

# **Anthropology and Development**

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## Chapter 1. Introduction. The three approaches in the Anthropology of Development

I wish to propose a point of view on development that reintegrates development into mainstream anthropology as an object worthy of attention, a perspective that engages in a minute exploration of the various types of interactions which take place in the world of development, bringing into play conceptions and practices, strategies and structures, actors and contexts.

Three main sets of writings can be distinguished:

1. discursive approaches
2. populist approaches
3. entangled social logic approaches

### 1. The discourse of development

Even anthropologists, who have collaborated on a continual, long-term basis with development institutions have no qualms about attacking developers 'unjustified dogmas'.

**Two elements explain this situation:**

\* First, in the development universe there is a wide gap between discourses and practices: what is said about a development project when it is a matter of conception, establishment, financing, or justifying the project has little in common with the project itself as it exists in practice, once it gets into the hands of the people to whom it is destined. Anthropologists play a permanent role which consists in 'calling people back to reality'. They diagnose and describe sidetracking, which gives the lie to official declarations.

\* Second, the development universe is one of 'political' action. Development institutions are input-oriented: they must convince donors of their capacity to furnish resources. To obtain this effect, rhetoric is of vital importance. But this required stereotyped language mobilizes an enormous amount of set expressions. The anthropologists' competence has to do, precisely, with a subtle knowledge of complex situations.

**But anthropologists' criticism of development rhetoric has several limitations.**

1. is that development professionals are not equally naive.
2. Another is that the social sciences themselves are not immune to clichés or to stereotypes, especially scholarly stereotypes.

Criticism:

The last is that there is a particular social science ideology, commonly referred to as 'post-modernism' 'post-structuralism' or 'deconstructionism', which, having taken on the theme of development, itself has specialized in the analysis of the 'development discourse' and has even proclaimed itself as the only form of 'anthropology of development'. Works have appeared in the last years which attack the 'development discourse' in one way or another, with the aim of 'deconstructing' it. These works do not take continuous shifts in strategy and policy in account. These works seem to adopt an ideological approach to development, perceived a priori as an entity in itself, and, to be precise, as a negative entity at that. Their approach is not based on unbiased empirical enquiry into the real processes of various types of development action.

Moreover authors tend to choose only those aspects of the 'discourse' that supports their theses. VB van Escobar en Arnfred give five characteristics of development discourse. These categorical statements are represented without qualification, and without paying the slightest attention to possible counter-examples.

Numerous nuances exist within the 'discourse of development' business, and some of these are important. Vb van Ferguson en Gardner and Lewis. The intention of Gardner and Lewis is to reform development from the inside, by promoting an 'alternative' development and by 'breaking down the barriers which exist between the 'developer' and the 'developed'.

Finally, certain analyses of the 'development discourse' can be qualified neither as post-modern nor as post-structural, and reject these elisions and caricatures. They could be classified as 'methodological deconstructionism'

Discursive - kritiek op het ontwikkelingsvertoog

\* Er bestaat een kloof tussen 'knowledge and practice'. Antropologen moeten de leugen ontmaskeren.

\* Ontwikkeling is een politiek proces gekenmerkt door clichés, retoriek, simplistic notions en algemeenheden. Alergie van antropologen

\* Ontwikkelingsorganisaties zijn 'input oriented' moeten donoren overtuigen (politics of legitimation - hillhorst)

- Erg politiek gekleurd: neokolonialisme is vervangen door development

- nothing more than an apparatus of control and surveillance.

- Bovendien is dev. discourse erg aan verandering onderhevig.

### 2. Populism, anthropology and development

We can note that a populist posture, defending 'indigenous knowledge' or encouraging a close study of these, is liable to run the gamut of a wide variety of scientific attitudes, which can be more or less 'ideological' or 'methodological'.

1. Ideological populism paints reality in the colors of its dreams, and has a romantic vision of popular knowledge.

2. As for methodological populism, it considers that 'grassroots' groups and social actors have knowledge and strategies that should be explored, without commenting on their value or validity.

The first is a bias which disables scientific procedure, while the second, on the contrary, is a positive factor which opens new fields of investigation.

### 1. Ideological populism

Ideological participatory methods of quick research, which supposedly draw their inspiration from anthropology, based on various techniques of 'animation' developed by Chambers and his disciples. Their aim is to promote research on peasants to be carried out by the peasants themselves, in which researchers would play the role of mere facilitators. Ideological populism maintains itself on the opposition that, it declares, exists between classic 'extractive' research and alternative 'participatory' research. This opposition ignores the fact that anthropology invariably combines fieldwork focused on actor's points of view and actors' strategies with an 'as-objective-as-possible' analysis of their contradictions and contexts.

Three recent works present a relatively complex combination of ideological and methodological populism, namely the works of Scoones and Thompson, Scott and Darre.

#### Populism in anthropology of development assumes various hues:

- \* it is more 'methodological' and empirical in authors like Richards who stick to concrete forms of indigenous and technical knowledge.
- \* it is more 'ideological' and is sometimes mixed with deconstructionism in authors who, like Hobart, systematically valorize indigenous knowledge over and against scientific knowledge.
- \* it appears as a complex combination of methodological populism and ideological populism in original theoreticians like Darre or Scott.
- \* finally, it is not only ideological but also quite rudimentary and 'applied' in the case of 'participatory rural appraisals' promoted by Chambers, which in keeping with the general expansion of 'participatory' development projects, assume an ever-increasing importance on the market of 'rapid' appraisals.

#### Populisme

- \* is eerder een politieke stijl dan een ideologie
- \* is een discours waar het volk centraal staat : een communicatiewijze die door eender welke ideologische stroming gebruikt kan worden om haar boodschap over te brengen
- \* ze gaat uit van de onderdrukking van de bevolking door een elite
- \* hierbij refereert ze regelmatig aan de economische en sociale status van de gewone man.

#### Hoe uit zich dit?

- ideologisch (Chambers, Scott, Darre)
- \* romantiseren en verdedigen van lokale kennis
- \* overwaardering van de kennis en capaciteiten van lokale bevolking
- methodologisch
- \* door bestudering van lokale strategieën en kennis zonder commentaar op waarde en validiteit
- \* zo objectief mogelijke analyse van contradicties en context

### 3. The entangled social logic approach

The entangled social logic approach, centered on the analysis of the embeddedness of social logic, studies the relationship between both universes, or rather between the concrete segments of both, through empirical enquiry, particularly around their points of intersection. We could also refer to this as 'methodological interactionism'. Interactions are treated the same way as the classic 'case study': as productive pathways into social reality, as means of deciphering concrete social situations, both in terms of actors strategies and contextual constraints, and as means of approaching practices and conceptions, of pinpointing conjunctural and structural phenomena. The interesting thing about this approach is that it breaks away from the culturalist ideology that formerly predominated in this field, and underlines the transactions linked with consensus production and norms. As far as the entangled social logic approach in anthropology of development is concerned, two independent sources can be identified: an Anglophone pole around Norman Young in the Netherlands, and a Francophone pole, around APAD.

#### Norman Long and rural anthropology of development

His orientation is essentially centered on the interfaces between different social worlds, and is defined by himself as 'actor-oriented', a term that has served as a label for his school of thought. The guiding concepts of the actor-oriented approach are 'agency and social actors, the notion of multiple realities and arenas where different life worlds and discourses meet, the idea of interface encounters of discontinuities of interests, values, knowledge and power, and structured heterogeneity'.

Longo's primary concepts have been established since the mid '80s, and have been cited, commented on and paraphrased, by Long himself and by his disciples, in articles and books for over fifteen years with hardly any modification. This very abstract system of interpretation has gradually evolved into an almost hermetically closed loop, while its empirical studies sometimes give the impression of being tailored to illustrate or to justify its 'guiding concepts' instead of producing innovative local or regional interpretations or of opening new perspectives.

## The works produced by APAD

An important step forward has been made through the publication in recent years of a variety of works on French-speaking Africa, by African and European authors who all have the merit of practicing the entangled social logic approach, and who therefore present empirical results on a variety of topics, all related in one way or another to the interaction that occurs between a wide variety of actors involved in the terrain where development institutions are active. The authors concerned share a similar methodological position which allows them to produce new interpretations 'close to the field'.

Not only do these works constitute a corpus of concrete analyses on the embeddedness of various social logics, but they also address new objects, and issues, in part, from development alone. Their aim is to break new ground in fields where political and development operations straddle the political, economic and local administrative practices commonly encountered in Africa. Another characteristic of these works is that they are often carried out in a systematically comparative perspective, thus avoiding the risk of an endless accumulation of local monographs that interactionist studies incur.

### Entangled social logic approach

- Focus zich noch op populaire kennis noch stelt het de development discourse aan de kaak.
- it is centred on the analysis of the embeddedness of social logic
- studies the relationship between peoples perspectives and development discourses, through empirical enquiry, particularly around their point of intersection

### Norman Long's guiding concepts:

- agency and social actors
- notion of multiple realities
- arenas where different life worlds and discourses meet
- the idea of interface encounters in terms of discontinuities of interests, values, knowledge and power and structured heterogeneity.

## Chapter 2. Socio-anthropology of development Some preliminary statements

### Development

I propose to define development as:

A sum of the social processes induced by voluntarist acts aimed at transforming a social milieu, instigated by institutions or actors who do not belong to the milieu in question, but who seek to mobilize the milieu, and who rely on the milieu in their attempt at grafting resources and/or techniques and/or knowledge.

#### **Alternatieve definitie:**

Ontwikkeling heeft tot doel de optimale ontplooiing te bevorderen van elk persoon zonder onderscheid door het uitbreiden van keuzemogelijkheden en het bevorderen van autonomie.

Development exists based merely on the fact that there are actors and institutions who take development as an object or an end to which they devote time, money and professional competence. I will give the name

**‘developmentalist configuration’** to this essentially cosmopolitan world of experts, bureaucrats, NGO personnel, researchers, who make a living out of developing other people.

Anthropology cannot presume to intervene positively in the moral or political debates surrounding development, except by introducing new and specific knowledge. The role of the anthropologist does not consist in making public declarations about his opinion on development. He needs to be a very keen observer.

### Socio-anthropology of development

Anthropology is the empirical, multidimensional study of contemporary social groups and their interactions, placed in a diachronic perspective, and combining the analysis of practices and of conceptions.

The analysis of the interactions between the ‘developmentalist configuration’ and local populations, like the analysis of the various forms of social change, demands certain types of competence, the very ones that sociology, anthropology and anthropology of development are determined to put to works.

A quick inventory of the abundant literature devoted to development indicates that empirical anthropology of development facts constitute a rather marginal area that is largely ignored. The large majority of works classified under headings of ‘sociology’ or ‘anthropology’ in fact deal with economy or ideology. These works are based on normative or moralistic considerations about ‘development in general’ or about the need to take ‘the cultural factors of development’ into account.

*Kilani’s* position contests the idea that anthropology of development exists, is, for its part, founded on the most deplorable confusions. Anthropology of development is continually associated with applied anthropology. He contends, that development is not a sociological concept, and that it has not other status than that of designating a reality outside anthropology, such as sports, towns, or old age.

But it is very heterogeneity of the facts of development that makes anthropology of development interesting. It has long since been established that the various reactions of a society to an ‘outside’ intervention constitute one of the best indicators of the dynamism of its own structures, and allows for a particularly good analysis of social behavior.

In the face of the simplifications encountered in all development ideologies, founded on consensual preconceptions, anthropology of development affirms, from the very outset, that the social sphere is very complex, that the interests, conceptions, strategies and logics of the various partners that development puts in relation with each other diverge.

### Comparativism

A decisive progress of anthropology of development will, result from rigorous comparative analyses, encouraged by an increase in the number of studies. In the interest of this desired progress, a few common or related concepts must be found.

What we propose instead are exploratory concepts, allowing for the production of new and comparable data which have nothing to do with pre-programmed over interpretations. Popular technical knowledge, logics, brokerage, arena, strategic groups are some of the exploratory concepts mentioned below, and which can ensure a more or less comparativist approach within anthropology of development. **The comparativist approach at the base of anthropology of development has two specific characteristics:**

1. the multiculturalist view of development situations, and
2. the transversality of conceptions and practices of actors engaged in these situations.

### Multiculturalism

**Development situations bring two different worlds into confrontation with each other:**

- Basically cosmopolitan, international culture, the culture of the ‘developmentalist configuration’.
- variety of local cultures and sub-cultures

Although the results of such confrontations are largely unpredictable, it is possible, nonetheless, to identify a number of constants and invariants. This is what we intend to accomplish with the aid of some of the exploratory concepts mentioned above.

## Transversality

Development usually takes the shape of specialized experts, specialized organizations and specialized funding, be it in the area of health, environment, agricultural production administrative reform, decentralization or the promotion of women.

Economic anthropology deals with relations of production, modes of production, small-scale commodity production, informal trade. Political anthropology reflects on power at the local level, patron-client systems, political conceptions. The argument remains the same. Social actors are engaged in constant back-and-forth movements between the political register and the economic register, to say nothing of symbolism, language or religion. Popular practices and conceptions, confronted with change in general and development in particular, mobilize all the registers at their disposal.

Anthropology of development cannot be broken down into sub-disciplines. *Anthropology of change and development is simultaneously a political anthropology, a sociology of organizations, an economic anthropology, a sociology of networks, an anthropology of conceptions and sense systems.*

Auge asserts that anthropology is by principle indivisible, as opposed to the overspecializations of other social sciences, which create sub-disciplines defined by their object. It is on this basis that he refuses to recognize health anthropology as a discipline in its own right. The autonomy of these comparative fields can only be relative; independence would be both absurd and unproductive.

**The comparative approach on which the relative autonomy of anthropology of development is founded is, to my mind, a result of the link between three fundamental and indissociable components:**

- (1) a specific and particular object
- (2) a problematic fueled by the contemporary debates in the social sciences
- (3) a methodology of data production grounded in the tradition of anthropology and 'qualitative sociology' and which takes into account all the dimensions of reality experienced by social actors.

## Populism

What I mean by 'populism' is a certain relationship between intellectuals (associated with privileged classes and groups) and the people (dominated classes and groups): a relationship in which intellectuals discover the people, pity their lot in life and/or marvel at their capacities, and decide to put themselves at the disposal of the people and to strive for their welfare.

Populism also structures, to a great extent, the world of research, in sociology, anthropology and history alike. The rehabilitation of grassroots social actors, the narratives of the lifestyle of the 'vision of the conquered', the analysis of popular resistance: these are some of the central themes of the social sciences. This latent ideology has various advantages and merits, and as many short comings and disadvantages, which will be mentioned below.  
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## A collective problematic

**invisible college**      an invisible college is an informal network of researchers who construct an intellectual paradigm in order to study common topics

## Social change and development: in Africa or in general?

Development is a fundamental aspect of contemporary Africa, rural and urban areas alike.

Socio-Antropology of development;

Is specifiek domein van onderzoek

Antro en sociologie kun je niet scheiden. Ontmoeting in degelijk, goed geïnformeerd veldwerk.

De dialoog tussen ontwikkelingswerkers, beleidsbepalers en antropologen is nodig en belangrijk

Toegepaste antro niet zonder theoretische antro.

Ontwikkeling is slechts een bepaalde vorm van sociale verandering, kan niet in isolatie bestudeerd worden.

De benadering moet comparatief zijn en kijkt vooral naar interacties op het lokale niveau.

Binnen een context van dominantie en ongelijkheid

## Chapter 3. Anthropology, sociology, Africa and development

### French colonial ethnology

The discovery of the complexity of the systems of African thought, of their extensive symbolic and cosmogonic construction, placed an emphasis, based on a culturalist perspective, on the specificity of the 'values' of African societies, thus opposing Western technical and economic rationality to a distinct African traditionalist rationality.

Four strands can be identified within this orientation:

- (1) **The holistic problematic of the Durkheim-Mauss school of thought** which puts the emphasis on social globality. Society is more than the sum of its components. This point of view, despite its indisputable epistemological advantages, incurs the danger of 'fetishing' society, viewed as an almost supernatural entity, thus drawing attention away from sectoral changes, progressive transformations and syncretic innovations.
- (2) **The French school of African ethnology, led by Griaule.** Their priority was the coherence of 'indigenous' values and mythical constructs, to the exclusion of both historical mutations and the interaction between religious and other social facts. Their research on the specific knowledge and visions of African societies did serve to rehabilitate them by emphasizing their wealth and complexity. Unfortunately, it also strengthened a 'patrimonialist' and somewhat a-historical vision of the cultures.
- (3) **The dominance of ethnic classification** had similar results. Ethnic reference is not merely a figment of the colonial administrator's imagination, nor is it an ethnological invention: those involved play the primary role in the process of its construction or naturalization, not to mention linguistic aspects of the matter. The restriction of ethnological research within an ethnic context, under colonial rule, has doubtlessly helped to obscure the full extent of trans-ethnic, infra-ethnic and supra-ethnic processes, which are precisely those involved in social change.
- (4) **Structuralism.** The intellectualist problematic specific to Levi-Strauss and the themes of research which he imposed (kinship, mythologies) hardly allowed for any serious consideration of the socio-economic changes Africa was undergoing at the time.

The combined influence of various traditions of this kind resulted in certain interpretations of African societies which were based on a 'society-culture-ethnicity' trilogy, of which culture was the centre of gravity. Each ethnic group-society had its own culture, the cornerstone of its originality. This process endowed African societies with **three broad characteristics: they were purportedly:**

- \* homogenous,
- \* resistant to history
- \* composed of independent entities

Classical ethnology often minimized contradictions and social and cultural rifts inherent in the groups they studied.

### Reactions: dynamic and/or Marxist anthropology

Essentially due to *Balandiers*' influence, and in the wake of *Claude Meillassoux*, who was something of a pioneer and the author of a seminal article in 1960 a social and economic anthropology of Marxist inspiration was developed. Its main focus was the analysis of internal cleavages in rural African societies, viewed in a historical light.

Analysis was limited to macro structures and phenomena of transition from one structure or another, with scant attention being paid to practical social strategies and to the immediate constraints they entail.

The scientific and empirical efforts of this Marxist Africanist anthropology focused primarily on the pre-colonial and colonial periods, to the detriment of the contemporary changes in progress. 'Development' was often considered to be unworthy of academic interest, especially since it was considered to be a long-since-familiar aspect of the dynamics of imperialism no more, no less.

### From a sociological viewpoint: sociology of modernization and sociology of development

*Andre Gunder Frank*, he analyses the chain of successive tendencies that end up linking the lowliest Third World villages to the centers of Western capitalism. This is the 'development of underdevelopment' promoted in part by the system of 'unequal exchange'.

The positive aspects of these theories is that they shed light on the processes of domination and exploitation, to the disadvantage of the Third World, which structured and continues to structure the world economy, which affected and still affects producers from the South. An obsessive focus on the mechanism of domination, has obvious shortcomings. Not only does it fall into the trap of 'miserabilism' but it also prevents research innovations, restricted as it is to the drawing up of an endless list of the forms of constraint, spoilage and domination to which the popular masses of the Third World fall victim.

The theories of modernization and of dependency, though opposed to one another, are related. They consider development from the vantage point of the centers of power, based on 'a determinist, linear, and externalist view of social change'.

## System analysis

### Systems analysis as a paradigm?

**There are two versions of systems analysis as a paradigm:**

- \* in the maximalist version, reality is a system
- \* in the minimalist version, reality appears to be a system

Most social processes cannot be defined as systems in the strict sense of the word, except, at best, certain extremely specific areas in which human activities integrate natural cycles, in the form of a physical economy, and which can be taken as independent analytical entities: this is probably the case of traditional agro-pastoral systems of production. Social practices and cultural meaning have nothing to do with systems, either in the maximalist or in the minimalist sense of the word. Neither society nor culture can be properly defined as systems, and to consider them as such would amount to ignoring the specificity of social phenomena, multiple actor strategies, human agency, power struggles, as well as the contradictions and incoherencies at the heart of thought and practice in general.

### System analysis as a metaphor?

Nonetheless, the systemic vocabulary is used constantly in social science. This is because it readily accommodates loose interpretations. If society is not 'really' a system, nor anything approaching a system, it is still possible to play with the idea of using terms that vaguely suggest that this is the case. The resource to a new metaphorical system always generates results in the beginning but results gradually decline and sometimes degenerate into clichés.

Systems thus turns out to be 'ready-made' thought, an additional cliché which only goes to reproduce a simplistic reading of society. **Three major difficulties then arise:**

- (1) a risk inherent in all metaphoric systems: the naturalization and reification of metaphors; that is, an artificial process is taken as a reality. One ends up believing, in the present case, that society is really a system.
- (2) a risk inherent in the system metaphor, namely, the emphasis placed on system functionality. One ends up believing that all social systems are functional, with a tendency to reproduce their own coherence.
- (3) a risk inherent in the systemic metaphor as applied to development, namely that of analyzing interactions between a development project and its target population as if one were dealing with a systemic circuit. One ends up believing that the project is one sub-system and the 'milieu' another.

Attempts have been made, within the systems analysis paradigm itself, to arrive at a more flexible type of systematization, capable of taking into account the 'non-system' aspects of social reality, such as conflicts, power struggle or symbolic resources.

### The current situation: multi-rationalities

Most researchers are convinced that a less pretentious approach is needed, one that is more empirical and which shows a greater awareness of the fragmentation characteristic of current social reality.

**This type of approach covers two complementary levels:**

- (1) First, **it is more localized**, with a greater focus on the micro and even on the meso levels. Its efforts that theorizing focus on the understanding, partial though it may be, of regional and sectoral phenomena, preferred over general theoretical viewpoints and dogmatic statements made out of context.
- (2) Second, **the emphasis is placed on social actors or groups of social actors**, their strategies, and the stakes they vie for.

The interactionist approach that I am defending is a combination of the analysis of constraints and the analysis of actors strategies, of structures and of individual or collective dynamics. The interactionism I refer to is not to be confused with symbolic interactionism and even less with ethno-methodology: it is more social and less generative, more polyvalent and less obsessive, more cautious and less pretentious. It takes into account interaction in general (social, political, economic, symbolic) between actors in a given field vying for given stakes (for example, related to the development process), as opposed to the grammatical and formal aspects of the definition of such-and-such a kind of interaction or such-and-such a situation existing between co-actors. Power struggles and phenomena of inequality are not ignored; quite the contrary. The emphasis is placed on 'grass roots' actors and the room for maneuver available to them, without brushing aside the constraints that come to bear on them and that limit the elbow room at their disposal.

**Viewed in the somewhat linear perspective of the 'history of ideas', Western conceptions of Africa - on the topic of rationality - passed through four stages:**

- following an initial stage denying that Africans had any kind of rationality whatsoever
- there was a second phase opposing African 'religious' rationalities to western 'economic' rationalities.
- this was followed by the discovery of technical and economic rationalities within the African peasantry, before the
- current the fourth and current phase of multi-rationality was reached

Nonetheless, the conceptions inherent in each preceding stage are still 'alive' today, and still structure the discourse of many actors in development.



Sardan verzet zich tegen:

- \* koloniale benadering
- \* statische benadering
- \* gebrek aan inzicht in de sociaal-economische veranderingen in Afrika
- \* structuralistische benadering
- \* Marxistische benadering (te macro)
- \* tegen project benadering

Wat wil hij aantonen;

- Als we onderzoek doen naar sociale verandering vraagt dat om het begrijpen van interne diversiteit, sociaal culturele veranderingen en externe druk
- Ontwikkeling is wel interessant voor onderzoek en ligt aan de basis van antropologie
- Systeemanalyse biedt geen oplossing, sociaal gedrag heeft niks te maken met systemen
- Realiteit van het veld is heel anders dan de geordende realiteit op papier

Wat stelt hij hier tegenover:

- Meer empirisch en bewust zijn van de fragmentarische sociale realiteit
- meer gericht op het lokale niveau
- nadruk op sociale actoren, hun strategieën en de belangen waar ze voor opkomen. Room to maneuver.
- Interactionistisch perspectief, een benadering die de interactie tussen actoren, groepen, hulpbronnen en bewuste en onbewuste handelings effecten beter in beeld brengt
- macht, machtsstrijd en ongelijkheid niet negeren.
- agency cruciaal concept
- mogelijkheid om verschil te maken
- belang van netwerken
- relatie tussen macro en micro processen
- mensen zijn multi-rationeel

## Chapter 4. A Renewal of Anthropology?

Our opening hypothesis is as follows:

*Anthropology of social change and development represents an important stake for anthropology and for sociology in general, and even for social science as a whole.*

### To the rescue of social science?

#### Tree point summary of a familiar situation:

- (1) The crisis of social science is often discussed. It is possible to list its various symptoms, which do not all intersect and which fail to be equally convincing;
  - the collapse of global systems of interpretation, delivered 'key in hand'
  - conflict between an endless pile of monographs and case studies, on one hand and unbridled comparative essayism on the other
  - conflict between an exaggerated quantitative orientation and an excessively qualitative and/or speculative bent.
- (2) Social science turns increasingly to anthropology as a resource because of the heuristic and methodological qualities that anthropology has or is thought to have. These scientific demands made by various disciplines can be generally observed either as an 'anthropologization' of scientist form these fields or through an increase in the number of anthropological references to be found in related disciplines.
- (3) 'Mainstream' anthropology, is not in a position to direct this kind of dialogue or to respond to such expectations. The most dynamic and innovative areas of this discipline are not necessarily those that determine the way anthropology is viewed from the outside.

The processes of social change and development provide anthropology with new objects and new questions. By this means, they can contribute to a partial renewal of the problematics not only of anthropology, but also, through it, those of sociology and other social sciences.

#### In order to understand the processes of social change and development, anthropology must;

- \* develop a number of new concepts,
- \* elaborate a couple of new strategies of investigation,
- \* create a new methodological apparatus.

These along with the many valuable tools anthropology already had acquired are needed for an understanding of the phenomena of change. Participatory observation seem to be essential to the treatment of such questions.

### The 'properties' of 'development facts'

#### 4 Major 'properties' to the processes of social change and development which influence the very perception of the anthropologist himself can be attributed:

- 1) The processes of social change and development inevitably involve relationships between heterogeneous norms, cultures and subcultures, heterogeneous value systems, heterogeneous structures of knowledge and conceptions, heterogeneous systems of action, heterogeneous logics and heterogeneous social systems. Such a confrontation of heterogeneous, divergent, dissimilar, contradictory elements is at the centre of the anthropology of change and development. The complex interaction between these heterogeneous elements is at the very centre of the object construction peculiar to the anthropology of social change and development. Anthropology is therefore obliged to take interest not only in 'local communities' and 'target populations', but also in frameworks of intervention, mediators and brokers, as well as external agents.
- 2) Social change and development mobilize intermediary, informal, transversal, structures: networks, affinities, patron-client relationships, local social, professional and kinship relationships. In this field a certain kind of anthropology and of sociology are indissociable. Indeed interpersonal relationships, be the 'egalitarian' or 'hierarchical' do not disappear upon modernization and bureaucratic rationality is far from being a regulator of African administration.
- 3) The processes of social change and development are diachronic by definition. This is one aspect of the matter that classic anthropology too often neglected, due to a marked tendency to throw the baby of history with the bath water of evolutionism.
- 4) The processes of social change and development are situated at the interface between anthropology and 'macro' sociology, on one hand, and ethnography and 'micro' sociology, on the other.

### Two heuristic points of view

These four properties which characterize social change and development throw light on the relationship between social sciences and two major 'heuristic perspectives' between which they oscillate continuously.

#### I would like to make a brief reference to two dominant heuristic perspectives:

- \* holism
- \* methodological individualism

### Anthropology as a holistic point of view

Anthropology of social change and development draws on this holistic perspective. It pinpoints the fact that the multiple, conflicting logics involved in 'development' processes are not due simply to the existence of different groups

of actors but also mobilize various registers of social reality, which have to be considered simultaneously. Practices and conceptions are always at one and the same time economic, political, ideological, and symbolic.

*Polyani* placed great emphasis on the notion of the embeddedness of the economy into social life as a whole.

Their (Thompson and Scott) common intention is to take into account, simultaneously, the various levels of social reality, as perceived by cultures, sub-cultures and social actors. Special emphasis is placed on the fact that the **classic economic phenomena that are generally involved in 'development' processes cannot be arbitrarily isolated from;**

- their social dimensions (cleavages of age, gender, status, condition, class)
- their cultural and symbolic dimensions ( norms of respectability, modes of social recognition, criteria of prestige, solidarity and achievement)
- their political dimensions (patron-client relationships and factions, neo-patrimonialism) or
- their magico-religious dimensions (accusations of witchcraft)

This is therefore an obviously holistic and eminently positive perspective.

Anthropology of development needs to break away from another type of holism: the type of that considers society as a coherent and homogeneous whole. These, for different reasons, hold that behavior simply reflects the system, that positions are simply positions within a social structure. This is also the case with 'culturalism' which reduces all societies to 'one' system of cultural values, or even to a 'national character' or 'basic personality', if not to a 'habitus'.

**Two types of holism can be confronted:**

- 1) transversal - methodological holism
- 2) multidimensional - ideological holism

Development facts indicate the use of methodological holism and the rejection of ideological holism.

### Anthropology as a highlighting of actors strategies

Anthropology of social change and development is 'actor-oriented'. It gives priority to the conceptions and actions of actors at the base and 'consumers' of development. It underlines the logics and rationalities that determine their conceptions and behavior. It emphasizes the existence of real spaces of decision-making at all levels, as well as the choices that individuals make in their own name or in the name of institutions of which they consider themselves to be the delegates. This 'heuristic point of view' can thus be placed under the heading of methodological individualism properly speaking.

However, the anthropology of social change and development does not presume that the social actor has only one single rationality, based either on the neo-liberal pattern or on several of its more circumspect versions, nor does it support the notion of a single formal principle at the centre of all logics of specific action. Actors strategies are not just about 'mastering zones of uncertainty' or maximizing the relationship between ends and means. 'Real-life' actors, be they individuals or collectivities, navigate between several logics, choose between several rationalities and live in a mental and material world woven with ambiguities, and ambivalences, in the sight of other people, in quest of their recognition or in confrontation with their antagonism, and under their multiple influences.

### Anthropology of social change and development and the fields of anthropology

Anthropology of social change and development is as much an heir as it is a pioneer. It inherits **various layers of contributions which can be classified under 4 headings:**

- 1) religious anthropology
- 2) economic anthropology
- 3) political anthropology
- 4) symbolic anthropology

### Anthropology of social change and development and religious anthropology

There are certainly privileged areas in which change is more visible and more impressive than in others. The religious domain, which is nevertheless the domain in which patrimonialist and backward-looking ethnology prospered, is also the field which anthropology of social change was most massively and spontaneously involved. Missionary enterprises, new syncretic cults, prophetic movements, the transformation of traditional magico-religious systems, the recent arrival of Western and Eastern sects, the production of new clergies: these phenomena come to resonate with the processes of economic change and the facts of development. The actors of religious change are also the actors of economic change.

### Anthropology of social change and development and economic anthropology

Economic anthropology left behind a great number of achievements, which we should not forget under the influence of new trends. **Three heritages intersect:**

- 1) the 'open-ended' question of the articulation between economy and society, which emphasizes the social and cultural norms that come to bear on economic behavior.
- 2) the analysis of 'peasant rationalities', which puts the priority on the search for specifically technical and economic logics and coherences
- 3) Marxist anthropology, of a more morphological order, which makes an inventory of social classes and articulates the modes and relations of production.

These heritages must all be taken into account in the analysis of social change and development.

## Anthropology of social change and development and political anthropology

Classic political anthropology frequently placed the priority on visible and institutional forms of power and on 'traditional' political structures, viewed in terms of stability, but it has also accumulated valuable knowledge on the means of acquiring notability, on village patron-client systems, on the relationship between seniority and authority or gender, on the interrelations between power and the supernatural, on the transformation of pre-colonial political structures, on the power struggles among kin and on related strategies of alliance, as well as other subjects of which we must be aware in order to understand how development action is integrated into the rural political game.

## Anthropology of social change and development and symbolic anthropology

Reflection on the cultural codes based on which the actions proposed and the actors who propose them are analyzed, on the popular knowledge onto which technique-scientific knowledge is supposed to be grafted, on the semiological configurations that organize the fields in which change is projected is proof enough. It is essential to attach the utmost importance to 'emic' conceptions, 'modes of indigenous thought', 'local life-worlds', indigenous 'ways of thinking'.

An important precondition must be fulfilled, however, before we can come into this anthropological inheritance: the taking into account of all the actors involved in the interactions linked to change and to development, in other words, not only 'grassroots' actors and those originating in indigenous societies, but also external actors, regardless of their level of intervention. They are all involved in religious anthropology, economic anthropology, economic anthropology, political anthropology and symbolic anthropology. It is by revising and re-evaluating them, rather than ignoring them, that a fruitful combination of empirical enquiry and 'heuristic viewpoints' can be achieved, and that the anthropology of social change and development might, thus make a small contribution to the renewal of anthropology and social science in general.

- Antropologie wordt niet altijd serieus genomen. 'Idealisten, partizanen, helpers van het kolonialisme' – 'antropologen als professionele vertragers'
  - Antropologie bevindt zich in een crisis, ontwikkelingsdenken ook. Er is geen wereldwijd systeem van interpretatie meer.
  - Antropologische inzichten worden wijd en zijd erkend als zijnde belangrijk (bv. migranten, integratiestudies)
  - Antropologie van ontwikkeling heeft een missie en de potentie om veel interessants te 'ontdekken'.
- Waar ligt de kracht van antropologie:
- \* Holisme & methodologisch individualisme (actor perspectief)
  - \* Antr. kijkt naar veel aspecten en maakt gebruik van een intensieve, lange termijn, *real life* methode.
  - \* Je kunt allerlei processen niet zomaar scheiden:
  - \* Economische verschijnselen maken deel uit van het ontwikkelingsproces en zijn niet te scheiden van sociale dimensies, de culturele en symbolische dimensies, de politieke dimensies en de magische-religieuze dimensies
  - \* Antropologie van ontwikkeling heeft iets te zeggen over alle terreinen van antropologie beoefening (65-66):

## Chapter 5. Stereotypes, ideologies and conceptions

This boomerang effect of 'reality' on development practitioners corresponds to

**two causes which are very simple in their principle:**

- 1) People do not react as expected because the expectations regarding their behavior are misguided. In other words, development agents have erroneous and 'biased' conceptions about African populations.
- 2) People do not act as expected because they have good reasons for not doing so. The logics of 'clients' and those of 'sellers' do not coincide.

This chapter will concentrate on the first point, which takes into account the conceptions of the actors involved in development, namely how they perceive development in general, how they perceive development projects in particular, and, finally, how they perceive the other actors involved. This is not only a question of ideology.

Reciprocal social conceptions constitute the basic data needed for understanding individual strategies as well as their interaction, in other words, the 'policy game' that a project represents. The way developpees is neither more accurate nor less biased than the way in which developpees view developers.

It is possible to point out the existence of a **meta ideology** of development as well as **infra-ideologies** of development.

Meta-ideologies or infra-ideologies are so many preconceptions that are handed around within the developmentalist configuration, and which anthropology of development must avoid in order to produce new knowledge.

### A meta-ideology of development

**Two paradigms** which appear to be intricately linked provide an overall justification of the professional practices of developers, regardless of their ideological, moral or political orientations:

- a) Development seeks the welfare of others (the altruist paradigm). Hence its strong moral connotation.
- b) Development implies technical and economic progress (the modernist paradigm). Hence its strong evolutionist and technicist connotation.

All development interventions are based, more or less on these two paradigms.

The point to note is that what the altruist paradigm and the modernist paradigm have in common is that both constitute an almost unavoidable reservoir of justification.

### Infra-ideologies: conceptions

'**Infra-ideologies**' of development entails conceptions that shape real or projected world visions.

Two series of complementary conceptions exist side by side:

- \* First conceptions of societies as they are
- \* Second conceptions of societies as they ought to be

These conceptions sometimes refer to models already in existence, sometimes to models yet to be invented (utopia). These aims are combined with attempts to transfer and to create structures and modes of organization (or social technologies) based on a social ideal to be constructed. The influence of socialist ideologies and of Western Christians is clear. They are often 'disconnected' from academic theories, they continue to function even when the academic theories that lent them explicit justification fall out of favor or out of use. The perception of African societies as 'primitive' and 'backward' is currently forbidden in public discourse, and no longer expressed in academic works, but it nevertheless continues to shape, implicitly, the conceptions of a number of development operators

### Five stereotypes

#### 1. The consensual village community

Africa, seen from its villages, is supposed to be the continent where community is the order of the day, and consensus a general rule. 'Community development' is only one of the shapes it assumes. This exotic, 'community-centred' idealization of village solidarities has served to strengthen so-called 'African socialist' politics, discourses on 'authenticity' and the goodwill of NGO activist. Regardless of the political and ideological affiliation of government, 'mass' control by development institutions and by administrators gives priority to aggregates, villages, associations, groups and co-operatives, above all else.

On the eve of colonialization, most rural African societies were already strongly hierarchical and individual-community-centred as they aspired to be, were promptly appropriated by existing groups and intermediaries, even if they did not always play into the hands of the powerful and sometimes managed to create new spaces.

#### 2. The peasant as an individual petty entrepreneur

It is true that, contrary to community-centred ideology, most operational decisions in the economy (or health) domains are made by specific individuals, at levels other than that of the village or so called 'community'. However, these decisions mobilize various sets of solidarities and appeal to a variety of interests. The peasant is described as an 'investor', seeking after individual gains (economic and political), subjecting all collective actions to a personal calculation of the relations between advantages and disadvantages. The main motivation for assuming a leadership role is not prestige but gain, underlines the fact that this is in fact a prefabricated model.

Contemporary society (as opposed to 'traditional' society) is seen as being regulated by strictly economic and organizational mechanisms, related to the market or to the state, mechanisms which supposedly bring independent, rational actors into relationship with each other, with a view to maximizing their profit on the basis of financial calculations, or of their efficiency evaluated through purely functional and abstract criteria.

It is therefore necessary to take into consideration the fact that in Africa as well, 'modernization' is also combined with other factors such as the discrepancy between ongoing practice and the official model, among others.

### 3. The peasantry and its traditionalism

Reference to a so-called ancestral past is incredibly frequent. By dint of searching for an elusive economic actor, one ends up blaming tradition for the fact that this factor cannot be found. Superstitions, customs, mentalities, are repeatedly and routinely called upon to account for the 'backwardness' of peasant populations, their inertia or their resistance to development operations. The contrast with Western civilization is still real, but this should not lead us to believe, under the influence of exoticism, that everything that is different is 'traditional'.

**This stubborn illusion of traditionalism can be imputed to two processes:**

- 1) Everything in Africa is unrelated to what is considered to be 'modern' is automatically attributed to African traditionalism and linked to a cliché of ancestral Africa which purportedly manages to weather contemporary storms.
- 2) Everything belonging to what is taken to be 'modern' sectors but which fails to correspond to what we could call the Western economic or political norm, is also alleged to be cultural vestiges, belonging, despite 'modern appearances', to the same old patrimonial stock.

### 4. The submissive and passive peasantry

The kind of argument, which interprets mechanism of domination as the product of an implacable machinery, or as the expression of an extremely sophisticated conspiracy seems oblivious of the dialectic between the actor and the system, and fails to be available to petty producers, and permanent or temporary migrants, as well as their capacity to adapt and to improvise.

### 5. The uncaptured, restive, rebellious peasantry

Peasants supposedly refuse to enter the modern market and supposedly take refuge behind self-sufficiency and ancient solidarities, as a form of resistance to the state and to the modern economy.

Where *Meillassoux* saw an imperialist strategy meant to delay integration, *Hyden* sees peasant resistance to the efforts of integration by imperialism. Not only do peasants fail to elude the grip of the state and to lead self-sufficient lives, their integration into exchange circuits linked to the modern economy is partly of their doing. Peasants are not rebels who triumphantly resist entry into the modern economy. It is undoubtedly unrealistic to see the peasant as a rebel, even if the term is used as praise rather than derision. Insertion into the monetary economy, not only appears obvious, but are also interiorized by most peasants, whether they approve or not.

### The relative truth of stereotypes: the example of 'culture'

It is through opposition to a related stereotype that one develops one's own stereotype, and one occasionally encounters an outrageous combination of two elements diametrically opposed to each other. At any rate, it is hardly reasonable to aim at defining the economic essence of peasantries in terms of just one principle. The search for founding truth on which society or the peasant economy is constructed is clearly a search for an illusion. There is an obvious stock of shared conceptions, based on certain cultural heritage, of which language is the vector and foundation. But how can we distinguish the levels at which they appear: the village, the region, the 'ethnic group', or the 'cultural zone'?

It is obvious that we are constantly in the presence of common conceptions, shared by groups of actors. This is precisely what the term 'culture' refers to: it is as simple as that. **But these stocks of shared conceptions are:**

- a) subject to evolution and change
- b) do not afford equal coverage to all types of referents
- c) are not homogeneous
- d) are not necessarily integrated into 'world views' and are not necessarily generated by fundamental 'values'.

These 4 elements are often overshadowed by culturalist positions, explained and theorized as in the case of certain ethnologists, are stable and ancient, exist at all levels, are homogeneous and reflect a world view cemented by common values. It is essential to distinguish between various levels of concepts. Those who overuse the word culture fail to do this, or do it only to a small degree.

But these popular concepts, which are all too frequently lumped together, can also be subdivided into several levels namely, common popular concepts, specialized popular concepts, popular sectoral concepts.

- the commonsense level, the normal perception of everyday reality, of 'the obvious' which varies from latent and implicit codes to more conscious norms. These are largely shared by members of a given culture and differ from one culture to another. - *shared popular concepts or representation*
- these everyday conceptions are not all used in the same way: certain relatively sophisticated and elaborate popular concepts are only called on, when needed, to provide a type of ready-made sense which is not required in ordinary interaction. - *specialized popular concepts*
- sectoralized knowledge, in which certain conceptions are shared only by specific groups. In fact, the term 'culture' invariably conceals the fact that more or less distinguishable, independent 'sub-cultures' do exist. VB the 'women culture' in Africa, in each society, women shared conceptual systems and the behavioral norms of women are in part different from men's, while still remaining a part of a broader, common culture. - *popular sectoral concepts*

## **The propensity for stereotypes: the example of ‘needs’**

To ignore these different levels, to ignore ‘the dynamics of concepts’ and the ‘syncretism on the move’ that are manifested in them, opens the door to stereotypes. Concepts like ‘culture’ become stereotypes only in consequence of the excessive use that made of them. ‘Need’ is a very good example.

What is really need, who is to define the needs of whom, how is a ‘need’ expressed, and to whom? Which reader or these lines is capable of giving a clear answer when caught off-guard, and even after mature reflection, to the question: ‘what do you need?’ And who would refrain from adjusting his answer according to his idea of the kind of ‘need’ the questioner might be willing to satisfy? The idea that objective needs exist, that these needs are common to an entire population, that its representatives are capable of making a spontaneous statement about these needs or of identifying them based on a consensus arrived at during village meetings.

2 paradigma’s

1. development seeks the welfare of others

2. development implies technical and economic progress

all development interventions are based on these paradigma’s

They have in common that they constitute an almost reservoir of justification.

infra ideologies: conceptions that shape real or projected world visions

5 stereotypes:

1. the consensual village community - consensus is a general rule

2. the peasant as an individual petty entrepreneur - peasant as investor, seeking personal gains

3. the peasantry and its traditionalism - reference to ancestral past

4. submissive and passive peasantry - mechanism of domination = product of onverbiddelijke machine

5. uncaptured, restive, rebellious peasantry - peasant refuse to enter modern market

## **Chapter 6. Is an anthropology of innovation possible?**

### **A panorama in four points of view**

I would like to mention 4 'points of view' on agro-pastoral innovation, which I think, define the contours of most of the statements that anthropology produces on the subject of agro-pastoral innovation: the latter has been considered sometimes as a process of social diffusion, sometimes as a phenomenon of social indexing, sometimes as the end product of popular creativity, and sometimes as the result of reinterpretation.

### **Innovation as a process of diffusion**

Innovation is , as it were, naturally diffused, regardless of its points of origin. In sociology as in anthropology, the diffusionist viewpoint can be broken down into three components: the successive and somewhat dated anthropological 'points of view' and a more recent sociological paradigm

The first anthropological point of view: classic diffusionism at the beginning of the twentieth century



## Chapter 7. Developmentalist populism and social science populism

Ideology, action, knowledge

### Intellectuals and their ambiguous populism

By 'populism' I mean to evoke neither 'popular' movements nor the attitude of a charismatic political leader. In this case, I will concentrate on just one of these meanings, which sees populism as a form of social relationship which intellectuals engage in with the 'people', if only on symbolic level.

### The poor according to Chambers

For *Chambers* 'the poor' and 'the people' are one and the same. The 'poor' constitute a variable category. The poor are thus, in his particularly broad and imprecise definition of the word, all those who are excluded, marginalized and ignored by development, that is to say, the vast majority of the rural populations. What he refers to as the 'poor' is precisely what others refer to as the 'people'. 'Those who are invisible and unknown'. These characteristics are all negative, but herein resides their strength: the observation they make is irrefutable. This all-inclusive definition does not stand to reason nor does it make allowances for a reasonably relevant classification of 'poverty' as a category. The populist project, and this is its strength, puts this invisible category on the stage, makes them visible, unavoidable, demonstrates their existence and their concrete reality in the very spaces in which they are usually condemned to move as phantoms.

### The developmentalist populist complex

Another characteristic namely its tendency continually to re-invent itself. The people, having once more been forgotten, and never having been taken seriously, must be perpetually re-announced and re-proclaimed.

### Moral populism

The first dimension of Chamber's populism is: moral populism. Those intervening in development must invert their approach and thus start from the 'bottom up' instead of starting from the 'top down'. Moral populism, in fact, has two facets it also has a polemical dimension:

- to affirm that the poor exist and
- that little attention is paid to them implies a condemnation of those who are guilty of this refusal and of this disregard, or of those who uphold it.

### Cognitive populism and methodological populism

The moral motivation results in a thirst for knowledge. In the context of rural development, how can we overlook the notional systems peculiar to the populations involved. Qualitative enquiry seems to be a preliminary step: in the event that quantitative survey is feasible, it can only be conducted on the basis of an in-depth, detailed knowledge of 'indigenous' categories of thoughts and behavioral norms. This is the aspect of scientific populism that I refer to as methodological populism; it opens the way, under methodological monitoring, to new fields of knowledge. Social science should observe the conceptions and practices of the 'poor' with the keenest attention.

### Ideological populism

Populist stereotypes stand out because they appreciate and defend the people. They have a certain flavor of nostalgia. Similar stereotypes that reflect on 'traditional peasant societies' can result either in condemnation (cultural obstacles that hinder development) or in praise (the foundation of 'another' kind of development).

### Populism and miserabilism

Chambers sometimes insist on the 'resources' of the people, on their potential for creativity and adaption: regardless of the conditions in which they live or are forced to live, the 'poor' are able to manage the situation with a remarkable savoir-faire. Chambers invites us to consider the poor as 'experts', he also attempts to provide a more general interpretation, **via the identification of four domains in which rural populations have, in his opinion, demonstrated their outstanding competence:**

- \* agricultural practices
- \* environmental knowledge
- \* powers of observation
- \* experimental capacities

We thus encounter a complex combination comprising, on one hand a distinct methodological populism (the people as a reservoir of sense, accessible either through popular 'traditional' knowledge or through the survival strategies deployed within and, on the other, an approach that falls under ideological populism (the romantic ideas intellectuals have about the people). The people live in constant fear of the future have neither independence nor room for maneuver. Populism overestimates the autonomy of the people, while miserabilism underestimates it. Miserabilism sees the people as victims, and it characterizes their cultures in terms only of an absence or a deficiency.

## Where action becomes compromise

Let us dispel two potential causes of misunderstanding. Let us begin with the example of action, that is, with development practices. Populist ideology gives rise to a policy that promotes characteristics popular resources and supports the dynamics of local societies, while miserabilism ideology generates an educational policy providing for a vulgarization of knowledge coming from the outside, aimed at populations who are incapable of managing on their own.

On one hand, development situations imply that the local populations are self-reliant and inevitably rely on an endogenous dynamic, but, on the other, they just as inevitably involve external interveners and assume that transfers of knowledge and resources will naturally take place. There is a constant shift and tend to insist on one pole to the detriment of the other. They cannot abandon one in favor of the other. At one point or another, they will have to take the opposite pole into consideration: those who position themselves in the camp of ideological populism will still have to make allowances for external interveners, while those on the miserabilist side of the fence will still have to make allowances for internal dynamics.

Chambers populist position implies that 'rural populations are actors and not subjects under observation or sources of data': participatory research is therefore necessary, so that the poor might 'have access to the control of their own destinies'. The intellectual and the populist developmentalist will open the eyes and the mouths of the poor, and provide them with the necessary tools for criticism. Chambers calls for a 'third culture' which is neither the culture of classic experts nor that of classic researchers. But he does in fact recognize that 'even though there is a lot of talk about 'participation', and 'research-participation' when all is said and done, it is always an external intervener who tries to change things'. This is precisely at the point of intersection between grassroots populism and avant-garde pessimism, a crossroads that is common to developmentalism and to revolutionary politics: how should 'the strong desirous of changing the conditions of the weak' proceed.

## ... and where knowledge can become opposition ...

Once they have discovered the people, anthropologist and sociologist either describe the hidden resources at the disposal of the people or analyze the deprivation under which they labour. They rarely attempt to do both. Populism in the social sciences combines both the heuristic tendency ('methodological populism' exploring the resources of dominated people, which is of a more anthropological order) and an ideological tendency, which overlooks the effects induced by the internalization of domination (it operates in accordance with ideological populism and projects romantic stereotypes).

Social science researchers, free from the constraints of action, unlike development operators, are able to focus exclusively on one pole without having to make allowances for the other. A sociologist studying domination can spend his entire research career ignoring popular conceptions, in the same way that an anthropologist can turn out one publication after another without ever taking political constraints into consideration.

dimensions of Chambers populism;

1. moral populism - start form bottom up, de morele motivatie, aantonen dat arme bestaan
2. cognitive populism and methodological populism - morele motivatie leidt tot een hang naar kennis. kwalitatieve enquiry
3. ideological populism - appreciate and defend the people

Populism overestimates the autonomy of people, while miserabilism underestimates it.

Miserablism sees the people as victims, and it characterizes their cultures in terms only of absence or deficiency.

## Chapter 8. Relations of production and modes of economic action

### Sonhgay-Zarma societies under colonization: peasant mode of production relations of production

The theory of 'the articulation of modes of production' entails a hint of dualism (the coexistence of a 'traditional sector' and a 'capitalist sector').

#### Subsistence logic during the colonial period

Subsistence logics worden ook wel logics of reproduction genoemd

##### 1. Peasant strategies:

- \* Individual in nature
- \* Ook conflicten (/ peasant resistance) worden niet uitgevochten in collectieve acties
- \* Er is geen sprake van coördinatie van gedrag. Maar: actoren handelen binnen beperkende structuren en het scala aan keuzemogelijkheden is dus ook beperkt
- \* Er bestaat een convergentie van economisch gedrag: een *logic of subsistence* > "I am referring here ... to social 'subsistence', in other words to the satisfaction of a family's social needs, to its cultural reproduction" (p.129) "it underlines the rationality on which a whole range of modes of economic action are grounded" (p.135)

##### 2. De subsistence logic gaat samen met

- \* Speculation en capitalist logics
- \* Logic of accumulation
- \* Evasive strategies > strategieën om afpersing e.d. te ontwijken
- \* (Tijdelijke) migration "The logic of subsistence cut across different relations of production in which the peasants (who were not only peasants) were engaged" (p.130)

##### 3. De subsistence logic bestaat uit

- \* Merchant subsistence (sale of products)
- \* Wage subsistence (sale of labour power)
- \* Self-sufficient subsistence "The 'subsistence logic' can be viewed as a kind of link between the various modes of economic action covering the range of individual peasant practices ... and the system of constraints to which they are all subjected" (p.131); "An analysis of relations of production becomes an analysis of the constraints brought to bear on the logic of subsistence, the obstacles in its path" (p.130)

#### Relations of production and contemporary transformation

It is feasible to hold that analysis of the relations of production and the subsistence logic conducted with reference to colonization is rendered obsolete when one considers contemporary society? This is far from the case. The forces of production have been developed in certain sectors. But these have not resulted in a disruption of rural relations of production. Migration has chosen new destinations, but the phenomenon remains as important as ever. There is one area of significant change: despotic exploitation has essentially come to an end. Its cessation did not coincide with independence. A first stage in its cessation occurred in 1945, with the end of the 'colonial golden age' and the suppression of forced labour. A second break with the past occurred in the 1970s with the coming on stream of uranium income and the years of drought, the joint effects of which led to a spectacular reduction in taxation. The plundering of the countryside came to an end.

But there are other types of change that cannot be analyzed in terms of relations of production, to the extent that they occur at another level and are played out 'within' the relations of production, to the extent that they occur at another level and are played out 'within' the relations of production already in place. This applies to most of the innovations resulting from the various development operations, either directly (infrastructure) or indirectly (diffusion of techniques and material), often by the market rules of 'free competition' or by means of an imperceptible change in 'individual' behavior.

VB Hydro-agriculture schemes installed in the Niger river were the major development operations in the west of the country. After modest beginnings, they turned out to be an unquestionable success, thanks to massive investments, and led to a marked improvement in the lives of the peasants concerned. However, the installation of these 'co-operative' structures has not affected the predominance of the peasant mode of production. It is possible that these innovations affected 'secondary' relations of production most of all, with the development, on a temporary basis, of the use of paid labour in the rice fields and with the shift in the gender division of labour. But this did not result in any significant changes in the social structure.

As the situation now stands, one can hardly maintain that rural 'entrepreneurs' or capitalist agriculture exploitation have become a dominant reality. What is noticeable, at the most, is an increase in strategies of accumulation. The constant flux of migrants from zones equipped with infra-structure raises a number of questions surrounding the subsistence logic. **Why is the drift from the land still going on, largely undisturbed, despite the relative increase in agricultural resources?**

1. So long as the workforce available on site is sufficient those surplus to requirements can continue the outflow to other areas. We could advance the hypothesis that the diversification of means of subsistence is a characteristic

element of the subsistence logic. One could argue that the revenue gained on account of migration far exceeds the revenues available locally.

2. Migration is the combined result of research for ready cash, the emancipation of juniors and the search for prestige.  
The effort to provide for the needs of one's family, or for one's own need, plus the means of gaining social recognition or admission to new social networks all play a role in the phenomenon, though they are not always easy to discern. At any rate, migrations cannot be analyzed on the basis of a single cause.

Thus, when producers 'decide' to adopt innovations from the outside, whether introduced by migrants or by development intervention, the processes involved cannot, in themselves, throw any direct light on the analysis of relations of production, nor are they liable to pinpoint the transversal logics that regulate these relations of production.

## Conclusion

The concept of a '**subsistence logic**' or a '**logic of reproduction**', is, for its part, a lot more dynamic than the concept of 'relations of production', to the extent that it underlines the rationality on which a whole range of modes of economic action are grounded. The 'subsistence logic', however, is not a kind of 'master key', capable of explaining everything. It is itself relatively abstract, since its aim is to indicate the basic economic coherence of a variety of concrete modes of behavior. 'The subsistence logic' is not the only over short periods of time. Though it is true that the small farmer is, as a rule, mainly involved in a logic of reproduction, this can also coincide with a logic of accumulation; thus, the logic of accumulation is not monopolized by 'great families', comprising civil servants-aristocrats-landowners, though these great families provide the most outstanding and effective examples of accumulation strategies in action.

**Defensive strategies** - aimed at warding off risks, minimizing risk and 'by-passing' risk factors

**Offensive strategies** - corresponding to goals of growth and accumulation

Defensive strategies are mainly deployed by small-scale producers are not incompatible with the putting into practice of 'offensive' strategies appropriate to the 'investment logic'; it all depends on the climate and the economic context.

Hence, the 'subsistence logic' can exist in combination with other logics of economic action, and with logics of non-economic action, in a wide variety of relationships. Obviously, this is far removed from the kind of equation that rule that 'a mode of production = a mode of economic action'.

Subsistence logic ook wel logic of reproduction: underlines the rationality on which a whole range of modes of economic action are grounded.

2 verschillende strategieën:

- defensive strategies - aimed at warding off risks, minimizing risk and 'by-passing' risk factors

- offensive strategies - corresponding to goals of growth and accumulation

mode of production = not (like a rule) a mode of economic action

the subsistence logic can exist in combination with other logics of economic action and non economic action

## Chapter 9. Development projects and social logic

Regardless of the type of organization or the mode of intervention, a development action between social actors belonging to different worlds and whose behavior patterns are regulated by a variety of logics. In the face of the resources, opportunities and constraints of which a particular development undertaking is composed, in interaction with the milieu the social actors involved behave in various contrasting, sometimes contradictory ways. In reality, despite the existence of an infinite variety of individual actions and reactions, the number of behavior patterns is limited. I will attempt to define these in terms of 'logics' or 'strategies'. 'By the strategy of agricultural producers, we mean the understanding put into practice by those for whose way of life agricultural and pastoral processes of production are central, and who bring agricultural means to bear as one element in achievement and reproduction the maintenance, reproduction and growth of the family unit, in a context ever increasingly affected by uncertainty'. A logic or strategy must always be specifically defined in order to make sense from a sociological point of view.

### The context of interaction

The way peasants react to a project depends to a great degree on external factors. This is one element that analysis must take into account. It is possible, everywhere, to bring to light a particular local history, which we could call a local history of contact with politico-economic interventionism, which necessarily structures current behavior patterns, at least in part. Consequently, the synchronic and diachronic contexts should in no event be ignored or underestimated.

### Level of project coherence

A project always claims to have a specific coherence which justifies its existence, and which is often opposed to former or neighboring projects, the development configuration being a world of fierce competition. However, this necessary declaration of coherence, which is one of the essential conditions of funding, and which is often expressed through a specific rhetoric is always undermined not only by the interaction between the project and the target population but also by the various elements that participate in the project itself. The example of the classic rural development project.

**Technical coherence** is overshadowed, if only nominally, by another level of coherence which has no direct relation with agronomy and its techniques. Notwithstanding, this declared coherence is sometimes in contradiction with the 'real' modes of functioning of public administration. As a result, this type of project is almost always short of at least some of the means required for action.

A **third level of coherence**, also independent of the two mentioned above, **concerns the role of financiers and donors**. Their influence is manifested indirectly, in the choice of technical agricultural models, in the national economic policy and the projects it approves. It is the project as an organization or as a system of interaction between employees and agents that inevitably leads to various types of sidetracking of the project as it exists 'on paper'.

**In other words, all development projects are connected, over and beyond the single level of coherence they are obliged to exhibit (the project 'on paper') to several partially contradictory levels of compatibility:**

- a) the internal coherence of the technical model
- b) the compatibility of the project with the national economic policy
- c) the conformity of the project with donors' norms
- d) the internal dynamic of the project itself.

Thus, even if the problem of its contacts with the population is put aside, a project is still a partially incoherent entity, since it comprises various types of coherence.

### Peasant reactions

'**side tracking**': it is the inevitable outcome of contact with reality.

The question is whether or not everyday sidetracking can help us to learn a few lessons, even if they only illustrate the fact that 'developers' and 'developees', of necessity, do not have the same logics.

VB The reaction of peasants are often linked to economic rationalities properly speaking, which integrate data on the economic and ecological environment: producers tend to take as point of reference a year of insufficient rainfall rather than a year of average rainfall: to minimize on inputs if cash is limited; to avoid farming methods that rely on a workforce that is unavailable at a time when numerous tasks need to be performed; to preserve or gain access to land and to increase patrimonial land.

The criteria on which peasants and experts base their professional activity and the risk they respectively face are completely different: when a project fails, the professional in charge usually suffers no professional consequences, but the peasant gambles his security on each harvest.

**The following logics or strategies, more or less updated depending on the context, local situation or social groups, are the most frequently encountered:**

- \* Maximizing workforce productivity as opposed to productivity per hectare
- \* Attempts at capturing land or staking off lots of land when the process of improvement begins
- \* Placing priority on extensive farming whenever possible to the detriment of the intensification preached by projects
- \* Minimizing of risks due to the dysfunctioning of official circuits of maintenance, of commercialization, and of provision of inputs.

- \* Annual revision of the choice of crops, and, in particular, of the ratio of subsistence crops to cash crops. Also concerns the comparative profitability of both types of crops as speculative investments
- \* Control of the recruitment of the labour force
- \* Modes of accumulation and use of an eventual surplus based on norms of ostentation and patron-client strategies
- \* Use of non-agricultural resources
- \* Making investments outside agriculture
- \* Personal appropriation of collective resources
- \* Using credits obtained for ends other than those declared officially

The problem of enumeration might be simplified if an attempt is made to define 'types' of behavior, or a few major alternatives. The decisions peasants make at each of these levels appear to be connected essentially to context-related variables, and not to standard solutions or to the solutions that technical services and development operators usually prescribe.

#### **Context related variables:**

- the gravity of the ecological crisis,
- the degree of civil service corruption
- the degree of reliability of circuits of commercialization
- the availability of opportunities outside agriculture
- the amount of tension surrounding issues related to land etc.

Peasant logics are expressed through fragmented, individual economic behavior. They do not constitute a 'collective' reaction of the peasantry in question but rather an aggregate or composite effects. Convergent, atomized actor behavior should not be seen as the doing of a collective actor; hence our reference to actors' logics.

## **Two principles**

### **Two very general principles of concrete behavior:**

- The principle of selection
- Principle of side tracking

#### **Two principle of selection**

Technical messages, development projects and interventions are all 'packages' of sets of co-ordinated measures which claim to be coherent. The package proposed is never 'completely' adopted by the 'target' population: it is always picked apart, to a greater or lesser degree, by the selections that 'target' populations make among the elements proposed.

The usual process is one of selective adoption. Certain themes 'work' while others do not. This result in a number of 'perverse effects', which annul the effectiveness of the improvements proposed and might even induce outright negative results.

#### **The principle of sidetracking**

Peasants exploit the opportunities at their disposal in keeping with their own particular objectives. Selective adoption and sidetracking can both be considered as ways in which a target group 'appropriates' a project. The paradox is that this appropriation, which in theory is the end sought by development operations, assumes shapes that often run counter to the project's objectives and methods. One can attempt to draw out some more specific logics encountered in a variety of practical situations, I will mention only 3 of these.

## **Three logics, among many others**

### **Seeking safety**

Minimizing risk is a fundamental peasant strategy. One could go even further and estimate that routine behavior generally ensures safety for the peasantry and for the development agents who are not very flexible, as a rule, and who often propose innovations - to other people - in a very routine manner!

Concerning health; it would appear that the superposition of 'magico-religious' meaning systems and the strong demand for Western medicine observed in Africa, far from being a sign of cultural 'backwardness' or of 'ignorance', corresponds to a perfectly rational pursuit of security: it is a matter of combining the empirical search for therapeutic security all round with the need for symbolic security.

### **Aid seeking**

The notion of self-sufficiency, or of 'self-reliance' has often been a key-factor of recent development projects. The assumption is made, a priori, that the populations share this point of view and that it coincides with their best interests (but this is merely an ideological or moral points of view which cannot be attributed to or imposed on other people with impunity).

In fact, the opposite strategy, which we could qualify as aid seeking, since it aims at making the most of external aid, is extremely prevalent. There is nothing surprising about people attempting to gain as much as possible from the financial and material benefits that project provides, while giving as little as possible in return.

### **Monopolizing aid opportunities**

Specific groups within the 'target' population use development aid for their own ends, in order to increase their privileges or simply to obtain privilege. This means that development actions can be seen as putting facilitates,

advantages and opportunities at the disposal of a population divided into groups, factions and networks. Development aid is also a stake in face of which certain persons or certain groups are better prepared or better than others when it comes to taking advantage.

### Strategic logics and national logics

**Diverse logics are all 'strategic' in the sense that they form the grounds on which explicit peasant action system, at the interface between politics and like 'logics' and 'strategies' are practically identical.** Relatively implicit logics of a more or less symbolic or cognitive nature also come into play. Certain notions that developers consider obvious are not shared by developpees. There are certain 'notional discrepancies' involved in the interaction between interveners and populations. Deep divergencies arise as a result of the difference between the conceptions of projects agents and those of populations, differences that go a long way towards explaining why projects are thrown off track. Notional logics thus take their place alongside strategic logics.

#### 3 Conclusions can be deduced from the above reflections;

1. Resistance to an innovation has its motivations and its coherence, this does not amount to mythologizing popular behavior or to claiming that such kinds of 'resistance' are always inevitable or that they invariably produce positive effects. It is only by explaining them 'from the inside' that we can acquire the means of overcoming 'resistance' if necessary.
2. A successful innovation is the product of 'invisible bargaining' and of a compromise between various groups of development actors and various groups of social actors
3. Projects are subject to 'sidetracking'. There is a difference what is expected and what really happens. Sidetracking is a sign that the actors involved have 'appropriated' the development project.

Points of view of planners and economists differ completely from the criteria and risks of farmers.

- Safety versus risk
- Intensification versus extensive farming
- Agro-pastoral production versus non-agricultural resources
- Consolidating inheritance versus investment
- Redistribution (patron-client investment) versus savings (productive investment)

The way peasant react to a project depends to a great degree on external factors.

3 levels of coherence:

1. coherence that justifies
2. technical coherence
3. coherence concerns the role of financiers and donors.

even if the problem of its contacts with the population is put aside, a project is still partially an incoherent entity, since it compromises various types of coherence.

side tracking: the inevitable outcome of contract with reality

- Selection – selective adoption. Certain themes of the technical package work, while others do not. *Vb. Mais in Krajan*
- Sidetracking - Peasants exploit the opportunities at their disposal in keeping with their own particular objectives (145). Zichtbaar: Ways in which a targetgroup 'appropriates' a project.

3 specific logics:

Seeking safety - minimizing risk

Aid seeking - gaining as much as possible from the financial and material benefits that a project provides

Monopolizing aid opportunities - in order to increase their privileges

## Chapter 10. Particular knowledge and scientific and technical knowledge

### Development actions bring 2 worlds into relationship;

1. On the one hand, there is the notional configuration of the 'target population' or of the 'peasant community'
2. On the other hand, there is the notional configuration of the development institutions and of their operators.

The two sets enter into relationship in the context of attempts at transferring skills.

If we want to find out why a vaccination campaign failed, it seems unrealistic to make, as preliminary, an exhaustive study of the cultural heritage of the villages question. A more reasonable approach would be to give priority to certain apparently relevant domains and to overlook others which seems less pertinent. If the action is to be carried out on the basis of understanding, choices will have to be made concerning priority areas.

I will concentrate here on only one aspect of the confrontation between the meaning system of a development project and the meaning system of rural populations for which it is destined: the confrontation between technical knowledge (originated in a Western system of cosmopolitan technical and scientific knowledge) and 'popular knowledge' (technical and non-technical alike).

### Popular technical knowledge

#### Rural development calls upon 3 broad areas:

- popular technical knowledge in the field of agriculture, animal husbandry and environment
- popular technical knowledge in the field of human and veterinary health
- popular technical knowledge in the field of management and economy.

#### The notion (popular technical knowledge) remains helpful for 2 reasons;

1. It has the merit of highlighting the fact that many fields of popular knowledge have an empirical foundation.
2. It allows us to differentiate between such practical-empirical knowledge and other more diffuse, broader and more speculative types of social knowledge.

It is hard to imagine how new agro-pastoral techniques can be introduced without first taking into consideration the agro-pastoral techniques already there - the peasant knowledge of agronomy, botany and ecology, on which these techniques build. It is therefore all the more surprising to note that the extent to which development operators in general overlook popular technical knowledge, and display a variety of attitudes which go from ignorance to contempt.

It might be helpful at this point to define some of the characteristics of the popular knowledge

### A few properties of popular technical knowledge

1. Popular technical knowledge constitutes a pool of pragmatic notions and skills, which rural producers put into practice, and which covers all areas of social life.

VB We are aware of the high degree of specialization of Fulani herdsmen. Yet despite of their technical competence, the world of development is often reserved on the subject of their economic competence. Anthropologist analysis demonstrates that the behavior of the Fulani people that is often stigmatized is, to the contrary, based on an entirely economic rationale, seen from the herdsmen's point of view.

Popular technical knowledge is thus based on different kinds of thinking.

2. Popular technical knowledge also comprises of meaning, which make possible the interpretation of practices, which make them meaningful.
3. Popular technical knowledge assumes variable, numerous, heterogeneous, and unequally distributed forms according to gender, age, status, surrounding milieu, or personal trajectory: a standard popular technical knowledge, held in common by everybody, would be a mere figment of the imagination. The relation between popular technical knowledge and money is also extremely variable: certain types of knowledge have market value and are highly 'commercialized', while others are 'free of cost' or inextricably linked to personal attributes. Some types of unspecialized popular knowledge do not belong to the category of common knowledge (knowledge about childbirth and infantile disease is the domain of the elderly women).
4. Popular technical knowledge undergoes change, evolves and hence is not merely 'traditional': it incorporates numerous accretions gained through former contacts with neighboring producers and with technical and scientific knowledge. The dynamism of popular knowledge is not restricted to the 'natural' environment, but concerns the social environment as well.

A peasant knows how to benefit from a system of credit, how to behave in a co-operative meeting, how to use cunning in dealing with sociologist etc.)

5. Popular technical knowledge does not necessarily occur as a 'system' and is not always based on an indigenous, harmonious founding 'theory'. Sometimes, peasant refuse, as it were, to increase their knowledge. Anthropological approaches in search of 'knowledge systems' thus tend to 'over-systematize' popular knowledge.

### Popular technical knowledge and technical-scientific knowledge

Difference between popular technical knowledge and technical scientific knowledge:



Popular technical knowledge	Scientific technical knowledge
Knowledge is localized, contextualized, empirical VB A millet cultivator in the Sahel has much finer technical knowledge of the local micro-ecosystem (and of that alone) than an university-educated agronomist.	Knowledge is uniform and formalized
Knowledge is applied by the producers and social actors themselves and exist on the spot and has to be modified	Knowledge is diffused by agents who do not put it into practice themselves. It is introduced from the outside and provides little scope for retro-action.

Both kinds of knowledges are only two elements which figure among a variety of types of knowledge and logics of interpretation into which people delve according to circumstances.

VB It is true that the African peasant combines an empirically earned ecological knowledge (=popular technical knowledge) with his conceptions about the role that spirits and the ancestors play in matters concerning fertility (=magical-religious knowledge). But the Western technocrat who holds operational research (technical-scientific knowledge) in high esteem also consults his horoscope or prays in church (=magical-religious knowledge).

**There exists an important difference;**

**Technical-scientific knowledge does *not* incorporate magical-religious knowledge as such. It is constructed in opposition to the magical-religious approach. This means that the technician trained in keeping with a technical-scientific culture is supposed to set aside his religious convictions.**

**Popular technical knowledge can be easily interwoven and imperceptibly combined, and legitimately so, with magical-religious knowledge.**

**At this point, 3 clarifications might be useful;**

- First, it may be noted that although technical-scientific knowledge runs counter to magical-religious knowledge and employs rather different methods, the former also gives rise to 'religious' attitudes to the extent that 'belief' is involved.
- Second, there is the obvious fact that popular technical knowledge is not restricted to Africa alone and that countries of the North also have a large share of this in addition to technical-scientific knowledge.
- Finally, there is the fact that popular technical knowledge and technical-scientific knowledge interact, thus producing hybrid phenomena

We need to bear in mind the fact that peasants do not have access to technical-scientific knowledge properly speaking (as knowledge which is taught in schools). This knowledge comes to them in the form of 'deconstructed' bits and pieces, in the shape of the messages diffused by development agents, as opposed to the systematic character of the technical-scientific culture itself.

### **Fields of popular knowledge and infrastructure**

It is more or less difficult to establish a line of demarcation between a technical knowledge and a magical-religious knowledge when it is a matter of health or of agriculture. So far as animal rearing and agriculture are concerned, production practices are obviously accompanied by magical-religious acts aimed at ensuring a good harvest or providing protection against spoliation.

Magical religious knowledge and popular soil-scientific, agronomic or climatological knowledges enter into combination with each other and complete each other, but despite their interlacing, each of these types of knowledge remains distinct. All cultures make distinctions between what is 'magical-religious' and what is not, but the criteria on which these distinctions are made obviously differ from one culture to another. There are indigenous 'emic' definitions of what is magical and what is not.

VB Thus, in the field of health, entire chunks of popular technical knowledge are clearly related to phytotherapy, 'old wives' remedies, or specialized knowledge and do not incorporate magical-religious procedures. Other series of conceptions and therapeutic practices involving supernatural agents do exist: in this case, it becomes impossible to distinguish between the technical and the magical-religious. In other words, patients systematically believe that the healing or improvement they experience is the result of 'treatment' although, from a bio-medical point of view, it could be a consequence of a natural defensive reaction of the body, or of the normal evolution of the disease, or of psychosomatic mechanisms.

Various types of popular knowledge differ from each other, to a great extent, precisely because of the nature of their empirical referents. According to the fields in which they are applied, they are subjected to different systems of constraints, which in turn give rise to configurations of concepts whose logics, construction and content are not the same. In the field of illness, for example, there is an enormous difference between visible, simple, easily identifiable disorders (like eye diseases) and diffuse, complex, ambiguous complaints ( linker internal diseases)

It is possible to speak in terms of external mechanisms (dispositifs) which differ according to the field of social practice in question and which influence the configuration of popular technical knowledges, and in particular their degree of independence in relation to magical or religious phenomena

**Dispositif:** the material base on which diseases are defined

Popular technical knowledge:

1. pool of pragmatic notions and skills, which is put in to practice and covers all areas of life
2. meaning,
3. assumes variables, vb some have market value while others are 'free of cost'
4. undergoes change, also concerns the social environment ( peasant knows how to benefit, to behave in a meeting etc.)
5. does not necessarily occur as a 'system'.

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- Second, there is the obvious fact that popular technical knowledge is not restricted to Africa alone and that countries of the North also have a large share of this in addition to technical-scientific knowledge.
- Finally, there is the fact that popular technical knowledge and technical-scientific knowledge interact,

## Chapter 11. Mediations and brokerage

### Development agents

The names given to development agents vary according to their field of intervention and their competence. Little is known about these agents, despite the fact that they occupy a central position. Most are devoted to describing the mission of development agents, or touting the merits of a particular method of executing development projects. Their authors present themselves as the unconditional defenders and active practitioners of the method in question. The information contained in such works has more to do with their authors' ideologies or the self-promotion of the institutions they work for than with the way in which development agents put all this good advice into practice.

### A parenthesis on corruption

The development world is filled with moral, symbolic or ideologic taboos, as a result of which many other domains are relegated to the periphery of knowledge and to the zone of what it is forbidden to say in public, despite the impact that such knowledge is likely to have on the analysis of the success or failure of development projects. Corruption, which constitutes a very important mechanism of social regulation, is one example that comes to mind.

### Development agents as mediators between types of knowledge

Development agents play various types of mediation roles. The one that concerns us is the abstract role they play as mediators between types of knowledge. Development agent assumes a double function: he or she is the spokesperson on behalf of technical-scientific knowledge and the mediator between technical-scientific knowledge and popular knowledge. On one hand, the development agent must promote technical-scientific knowledge and must present this as superior to popular technical knowledge; on the other hand, he is supposed to create a balance between both types of knowledge. This 'real' contradiction is obscured because the development institutions attribute only one of these two roles to the development agent. He is considered, first and foremost, as the spokesman of technical-scientific knowledge, and trained with this aim in mind. He is not trained to mediate between different types of knowledge.

The fact that development agents are not trained to be mediators does not mean that this role is not exist, nor does it simply means that the role is not assumed. The fragments of scientific and technical discourse that transit through the intermediary of the extension worker or of the nurse are invariably reinterpreted by the peasant in reference to his own particular system of knowledge and of meaning. For a better understanding of what this role of mediator entails, we may turn to one of its simplest aspects, namely language. Development agents are mediators first because they are interpreters.

### Language, literacy programs and communication

To transmit we must translate. Translation, the passage from one natural language to another, is the initial stage of rural development in Africa. Development agents are generally forced to improvise translations of messages and to manage, through their own devices, linguistic relations with the populations.

The issue is about communication in the local languages, and this communication is first and foremost an oral phenomenon. Communication in the African rural milieu (using mother tongues) usually assumes an oral form (including on radio and television). Regardless of the choice of media, and whether the developer speaks the developpees language or not, the problem surrounding the transmission of a 'technical message' still amounts to the inevitable confrontation between two systems of meaning.

The conclusion is clear: a development agent cannot play the role of spokesperson for technical-scientific knowledge without also assuming a role as a mediator. He or she cannot transmit without first translating, and the 'quality' of the 'translation' will depend on the degree of the development agent's mastery of both languages. But there are other facts to the role of mediator.

### Mediation and negotiation

Other conflicting elements include modes of behavior, practices, interests. The execution of a development project within a local milieu can be compared to an extensive process of 'informal negotiation', with the development agent caught up in its centre. It is the agent's responsibility to manage power struggles, underhand strategies and compromises.

**Development agents must assume 3 functions; an almost impossible task that entails an accumulation of contradictions and ambiguity. They must:**

- \* defend their own personal interest
- \* defend the interest of their institution
- \* mediate between various actors' interests and those of local factions

### Brokers

#### The development rent

Among the countries of the South, African countries are the most dependent on external aid. Development aid can rightly be defined as a 'rent'. Defining the African state as an assisted state is just another way of saying that it is dependent on external rent.

## Local development brokers

The term 'local development brokers' makes reference to the social actors implanted in a local arena who serve as intermediaries for the draining off of those external resources commonly referred to as 'development aid'. If we take the development project as an ideal type of the development operation, brokers represent the local social bearers of a project, those situated at the interface between the target population and the development institution, those who are supposed to represent the local population, the interlocutors of support and financial aid structures.

Development brokers are the by-products of local histories and operate within networks. Brokers attempt, beyond their ideological declarations, to reinforce their position in the local arena. A link is thus established between development brokerage and patron-client systems.

## A typology of brokers in relation to their networks

### 4 broad categories of brokerage networks:

1. **confessional networks**
2. **civil servant from a common locality**
3. **cultural/ethnic movements**
4. **peasant leaders**

#### 1. *Confessional networks*

Membership of a Church, a sect, a confraternity, allows for the mobilization of social contacts on the outside of the local community, lineage and kin to which one belongs. This type of membership, connection former missionary enterprises and today's philanthropic organizations, was the original form of decentralized brokerage, and is still by far the most important.

#### 2. *Civil servant from a common locality*

Village members associations in towns. They impel the creation of an increasing number of development projects with the help of their professional skills and the social or political relations acquired in the town or abroad. They thus manage to maintain or to re-establish a link with their social origin, and to take up a position in the local arena.

#### 3. *Cultural/ethnic movements*

They pursue a double objective. They promote the access of the populations to which they belong to a greater share of the development rent, on the claim that this population is subjected to an unfair 'ethnic' division of this rent. Their activities also allow their leaders to gain better access to positions in the national political arena.

#### 4. *Peasant leaders*

This is an expression used by many NGOs and development agencies to designate partners originating in the agricultural milieu, in order to provide the 'barefoot' brokers that institutions from the North require.

## Brokers or brokerage?

Brokers are not necessarily 'professionals'. It is more appropriate to speak in terms of a 'function of brokerage' which can be accomplished by individuals who play a variety of social roles. Brokerage roles are not always assumed by individuals; they can also be secured by an association, an institution. It is advisable to choose between the terms 'broker' and 'brokerage' according to the circumstances at hand.

## Integration of brokers into the local arena

### 4 broad categories can be distinguished:

- \* the broker is on the outside of the local political arena, and would like to get in.
- \* the broker is a powerless or low-status or marginalized actor in the local political arena. His role as a broker serves a strategy of upward mobilization.
- \* the broker is a high-status actor or occupies a central position in the local political arena.
- \* the broker want to get out of the local political arena. His brokerage function entails a strategy of social climbing on the outside.

The situation is one of co-existence of various centers of power, whose influence and fields of competence differ, and which are more or less articulated, hierarchical or concurrent and which often arise as the result of successive layers of historical accumulation.

### The relationship between local development brokers and traditional mediators

Many local powers of the traditional type, lineage chiefs, village chiefs, district chiefs, 'notables', served in the past or continue to serve as mediators. It is a known fact that colonization made use of these indigenous intermediaries either in the administration or the improvement of territories. Though these mediators benefited in their time from the financial dividends of their status they are often deprived of access to the development rent. As opposed to development brokers, they have not yet acquired mastery of the language spoken in the world of development.

In the phenomenon of modern, development-linked mediation, the capacity to serve as a go-between in the relationship between the developmentalist configuration and the local population involves a very specific factor, namely the development language.

## The development language

There is usually no communication between the linguistic world of the 'developee' and that of the 'developer'. When these worlds do come into contact, at the level of development projects, the development language, under the specific guise of a project language, essentially serves to reproduce projects and does not penetrate the local language.

## Two radically different linguistic worlds

The development language is an essential ingredient of development agencies, institutions and operators, but it hardly ever penetrates into the local languages. The fact that the development language remains on the threshold of the local language, is not attributable to linguistic reasons. The reason is quite simple: those who use the local language, 'developees', are not a part of the developmentalist configuration and have nothing to do with the language spoken there. The paradoxical thing about the development language is that it is supposed to address itself to developees while, in reality, it concerns only developers.

## The project language

The concrete form the development language assumes in the field, once it becomes operational and embodied in an institution in contact with local populations, is what we might call the 'project language'. In the same way that each organization has its own language, each project has its own project language, which is a specific and unique product of the development language. The use of the project language limited to certain situations: the written documents produced by the project; 'project-organization' meetings; agents training sessions' but also contacts between configuration. The project language is also supposed to communicate with the local language.

VB The analysis of an environmental management project, with an extremely participationist ideology, carried out in the Torodi area in Niger, is revealing in this regard. On one hand, the project language is well developed, both within the project organization itself and in its external contacts. The project language in question is almost always formalized through a series of illustrated posters, displayed around the project's conference room.

But on the other hand, the 'penetration' of this project language into the local population is almost non-existent. The vast majority of peasants, both male and female never use the project language, and, to tell the truth, are not at all concerned by it. In each village the number of peasants who have a slight notion of the project language, in its local language versions, does not exceed three or four persons at the most. But they never use it except in the presence of visitors.

Even NGO-type projects, which distance themselves as far as possible from the state project model, even projects that aim at being alternative, with a strong emphasis on participation, relapse willy-nilly into standard official language when it comes to addressing themselves to peasant assemblies in the local language.

**We could propose a 'model' to account for the Torodi project and projects of the same type. It is as if the project comprised 3 intersecting spheres;**

1. There is the project organization. The entire project depends, at the end of the line, on six amateurs in all, who do no more than could be expected of the technical services of the state in rural areas, under normal conditions.
2. There is the project language, which is omnipresent and had even less of an impact on the local population than the project-organization itself.
3. There is the sphere of evaluations. They play a key role in the projects reproduction.

The project language does not play a functional role in the relationship between the project organization and the local population involved. It is the project language that defines the project's personality for the benefit of the donors, and that provides at least some of the criteria needed for the continuous evaluations with which the project is confronted. It is also an essential component of the professional identity of those in charge of the project. Regular use of the project language provides them with the means of asserting their position within the local development configuration and of legitimating their competence and social worth.

## Language and brokerage

The situation is different in other projects which share the same ideology, or in other words, which have an identical project language but arrive through different channels, in particular NGOs. The increase in the number of NGO-type projects produces an increasing involvement of African partners originating in the 'civil society'. The result is the increase in the number of brokers referred to above.

Brokers supposedly speak the local language, but they must also master the development language.

As observed in the case of the Torodi project, projects reproduce themselves by means of the development language. Mastery of the development language is their ticket for entry into an international network, access to the developmentalist configuration and therefore to the promise of funds and projects. Hence, young Africans from the rural milieu can be observed in the process of demonstrating their fluency in the development language at this or that colloquium, workshop or seminar held in Geneva, Montreal or Berlin.

Finally, the difference between zones in which peasants organizations generate a locally produced surplus and those in which dependence on aid is the overriding strategy must also be taken into account. What impact does this have on the development language and, in more general terms, on brokerage

**Development agents as skilful mediators**

- Weinig erkenning van werkgever (institutes)
- Goede mediation komt weinig voor
- Verbetering mogelijk na expliciete training
- Goede mediators zijn vooral goede interpreters.

**Language**

- Lokale taal wordt vaak niet gesproken.
- Concepten moeilijk te vertalen in de lokale taal
- It involves bringing two semantic fields together

**Development agents must assume 3 functions;**

- \* defend their own personal interest
- \* defend the interest of their institution
- \* mediate between various actors' interests and those of local factions

**Local development brokers – local social bearers**

- Aim at improving their position
- Vergelijkbaar met patron – client relations

**Typology , category of brokers**

- a. confessional networks - members of a church
- b. civil servants form a common locality - village members associations in towns
- c. cultural/ethnic movements
- d. peasant leaders - partners originating in the agricultural milieu

**Vier soorten brokers:**

- Outside the local political arena – likes to get in.
- Powerless/low status or marginalised actor – strategy of upward mobility
- High status, strategy of consolidation
- Wants to get out of the local arena – social climbing on the outside.

**Development language:**

Different linguistic worlds - hardly ever penetrates into the local languages.

Paradox - Supposed to be for developpees, but it concerns in reality only developers.

Project language - Het project is de laagste trede op de ladder waar deze taal gesproken wordt.

## Chapter 12. Arenas and strategic groups

### Local development as a political arena

A development project (or development infrastructures, in general) thus appear to be a game in which the players involved all use different cards and play according to different rules. It could also be seen as a system of resources and opportunities which everyone tries to appropriate in his or her own way.

Power presupposes the existence of relatively autonomous actors endowed with unequal or unbalanced power resources, but who are never, or rarely ever, totally destitute of power, since even the most impoverished in this respect still have at least 'the ability, in reality and not just in theory, to refuse to do what is expected of them or to do it another way'.

Another type of power: 'institute power', which is concentrated rather than diffuse, which can be converted into other forms of 'capital'. Gaining access to a position of power with the help of one's network of social relations, gaining personal wealth because of this position, distributing a part of this wealth to enhance one's network of 'contacts' is all part of everyday life.

**The concept of the 'arena' entails both these definitions of power. In an arena, heterogeneous strategic groups confront each other, driven by more or less compatible interests, the actor being endowed with a greater or lesser level of influence and power.** But one also encounters centers of instituted local power: an emir, a district chief, an imam, enz. all have specific powers, linked to their functions and recognized as such. The by-product of this relatively muted 'confrontation' or this relatively informal 'negotiation' is what becomes of a development operation in practice: an unpredictable phenomenon.

The way in which actors employ their respective visible or invisible capabilities in face of the opportunities presented by a development project result in the emergence of a micro-development policy. This type of perspective obliges us both to examine the strategies that different categories of actors deploy, and to do research on the diversity of social codes and norms of behavior which serve as references to these strategies. Not only do codes vary from one social set to another, but actors belonging to a given social set readily adopt different systems of norms and of legitimacy according to the context and their own interests. The multifocality of power, the diversity of potential criteria of evaluation, the accumulation of 'legal' references all seem to enlarge the elbow room available to one and all.

### Conflict, arena, strategic groups

A village is an arena in which several 'strategic groups' enter into conflict with one another.

#### Conflict

**Gluckman's use of the word 'conflict' entails 3 different levels of analysis:**

1. First conflict is component of social life in general.
2. Second he establishes a structural analysis: conflicts are indicative of a variety of social positions. Even very small societies and societies without institutionalized forms of 'government' display rifts and cleavages. These are sustained by norms, moral rules and conventions. Conflicts are therefore an expression of the interests linked to different social positions and are structured by culture.
3. Last conflicts, which seems destined to tear societies apart and to throw them into chaos, contribute instead to their reproduction and to the reinforcement of social cohesion.

Despite the fact that conflicts often reflect differences of positions within social structure, we still need to bear in mind that individuals still retain some elbow room. Interpersonal or inter-group conflicts are not only signs of opposing 'objective' interests, they are also the by-product of personal strategies and of idiosyncratic phenomena. The identification of conflicts provides the means of going beyond the consensual facade, beyond the performance that local actors stage for the benefit of the intervener or foreign researcher.

#### Arena and field

**The arena is basically the social space in which these confrontations and competitions occur. Arena is a more interactive notion, and also a more 'political' one.** It refers to action on a smaller scale and presents a sharper awareness of the confrontations between actors themselves. An arena, as we understand it, is a space in which real conflicts between interacting social actors occur around common stakes. It occurs within a 'local space'. A development project is an arena. Village power is an arena. A co-operative is an arena.

#### Strategic group

The concept of the 'strategic group' is an alternative to that of 'social class', considered to be excessively rigid, mechanical, economic. Strategic groups remain on the same macro level as social classes and intervene either at the national level or at the level of the society as a whole. In the face of a given problem in a given social context the number of attitudes and behavior patterns is not infinite: what we observe is a restricted number of attitudes and behavior patterns. One of the aims of research is to determine finally whether or not these strategic groups which serve as working hypotheses at the outset really exist, whether actors who share a common position also forms of interaction, informal or formal. As opposed to classic sociological definitions of social groups, strategic groups are not constructed once and for all and are not relevant to all types of problem: they vary according to the problem at hand, that is, according to local issues.

The strategic group is a fundamentally empirical and methodological notion. It is built on the simple supposition that all actors in a given community do not share identical interests or concepts.

## **The ECRIS framework**

**ECRIS** (Enquete collective rapide pour l'identification des conflits et des groupes strategiques) **occurs in 6 phases.** Indeed the aim of the ECRIS framework is to devise, through a phase of collective enquiry, indicators adapted to the field and to the theme, indicators which will afterwards be used for the individual enquiry which remains irreplaceable. One of the main objectives of the ECRIS framework is to allow for a multi-site research, that is, to conduct a rigorous comparison between different sites where fieldwork will be done along unified problematics and methodologies.

### **1. Individual indentificatory enquiry**

This is a quick way of preparing the teamwork to come by means of a rough identification of major local issues, in order to predetermine which are the strategic groups, comprising categories of actors who are presumed to have the same overall relationship to these issues.

### **2. A preparatory seminar**

The preparatory seminar is aimed at familiarizing participants with the problematic and method, to review the documentation available on the research sites, to propose a series of tentative qualitative indicators that might prove helpful for later individual research.

### **3. The collective enquiry**

The basic principle underlying ECRIS is the following: the entire group of enquirers makes a successive tour of each site and stays a few days on each site. During the stay, each team of enquirers concentrates on one local strategic group, and only one. It investigates only persons belonging to the strategic group assigned to the team. The composition of the enquiry groups changes from one site to another. It allows each enquiry to approach a problem via the notion of the strategic group, and provides experience on the variety and relativity of the strategic groups. Individual interviews are preferred, with as great variety of persons as possible within the strategic group assigned to the team of enquirers.

#### **The main instruction is quite simple:**

1. During the enquiry attempts must be made to identify as many conflicts and contradictions as possible, including those in which the persons being interviewed are not directly involved.
2. Attempts must be made to understand, as far as possible 'from the inside' the way members of the strategic group relate to the research topic and how they perceive other groups. The strategic group must be divided into its various components, each endowed with its specific behavior and discourse and distinguishable from other components.
3. The tentative indicators should be explored in order to discover potential fields of application.

VB One example of an interesting local 'decision' to be explored is the renewal of the co-operative executive bureau; the biography of certain actors might be interesting

Each evening a collective evaluative session allows for a superposition of the different angles from which conflicts were observed. This helps the group to determine whether or not temporary working hypotheses are still relevant. These groups sessions are the groundwork for the member of the research team who will carry out subsequent work on the site. Group sessions are particularly helpful in paving the way for later individual work.

### **4. An evaluation seminar of the collective enquiry**

#### **This has 3 objectives:**

1. the shared qualitative indicators, which have been tested during the collective enquiry, will finally be elaborated and will form the grounds of which each individual researcher can base his personal enquiry;
2. the research angle appropriate to each site must be clarified
3. an effort at comparison must be made in order to isolate, based on the various sites, the common elements as well as the specific characteristics of each site, the major leads and the main hypotheses.

### **5. Individual research on each site**

At this point, the first phase of fieldwork has been considerably clarified and is well under way. A set method of proceeding is no longer proposed: in ECRIS, each team member is provided only with shared indicators and specific areas to research on.

### **6. The closing seminar**

This is prepared by the writing of individual reports by each researcher based on his enquiry on each site. It is entirely devoted to comparative analysis, through the interpretation of local data and of the result gleaned with the help of quantitative indicators based on the hypotheses proposed.



**Arena:** In an arena, heterogeneous strategic groups confront each other, driven by more or less compatible interests, the actor being endowed with a greater or lesser level of influence and power.

**Strategic group:**

ECRIS framework 6 phases:

**1. Individual indetificatory enquiry**

Rough identification of major local issues (if needed, PRA methodology)

Predetermine the main strategic groups

Presume categories of actors who have the same overall relationship to the issues

**2. preparatory seminar**

Familiarize participants to problematic and method

Review available documentation

Propose a series of tentative qualitative indicators

Link each indicator to a systematic body of material and a well-specified field

**3. collective enquiry**

Entire group visits all sites

On a specific site, split in groups of 2 – 3 people

Each team concentrates on one local strategic group and speaks only to members of that only group

i. Identify as many conflicts and contradictions possible

ii. Understand the way members of the strategic group relate to the research topic and their perceptions of other groups

iii. Explore tentative indicators – how useful for analysis?

Each night a collective evaluation session for exchange of the different angles from which conflicts were observed.

Formulate new questions, hypotheses, insights

**4. evaluation seminar of collective enquiry**

Objectives:

Qualitative indicators will be elaborated and it forms the ground on which each individual researcher can base his personal enquiry

The appropriate research angle for each site must be clarified

An effort at comparison must be made (identify common elements as well as specific characteristics of each site) including major leads and hypotheses.

**5. individual research on each side**

**6. closing seminar**

Writing of individual reports

## Chapter 13. Conclusion. The dialogue between social scientist and developers

Loss of a common idiom between 'fundamental research' and 'applied research' all seem to constitute the various of a fundamental misunderstanding.

### Logic of knowledge and logic of action

Social scientist and developers respectively generate fundamentally distinct professional logics. It is therefore impossible to conceive how these sets of logics can be forced into interaction except by emphasizing their specific characteristic. By stripping the social actors in development of their moral veils, one discovers degrees of disparity which are of great interest to sociological investigation. But this also applies to social scientists; anthropologist practice cannot be taken at face value when it professes philanthropic motivations. It is a well known fact that social science is also a 'market'. **Bourdieu himself is involved in logics that influence his scientific practice. His scientific logics cannot simply be classified either as developers' logics or as developpees' logics.**

1. Knowledge and action mobilize extremely dissimilar registers of legitimization. Scientific knowledge in particular is constructed through a continuous, fight against error. Action on the other hand comprises arbitration, ambiguities, compromises etc. Knowledge doubts, while action needs to believe.
2. Social scientist are confronted with complex social phenomena that they need to resort to multi-dimensional rationalities, rather than linear and deterministic rationalities. Developers generate technical rationality in which decisions have to be made.
3. While development operators postulate and search for common interests within populations, and between the populations and themselves, sociology, on the contrary, tries to detect differences and contradictions.
4. Misunderstandings also arise concerning the roles each is expected to play: while developmentalist take it for granted that the expert in 'human dimensions' is a natural ally or a development service provider, the expert often develops a critical and external point of view on the projects with which developers identify.
5. Finally, social science and the development professions respectively are regulated by different systems of norms and different professional values.

### Two models to be rejected

- 1) Social scientists and development operators rarely interact.
- 2) The second model concerns submission. The logic of research tends to disappear in favor of the logic of development expertise. Many African social scientist are swallowed up by the expertise market and its rent, owing in part to the erosion of the state and of public research.

### Third model: action research

A third model aims at the fusion of these 2 roles, as implied by the names by which it present itself here and there: action research, development research, participatory research. Action research must simultaneously obey the rules of research and those of action, or incur the risk of becoming poor research and misguided action.

#### Action research from the angle of research

The problem with so-called 'participatory' enquiries is not that they accept certain additional constraints of time and subject definition. This is a legitimate rule of the game, in this particular instance. The question is to determine whether or not invoking 'participation' does not result in overlooking, along the way, other constraints which are just as fundamental, regardless of its duration or subject matter.

#### Action research from the angle of action

Action research, if it takes the form of intervention, is subject to the same effects as other types of intervention.

**No matter how 'participatory' a project intends to be, it remains subjected to the 2 'principles' that regulate the interaction between the population and external interveners:**

- the principle of selection and
- the principle of 'sidetracking'

### Fourth model: the contractual solution

**The contractual model:** social scientist and development operators agree to define a clearly circumscribed zone of interaction and collaboration without relinquishing their specific identities. The two parties decide on the terms of reference of the research through negotiation, by confronting their respective logics in a given domain.

### Training development agents

We need to underline the role that anthropologists can play in the training of development agents in the field. One of the advantages of possessing a minimum of anthropological competence is that development agents are thereby forearmed and forewarned against clichés and stereotypes about local societies which abound in the development universe.

Another advantage to training development agents in anthropological enquiry is that it inverts their relationship with the peasants.

- \* The methods inherited from the colonial past, as well as the example left by the post-colonial administration, have ingrained an attitude and a tradition of contempt among civil servants and one of suspicion among peasants which reinforce each other.
- \* Even when happening to be of peasant origin, a development agent is of necessity someone who has been to school, during which time he or she has learned family skills. As a result, the development worker has little or no foundation in popular knowledge and tends instead to shun it.
- \* The classic methods of training development agents do not prepare them for a future role as mediators between peasant knowledge. Instead, this training inculcates in them an anti-pedagogical attitude based on reluctance to address themselves to 'ignoramuses'.
- \* 'New' methods of agent training, bent on opposing traditional systems of hierarchy and training, introduce communication. Though ostensibly non-directive, participatory, or self-training, they in fact often involve forms of manipulation which conceal a profound ignorance concerning these peasants, even though this type of ideological rhetoric claims to rehabilitate them.

### **Adapting to sidetracking**

Doing 'follow-up' on sidetracking provides an excellent opportunity for collaboration between anthropology and development institutions. Development operators must do all they can to minimize risk factors. Seen from the perspective of development institutions viewed as 'organizations', the resource to anthropology should help to improve the capacity for regulation of the established system of action and to reduce the uncertainty inherent in it.

**Within the developmentalist configuration, side tracking effects are usually imputed either to developpees or to developers;**

- 1) In the first case, the gap between a correct understanding of the peasants best 'interest' (as perceived by the authors of the project) and the incomprehension the peasants themselves display has to be breached. Information is therefore a flourishing field in the developmentalist configuration. Their methods usually revolve around improving mass information, methods of training and communication.
- 2) In the second case ('it is the developers fault'), sidetracking is attributed to the absence of preliminary studies, the overlooking of local reality, poor definition of aims, inadequate supervision, the unwieldiness of the procedures that donors stipulate, the incompetence and venality of national coordinators the ethnocentrism of foreign experts, etc. Looking for this type of scapegoat will not solve the problem of sidetracking. Sidetracking cannot be attributed indiscriminately either to developers or developpees.

In the context of sidetracking, the anthropologist is best employed in the evaluation of the extent, nature and possible reasons behind sidetracking, or, in other words, in the monitoring and follow-up of development intervention. This requires 2 preconditions on the part of development institutions:

- (a) that projects solicit information about the sidetracking to which they are likely to be subjected and aim at establishing frameworks for feedback
- (b) that they consider it necessary to apply to independent, competent anthropologist to do the job.

It would still be an achievement if anthropology could help development projects to be more attentive to the effects induced by their interaction with the local populations and, as a result, to change their approach. But all this depends on enquiry.

### **On enquiry**

**The problem is that all enquiries are not the same. We can distinguish 3 types:**

1. Many people think that an 'enquiry' is a matter of questionnaires and statistics.
2. Yet the word 'enquiry' also has another meaning, one that refers to anthropological enquiry proper, sometimes called 'qualitative' enquiry. But anthropological enquiry, as such is not easily applied to development projects.
3. Finally, there is enquiry or the 'tour of the field'. This allows experts, consultants, researchers and decision makers to become a little more familiar with a problem or a situation, to 'get an idea'. Such enquiries respond to certain evaluation needs, but they have nothing to teach us about the logics that regulate the way populations react to the action carried out on their behalf. Expert enquiry is opposed in many respects to anthropological enquiry.

Attempts at synthesis have been made. The best-known and most widely practiced is RRA.

RRA Rapid Rural Appraisal

PRA Participatory Rural Appraisal

MARP Methode accelereee de reserche et de planification participative

RRA en MARP are based on the so-called focus group technique, which is merely the recourse to systematic group interviews, carried out on groups defined on the basis of simple social criteria. A complete evaluation of such hybrid methodologies is difficult.

Alternative solutions;

- \* Calling to serve as 'experts' on anthropologist who are already specialist through long-term study of the region involved and/or of the theme in question.
- \* The collaborative definition of research themes between development operators, PhD students and their supervisors.
- \* A combination of individual and collective enquiries, of medium-term and short-term enquiries, as described in Chapter 12 (the ECRIS canvass)

## **Socio-anthropology of development and anthropology applied to development: one instance and its limit**

If we assume that the development professionals who use our research are good at what they do, and that we are good researchers, there is still a missing link in the chain between our studies and their operational concerns. One then has to draw up a strategy, define reforms, and put a new policy into practice.

The problem with so-called 'participatory' enquiries is not that they accept certain additional constraints of time and subject definition. This is a legitimate rule of the game, in this particular instance. The question is to determine whether or not invoking 'participation' does not result in overlooking, along the way, other constraints which are just as fundamental, regardless of its duration or subject matter.

**The contractual model:** social scientist and development operators agree to define a clearly circumscribed zone of interaction and collaboration without relinquishing their specific identities. The two parties decide on the terms of reference of the research through negotiation, by confronting their respective logics in a given domain.

### **3 types of enquiry**

- questionnaire
- qualitative enquiry
- tour the field (RRA en MARP)