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Hunter-Gatherers in First World Nation States:
Bringing Anthropology Home

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近代国民国家の中の狩猟採集民

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Anthropologists working at home were, for a long time, considered the poor cousins of their peers working abroad. Somehow they were perceived to have failed the test of travelling out of the comfort zone of their own society and grappling with a radically different other where the real theoretical and ethnographic contributions to anthropology were to be made. Anthropology at home was seen as an anthropology of social issues, drawing anthropologists uncomfortably close to sociology, policy oriented studies and applied research and away from the possibility of theoretically significant contributions. Times have changed, however, as has the discipline. I shall argue that research with fourth world peoples is a distinctive, if limited, field of study which is likely to persist for a considerable time yet and that it is fertile ground for social theory. I will outline what I see as some of the theoretical issues central to this field in the coming decades.

　自国で調査を行っている人類学者は，長い間，外国で調査をしている同僚の かわいそうなイトコであると見なされていた。とにかくかれらは自国の快適な 場所から抜け出て旅をし，そこで調査をすることによって真に理論的および民 族誌的な貢献を人類学に対しなすことができる極端に異なる他者に取り組むと いうテストに失敗したと考えられていた。自国での人類学は，人類学者を社会 学，政策にかかわる研究，応用調査へと不愉快にも近づき，理論的な貢献の可 能性があまりないので，社会問題の人類学と見なされた。しかし時代が変わり，

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学問も変わった。第四世界の諸民族の調査は限界があるとはいえ，これからか
なりの期間続きそうな独自の研究領域であると私は主張したい。さらにそれは
社会理論にとっては，実りの多い場であると主張したい。私が，将来，この分
野にとって中心的であると考える理論的な問題のいくつかについて述べる。

Anthropologists working at home were, for a long time, considered the poor cousins of their peers working abroad. Somehow they were perceived to have failed the test of travelling out of the comfort zone of their own society and grappling with a radically different other where the real theoretical and ethnographic contributions to anthropology were to be made. Anthropology at home was seen as an anthropology of social issues, drawing anthropologists uncomfortably close to sociology, policy oriented studies and applied research and away from the possibility of theoretically significant contribution.

Of course, particularly in places like Australia, and to a lesser extent in Canada and Alaska, there were, and indeed still are, internal frontiers which once crossed take one to communities where there are markedly different cultural worlds in which social life and practices still owe a great deal to a precolonial past. In such places it is still possible, although less and less so with each passing year, to gather information that sheds light on a past self-sustaining and independent existence and the social life that went with it. It was this kind of research that dominated anthropology in the heyday of functionalism and continued down until the 1970s, in some areas. I see no reason to be apologetic, even today, about an interest in the reconstruction of variations of a way of life that has dominated the world for so long: indeed in places like Australia only an impoverished mind could lose a sense of wonder and curiosity about the outcomes of 30,000 years of occupation of the desert regions where society was simply human beings and their wits.

This kind of interest has not predominated for the last twenty years. The tradition of past oriented studies, which were seen to be the grounds for the contribution to social theory and to reproduce a domain of 'hunter-gatherer studies', have given way to an emphatic emphasis on the contemporary situation in which the diversity of writing about people who recently lived by hun-

ting and gathering mirrors the diversity of contemporary anthropology itself. To the extent that hunter-gatherer studies exist as a distinctive field today, it is within the context of prehistory or of programs of Native American and Aboriginal Studies. These latter are often hived-off, inward looking, overly concerned with the politics of knowledge and sometime, too, with reproducing party lines.

The changes that took place in the 1970s were of several kinds but are encapsulated in the shift in terminology as groups with a hunter-gatherer background started to subsume themselves within the broader category of 'indigenous peoples'. This shift marked the emergence of global indigenous networks and an increasing political activism on their part. Among academic anthropologists it saw a dramatic increase in contract research for both indigenous organisations and for government which closed the gulf created between those who study and those who are studied. The joining of research and practice in this way, which lay at the heart of the marginal status of anthropology at home in the past, is now the condition of anthropological research everywhere. It is not that every project abroad has to be applied, although it is commonly the case that the countries and communities hosting anthropologists do want to know what is in it for them, but that the moral complexities, the practices and the involvements that have been central to the life of those of us who work with indigenous people at home are now beginning to pervade the discipline at large. Times have changed, as has the discipline. Anthropology at home with fourth world peoples is now emerging as a site that presents some of the theoretical issues and general concerns which are likely to hold centre stage in the discipline in the coming decades in fresh and interesting ways.

Anthropology with fourth world hunter-gatherers differs, however, from other kinds of anthropology at home because of the distinctive relationship such peoples have with the states within which they are encapsulated. In the late 1960s this relationship started to undergo a transformation worldwide as fourth world hunter-gatherers struggled free from assimilation policies and the spirit of decolonisation influenced the wider political climate. Indigenous political energies began to be switched from demands for equal rights to demands for recognition of their distinctive indigenous status. In essence this was and is a moral position which incorporates a claim to special recognition on the basis of being original inhabitants and with it a claim to protection of a unique cultural heritage. It is also associated with disadvantage, racism and particularly outside the first world with political oppression in some cases. As George Manuel and Michael Posluns, the original promulgators of the concept, said in 1974:

> The Aboriginal World has so far lacked the political muscle to emerge: it is

without economic power, it rejects Western political techniques; it is unable to comprehend Western political technology unless it can be used to extend and enhance traditional life forms; and it finds its strength above and beyond Western ideas of historical process.　While the Third World can eventually emerge as a force capable of maintaining its freedom in the struggle between East and West, the Aboriginal World is almost wholly dependent upon the good faith and morality of the nations of East and West within which it finds itself (1974: 6)[1].

This understanding was consolidated at the founding conference of the World Council of Indigenous People in British Colombia in 1975.　It is a political circumstance linked directly to first world nation-states as the reluctance to admit minorities from Asia and Africa makes clear (Dyck 1985: 23) although this has changed over the years.　In first world situations marked cultural and racial difference from the encapsulating majority are a crucial dimension of their situation and a key political resource which has none of the ambiguity associated with the position of pre-state ethnic minorities in the third world and any claims to being indigenous they might make.

Fourth world people in first world nation states have a distinctive location in liberal democratic political life in which moral opposition and the politics of embarrassment are an integral part.　For government the 'Indian Problem', 'the Ainu Problem' or the 'Aboriginal Problem' has been, in the past, how to remove these people from the political landscape.　As the assimilation and termination polices make clear the general post-war prosperity was expected to not only improve their general material circumstances, as it indeed did, but to turn them into citizens who would merge with the rest of the nation.　This analysis failed to realise that the peoples whom the governments and the public tended to see as rapidly losing their culture, were still members of distinctive surviving social orders that were, and are still, the primary sources of personal and social identity.　To the surprise of governments the granting of citizenship or equal rights did not alter their moral position in relation to the state nor did it remove them from the political landscape nor lead to the demise of the surviving social orders.　Instead wittingly and unwittingly, governments have become deeply implicated in the reproduction of indigenous social orders, and however unwillingly, are having to accept living with difference and the politics of indigenism.

LIBERAL DEMOCRATIC THEORY AND THE POLITICS OF INDIGENISM

Liberal democratic theory has traditionally constructed equality and fairness in terms of the erasure of difference.　In a recent book Will Kymlicka (1995) has attempted to develop a theory of minority cultural rights based on

the traditional liberal principles of freedom of choice and personal autonomy. He argues that membership of what he calls a 'societal culture' is not only an essential component of an individual's moral agency but also of a person's ability to meet members of other cultures on equal terms. Majority culture is protected by the choice of official language, administrative boundaries, holidays and other symbols adopted by the state which thereby unavoidably promotes certain cultural identities to the disadvantage of others. The challenge is to have policies, symbols and institutional arrangements which reflect and support a country's minority cultures, as well as its majority culture. To this end, minority rights may be a useful and even necessary device, he argues, to allow its members to meet the majority on equal terms. In Kymlicka's view group-specific rights are needed to accommodate differences, and the accommodation of such differences is seen as the essence of true equality (Kymlicka 1995: 108). The recognition of indigenous rights thus becomes the pursuit of equal rights at a more sophisticated level. It is itself a process of giving greater effect to equal rights.

The politics of indigenism in liberal democratic states creates a powerful mix of state policies and legal systems, international law and indigenous rights, and indigenous claims and identity politics. The emergence of this mix marks an important watershed. Prior to the 1970s the state's relationship with indigenous people was one of tutelage in the context of policies of assimilation. This was a radical attack on difference in two ways. It not only sought the elimination of cultural difference as exemplified in the statement of Australian government policy on assimilation: Aborigines 'shall attain the same manner of living as other Australians, enjoying the same rights and privileges, accepting the same responsibilities, observing the same customs, and being influenced by the same beliefs, hopes and loyalties' (1951 see Hasluck 1963: 3) but it also sought the elimination of any distinctive legal status.

At that time the distinctive legal status was largely restrictive, although it did include some positive distinctive rights in north America. It is, therefore, important to recognise the emancipatory intentions of the assimilatory policy which sought to include indigenous people, even if some of the ways it tried to do this were highly problematic. The point of greater importance here, however, is that for large sections of the indigenous populations the policy was largely at odds with the realities of their remote geographical, social, economic and political location. While these people were receiving formal education and the skills thought necessary to equip them to merge in the wider society, governments neglected the way that the size of the populations created by settling people in remote village communities was often only serving to make some aspects of indigenous culture, social forms and practices more viable[2]. Of course there was considerable social change in most areas of life but at the same time the state was becoming increasingly, although largely unwittingly, involved in

the reproduction of the surviving indigenous social orders.

Following on the achievement of equal rights came a change of focus: now the concern was with human rights and appeals to the United Nations and its conventions. This quickly transformed into the language of indigenous rights with its claim for group rights (see Crawford 1988) and the recognition of peoplehood, of the right to self-determination and of ownership of traditional territory, all of which can also find some degree of support in the conventions of the UN[3]. As first world nation states have responded to these claims and acknowledged, in north America, that their failure to honour the historical agreements made with indigenous people in the past requires the state to continue to make amends, the state has now become further involved in the reproduction of indigenous societies, this time explicitly and largely in statutory form.

THE STATE AND THE UNWITTING REPRODUCTION OF INDIGENOUS SOCIAL ORDERS

There are two phases to the ways in which first world nation-states have become unwittingly involved in the reproduction of indigenous social orders. The first phases was in the long period of segregationist policies and negative legislation referred to above. Here I want to focus on the more recent phase characterised by what has been termed, 'welfare colonialism'. Robert Paine coined this term in 1977 to describe the situation in the Canadian north. He argued that the granting of the social rights of citizenship, that is access to welfare payments, to indigenous people in first world nation-states was unintentionally as debilitating as beneficial because of the social and political dependencies it creates (1977: 3). The colonisers still make decisions on behalf of the colonised and in the name of their culture yet, paradoxically they still need to secure indigenous assent as evidence that the people are politically enfranchised (see Beckett 1988: 14). The term appeals in part because it suggests a contradiction between reaping the benefits of being a citizen and being disempowered by those benefits and in part because it seem to account for the slow improvement in well-being in many indigenous communities.

While the notion of welfare colonialism was an advance on previous understanding, mainly because it brought a more sophisticated view of the state into the analysis of the contemporary situation of indigenous people, a more complex analysis is required. For historical reasons Australia provides the grounds for an archetypical critique of welfare colonialism but one that I believe applies elsewhere even if not quite so strongly. In summary it can be argued that the major impact of the provision of the social benefits of citizenship for many, particularly in the remote areas of Australia, was not a welfare dependency but, as William Arthur has so felicitously called it, a 'welfare

autonomy' (see Peterson 1985). A culture of finite and limited objectives (Sahlins 1972) combined with an egalitarian ethic, economic marginalisation and minimalist government spending on indigenous people up until the 1970s, protected Aboriginal people in remote regions from a consumer dependency which might either have provided them with the incentive to sell their labour or created a sense of relative deprivation and dissatisfaction. Instead the receipt of full welfare payments in cash provided a more than adequate income for people to pursue indigenous agendas leaving people free to produce social and symbolic capital without the necessity for the great majority to be involved in any conventional productive activity[4].

From the social exchange of drinking and card playing, to identity reinforcing supplementary subsistence pursuits and participation in ceremonial life there was an intensification of a self-conscious concern with Aboriginal agendas and a disengagement from material production in the wider economy and the selling of labour. This facilitated the reproduction of many aspects of indigenous social and cultural life which a fulltime engagement with the Australian economy would have made more difficult.

In social orders built around the urge to accumulate social capital, money and goods are valued subject to an interpersonal history of what Basil Sansom describes as help, helping and helping out, which are central to the resistance to the 'monetisation of the mind' (1988: 159). The power of cash and commoditisation to objectify and depersonalise social relations is subverted in such social orders and harnessed to internal purposes and the production and reproduction of social relations. In these contexts a great deal of the circulation of goods and money takes place through demand-sharing: people ask others for things not simply because they are needy but to test the state of a relationship in contexts where social relationships have to be constantly produced and maintained by social action, or because they want to assert a relationship or to substantiate an existing one. Such behaviour, so central to egalitarian social orders, detaches people from property and the inequalities which property can quickly produce (Woodburn 1982). In doing so it keeps people materially poor which in turn maintains state involvement in their lives, because too marked a difference in their life circumstances from that of the encapsulating majority creates a political problem. Not only do the people themselves complain about their circumstances but liberals associated with the new moralising social movements amplify the legitimate grievances that underlie these claims, helping them hold public attention.

THE STATE AND THE WITTING REPRODUCTION OF INDIGENOUS SOCIAL ORDERS

The third phase of state involvement with the reproduction of indigenous

social orders worldwide began in the early 1970s. It entailed, their recognition and support through positive legislation following quite soon after the achievement of equal rights. This happened first in Alaska in 1971 with the *Alaskan Native Claims Settlement Act* providing $960 million dollars, 40 million acres and the setting up village corporations and registers of people entitled to benefit from the settlement. It went further than dealing with people still on the land, or at least in the state, by setting up a special corporation for people who were resident outside Alaska, along with formal mechanisms for dealing with disputed identity issues. This creation of new statutory indigenes and the statutory recognition of aspects of tradition was beginning to take place in Australia around the sametime. The difference however was marked. In the United States version of liberal democracy there is a premium placed on equality as the erasure of difference and on maximising personal freedom by minimising state regulation and intervention in people's lives, both of which the Settlement Act ran counter to. In recognition of this the original Act was given a 20 year life, after which the shares in the village corporations, which could only be held by indigenous people upto that time, were to be freed so that they could be sold to anybody. In Australia, where equality is associated with redistribution and ensuring a low but reasonable standard of living to everybody, no such limits were applied because continual fine-tuning is entailed by the stronger interventionist order.

In 1975 the Canadian James Bay and Northern Quebec settlement was made. This came in a context of the long standing recognition of statutory indigenes but it added much more support for the Cree and Inuit social orders than that received prior to the agreement. It not only entailed legislation, land and a $250 million dollar payment entrenching difference in a direct and practical way but went further in providing, among other things, an income security program for Cree hunters and trappers that paid them to stay on the land practicing their subsistence and commodity producing skills.

In 1976 in Australia the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act* was passed which also involved, legislation, land and money. This has resulted in 42% of the Northern Territory becoming Aboriginal freehold in 22 years through a claims process. Central to the Act is a statutory definition of a traditional land owner which makes reference to descent, sites, common spiritual affiliation to those sites and primary spiritual responsibility for them, embracing a major facet of Aboriginal social and cultural life. Aboriginal people can seek to claim back unalienated crown land by showing they are the traditional owners in terms of this definition.

State involvement in the reproduction of indigenous social orders extends, however, beyond the sociological support of distinct remote communities through the crucial provision of security of tenure and the creation of indigenously controlled incorporated structures, into the arena of cultural

reproduction. Legislation for heritage protection, for the repatriation of skeletal remains and of material culture, bilingual education programs and support for culturally based programs ranging from painting to sweat lodges in settings as diverse as rural villages and prisons, all implicate the state in this reproduction.

CONTEMPORARY RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT

If the moral situation of indigenous people in relation to the liberal democratic state is central to understanding their condition today so too is the moral location of anthropologists in respect of indigenous people central to understanding the conditions of our practice. While this condition is not unique to anthropologists working with fourth world peoples, certain aspects of their situation are more starkly drawn than elsewhere.

Much research that involves anthropologists with indigenous people today comes under the rubric of applied, policy or contract research. This is research where others have usually defined or had a hand in defining the goals of such research which is often quite tightly targetted. Much of this research is related to the fact that indigenous people suffer from poor life circumstances which are satisfactory neither to themselves nor to the encapsulating states. There is sometimes a feeling that the problems are intransigent and mostly anthropologists are keener than usual to help the people they are working with change aspects of their life circumstance. Living together in the same polity it is often harder to keep political positions and scholarship free from each other: we who are generally conformists abroad are, as Levi-Strauss has said, critics at home.

Central to this kind of research is a need for a greater awareness of first world culture, particularly as it relates to the state, state institutions, bureaucracies and the legal system. This is not just a matter of understanding the nature of bureaucratic processes and how policy formation takes place but a more fundamental concern with the underlying philosophical foundations of the varieties of the liberal-democratic state. Without an understanding of such issues as the varying construction of notions of equity, equality and justice, how these relate to the individual and the family and how redistributive justice is achieved, not only is the researcher less effective in influencing policy formation but the analysis is in danger of floating free of the intellectual and practical constraints that govern public life.

As an example I might instance the place of the corporation in Australia as a central site for the coordination of redistributive justice in housing, health, law, and land. There are over 3000 such indigenous corporations, giving an average adult membership of only 60 persons. The corporation brings with it not just a way to transfer public funds for private benefit but systems of gover-

nance, representation, monitoring and accountability which impose an often un-comfortable structure and discipline on indigenous groups that is at odds with their own forms of group organisation and decision making. It becomes a locus of conflict between government and indigenous people who usually understand its aims, purposes and workings differently and from the govern-ment's point of view the disciplines which are its virtue are seen as constantly threatened by the desire to give primacy to the production and accumulation of social capital.

Neglect of the culture of states and bureaucracy arises not simply because it is often seen as uninteresting but also, I believe, because there is frequently a fundamental rejection of some of the core values they stand for. Being atten-tive to these values can be seen to be endorsing them, yet the risk of ignoring them is that the analyses and recommendations take on a utopian or unrealistic air. This is most relevant in the case of remote indigenous communities where the moral legitimacy of the settler states in dealing with these societies is most clearly undermined by their unjust founding. Their vulnerabilities and the set-tler state's moral illegitimacy magnify the existential dilemmas. The state sub-sidies their social orders as compensation with neither them nor it having any clear idea of the goals, the costs and benefits or the future of disjunctive social and ideational orders so weakly linked to material production and/or self sup-port.

Those working in the applied, policy and contractual research areas rarely have time to sit back and reflect on such issues while those in academic positions tend to direct their attention elsewhere in part, perhaps, just because they con-front us directly with such fundamental existential issues relating to core cultural meanings and values.

THE PROBLEM OF CULTURE

The foregoing has underlined the deep state involvement in the reproduc-tion of indigenous social orders and their cultures, which does I believe, set up a distinctive research agenda and practice in relation to fourth world people en-capsulated in first world nation-states. To emphasise the state's involvement in the reproduction of indigenous social orders and their cultures is not, however, to deny indigenous agency nor the existence of indigenous domains but to re-problematise a range of issues including culture, tradition, continuity, change and domain among others, and to reject any simple unproblematised dichotomies. Nor is it to make pointless territorial claims to a particular sub-ject matter. Rather it is to suggest some of the emerging grounds for why many of us still find it useful to come together at a time when the interests in ecology and adaptation that bound us together in the past, are becoming less signifi-cant[5].

If indigenous surviving social orders are being reproduced without substantial recourse to material production and in a complex dialogue with the state some fascinating issues are raised. Central to these is the issue of the relative autonomy of culture. If the ideational system is already substantially detached from the original production system with which it was associated how much more autonomous can its relationships with material circumstances become under government policies directed at further transforming material circumstances? The situation is made all the more poignant because government policies and indigenous rhetoric place great emphasis on the maintenance of culture. This is a claim for the possibility of secular assimilation: that is to say that an indigenous culture can be injected with affluence yet the ideational system remain unchanged[6]. Of course it is easy enough to dismiss this as simply a rhetorical strategy whose principal purpose is to create and maintain a space for indigenous action. By obtaining government recognition of distinctive indigenous medical, educational and other practices that overlap government policy domains, indigenous people secure the right to operate in these domains, often to the exclusion of non-indigenous people and to control the associated resources. The claim can also be understood in more ideological terms as a touch-stone for the culture of resistance emphasising difference and ignoring similarities. However, even though both these political understandings of what may be driving the claims for secular assimilation undoubtably have bearing on the situation, there are other issues.

Much of the concern with culture is sincere, if confused, and it is partly because of this that cultural maintenance and cultural appropriateness are recurrent tropes in government and indigenous. This self-consciousness about culture and traditionalism rather than helping people penetrate the reality of their situation often obscures it. Take culture and schooling, for instance. It is a common claim that schools in indigenous communities should be involved in the reproduction of indigenous culture as if this were unproblematic. Teaching art, craft, performance and other aspects of older people's lived culture is seen to meet this claim but not only overlooks how aspects of the everyday culture of the encapsulating society are covertly reproduced through the disciplines of the classroom and unexamined assumptions of school culture but also how indigenous everyday practice undergoes a transformation[7]. Culture becomes identified with sets of reified practices leading to the emergence of local indigenous high culture, allowing people to ignore the emergent contemporary culture in which money, alcohol and violence, for instance, play a central role (eg see Martin 1993).

A quite different aspect of the self-conscious concern with culture is in connection with heritage and other legislation. This legislation is permeated by an underlying contradiction. On the one hand it provides recognition for indigenous heritage but on the other hand it does so with the clear intention of

limiting that recognition of difference and to setting up the conditions for the extinction of rights. It does this through definitions of heritage or rights in land that conform to certain ideas about authenticity held by a public that is sympathetic only to the recognition of radical difference. Paradoxically the struggle around the meanings enshrined in such legislation instead of creating a cutoff point for recognition, can result, in urbanised indigenous people recovering and reconstituting relationships to place and heritage modelled on the 'authentic' practices, thus strengthening and entrenching the very cultural difference which the state is seeking to contain. This in turn can lead to the sincerity of the claims being challenged.

More is at issue here that a concern simply with the invention of tradition. Attention should be focussed on the inter-cultural production of indigenous culture both in the praxis of everyday life and in the more formal context of courts, tribunals and legislation. The condition for the recognition of indigenous rights is often the exposure of family life, history, practices and beliefs in adversarial public forums. While this may create difficulties for people, it is in the preparation for and hearings of these tribunals that much cultural knowledge is now being transmitted between the generations (eg see Trigger 1997). This is true in places as distant as the Gitxsan of Canada and the Nyininy of Australia where territorial claims are the forum for a reconnection to land and the transmission of detailed knowledge related to it which would not be possible without the resources, energies and interests generated by these processes. This also can produce a self-consciousness about tradition and discourses which can become quite problematic for indigenous people not really aware of the constraints on oral testimony from historiography and the long traditions of scholarship surrounding their ways of life.

The slippages, ambiguities and misapprehensions in official and indigenous understandings and discourses surrounding culture tend not to be placed under the kind of scrutiny they deserve nor to be juxtaposed with social practice. Rather attention tends to be over focussed on issues of identity and social constructionism and while there is much of interest to be said about social construction and representation this often ends up reflecting more about us, by passing the substance and organisation of people's everyday lives.

The reasons for this are not hard to fathom. Field research can be more difficult to do in the fourth world. It can often be seen as unavoidably including a focus on negative aspects of people's lives and there is sometimes a concern that an honest examination of the contemporary situation may undermine people's struggle for empowerment (Trigger 1997). This in turn is related to what one might call a 'failure of nerve' in respect of the grounded analysis of everyday social and cultural practices. By this I mean that the discipline has never found it easy to deal with the fact that some aspects of people's practices may pose problems for them or to develop an adequate

language for discussing issues like cultural loss while still recognising the continuously emergent properties of culture.   The challenge of producing an ethnography grounded in the contemporary realities of people's daily lives, has with one or two notable exceptions, been eschewed:[8] where are the ethnographies that encompass the place of boredom in peoples' lives, that provide accounts of and account for the intensity of negative feelings between community factions or an understanding of the ways in which confrontation and conflict are central modes of relating to people.   An anthropology that does not embrace these difficult issues alongside the positive aspects of life is side stepping major intellectual challenges as well as limiting the contribution it can make to situating the social, cultural and political dilemmas facing many indigenous communities.

CONCLUSION

In working in the fourth world on contemporary issues today we cannot ignore the power differentials between ourselves and indigenous peoples in the way that it was possible to do in many situation of past oriented research. Much of our informants' discourse is addressed to us as members and/or as agents of a dominant culture.   Our research is used to authenticate and challenge indigenous claims and understandings and we too are involved in the reproduction of aspects of indigenous culture.   It is an immensely politicised field made more difficult by the increasing role of consultancy.

Inevitably much that we write either addresses or is seen to be relevant to the contemporary situation of fourth world people and brings us face to face with the reality of cultural relativism in a way that research abroad does not. The difficulties fourth world people face today have their historical origins in first world actions; they are encapsulated inside first world states; disciplined by first world bureaucracies; constrained by first world legal systems; and they are largely supported by first world capitalist economies.   Yet, surprisingly, for substantial sections of these populations there is a radical disjunction between these material realities and their surviving social orders.   Can this relationship last? Can they survive on this over dependence on the production, circulation and consumption of symbolic and cultural capital?

Because of the social and cultural distinctiveness of indigenous social orders it is too easy to see self-determination as the salvation.   It is not that self-determination is unimportant, I believe it is vital, but rather whether it can deliver all that is expected of it?   Can it go some substantial way to removing many of the problems that people are facing now?   Being supportive of indigenous peoples' struggle for adequate recognition, as we all are, it is too easy for us, as anthropologists, to end up simply emphasising power relations.   Important as they are, the task for anthropologists should be to focus on the ways

in which people organise and understand their daily lives, as this will always be central to their situation no matter how much self-determination they achieve. The contemporary inter-cultural production of peoples lives will continue through their engagement with the encapsulating economy, with the structures and disciplines of state and bureaucracies, with legislation, with schools, with the criminal justice system and western medicine. The challenge facing us as anthropologists working in the fourth world today and seeking to help empower indigenous people is to explore and theorise the complexity and diversity of these contemporary cultures of engagement.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

NOTES

1) The concept of the fourth world was first suggest to George Manuel by the First Secretary of the Tanzanian High Commission in Ottawa, Mubutu Milando (1974: xvi).

2) There were critics in the United States and Canada who saw this and wanted to break up the reserve systems (see Perry 1996: 240–241).

3) Some people argue that the right to development is another indigenous right (see Rich 1988).

4) Another area where this welfare autonomy has been created by the state in Australia is on cattle stations in the remote areas.

5) These interests are clearly still important, as the number of papers on this topic at the conference show, but nowhere near as pervasive as they were in the 1960s and 1970s.

6) The contrast here is with assimilation as spelt out in the assimilation policy discussed earlier in this paper where not only were people to live in the same material circumstance but also observe the same customs and be influenced by the same beliefs, hopes and loyalties.

7) This is also reinforced by our tendency to work mainly with older members of communities.

8) Three Australian examples are: Sansom 1980; Martin 1993; Merlan 1998.

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