

**Anthropology, development, and human rights:
the case of involuntary resettlement**

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Anthropology, development, and human rights: the case of involuntary resettlement

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Anthropology's present concern with the environment may be seen as connected with the present state of affairs as regards the global environment. The various points of departure and modes of attack taken by anthropologists in confronting the present environmental crisis is to a large extent a reflection of its long-standing occupation with both the environment, human populations, and more specifically the relation between the two. Our forefathers grappled with these issues and developed some basic theoretical concepts and methodological tools for analyzing and understanding man-environment relations and changes in them.

This interest in the environment is important for the concern in the present paper. Taking the above framework as a point of departure then, the paper aims at contributing to the tracing out of a new field of concern emphasizing human rights. The paper presents elements of the current knowledge of a specific type of development project and its consequences, reviews some important aspects of an anthropological focus on human rights based on a case study, and puts forward some recommendations for future action and input by anthropologists.

On involuntary resettlement

Involuntary resettlement will in this context be taken to be a subtype of a wider category, namely what has been called "population transfer" (Colchester 1986; Søftestad et al. 1990). Briefly, population transfer is any state-imposed resettlement of people, irrespective of reason. Population transfer normally takes place within state boundaries. The terms dislocation, displacement, evacuation, relocation, and resettlement have over the years been used to cover various sub-categories of population transfer. Examples include the refugee problematic, migration-studies, internal colonisation schemes, hamletting, sedentarisation, and villagisation. Population transfer is the result of different considerations, including: (a) counter movements for self-determination, (b) impose a single dominant culture, (c) facilitate resource extraction, (d) accomplish various strategic goals, and (e) relieve population pressure.

According to this it is important to differentiate between the voluntary resettlement of self-selected segments of a population, and the involuntary or forced relocation of a total population. For the purpose of the present paper, it is necessary to leave out population movements, whether forced or voluntary, as a direct consequence of environmental disasters like for example drought. Furthermore, I will limit myself to the larger or smaller, but always forced movement of local populations as a consequence of planned development of one type or another. In this paper the term "involuntary resettlement" will be used in this more restricted sense. The analysis and conclusions presented regarding involuntary resettlement can with modifications be generalized to other types of population transfer.

The paper focuses on one important type of development project, namely the construction of dams and reservoirs in connection with hydro power development and irrigation schemes. More specifically the focus is on the involuntary resettlement of local populations as a consequence of these often large infra-structure projects. While involuntary resettlement to a large extent is found in projects in the water development and energy sectors, this is by no means the only case. The present paper will however only deal with involuntary resettlement in this connection.

A very important issue connected with the building of dams deals with environmental changes as a consequence of the project. Environmental changes following the construction of dams greatly influence the situation for those resettled, those remaining behind, as well as any host population in the new location.

Involuntary resettlement affects larger and smaller population groups globally. In most cases they will have several things in common. They are marginalized culturally, economically, geographically, and politically speaking, and in many cases they belong to a minority ethnic group. It is precisely these population groups that are likely to be most critically hit when forced to abandon their ancestral lands. Their culture, being in some deep sense synonymous with the land, will in many cases not recover from such a shock treatment of forcible removal.

These population groups are often referred to as minorities or indigenous peoples, and the paper addresses some specific problems indigenous peoples face when subjected to involuntary resettlement. There exists no formal definition of either term. According to widespread use, indigenous peoples are characterized by (a) pre-existence, (b) non-dominance, (c) cultural difference, and (d) self-identification as indigenous (see e.g. Independent Commission on International Humanitarian Issues 1987: 5-11).^{1/} In view of the lacking formal definition of indigenous peoples, the term is used here in accordance with common usage as found for example in Resolution 1988/18 of the UN Sub-Commission on Prevention

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of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities (United Nations 1988; cf. Alfredsson 1990: 12-17). The current use of the term is however not unproblematic (see e.g. Barsh 1986; Independent Commission on International Humanitarian Issues 1987).

The reasons for building dams

Traditionally, dams are a relatively local and small-scale effort at facing the perennial and universal problem that water never seems to be available when it is needed and where it is needed.

Today the situation is different. With the increasing control and power of the nation-state both economically and geographically in conjunction with among other things the aid-business, we do not any longer deal with small-scale and locally financed, built, and controlled dams and reservoirs. There is accordingly an additional and higher-order problem, namely who decides when and where water is needed, and for what purpose.

There are both open and more hidden reasons for the building of dams that lead to forced relocation of people. Among the often used arguments are: (a) it increases the production of electricity, (b) it fights unemployment (this argument covers especially the construction period when often large numbers of locals get paid jobs, both also the post-construction period and the possibility for more jobs in the agricultural sector in case of an increased potential for irrigation), (c) it increases food production through irrigated agriculture, and (d) it helps controlling floods.

The large-scale dams that this paper focuses upon are in some cases built to provide irrigation water for the agricultural sector. More commonly dams are constructed ostensibly in connection with hydro-electric power schemes. In these latter cases, the provision of irrigation water is more a secondary albeit important effect.

Among the more or less hidden reasons is the fact that involuntary resettlement is seen as a means towards transforming backward areas and traditional lifestyles and integrating them in the nation-state. Alternative modes of production are seen as obstacles to modernisation: hunter-gatherers and nomads must be settled, pastoralists turned into peasants, and subsistence peasants converted into modern agriculturalists. In some cases relocation is partly motivated by strategic considerations. This is often shown in the form of a felt need to protect a region or a border against what is perceived as a (potentially) unfriendly neighbouring state.

The consequences of dams

The scale of dam building around the world is staggering. In 1977 there were worldwide a total of 424 reservoirs with dams greater than 100 meters high that was either completed, under construction, or planned (Goldsmith and Hildyard 1984, vol. 1: app. 1).

The World Bank is the major development agency involved in involuntary resettlement. Because of this as well as the often enormous social and environmental consequences of these projects, it has been a prime target for criticism (see e.g. Goldsmith and Hildyard 1984, 1986; Searle 1987). At the same time the World Bank is the only agency with an official, concerned, and detailed policy on this (Cernea 1988; The World Bank 1984, 1990).

With several projects under construction, and even more planned, the scale of environmental destruction and human misery is going to increase many times more. Global statistics on the number of peoples relocated involuntarily do not exist. The statistics that exist, primarily put together by the World Bank, are grim. As an example, a review of 39 selected dam projects funded by the World Bank during 1979-85 concluded that they entailed the involuntary resettlement of about 750,000 people (Cernea 1990a: 5).

Many of these dams are located in little inhabited areas. More and more dam projects are now being built in densely populated areas. This is due among other things to increase in engineering capabilities, a relatively free aid-flow from the North, and an increasing need for utilizing available resources in the South. India is the best example of this besides China and Southeast Asia.

The funding for these often very costly projects in many cases comes from the World Bank and regional development banks, while the engineering skills are often provided by multinational engineering firms in Europe and North America. In Europe the largest and most active of these firms are, perhaps not too surprisingly, located in Norway, Sweden, and Switzerland (see e.g. Erklarung von Bern 1985).

Analyses of the consequences of dams and involuntary resettlement often distinguish between (a) economic, (b) environmental, and (c) social consequences.

Regarding the environment, dams and reservoirs have a more or less dramatic impact on the local and regional environments. The severity of the impact depends on several factors. In addition to the actual size of the dam, various characteristics of the environment itself, including soil types, topography, vegetation cover, and climate, are important (Goldsmith and Hildyard 1984, 1986). Irrespective of whether a dam leads to forced relocation of the local people, it will accordingly have serious consequences for them.

When the building of dams leads to involuntary resettlement, additional consequences appear. The

severity of involuntary resettlement stems however not from numbers of displaced persons alone, but more from the problems faced by those resettled irrespective of numbers. A list of the more commonly reported and most destructive consequences of involuntary resettlement includes: (a) socio-cultural consequences, (b) economic consequences, and (c) various stress-factors (Goldsmith and Hildyard 1984, 1986). The latter can be further specified into psychological, physiological, and socio-cultural stress (Colchester 1986; Colson 1971; Partridge, Brown, and Nugent 1982).

It is important to distinguish between long term and short term impacts both on the environment and on the relocated peoples. In this connection emphasis must be given to the fact that environmental and social changes as processes are mutually interdependent, and they must accordingly not be compartmentalized. It is furthermore necessary to distinguish clearly between the effects on the resettlers and the effects on any host population in the new area.

Dams and involuntary resettlement are part of an accelerating and unprecedented effort at transforming and restructuring both the environment and small, more or less self-contained cultures worldwide. The future consequences of this on human cultures as well as local and regional environments will be dramatic if not checked.

Kotmale Hydro Power Project in Sri Lanka

I have recently had some experience with involuntary resettlement as a consultant to the Swedish International Development Authority (SIDA) on the Kotmale Hydro Power Project in Sri Lanka.^{2/} The purpose of the consultancy was to study the present situation of the people who were evacuated from the Kotmale valley as a result of the project.

This case study does not deal with indigenous peoples. The local population in question are Sinhalese, the largest and politically strongest ethnic group in Sri Lanka. The experience with the involuntary resettlement component in this project is nonetheless relevant for projects where indigenous peoples are affected.

Background

A brief note on the project itself and its history may be in order. The Kotmale Hydro Power Project basically consists of a hydro power plant and a large dam constructed to create a reservoir in the Kotmale valley. The Kotmale Oya is a tributary located in the upper reaches of the Mahaweli River. It was originally a project between two private Swedish contractors and the

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Sri Lanka Government. During the construction period it was found necessary to involve SIDA due to financial constraints. SIDA's accepting to provide the funds in fact meant "taking over" the implementation of a project designed by others. Specifically, the original agreement left all responsibility for the evacuation and relocation of the local people living in the parts of the Kotmale valley to be submerged with the Sri Lanka Government.

Kotmale Evacuees Study

During the construction period, it gradually became clear to SIDA that the situation of those resettled was far from good. In connection with planning the final technical-economical and environmental evaluations, it was accordingly agreed to define a separate study to look into the problem of evacuation and relocation. Thus the so-called Kotmale Evacuees Study was initiated in 1988.

The aim was to establish the present situation of the several thousand people who had been forcefully removed from their ancestral lands in the Kotmale valley. A key phrase in the Terms of Reference reads:

The study should aim at showing how the lives of the evacuee families have been affected by their relocation . . . and particular attention should be given to . . . the assessment of the evacuees of the changes in the quality of life resulting from their resettlement.

No data on the situation before evacuation existed however, and SIDA had not given any thought to exactly how one should measure to what extent the resettlers' lives had been affected.

For this reason the study could not be conceived as a traditional evaluation exercise which basically implies measuring changes that have taken place as a result of specific development activities, relative to an earlier baseline study. Alternatively, it had to be understood as a type of impact analysis. This meant assuming that comparison with any existing data on comparable populations, together with a certain measure of intuition, could produce acceptable conclusions regarding the relative standard of living of the population in question. This was far from being satisfactory.

Based on SIDA-policy, it was decided to hire a local consultant to execute the study. SIDA at the same time saw that the study had important anthropological aspects to it. These were seen as connected with setting up and executing a methodological exercise of the fairly large-scale and complicated nature believed necessary here, and more concretely with questions of methodology involved in researching the issues of resettlement properly. Towards this end, SIDA collaborated with the Development Study Unit at the Department of Social Anthropology at the

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University of Stockholm on anthropological consultancy services of this nature.

Evaluation

My views on the way the component of involuntary resettlement was handled in the Kotmale Hydro Power Project, and by extension of the Kotmale Evacuees Study itself, can briefly be summarized as follows:

1. The original contract between the two Swedish contractors and the Sri Lanka Government left the total responsibility for the evacuation and resettlement operations with the Sri Lanka Government, and this is not acceptable. The fact that it originally was a private contract in no way leaves SIDA innocent in the matter. The contract should definitely have been renegotiated when SIDA took over the financing.

2. Due to geological conditions, the dam height had to be reduced drastically during construction. This had however no consequence for the number of people to be resettled. The argument was that this would facilitate a future increase in the dam height at a later point in time. As must have been clear to many people already then, this will never happen. As a result of this appalling decision by the Sri Lanka Government, thousands of people have been forcibly resettled without any reason at all. The two Swedish contractors' role in this leaves much to be desired.

3. No detailed and comprehensive plan for the resettlement operations, specifying for example time tables, numbers of people to be moved, and new resettlement locations, seems to exist. A total of around 4,000 families have or will be resettled according to available statistics. The actual number of people to be resettled remains unknown.

4. To my knowledge SIDA never bothered about supervision and monitoring. (This was admittedly formally speaking outside SIDA's control.)

5. The evacuation process was successful to the extent that it met the targets in terms of timing. This unfortunate emphasis on evacuation had however the effect of what seems like a low emphasis on the following and very crucial relocation phase.

6. Formally people had a choice as to where they wanted to move: downstream in the large, centrally planned new irrigation schemes, or further up on the hill sides in the Kotmale valley itself. This choice was however largely theoretical since people seldom were given substantive information to choose between the two alternatives.

7. The resettlers were compensated en lieu of losses sustained on a differential basis. Compensation was given both in cash and in land. Most resettlers felt that the compensation was not adequate.

8. As a consequence of a low emphasis on overall planning and synchronisation of all aspects of the relocation process, the development of infra-structure and provision of basic services in many of the new settlements were lagging.

9. Especially initially, life in the new settlements was very tough. For many evacuees there were delays of 2-3 years in the provision of for example irrigation water. Lack of domestic water supplies and fuel wood were apparent. Starting anew meant no income, and many families had to use the compensation money for consumption needs instead.

10. A total of around 40 villages had to be partly or totally evacuated. The authorities in charge seem to have bothered little about trying to have people from the same or neighbouring villages move together. As a result, people from 5 to 10 villages are often mixed in one village. They are also mixed with voluntary resettlers from other parts of the country as well as with the host population.

11. More than half of the resettler families decided to stay back in Kotmale and move up on the hill sides. This meant moving into existing tea gardens, and these were expropriated and divided. The Tamil plantation workers living there were shipped out. Nobody seems to know what happened to them, let alone care.

12. For those relocated in Kotmale itself, there were special problems due to the non-availability of land. For this reason the official promise of providing each family with 0.8 hectares of land was not kept, in reality allotments vary between 0.2 and 0.8 hectares. Apart from this, almost one-third of the resettlers in Kotmale were not in occupation of their allotments. Although for other reasons, a parallel situation applies in the downstream setting. Here more than one-third of the resettlers operate less land than their original holding.

13. Traditionally, Kotmale people had relied on extensive wet-rice cultivation along the valley floor. Those evacuees opting to stay on in Kotmale faced a dramatic problem in being relocated high up on the hill sides of the valley. Due to the total change of the ecosystem and climate, they had to abandon wet-rice cultivation completely and start as small-scale tea cultivators. As stated above, their new land is in fact located on old tea estates. Agricultural extension services to care for this new group of tea growers and especially their need for training are almost nonexistent.

14. Evacuees downstream, although able to continue growing rice, had to cope with a new situation implying increased market integration and internationalization of the whole agricultural sector. This in effect meant that they overnight found themselves changed from small-scale, mixed-cropping, and subsistence oriented peasants to

farmers producing a cash crop based on capital intensive technology.

15. Those relocated in the large settlement schemes along the lower reaches of the Mahaweli River have problems of their own. This new environment implied initial problems of adjustment to a very different climate, seasonal drought, and various diseases they were unaccustomed to. Even at present, many of those resettled here have problems with these changes. This especially goes for malaria, a disease almost unknown in Kotmale. Today there is hardly a family that has not been affected by malaria.

16. Half of the population relocated in Kotmale report an annual income of Rs. 9,000 or less. (Rs. 9,000 roughly corresponds to the poverty line.) Among those relocated outside Kotmale somewhat more than half derive an annual income in excess on Rs. 9,000. This, together with for example the above reported differences in ownership of land, are clear signs of a social and economic differentiation among the resettlers. Furthermore, there are indications that this differentiation is increasing. This contradicts the egalitarian ethos underlying the Mahaweli settlement operations as professed by the Sri Lanka Government.

17. The opportunities for self-employment and income generation in the non-farm sectors are extremely limited both for men and women.

18. For all resettlers, the new subsistence practices to a large extent were to take place within large-scale and centrally co-ordinated productive regimes. As stated above, major aspects of this have yet to be realised.

19. On the local level, resettlers seem to have problems functioning within these new top-down imposed organisational structures, socially and practically speaking. The level of social integration within settlements is surprisingly low, there is an apparent lack of clear and articulated leadership, and institution building on the local level is lagging.

20. The resettlers' assessment of their own life is distressing reading. The uprooting from anything traditional, known, and dear to them, has left a deep and apparent lasting impression on the outlook of life and what the future will bring. Specifically, most people grieve the loss of old social ties and relationships by the dispersal of kin and the disintegration of compound groups. It accordingly should come as no surprise that a majority of the evacuees view the past situation as better compared with their present life.

21. As will be apparent, SIDA had no prior experience with resettlement. Any such experience would presumably have led to a better conceived study.

22. The Kotmale Hydro Power Project being a large infra-structure project, it was natural that the responsibility for executing it was given to SIDA's Infrastructure Division. From a bureaucratic point of

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view it can possibly be argued that it made sense to place also the responsibility for the Kotmale Evacuees Study with the Infrastructure Division. This would however not seem to be conducive to an optimal emphasis on the human, anthropological core issues involved.

Anthropology, dams, and involuntary resettlement

The following exploratory schema is aimed at pointing towards a connection between anthropology, dams, and involuntary resettlement.

Several questions follow from establishing this connection, among them: (a) why is it important for anthropologists to study dams and involuntary resettlement? and (b) how to study dams and involuntary resettlement? Tentative answers to these and other questions will be presented below. First it is necessary to outline the above mentioned schema.

Human rights

The basic framework put forward is seen as anthropological analyses of specific human rights issues in connection with involuntary resettlement affecting indigenous peoples living within current nation-states.

The rationale for this framework stems partly from the built-in logic in modern nation-states. Many of these nation-states are located in the South, and are characterized by a populace divided along crosscutting and often conflicting parameters. These parameters include ethnicity, language, mode of production, political organisation, and religion. The usual pattern is that one or a few groups, based on a combination of these parameters, assume de facto control. This means that other groups, and especially the most marginalized ones, will find their traditional rights not respected and indeed trampled upon.

To simplify, assume the following two levels: on the one hand is the nation-state and on the other the various indigenous peoples that live within the borders of the nation-state.

First there is the nation-state. It demands full control and expects obedience. The rationale underlying this stems from a gradually emerging and by now accepted view on the character of the nation-state. According to this, nation-states ". . . are in themselves appropriate and sacrosanct political entities, which enjoy, as of right, political sovereignty and the power of eminent domain" (Colchester 1986: 1). The right of eminent domain granted to nation-states confers upon governments among other things the right to expropriate property and land, and abrogate traditional use rights as claimed by indigenous peoples.^{3/} This is always done with reference

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to the national interest, and in pursuance of development along an economic model developed in the North.

On the other hand then, are various indigenous peoples living within the nation-state and subject to this policy of eminent domain. These peoples' claims to the similar rights to their traditional areas are interpreted by the nation-state as unfounded and secessionist in nature, and are accordingly denied.

Parallel to this, and to a large extent as a direct consequence of the existence of the UN, there is now an increasing international understanding, if not recognition and acceptance, of the fact that there are various types of human rights. Rather schematically, these are: (a) human rights that are universal and accordingly applies to all humans, in all places, and at any time, and (b) human rights that are specific, resulting from local circumstances and conditioned upon a unique set of economic, environmental, ethnic, historical, linguistic, and political factors. (This position does of course not imply that the concept human rights itself is universal.) I will argue that the emerging international focus on indigenous human rights, including these two general types of human rights and the implications this raise, should be focused more on by anthropologists.

There are several international legal instruments that directly or indirectly address these issues. These should function as points both of departure and reference for any concerned anthropological interest in and work on these issues. Among them are: (a) ILO Convention no. 107, Convention Concerning Indigenous and Tribal Populations in Independent Countries, (b) ILO Convention no. 169, Convention Concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries, (c) the UN Draft Universal Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and (d) the UN Declaration of the Right to Development (Alfredsson 1989; Swepston 1989; Türk 1987; United Nations 1990).

Within anthropology there existed some time back a concern with human rights. One example is the American Anthropological Association that in 1947 adopted a Statement on Human Rights (American Anthropological Association 1947). This was later submitted to the UN Commission on Human Rights. However, as with similar initiatives in the post-war flurry of "never again war," it did not amount to much but empty words. By now the time should be ripe for a more serious and concerned confrontation with the issue of human rights, and the above mentioned statement, and others like it, deserves a closer inspection (cf. Renteln 1988: 66-68).

I propose then to study the effects of dams and involuntary resettlement on both the environment and the people affected within a fairly open ended human rights - framework, and drawing upon ideas from other spheres of anthropological concern including development, ecology, economics, ethnicity, and politics.

Now, taking the position of those affected by dams and involuntary resettlement, what are these specific human rights? One position on this, deeply influenced by anthropology, is that one cannot assume a priori what specific human rights a culture hold to be especially important and culturally significant. This can only be determined as a result of prolonged fieldwork (Downing and Kushner 1988).

Ideally, I of course agree with this argument. Practically speaking however, I am not sure it is necessary to use this extreme approach. I venture to suggest that most indigenous cultures and peoples a priori can be characterized as having two specific human rights that both are important to the present concern (cf. United Nations 1990).

The first is the right to land, or land rights, an economic right.^{4/} The Northern legal system puts an almost total emphasis on the individual and her/his rights and obligations versus the nation-state. The basic difference with the indigenous cultures discussed here is that this emphasis on the individual is all but absent. Alternatively, various types of rights are vested in a group or collective of some sort, be it a descent group, a community, or other. This fundamental difference has to be taken into consideration when determining and assessing these peoples' claim to land and resources. This is important not only in an argument against the nation-state's arrogation of land, but also as a means to assess the damage done to the effected people as a consequence of planned development activities leading to involuntary resettlement and inundation of large tracts of land, and ultimately to arrive at a fair and realistic assessment of the types and forms of compensation to be paid to them.

The second type of specific human rights is self-determination, a political right.^{5/} As with land rights, this is a right whose content has to be specified in each case. Specifically, self-determination does not necessarily imply the right to secession (cf. e.g. Alfredsson 1982). Nation-states are of course concerned with this. It is very important to make it clear that a concept like self-determination is open to interpretation, and furthermore is a direct reflection of the needs of a special people at a specific point in time. What indigenous peoples want today seems to be basically not sovereignty, but rather a form of internal autonomy in cultural, economic, educational, political, and social matters. Like all legal concepts, the idea of self-determination is not static. It is evolving and is being transformed in a reflection of societal developments. The UN Working Group on Indigenous Populations gradually seems to take on a leading role in developing and redefining international legal concepts and norms regarding the rights of indigenous peoples (cf. e.g. Anaya 1990).

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Given the above schema featuring two separate human rights as crucial to an assessment of the impact of dams and involuntary resettlement on indigenous peoples, it is still necessary to gather specific information on them. They have to be defined for each culture in question. An anthropological approach and input is here most crucial.

Anthropology's long-standing concern with ethnicity can be tied in with this model focusing on human rights. One connecting point is that the two human rights singled out above, are among the factors that can be used as foci and rallying points in a process of ethnic revival and campaign of increased consciousness and understanding of own values and worth. Equally important, ethnicity is an important and powerful analytical tool for understanding current processes of ethnic conflicts. In this connection it is important to be aware that involuntary resettlement in many cases is the direct cause of ethnic conflicts.

Development and ethics

Anthropologists' work on dams and involuntary resettlement must be based on a discussion of what constitutes the aim of applied anthropology, which is a discussion of ethics and moral responsibility.

Anthropology has traditionally been occupied with the variation in human cultures. Its basic research agenda has focused on cultural separateness and cultural differences. Following from this, its perhaps most fundamental moral message has emphasized cultural relativism (cf. Renteln 1988). The later concern with human rights within Northern cultures and theorizing based on this can partly be understood as taking the anthropological message of cultural relativism as a point of departure. Human rights, or rights as humans, meant the right to maintain and practise unique cultural patterns. This focus on cultural relativism and on differences between peoples does of course not preclude a concern with cross-cultural universals (see Renteln 1988: 164-66).

Anthropology has thus contributed to the prevalent view on human diversity and more specifically human rights. The question is now: is this enough? Given the prevailing situation globally, should we perhaps take on and advance a more politically and socially informed and bolder position? I believe the time has come for such considerations. One intriguing and thought-provoking answer to this is provided by Becker (1971).

In his critical analysis of the development and focus of science, Becker argues that it has sidetracked since its modern founding in the eighteenth century, losing on the way its original goal. As far as anthropology is concerned, the central problem today should not be to explain human differences. In his alternative paradigm, building to a large extent on Kant and Rousseau, Becker singles out human freedom as central.^{6/} He argues:

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What [is] supremely relevant? Nothing else but the question: "What are the differences in human freedom in societies, across the span of history?" It is only when we ask this question that we can see the moral usefulness of the science of man. . . .

When we ask . . . how man in society got to be as he is, the only relevant principle must be the principle of human freedom; the only possible synthetic framework must be one that explains differences in human freedom in society and history. (Becker 1971: 120-121)

The problem of freedom has two aspects. The first is the origin of inequality: ". . . historical inequality [must be studied] in the process of its evolution in order to attack the problem of human freedom in our time" (Becker 1971: 139). This is not enough however. In addition science has to develop a ". . . moral imperative for the present time . . ." (Becker 1971: 144). Put somewhat differently, the scientific quest should enjoin us ". . . not only to learn, but to learn for a purpose . . ." (Becker 1971: 73). The positivistic or "real" aspect of social science has to be balanced or complemented by an "ideal" or critical aspect that is presently lacking. The main moral task Becker thus is envisaging for the social sciences, and perhaps especially for anthropology, is ". . . the maximization of both personal freedom and social community . . ." (Becker 1971: 153). This approach seems to have common elements with the idea of the right to development discussed below. It also ties in with the question of advocacy (Hastrup and Elsass 1990; Wright 1988).

The connection between human rights and development is important. On the one hand, planned development involving dam building and involuntary resettlement affecting indigenous peoples must be based on locally defined land rights. On the other hand it must be tied in with the right to self-determination and a substantive participation in governance.

The discussion the UN Declaration of the Right to Development enters here (United Nations 1986). This declaration brings the discussion forward, but some obstacles remain. One of them, perhaps the most important, deals with the rights of individuals versus the rights of groups. The declaration here reflects the basic view in international human rights law that protecting individuals' human rights leads to protection of groups. This individual emphasis from the late 1940s onwards and consequent less emphasis on group rights and self-determination would seem to be politically motivated. More specifically focusing on indigenous peoples, the idea of the right to development loses its meaning if not more emphasis is placed on group rights.

It thus becomes important which group rights can be inferred from the right to development. Türk presents the following set of group rights for further discussion:

1. The right to maintain and develop group characteristics and identity.
2. The right to be protected against attempts to destroy the group identity - by different means, including propaganda directed against the group.
3. The right to equality with other groups as regards the respect for and development of their specific characteristics.
4. The duty of the territorial state to grant the groups - within the resources available - the necessary assistance for the maintenance of their identity and their development.
5. The right to have their specific character reflected in the legal system and in the political institutions of their country. This right should include cultural autonomy as well as administrative autonomy, wherever feasible.
6. Along with these general and common rights each category of groups and each group is entitled to more specific rights. Thus, for instance, the land rights of indigenous peoples constitute a specific category of rights necessary for the development of this category of groups. (Türk 1987: 6)

This general set of group rights deserves to be discussed further by anthropologists. It should be applied to specific indigenous cultures and thereby tested. Two comments are in order: first, Türk specifically delimits self-determination to mean a more or less limited internal autonomy. Second, he sees this autonomy not as an end in itself, but as a means towards the development of indigenous cultures as well as the nation-state itself. The emphasis is accordingly on development and not on political status.

The above points towards a need for alternative models of development. One such model has been put forward by Stavenhagen (1985, as cited in Wright 1988: 380). The model consists of four elements. First, it aims at understanding how existing cultures can provide the basis for alternative models of development. Second, it emphasizes a respect for the environment. Third, it is based on the use of local human, technical, and natural resources as a means towards self-sufficiency while at the same time protecting the environment. Fourth, it emphasizes a participant development process where the

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effected peoples participate actively in all phases from planning to implementation.

Anthropology and involuntary resettlement

Dams and involuntary resettlement pose a special challenge to anthropologists in different ways. First there is the question of why anthropology is in a special situation to study these issues (cf. Society for Applied Anthropology 1990). It is important to point out the strong anthropological and sociological nature of involuntary resettlement, as opposed to its often professed environmental nature. An example of the latter is the common inclusion of involuntary resettlement in Environmental Impact Assessment-statements) Involuntary resettlement does not so much deal with a changing environment as with human populations in a changing environment. It seems natural that important assumptions for an alternative approach to planning and implementation of large-scale development projects, especially those involving major infra-structure components in the water resources and energy sectors, should come from anthropology. Anthropology is a field of enquiry whose basic premise and concern is man, and it is uniquely equipped to study and analyze those fundamental relationships between human cultures and the environment that are so dramatically upset in projects involving involuntary resettlement.

Then there is the theoretical focus. How to study these development processes? I have above proposed a framework focused around human rights. It is admittedly rough and general, and needs refining.

Furthermore, there are the methodological aspects. How to assess the value and meaning of territories and resources lost forever? How to assess the consequences of involuntary resettlement for the peoples concerned, culturally, economically, politically, psychologically, and socially speaking? Here the traditional short-cut methodological ways and means will hardly do. What is needed is traditional long-term anthropological fieldwork entailing deep immersion in the culture.

Finally, there are the advocacy and strategic aspects. Any anthropological input into the planning process involving development projects that lead to involuntary resettlement and large-scale environmental destruction should be based on a humanistic inspired economics analysis of the costs and utilities for all parties involved. It accordingly should argue for total solutions to developmental issues that are optimal and viable in the long term. A core issue today is embodied in the term "sustainability." A globally sustainable environment is basically nothing but a result of locally sustainable environments. Indigenous peoples in their own way share our concern. They want to secure the sustainability and productivity of their land to ensure

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that their descendants may continue to live there and maintain their culture. By implication and in its worldwide aggregate form, this is an argument supported by as well as supporting the conclusions in the report of the World Commission on Environment and Development (1987). A central issue is how anthropology can gain leverage in this debate.

Let there be no doubt about why anthropology in my mind should subscribe to such an approach. The reasons are first, to argue more strongly for a sorely needed and more integrated view within economic development on the intimately connected aspects of the environment and human cultures, second, to focus on the very important and largely neglected long term effects of any large-scale tinkering with the two, and third, to be in a better position to defend those indigenous cultures most hard hit by certain development efforts, in particular dam building and consequent involuntary resettlement.

Resettlement operations

Several postulates follow from establishing the special responsibility of anthropology in involuntary resettlement, as viewed from the vantage point of human rights. These postulates point towards new and potentially rewarding points of departure in researching and more generally working with involuntary resettlement.

Traditional operational rules

Existing attitudes to environmental management and social engineering in the wake of projects involving dams and involuntary resettlement leave much to be desired. They are still provoking havoc among the small and marginal cultures where these projects are located. As with other experiences with the Northern modernisation efforts in the South over the last few decades, it has not so much been a question of changed systems of production as destroyed systems of production. With the local resource base partially or completely gone, the traditional mode of production was in many cases never left much chance of surviving.

So much for the planning and actual removal of the population in question. When it comes to shifting them to a new location and integrating them in the new environment, the mistakes abound again. A major mistake is to base involuntary resettlement on a welfare model. This almost without exception leads to the affected population developing the so-called "dependency syndrome."

Principles of resettlement

The agency with most experience in involuntary resettlement is undoubtedly the World Bank. It has during the last several years critically examined its involvement in resettlement operations in order to design operational guidelines for this type of project. A brief summary is presented in the following.^{7/}

The World Bank's general project cycle includes the following elements: (a) project identification, (b) project preparation, (c) project pre-appraisal and appraisal, and (d) project supervision and monitoring. More specifically focusing on involuntary resettlement components in projects, there is a strong emphasis on the importance of including sociological-anthropological skills early on in the project cycle. Lack of this can make it impossible to conduct an adequate appraisal of the involuntary resettlement component, including resettlement plans, costs, and organisational arrangements. The involuntary resettlement component of a project furthermore has to be identified, examined, and evaluated in all its aspects already in the identification phase of the project. To do it only after project appraisal and negotiations is not satisfactory. The basic objective of the appraisal is to ascertain to what extent the proposed arrangements are feasible and adequate and whether they will enable the relocation and resettlement of people with a minimum of stress and with a successful result. In this, the World Bank argues, it goes beyond the elements usually reviewed under Social Impact Assessment and Environmental Impact Assessment.

Important aspects of the World Bank's operational procedures and guidelines for resettlement components include: conceptualization, design, planning, financing, and implementation (cf. the project cycle mentioned above.) Principles basic to resettlement operations deal with: (a) government responsibility, (b) development packages and strategies, (c) compensation, (d) resettler rights and participation, including involving resettlers in the choice among various resettlement alternatives and the social organisation of resettlers, (e) resettler habitat, (f) protection of the interests of the host population and prevention of adverse impacts on both host population and the environment, (g) a clear definition of the objectives of resettlement, and (h) environmental management.

An important part of the design and planning of resettlement is the Resettlement Plan. Components of this plan are: (a) preparation of the population for removal, (b) transportation to the new site, and (c) integration of the resettled population into the new community.

According to the World Bank, there are three areas in involuntary resettlement that need immediate attention and strengthening: (a) the quality of borrower's preparation and the detailed planning of involuntary resettlement components must improve radically, (b)

increased attention must be given to economically and socially viable options for developing the productive capacity of displaced populations through project-financed land- and employment-based strategies, and (c) the supervision and monitoring aspects must be improved.

Anthropological contributions

There are already some anthropological contributions in this field. In addition a number of things can be done.

The World Bank's operational guidelines specify very clearly the importance and need for anthropological participation, specifically in the pre-appraisal and appraisal stages (see e.g. Cernea 1988). Anthropological input can take the form of providing economic and cultural characteristics of the population to be moved, and how this will affect its responses to resettlement and its ability to cope in the new environment. In terms of the above emphasis on land rights, the anthropologist is well equipped to document the traditional forms of rights in and use of the various types of environment recognized by the population in question. This is a very important and crucial task in order to establish what is lost due to inundation, and to determine both their needs in the new location and the compensation they are entitled to.

Anthropology's special focus gives room for other specific points of attack: (a) studying what has been called the "administered community" in new resettlements (Downing and Kushner 1988: 27-42), (b) developing methodology, cross-cultural and inter-disciplinary based, involving for example suitable blends of qualitative and quantitative methods, environmental perception methods, and the use of historical methods, (c) "studying up," that is focusing on the important larger economic and political structures that encompass a specific project, including for example the (foreign) lender or donor, the (foreign) contractor, the recipient government or ministry, and the local contractor or utility company, and thus link the rationale and sometimes contradictory policies of these four actors with what really happens on the micro-level, and (d) relating environmental changes and changes in production.

Aside from any direct involvement in project work, there are several tasks that need to be followed up in the areas of organisation, research, and training, as exemplified in the following. The Annual Meeting of the Society for Applied Anthropology in 1989 discussed the issue of involuntary resettlement in detail, and the American Anthropological Association later formed a Task Force on Involuntary Resettlement. The Society for Applied Anthropology has recently set up a Human Rights Committee. The Development Study Unit at the University of Stockholm referred to above plans to arrange a seminar where the experiences with resettlement in Kotmale will

be discussed. The seminar will be aimed at SIDA-officials and development anthropologists.

The last point above can be generalized. Anthropologists have an important role in arguing for a more concerned emphasis on behalf of the various national and supra-national agencies and financial institutions. We have a special responsibility when it comes to the development of minimum threshold standards in involuntary resettlement, to be codified in Social Impact Assessment- and related to Environmental Impact Assessment- statements. This work on standard-setting for involuntary resettlement-components can take the World Bank's operational procedures as a point of departure. The concern with the effects of involuntary resettlement on marginal cultures necessarily has to be tied in with a concern for its relation with both the local and the global environment, and furthermore with an argument for establishing more concerned environmental policies within development projects.

Finally, there is a growing and increasingly important NGO-sector located both in the North and the South that specifically focuses on these issues. This NGO-network is interested in co-operating with anthropologists. In addition anthropologists themselves should consider co-operating more closely on these issues.^{8/}

Conclusion

The above exposition of some aspects pertaining to the relation between involuntary resettlement-components in development projects and anthropology, gives occasion to some conclusions. First, there is little focus on the environmental consequences of infra-structure projects involving the building of large dams, even less focus on the social consequences of involuntary resettlement, and no focus at all on the relation between the two.

Second, resettlement programs must be development programs as well, and the idea of a "development-oriented resettlement" has been advanced in this connection.

Third, it is necessary to be realistic about this, some reservoirs and involuntary resettlement are unavoidable - they are "in the national interest" as the phrase goes.

Fourth, what we have to do then is to argue forcefully for a planning approach that takes all factors into consideration and weighs short term advantages against long term consequences. While strongly defending the universal and specific human rights of indigenous peoples in cases of involuntary resettlement (including their right to a sustainable environment), we must also try to achieve the necessary understanding and acceptance from the nation-state.

Given this situation, the paper has several aims. First, a short term aim is to highlight some aspects of involuntary resettlement, especially in connection with concomitant and interconnected environmental changes, and in the long term to argue for a larger interest in involuntary resettlement among anthropologists.

Second, to present elements of a possible research agenda focusing on these issues.

Third, to argue strongly for the involvement of anthropological expertise in the planning process of infra-structure projects leading to large-scale environmental changes and the involuntary resettlement of local populations.

Fourth, to argue for a thematic and cross-cultural approach to these issues as an alternative to the existing case-by-case approach.

This may hopefully prove more useful and productive for focusing on the basic causes and consequences, as well as the economic and political processes involved. The success of such an alternative approach to the study of involuntary resettlement relies heavily on anthropological input.

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Notes

1. The term "indigenous people" must be distinguished from "minority." In both cases there is an emphasis on a subjective element, namely self-identification. However, indigenous peoples differ from minorities in their relation with land: they presently inhabit land on which they have lived since time immemorial.

2. The material presented in this section is partly adapted from an earlier publication (Søftestad 1990).

3. The power of states to arrogate land is upheld in international law. ILO Convention no. 107, Convention Concerning Indigenous and Tribal Populations in Independent Countries, provides an example. Article 12 (2) recognizes the right of governments to displace indigenous and tribal populations from their ancestral lands in the interest of national development.

4. The term "land rights" is an older term that originally had a rather restricted meaning. It is gradually being broadened to include among other things soil, surface resources (including vegetation cover), subsurface resources, water, and sea-ice. The term is retained here for want of a better one.

5. For the general issues connected with human rights that this paper focuses on, it makes no difference that the case study above deals with non-indigenous peoples. The same argument applies for the specific focus on land rights. Self-determination is however an exception. The basic causes for the indigenous emphasis on self-determination as well as its content, applies only to a limited extent to non-indigenous peoples.

6. Becker's views are mentioned briefly in Downing and Kushner (1986: 37).

7. This section draws upon evaluations and experiences within the World Bank, especially as found in Cernea (1988, 1990a-c).

8. The European Association of Social Anthropologists (EASA) may prove to be the right forum for this.

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