

Encountering Order and Disjuncture: Contemporary Anthropological Perspectives on the Organization of Development

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1. Introduction: Revisiting Anthropology and Development

For anyone interested in development issues, the beginning of the 21st Century does not feel like a particularly optimistic time. There has certainly been a bold recent shift in development policy towards a set of Millennium Development Goals that aim to reduce extreme poverty, enrol children in primary school, eliminate gender disparities, reduce infant, child and maternal mortality rates and provide access to reproductive health services. The UK government has also recently committed itself to large-scale increases in international development assistance over the next 5 years in an attempt to reach the United Nations aid target of 0.7% of GDP by the end of the decade. But as Gough & Wood (2004, p. 1) pointed out, “[t]he reality is more prosaic and, in many zones of the world, tragic”. They went on to describe the recent rapid increases in global inequality, the continuing spread of HIV/AIDS, famine and conflict and the fact that in many areas where capitalist economic growth has taken place it has been associated with increased instability, insecurity and vulnerability. Few of the Millennium Development Goals appear likely to be met in practice. Nor, at a more theoretical level, has development studies managed completely to bounce back from the “impasse” that was identified in the 1990s (cf. Booth, 1994), despite a revisiting of older ideas and the emergence of a range of new approaches—from insights from institutional economics to the rise of “post-development” perspectives.¹

Arguably, debates on the nature of development have been overtaken by a neo-liberal consensus that substitutes “globalization” for development and makes international markets the agents of change, and development largely a matter of securing the conditions

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¹ These papers were originally presented at the workshop on Order and Disjuncture: The Organization of Development, held at SOAS, London on 26–28 September 2003. The original workshop was organized under the auspices of EIDOS, the European Inter-University Development Opportunities Study Group. Founded in 1985, EIDOS has brought together British, Dutch and German anthropologists actively engaged in the study of development. We would like to take this opportunity to offer warm thanks Philip Quarles van Ufford, Rüdiger Korff, Monique Nuijten, Oscar Saleminck and Heiko Schrader, who form the current EIDOS group.

for integration into them. But even as orchestrated policy convergence and “harmonization” around universal principles and institutions for global governance characterize international development, the “actual networks of practice” (Duffield, 2002) are becoming ever more concealed, thereby making the need for a critical ethnography of development policy and practice more and more important. This collection of papers indicates the nature of such a contribution by examining development through a conceptual lens of “order and disjuncture”. Our approach begins with the observation that, as Rossi (2004, p. x) suggested in her overview article on the original workshop from which these papers have been selected,

... the apparent increasing order which characterises the expansion of developmental rationales conceals increasing disjuncture between normative expectations and the multiplicity of practices which take place within development arenas.

Each of the papers presented here examines the order and disjuncture of development in one of several different ways. Before turning to these ethnographies, it is therefore useful to distinguish different frameworks of “order and disjuncture” upon which these and other anthropologists of development draw.

First, and most commonly within the technical and managerial framework that defines aid policy, “order” can be understood as the “ideal worlds” that development actors aim to bring about through the execution of proper policy and project design. Disjuncture comes from the gap between these ideal worlds and the social reality they have to relate to. This comes to be managed in one of two ways. On the one hand, the gap between intention and outcome must be narrowed through the pursuit of proper implementation and “best practice”—a continuing task of agency workers at all levels, and one corresponding to the long-term academic anthropological concern with the contradictions between what is said and what is done in development. On the other hand, developers “try and see to it that the ‘ideal worlds’ [are] consistent with what we know about how real societies actually work, so that ‘development’ planning can set itself objectives capable of being realised”—this being the role of “liberal” development anthropologists (Ferguson, 1994, p. 10). For instance, within the rubric of “evidence-based policy”, Rew & Khan (this issue) develop the case for anthropological knowledge informing policy by challenging assumptions within the new neo-liberal governance agenda and its dominant framework of “new public management”. This is one among several increasingly sophisticated and reflexive efforts to have the social or cultural—understood as “relationality” (Rao & Walton 2004)—built into policy prescriptions, while resisting the tendency of agencies to instrumentalize and reify this *conceptually* as “social capital”, “cultural heritage” or “indigenous knowledge”, or *methodologically*, for example as participatory rural appraisal (PRA) or to turn anthropologists into cultural brokers. However, whether criticizing the achievements of developers or contributing ethnography *for* development, work of this kind will necessarily take place within what Ferguson (1994) termed the dominant “interpretive grid” of development discourse, and the pure/applied distinction can therefore be seen to lose meaning (Gardner & Lewis, 1996). This very grid must itself now become the subject of anthropological analysis.

Second, within the critical deconstructionist framework established by Ferguson and others, anthropologists understand the techno-managerial discourse or “order” of development itself as an instrument of cognitive control, social regulation or exploitation.

This form of order is also viewed as a rationalizing discourse that conceals development's real political relations. Two perspectives can be distinguished here. For neo-Marxist "dependency theory" critiques, development "really" sustains an economic order of international class inequality and disjuncture manifests itself in social movements of resistance or rebellion. For Foucauldian critiques of development "order" as a discourse, a power-knowledge regime—both discursive and non-discursive—has "instrument effects" that go beyond the intentions of individual or institutional actors, bureaucracy or the state (Ferguson, 1994). In the latter, "the planner's conceptions are not the blueprint for the machine; they are parts of the machine" (Ferguson, 1994, p. 276). In both neo-Marxist and Foucauldian senses, development interventions may—and commonly do—fail in their own terms, while succeeding in their political effects. As Marsland (this issue) shows, the critical analysis of discourse has also now been turned on the newer progressive, participatory, indigenous or community-based development alternatives to reveal, as Escobar (2004, p. 213) recently put it, "the collapse of social emancipation into social regulation" (Cook & Kothari, 2001).

Today, critical anthropologists are turning increasingly to a later strand of Foucauldian thought, which conceives the "order" of development as a form of governmentality (Foucault, 1991). Governmentality works *neither* through the extension of bureaucratic or military control to undeveloped border regions (Ferguson, 1994, p. 270; Scott, 1998), *nor* through the logic of repression and control implied within a western project of development (Escobar, 1995; Sachs, 1992), but instead through a form of "positive power that wins legitimacy and empowers action" (Watts, 2003, p. 12). Within this perspective, people constitute their aspirations and interests "in terms of the norms through which they are governed as 'free' social agents" (Shore & Wright, 1997, p. 9).

The conception of a power that is *productive* rather than repressive, that comes from below as well as above, that is heterogeneous, diffuse, immanent and unstable (Gedaloff, 1999, pp. 8–9), informs understanding of the practices and negotiations around development "orders" in the ethnographies that follow. Some anthropologists have also found that the idea of governmentality is useful as a way of understanding development as an international order (of "global governance") involving forms of power that do not require a state, bureaucratic or territorial framework. It is also useful as a means to reconcile the increasingly intrusive (into the affairs of particular countries) nature of convergent and harmonized aid, with its liberal principles of freedom (economic and political), local ownership, or partnership (Mosse, 2005; Gould, 2005; Anders, 2005; cf. Duffield, 2002; Watts, 2003).¹ Of course, a conception of global governmentality as a "well-oiled machine of disciplinary and biopower" (Watts, 2003, p. 26) hardly admits disjuncture, which is perhaps its weakness in the face of the proliferation of ungovernable spaces or financial markets and the unpredictability of "the network society" (Castells, 1996).

In response, and third, several anthropologists of development have recently inverted the problem and insisted in various ways that "disjuncture comes first" (van den Berg & Quarles van Ufford, 2005). Their ethnographic work refuses to concede to development its own claim to order, denies "globalization" a *global* logic (Burawoy, 1998, p. 30) and refuses capitalism's claims to an inner logic (Mitchell, 2002). Insisting instead on the primacy of contingent practice. Anthropologists are concerned with setting aside self-representations of bureaucratic rationality in order to uncover more of the inner workings of development agencies. Indeed, such accounts reveal the complex and autonomous agency of the diverse actors within government bureaucracies, non-governmental

organizations (NGOs) or markets that ensure that the capacity to produce order is in practice very limited (Lewis *et al.*, 2003). As Li (1999) pointed out, claims to order are always fragile, contested, built on compromise; hegemony is not imposed but has to be worked out. By implication, there is a challenge here to the deconstructive analysis of development discourse and its presumption of “order”, hegemony and unified western agencies acting upon other societies through aid. As one of us has argued (Mosse, 2005, p. 133) reflecting on his own work as a consultant anthropologist on a British (DFID) aid project, the “conceptual work (of policy) did not precede or direct action but followed it, providing an authoritative framework of interpretation, or a ‘second-order rationalization of politically and economically ordered work routines’ (Heyman, 1995, p. 265)”.

An important tradition in both the sociology and anthropology of development has made such routines, immediate practices, and the lifeworlds of agents and “targets” of development its focus, arguing that it is from these social interactions and interfaces that meaning and structures of power emerge. Indeed, the “actor-network” ideas of Long (1992) highlighted some time ago the ways in which anthropological work could usefully take on as a field of study the “communities” of development projects, agencies and institutions that are often transnational in reach. Similarly, Bierschenk’s (1988) theory of strategic groups (used by Korf, this issue) draws attention to the hidden agendas (or transcripts, Scott, 1990) that shape the strategic bargaining and negotiation over resources undertaken by groups and individuals within project arenas. Ethnography can extend study beyond projects to the broader analysis of the social relations operating within the complex institutional arrangements of development, including the constellation of public and private agencies that channel development assistance, such as the inter-governmental organizations of the United Nations, multilateral and bilateral donors such as the World Bank or the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the increasingly vast array of NGOs participating in development activities. In doing so, ethnography can examine the various interests and overlapping networks involved in these arrangements.

The ethnographies of this collection unveil the diverse logics that underlie and shape development “interventions” and often contradict stated intentions, whether found in social relations and symbolic meanings of dirt in Beall’s (this issue) account of “integrated waste management” in Pakistan, or in the logic of armed violence underlying “social mobilization” in Sri Lanka outlined by Korf (this issue). Each case suggests that the order of international policy claims is the wrong starting point for understanding, since policy is not an “external given” acting upon a passive human or natural world. It is instead argued that development orders are produced “by engaging with a series of other logics, forces and chemistries” (Mitchell, 2002, p. 51). Ethnographic work has the unique potential to show how change is brought about, not through the logic of official policy intentions, or even through its hidden operation as a discourse of power, but through processes of compromise and contingent action of various kinds.

This focus on agency allows for a useful and important corrective to a subjectless Foucauldian analysis. However, we cannot simply substitute an endless multiplicity of actor perspectives, intentions and scenarios for Foucault’s anonymous micro-physics of power. Instead, we need to understand the relationship between these diverse interests and logics and the rationalizing representations of development. In particular, we need to show how actors in development work to secure and support representations that hide the actual contingencies and networks of practice so as to “allow reason to rule, and allow history to be arranged as the unfolding of a locationless [policy] logic” to which expertise is attached

(Mitchell, 2002, pp. 15, 36). In his ethnography of a British aid project in India, Mosse (2005) showed how actors with very different interests or perspectives and whose everyday practice contradicted the prescriptions of project design, none the less worked hard to sustain and protect unified official interpretations of events and actions that articulated with higher donor (DFID) policy, because thereby success and their own interests were secured. More broadly, successful projects conceal contradictions behind authorized representations that sustain the notion that their outcomes are policy well executed (Mosse, 2005)². In other words, the order of development is primarily an interpretive order, socially sustained through “interpretive communities” and necessarily separated from actual events and practice (Mosse, 2005). Out of the messiness of practice, actor-networks constantly establish domains for the rule of expertise and universal principle that stand apart from the local, the arbitrary and contingent world (Mitchell, 2002, pp. 77–78, 100–101).³

In various ways the ethnographies in this issue demonstrate that policy does not precede or order practice. Indeed, policy in development is an end rather than a cause, a result—often a fragile one—of “social processes of enrolment and the work of ‘translation’ (of policy goals into practical interests; practical interests back into policy goals)” (Mosse, 2004a, pp. 663, 647). These ethnographies point to two conclusions. The first is that the “order” of development never derives from the prior logic of policy, but emerges from the enrolments and interactions of networks or actors. Following Latour (2000), development can be seen as requiring the constant work of *composition* in which heterogeneous entities (people, idea, events and things) “are tied together by translation of one kind or another into the material and conceptual order of a successful project” (Mosse, 2004a, p. 647). This collection of essays demonstrates that the apparent order of development is always parasitic on the other orders that it conceals.

Following from this is a second conclusion: that the disjuncture arising from the autonomy of practice from rationalizing policy is not an unfortunate “gap to be bridged” between intention and action, but is instead necessary and must therefore be actively maintained and reproduced. Since “success” demands that action be interpreted as the execution of official policy, competing logics and contingencies of action become necessarily hidden. The task of the skilled brokers who work across institutional, cultural, value and other boundaries—such as the managers, consultants, fieldworkers and community leaders involved in development activities—is then to maintain, not blur, this disjuncture and to protect the autonomy of practice and policy (Mosse & Lewis, 2006, forthcoming). The following section asks how anthropologists fit into such a world.

2. Anthropologists and Development

Recent work by Quarles van Ufford *et al.* (2003) conceptualises development’s normative, administrative and analytical orders and the disjuncture of contingent practice in a way that facilitates reflection on the roles of anthropologists in development. Development, they argue, has been variously characterized as: “hope”, in that it carries ideas about ways of shaping a better future; as “politics/administration”, in that since the 1950s it has constructed a system of agencies and technologies designed to produce it; and, finally, as “critical understanding”, in the sense that it functions as a site of knowledge about the world. These different domains of knowledge/action have different historical roots, institutional structures and locational specificities. They coexist somewhat uneasily. Indeed, there is an inevitable disjuncture between policy as hope, as political-administrative reality, and as

critical reflection. It is not always possible to translate between them, and they cannot be made consistent (Quarles van Ufford *et al.*, 2003, p. 18). Policy does not always shape action, nor do research insights necessarily feed into policy. Instead, they are driven by different logics.

Anthropologists have, in the main, taken one of three positions in relation to development. Each one loosely corresponds to these domains of thought and action: “critical reflection”, “administrative politics” and “hope”. As “antagonistic observers”, anthropologists have been characterized by critical distance and a basic hostility towards the ideas of development and the motives of those who seek to promote it. As “reluctant participants”, anthropologists have followed resource pressures and livelihood opportunities into development work with varying degrees of enthusiasm, offering their professional services to development agencies. Finally, as “engaged activists”, anthropologists have worked within a long-standing tradition in which they have attempted to combine community or agency-level interactions at the level of research with practical support for marginalized or poor people in the developing world (Lewis, 2005). The point is not that these are fixed identities, but, as the authors of the articles to follow demonstrate, *different locations*. Their inherent incompatibility means that it is also virtually impossible to occupy them simultaneously.

While anthropologists may operate within each domain, the tensions between the optimism and scepticism involved in each have characterized the profession since the 1940s. Whereas Malinowski advocated new roles for social anthropologists involved in the administrative domain as policy advisers to colonial administrators in Africa, Evans-Pritchard was urging them to do exactly the opposite. For Evans-Pritchard, social anthropologists had to remain in the domain of critical understanding and distance themselves as far as possible from the tainted worlds of policy and “applied” involvement (Grillo, 2002). However, the simple bifurcation between “development anthropologists” (who broadly work within the agendas of development institutions) and “anthropologists of development” (who take a critical stance on development ideas, values and purposes) fails to capture the multiple practical roles and research positions of anthropologists in development (Grillo & Rew, 1985). It does, however, reflect one of the problems of recent debates on anthropology *in* and *of* development: namely, its failure to recognize and accept the heterogeneity of “hope”, “politics” and “critical reflection”. Consequently, and as frequently observed, this dichotomy has led to the institutionalized reproduction of antagonistic positions between constructive engagement and disengaged critical analysis, as well as to diverging career paths.

The second point from Quarles van Ufford *et al.* relates precisely to the problems associated with this divide. There are serious dangers in asserting one mode of thought/action over another, or in institutionally separating one from the others. The mobilizing metaphors of “hope” have to be transformed into institutional incentives and interests in order to have an effect; but equally, a professionalized and increasingly managerialist development industry in which development hopes are rearranged according to the internal logics of administration and organizational politics, and that is unchallenged by the ethnographic worlds of people for whom such professionals claim to speak or by the contingencies of practice or the wider more basic moral vision of global justice and personal wellbeing,⁴ easily becomes a self-serving organizational realm disconnected from the reality of its own effects.

Moreover, anthropologists who remain in the administrative domain and become “social development advisers” in agencies such as the World Bank or DFID have to pay their way “in the coin of knowledge of recognizable organizational utility” (Cernea, 1995, p. 6). In so doing, they contribute to knowledge systems that emphasize universal over contextual knowledge, and constantly strategize to preserve their space in the agencies (Mosse, 2004b). As a result, they find it almost impossible to analyse the social and political contexts of aid or to comment on its failing visions. Instead, they become a source of newly instrumentalized knowledge products such as PRA, indigenous knowledge, social capital and culture. However, those who assert a scholarly independence find that their critical analytic “hermeneutics of suspicion [of development interventions] leads to an impasse if it is not supplemented by a hermeneutics of recovery and reconstruction” (Quarles van Ufford *et al.*, 2003, p. 17).

Despite continuing institutional barriers, the creative potential of moving from one domain to another is recognized more and more frequently by anthropologists. Ethnographers who become aid managers, agency officials, consultants or activists may also become (self-) critical ethnographers writing from within (Eyben & Leon, 2005; Mosse, 2005). Perhaps anthropologists attempt more institutional mobility than most between the domains of hope, administration and critical understanding, but such transitions also present a set of new conceptual, methodological and ethical challenges. Nevertheless, it is from such locational mobility that anthropologists can begin to respond to Quarles van Ufford *et al.*'s (2003) plea for a new, morally informed development as “global responsibility”. In all these respects, the conceptual framework of order and disjuncture can contribute to a reinvigoration of the dialogue between anthropology and development.

3. New Ethnographic Perspectives on Order and Disjuncture

Harrison's anthropological reflection on the current international “anti-corruption agenda”, the first paper in this collection, illustrates the importance of anthropological insights based on this locational mobility. Harrison asks the essentially techno-managerial question of what can anthropologists, comparative latecomers to the field after economists and political scientists, contribute to this new development policy agenda? Addressing this question immediately identifies a disjuncture between the claim that there is a crisis of corruption and the range of ethnographic understandings about the ways people actually experience “corruption”. It becomes clear that there are “divergent and conflicting assessments” about whether particular actions are “corrupt” and these make reference to a variety of codes of “right” behaviour, of which public accountability is only one (Gupta, 1995, p. 388).

In this way, Harrison turns a critical lens on the anti-corruption discourse itself. By claiming a set of “universal principles”, which are in fact derived from historically and culturally specific western notions of public service, combined with a moralizing discourse that pathologizes other forms of social order as forms of “disorder”, “anti-corruption” efforts lend justification to the new intrusive forms of aid and global governance. These are prioritized, some might argue, as much to ensure the freedom of capital as to safeguard social justice. Anti-corruption efforts can therefore be analysed as an aspect of aid as governmentality; but Harrison also points out that an anthropological critique framed simply in terms of cultural relativism (or governmentality) is also suspect,

conceptually because it ignores the fact that bureaucratic norms are already firmly part of people's social imaginary, and *morally* because of the fact that corruption is experienced as real and damaging. Precisely because corruption is by its nature difficult both to define and to measure, varying according to the perspective and context of the definer, and is now also influenced by the global anti-corruption discourse itself, the paper argues for the important anthropological task of understanding processes of meaning-creation, and their relationships to social networks and power.

Dik Roth's paper then extends the analysis of the production of order and disjuncture under development policy reforms—and indeed the theme of corruption—to the socio-legal and physical engineering of irrigation structures and their institutions. Based on ethnographic work from Sulawesi in Indonesia, he shows how assumptions of managerial order are built into the design of water users' associations, which involve a form of legal regulation in relation to which farmers are seen as unruly and their own institutions (*subaks*) corrupt. First, Roth traces an intricate pattern of conflicting rationalities and legalities subjugated in the new order of reform. Second, he shows how Balinese migrants make formal institutions work according to the logics of their own priorities, values and organizing practices (those of the *subak*). This makes official institutions function by the reincorporation of ritualized relations of the *subak*, but at the same time it also involves the reaffirmation of ethnic differences and brings the exclusion of non-Balinese farmers. The analysis therefore also shows the ways in which public sector reform unfolds social processes that overlap with identity and ethnic politics and have complex and exclusionary effects.

The paper that follows, by Korf, moves the focus to the question of conflict, a key preoccupation within development studies today, considering the efforts by donors in post-war reconstruction in Sri Lanka. The author explores the way in which attempting to link peace and development is currently the dominant strategy of the Sri Lankan government and international donors, to win over a reluctant Sinhalese population to concede devolution to Tamil-inhabited areas. The article explores the ways in which reconstruction donors and NGOs have generated new rituals of "social mobilization" and a discourse of "conflict transformation" as bottom-up participatory development. The tendency to view conflict as irrational disjuncture and an aberration of the normal path of development is in fact reaffirmed both by the *ad hoc* technocratic emergency relief measures (taking place within an unfolding relief–rehabilitation–development linear scheme) as well as by the new bottom-up peace and community mobilization approach. Both conceal the complex relations that produce violence, including the politics of aid itself. Managed relief and the dangerous "myth of community mobilization" are contradicted by the logic of conflict, and the realms of power formed around armed militias. As with others in this issue, Korf's context demands that the disjunctive pragmatic reality has priority in analysis, especially where it is negated in official representations circulating in metropolitan networks and institutions. But Korf's actor-oriented framework and his position as practitioner-ethnographer enable him to go further. By observing the inter-translation between the multiple hidden interests of conflict and the formal policy goals and institutional responses, an understanding is gained of how interests are encoded in the ambiguous policy norms and institutional rules that are the outcome of strategic conflicts, and this helps us understand how social differences (e.g. of ethnicity or class) may be perpetuated by policy.

If Korf challenges the social analyst to begin with the pragmatics of conflict in interpreting the meaning of official policy on “community mobilization”, Marsland’s paper on community participation in Tanzania *begins* with a universal policy principle (participation) and goes on to show how it comes to be worked out through existing cultural-political logics, including the historical experience of African socialism. Marsland’s ethnographic case of a community-based public health project involves three interlinked layers. The first concerns the intentions of the international development community, the second, the intentions of the Tanzanian state, and the third, intentions towards and expectations of the project from the perspective of local actors. It is argued that “participation” as understood within international development discourse easily slips into participation as constituted within the history of the Tanzanian political economy since independence and its policies of self-reliance.

On the surface, it can appear that the aims of the Tanzanian state and of international development experts are the same, but closer investigation reveals that there are important differences in the operation of power. When Tanzanian development workers invoke participation, an international development worker might imagine that they are concerned with the empowerment of “the people”. However, given the ideological history of the idea of participation in Tanzania, the meaning is closer to one in which “the people” become obliged to contribute to the development of the country. In this way, participation within a neo-liberal framework of health sector reform “responsibilizes” communities in a manner that reproduces existing forms of governmental regulation through “self-reliant” communities. The new neo-liberal order is parasitic on the old governmental order. These parallel neo-liberal and African socialist rationales combine to produce instability and uncertainty but also conceal the political contingency of aid practice that Marsland reflexively discusses.

Beall’s paper on the management of solid waste in Faisalabad, Pakistan, takes us from the management of the public sphere to the management of public space. Indeed, there is a parallel between the moralizing (and “othering”) discourses of corruption and of dirt, both of which conceal the underlying social and symbolic logic central to understanding what is going on in practice. Donors, urban managers and increasingly middle-class residents in urban Pakistan fit a new science of “integrated solid waste management” into a neo-liberal order of contracts, services and “responsibilized” communities. But Beall shows, through her ethnographic work among street sweepers and middle-income householders, that development change is not brought about through the realization of neo-liberal policy principles, but through the rupture and contradictions that are effected in existing systems of social relations and meanings around rubbish removal (Mitchell, 2002, p. 77). This involves a delicate system of social rank, patronage and entitlement (cutting across the public and private spheres) which is changed by deepening market-based relations in ways that make it harder for the poorest workers to negotiate entitlements and livelihoods. Beall explores the “little sub-worlds” involved in the removal of domestic dirt and how these articulate with larger “thought worlds” about dirt and disorder (“matter out of place”), both of which, she suggests, can be informed by ideas of cultural order from Mary Douglas that make sense of the way in which development agencies over many decades have intervened in the management of waste.

The final paper in this collection, by Rew and Khan, uses “a political ethnography of northern Orissa” to chart another form of misrecognition. The neo-liberal governance agenda, they suggest, is based upon the mistaken assumption that the state is a site of

empowerment. This is a misconception shared, they argue, with certain class- and state-centred political economic analyses of India. Donors have been repeatedly disappointed with progress against the goals of the neo-liberal agenda, such as reducing public sector wages, addressing the regulatory state, and a bureaucratic machinery that creates inequality. Rew and Khan suggest that part of the problem is the failure to frame governance in culturally appropriate ways, to understand the competing moral orders within which the bureaucracy functions locally and which give meaning to policy thinking on governance, and the webs of power that constitute “governance”.

This is another ethnography that shows that development norms first have to be understood in relation to local cultural-religious orders. This is not simply a matter of revealing the community to the state, but also of revealing how government is perceived by the community, and how “tribal” communities become objectified by state actors. So, in setting the donor policy ambitions for “good governance” against the experience of the administrative and development initiatives in a region of India, Rew and Khan develop an anthropological perspective on “governance” that challenges “stand-alone functionalist approaches”. In so doing, they reassert anthropology as a discipline able to contribute to the analytical perspectives of policy.

4. Conclusion: Where Next?

The ideas about order and disjuncture presented here do not yet constitute a fully formed framework for a new anthropological perspective on development, but they do generate a set of ideas for new ways of thinking about policy ideas, organizations, institutions and agency. For example, the encounter between developers and people is far more complex and nuanced than is allowed for either (at the level of practice) by the crude approaches of interventionist developmentalism that still exist in many parts of the development industry, or (at the level of theory) by the post-structuralist critiques of anthropologists in the 1990s. Meanings are contested and organizing space is negotiated at multiple levels, blurring the range of insider/outsider, indigenous/scientific or formal/informal dualisms that are common in both development theory and practice.

At the level of policy, the order and disjuncture framework invites a far closer scrutiny, and perhaps soul searching, among those involved either as researchers or as practitioners in relation to the illusions of order that are constructed in the name of development, and which obscure a far more complex and messy reality. At the same time, the ideas presented here also draw attention to the myriad ways in which development as an idea is experienced, lived and negotiated by people claiming identities from roles within both the production and the experience of the “development idea”.

Finally, the agenda suggested by this issue indicates the potential value of a continuing conversation between anthropology and development studies, which can allow both fields to leave behind the tensions between theory and practice that have dogged both—from Edwards’s (1994) allegations of “the irrelevance of development studies” to the continuing tensions between anthropologists and their “applied” colleagues (Mars, 2004). Creative thinking on development can be assisted by a continuing conversation in which both disciplines try to rethink the theory/practice divide. Harrison & Crewe (1998) argued that the boundary between development anthropologists and anthropologists of development was artificial, because it obscured the positioning of all anthropologists within a dominant organizing idea of development (cf. Ferguson, 1997; Little & Painter, 1995). It is equally

illusory to believe that one can separate research “on” and “in” development, and the new agenda presented here requires us to move beyond such dualism.

Notes

- ¹ As Rose & Miller (1992, pp. 175–176) pointed out, this is a matter of understanding the interdependence of “governmental technologies” of development and their “political rationalities” or moral justifications.
- ² For the corresponding view of project failure, see Mosse (2005, chapter 8).
- ³ In fact Mitchell (2002), in his work on Egypt, goes further to show that the world of contingent, hybrid actions is not just concealed by policy intent, but is in fact the *origin* of rational principles of rule, whether property, law or science. That is to say, development policy which appears as rational abstraction separate from the social order it governs is shown historically to be grounded in particular interests and events, contingency, violence and exclusion.
- ⁴ Kothari (2005) found, when interviewing with former colonial administrators, a distain shown by this older generation of “development workers” to the growing professionalization of expertise among the world of NGOs, agencies and consultants of today.

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