

Rezensionen

Abram, Simone, and Jacqueline Waldren (eds.): *Anthropological Perspectives on Local Development. Knowledge and Sentiments in Conflict*. London: Routledge, 1998. 166 pp. ISBN 0-415-18278-6. Price: £ 14.99

Development anthropology has largely been dominated by a focus on international development and a critique of the models of a "developed West" providing aspirational ideals for "the Third World poors," and it still has a strong tendency to be "development aid anthropology for Third World problems." Less attention has been paid to development efforts made by states, especially European nations, within their own territories and there is a short supply of anthropological analyses of planning activities of local governmental authorities.

The present volume is a collection of papers first presented in a workshop at the 1996 EASA (European Association of Social Anthropologists) Conference in Barcelona. The aim of the workshop was to reconsider the differentiated, local notions of development being used in routine state-governed development, in contrast to international aid-sponsored development. The collection aims at taking a critical anthropological approach to forms of "development" as they are experienced in contemporary localities, showing the importance of the study of protest and power in the governance of development, but also how anthropologists can contribute to this study through examining the conflicting meanings of common terms involved. Although alternative understandings, empirical and normative, of "development" are regularly debated, the concept continues to be employed as if its content is more or less unambiguous and universally accepted. The authors of the present volume attempted to redifferentiate the metaphors of development employed by different social groups who resist development measures and by developers.

The ten contributors are from seven European countries and four of them wrote about their own country. Five of eight chapters deal with European regions, and three of these with tourism. Simone Abram's well written and informative introduction is a clear pleading for a politically oriented anthropology. She underscores that there are different development anthropologies, taking a critical position against fashionable poststructuralist approaches à la Arturo Escobar. Her historical interpretation of the origins of development critiques is

quite interesting, because she identifies them primarily in environmentalism. She recommends to consider three main dimensions for the analysis of local planned development: (1) the activity of development planning as a form of governance and the role of participation within it; (2) changes to notions of development due to the popularisation of environmentalism; and (3) their implications for changing and differentiated notions of governance and democracy.

Anne Kathrine Larsen's very well written text on development discourses in Malaysia shows to us that we cannot simply reduce different understandings of "development" to bipolar contrasts between "locals" and "externals." The Malaysian case exemplifies that there exist different notions of "development" among international development agencies, the Malaysian governmental authorities, and the local populations. Aud Talle's chapter about female bar workers in a Tanzanian border town is also very well written, but deals with "development" in a quite peripheral way, being rather a good ethnographic description of a local situation. There is one interesting aspect regarding the bar workers' notions of "development," as they are absolutely contrary to the participatory ideals propagated in contemporary development cooperation rhetorics, taking a clear modernization stance and disdaining everything which has to do with "tradition."

Duška Knežević's chapter about the new Slovene-Croat state border in the Upper Kolpa Valley is well written regional history and some ethnography, but by no means development anthropology. It is rather a good frontier study from historical, political, and ethnic points of view. One of the best contributions was made by Gaspar Mairal Buil and José Angel Bergua, analysing the conflicts around the construction of an irrigation scheme on the river Esera in Northern Spain. This paper has more to do with the volume's title than any other. The authors make a thick description and profound analysis of the different actors' points of view in a conflict about natural resources and the impacts of a dam construction, labeling the two conflicting kinds of discourse "economism" and "culturalism." "Economism" is the kind of discourse used by the proponents and defenders of the dam, making recourse to economic and technological arguments, while the opponents defend a different rationality based upon general cultural values related to land and local identity. A shortcoming of