bury themselves in their specialties or, if they must go abroad, seek out the remotest, least unstable tribe or village they can find.  
(Gough 1968:405)

There can never be any resolution of the guilt reflex for anthropologists who find themselves in the middle; liberalism is a double-bind situation. In rural development studies, we have seen that some anthropologists are going their way unencumbered by this burden. They are keeping to the traditional role of functional anthropology and keeping the liberalism engrained in it in check. I believe that by the very nature of their work they are taking a stand in an ideological debate whether they choose to concede its existence or not. They have chosen, just as originally anthropologists worked for the Home Office, helping to mold the British Empire, either directly or indirectly. Even in those years, anthropologists were regarded with suspicion by the colonial administrators, just as they are today by aid agency bureaucrats. The fact remains that they must not rock the boat if they want to stay employed. Anthropologists who would do so must balance their identification with the peoples they study with a belief in the inevitability of "development" as they see it; with a belief in their own ability to be able to ascertain ways of easing development's more unpleasant factors for their subjects; and, in the good intentions of the "powers that be" to put their recommendations into effect.

In the research and writing of this thesis, I have found very little to uphold the validity of these beliefs.

### A Brief Review

In Chapter II, we saw that even a topic as seemingly obvious as providing people with enough food to stay relatively healthy becomes a debate in which ideology plays the leading role. The limits set by the ideological beliefs of researchers define the scope of any inquiry into causes and possible cures of the present picture of world-wide hunger and malnutrition. Only those willing to go past the visible economic and social features, such as markets, to the underlying structures, as Lappé and Collins have begun to do, can truly begin to study such a "simple" problem as the "invisible" forces involved in it.

In Chapter III, we explored the contradictory meanings of "development" and saw how the acceptance or rejection of these meanings has a direct effect upon the outcome of anthropological research. It comes down to the fact that there is, as Clammer says,

a rather fundamental divide between those who see the process of development as essentially unilinear and inevitable, and those who assert that, on the contrary, development is multi-linear, is far from inevitable, and is indeed a process held back by the structure of the world economy and the relations of dependency, exploitation and domination within that economy.

(Clammer 1978:250)

Chapter IV showed that the belief in the humanitarianism of the "powers that be", held by many anthropologists, is unfounded so far as many of the institutional mechanisms

of both government and business interests in the process of capitalist development are concerned. Even officials in management positions within these organizations are often powerless to prevent obvious negative effects upon the target groups in development projects.

In Chapter V the class between intentions and history is glaringly illustrated by the treatment of primitive peoples, where even those who wish to protect them from destruction can unwillingly become instruments through which annihilation is carried out. Only a conceptualization which places primitive peoples, as with any minority group, within the total world economic system will show, as Davis does, that what has happened is a direct result of a specific "model of development," in this case capitalist. Herein lies an alternative to the fatalism of many anthropologists who have rejected the "optimistic view of history" but still believe in inevitable unilinear development.

Chapter VII examined how some anthropologists would seek the salvation of their discipline in the realms of the physical sciences. This is especially evident in studies concerned with health and nutrition. However, this does not mean that these areas should be avoided by anthropologists, but rather that they should not accept the deterministic methodology of many physical scientists. This reflects the controversy now present within the physical sciences themselves. (Diener 1979)

All too often the "scientific method" is put forward as a means of avoiding the social, political and economic dimensions of a problem. Chapter VII shows that this also applies in some areas of peasant studies in which anthropologists are specializing in a "problem-solving" approach. Traditionally anthropologists have been more interested in how to define a "peasant" and/or "peasant community" rather than to explain the place of the peasant in the modern world. Some have sought to use their knowledge of peasant culture to bring about "controlled" change. However, as the results of modernization more and more are proletarianization and impoverishment of the world's peasants, many other anthropologists have realized that "peasant" studies must become merely one part of a more sophisticated analysis.

#### Alternatives for Anthropology

Del Hymes (1972) sought to "re-invent" anthropology and Mina Caulfield ponders the fact that

During the upsurge of cultural consciousness (Red Power) which led to the invasion of Alcatraz, I was engaged in carrying supplies and Indians back and forth on my boat, and the thought occurred to me that the little help I was contributing probably amounted to more real aid to liberation for those people than any amount of anthropologizing I might conceivably do in my lifetime.

(Caulfield 1971:209)

And this is indeed one alternative, "direct action."  
In the tradition of Schumacher, one can seek to work with

groups such as Oxfam which do not represent vested interests, in a one-on-one situation. Or, one can do research which seeks to trace the historical facts and present workings of the exploitative structures in the world. This path has been advocated by John Young who suggests, for example, that

In addition to focusing on the abuses caused by the American food system, ethnographic work can provide a better understanding of the obstacles which prevent any particular country, region or group of people from achieving food self-reliance. Where traditional culture has been replaced by an underdeveloped sector, anthropologists may be of further help by providing information on the agricultural production and distribution systems of the past which could be used to reach more successful social and environmental adaptations in the present .... Through their educational efforts, anthropologists also can help to increase public awareness of what can be learned from the alternative food systems which now exist in countries such as China and Cuba.

(Young 1978:527)

In following the lead of Food First, one would have to have a critical but non-political format. Lappé and Collins, using Frank's concept of underdevelopment, have brought their analysis to the point where they find that the most important factor in food distribution inequality is the control of the means of production, and then they stop. They seek to function as a low-key educational force. And yet, is this enough? In some ways, yes, it fills a definite need, but this is only the first level of inquiry. For someone wishing to know more about the why's



rather than just the how's of inequality, it is not.

And indeed, this method has some very large pit-falls surrounding it. For although it seeks to eliminate the failings of functionalism by using a historical perspective, I have to agree with T.J. Byres, when he concludes his review of a book attempting a historical analysis of the Green Revolution, with this criticism,

This kind of Third Worldism, with its populist echoes and ecological strains, is dangerous inasmuch as it ignores or obscures the class divisions and class exploitation that exist in the Third World (and in the First World) .... The implication of undifferentiated Third World countries, whose governments are above or independent of classes and sensitive to the needs of the poor, is a false one.

(Byres 1980:250)

Ten years before Young wrote his suggestions, Kathleen Gough offered more far-reaching alternatives for anthropologists, in the same vein as Young but advising the use of the works of writers such as Marx, Lenin, Luxemburg, Baran, Sweezy and Frank, to name but a few. In effect, to undertake what functional anthropologists have pointedly avoided. Gough says that

Although we have worked for 100 years in conquered societies, and although for at least 50 of them we have emphasized the interconnectedness of parts of social systems, we have virtually failed to study Western imperialism as a social system, or even adequately to explore the effects of imperialism on the societies we studied.

(Gough 1968:405)

Just how this should be done and to what extent continues to be hotly debated.<sup>1</sup> I do not wish to enter into

this debate, for it would mean writing a book instead of a thesis. However, it is in this direction which anthropology can take a place in the unfolding of events; the role of offering critical theory, the unmasking of ideological mystifications. (O'Laughlin 1975:368)

The area of rural development offers a very important application. To leave it in the hands of the functionalists, with their "rational" peasant, is to do a disservice to the realm of knowledge which can be used to "inform those political struggles that transform (the world)." (O'Laughlin 1975:369)

The practices of aid agencies in their present form, as extensions and perpetuators of the capitalist mode of production, will always require a functionalist approach which, Asad says,

identifies social structure with directly visible reality, but that the understanding it seeks regarding events and the mutual relations is of a non-critical, non-historical kind. (Asad 1974:218)

This methodology also, O'Laughlin says,

presupposes inherent atomistic tendencies in all societies ... the illusory individualism or capitalist society is confirmed through universalization in structural-functional writing. (O'Laughlin)

But the conditions of underdevelopment cannot be viewed in isolation without distortion, for O'Laughlin concludes

society cannot be understood as a population or aggregate of individuals, but as a totality of social relations. (O'Laughlin 1975:346)

Underdevelopment is a global phenomenon and the presence of it in specific areas can be understood through the concept of articulation of modes of production - the capitalistic mode of production being dominant - which includes the concept of social classes, defined by Lenin as being

large groups of people which differ from each other by the place they occupy in a historically determined system of social production, by their relation (in most cases, fixed and formulated in law) to the means of production, by their role in the social organization of labour, and, consequently, by the dimension and mode of acquiring a share of social wealth of which they dispose. Classes are groups of people one of which can appropriate the labour of another owing to the different places they occupy in a definite system of social economy.

(Cited in Stavenhagen 1975:28)

In the concept of articulation of modes of production, articulation is "used as an anatomical metaphor to indicate relations of linkage and effectivity between different levels of all sorts of things." (Foster-Carter 1978:216) This articulation, as Laclau points out, does not mean another way of recreating dual economy theory, but a "structured and differentiated whole, the 'economic system'." (Foster-Carter 1978:213) Although the dominant capitalist mode of production coexists with other modes of production, or even in some cases may help create and sustain them, as feudalism in Latin America exists, "not exogenous to capitalism, nor as pockets of decline, but as an intrinsic and structured part of a wider system," (Foster-Carter 1978:213) the

inevitable result will be their eventual destruction because of, as Foster-Carter points out

(the) fundamental law of capitalism, as true today as on the day when Marx discovered it: capitalism has as its final goal the destruction at every point on the globe of antecedent modes of production and relations of production, in order to substitute for them its own mode of production and its own relations of production.  
(Foster-Carter 1978:220)

### In Conclusion

Even though theory and methodology are and always will be fodder for the academic publishing mill, there is a need to constantly re-examine those in use to make the study of human society relevant to the times they occupy and the revolutionary processes they coexist with. An anthropologist seeks to study mankind, a species that can make hunger and malnutrition into mystical conditions, visited upon the unfortunate for unknown reasons. If one views this through the gauze of morality, it becomes an obscenity, a proof of our fallen natures and must be explained away in compartmentalized reasoning, just as the starved faces of African children are only ghostly images on a T.V. screen - not part of reality.

To view such things as the "World Food Crisis", the dispossession of the world's peasants, and the annihilation of the Amazonian peoples and ecosystem, with morality makes them incomprehensible; to view them as the victim's fault, directly or indirectly, in the conservative-liberal medium, is criminal. However, to view them as a historical materialist who

considers human actions and motivations to be complex results of a dialectical interaction of biotic and social processes, the latter continually propelled by the dynamism of the forces and relations of production as well as by the ideological evolutions deriving from them and influencing them in turn.

(Baran and Hobsbawm 1973:53)

is to see with a clarity, detached and yet part of the whole, which leaves one sad in the realization of the potential for human failing and yet hopeful in the knowledge of an equal potential for creation and achievement.

NOTES

1. For a very small sample see Hindess and Hirst (1975),  
Cook (1977) and Mouzelis (1980).

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