

Ich möchte an dieser Stelle zwei Beiträge herausgreifen: Don Gardner untersucht den historischen Entstehungsprozess von Identität bei den Mianmin in Papua Neu Guinea. Er beschreibt überzeugend, wie erst im Kontext des australischen Kolonialismus ihre kulturelle "Stammes"-Identität relevant wurde. Besonders gut gefällt mir das Beispiel am Ende des Aufsatzes, in dem die Komplexität und die sich verändernde Bedeutung von Identität durch verschiedene Stufen sozialer Interaktion im Kontext eines Minenprojekts untersucht werden. Jelle Miedema macht am Beispiel der Kebar in der nordöstlichen "Bird's Head Peninsula of Irian Jaya, Papua" deutlich, dass kulturelle Identität nicht nur die Angelegenheit einer autonomen ethno-linguistischen Gruppe, sondern eng mit trans-ethno-linguistischen Mustern und Entwicklungen verbunden ist.

Dieses Buch ist für jeden Leser nützlich, der sich über postmoderne Ansätze zu Identität und Kultur sowie aktuelle Veränderungen der kulturellen Identitäten in der Pazifik-Region informieren möchte. Die theoretische Relevanz des Buches weist dabei weit über die Pazifik-Region hinaus. Es erweitert den Horizont über die klassische Abgrenzung einzelner Disziplinen hinweg. Insofern ist es neben Sozialanthropologen auch für Politologen, Ökonomen und Psychologen von Interesse.

Markus Wiencke

### **Shripad Dharmadhikary: Unravelling Bhakra: Assessing the Temple of Resurgent India**

Badwani: Manthan Adhyayan Kendra, 2005, 372 p., incl. colour maps and photos, US\$ 15,-

In 1963 India's then prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru gushed at a ceremony for a new dam project: "The Bhakra Project is something tremendous, something stupendous, something which shakes you up when you

see it. Bhakra, the new temple of resurgent India, is the symbol of India's progress." Shripad Dharmadhikary's newly released report "Unravelling Bhakra" deconstructs this myth.

The infrastructure project is said to have irrigated the granaries of the nation, India's North-Western states Punjab and Haryana. The legend goes that after the construction of the Bhakra dam, food grain production in those two states soared and India was able to become food self-sufficient. Bhakra is said to have provided the agricultural underpinnings for the newly independent state.

The author asks whether the dam deserves the credit for having rescued India from hunger and famine, and from the demeaning position of being a receiver of food aid. He asks whether the spectacular growth in food grain production, credited to Bhakra, is replicable and sustainable. Dharmadhikary explains: "Investigating the Bhakra project is not just about the past. The Bhakra project is even today used to justify almost all large dam projects in the country."

The author finds very little evidence to prove Bhakra's alleged contribution to the country's development. He reveals that the Green Revolution in Haryana and Punjab, the increase of yields that resulted in an impressive surge of food grain production, necessitated a large number of inputs, few of which were connected to Bhakra. Fertilizers and machinery were necessary, a new high yield variety of seeds (HYV) was instrumental, but water was critical.

Surprisingly though, this water was not supplied by the Bhakra canals. The author reveals: "Irrigation was there over a hundred years before Bhakra, and the Green Revolution came in 12 years after the irrigation from the project had begun." Farmers in the area report that the inadequate, unreliable and limited supply of canal water was not conducive to intensive farming with the new seeds. Dharmadhikary quotes B.D. Dhawan, "the HYV seeds, unlike the earlier or desi seeds, perform well only when pampered

with requisite inputs and care. In view of their exacting demands for water, ensuring timely irrigation for them is impossible unless a farmer has control of the source of irrigation [...] a condition easily fulfilled by groundwater as compared to surface water."

Farmers then turned to tubewell-based groundwater irrigation, which proved instrumental for the success of the Green Revolution. The number of tubewells in Punjab increased twentyfold between 1965 and 1975. This dramatic growth preceded the growth of agricultural output in the 1970s. Groundwater mining now constitutes around 50% of Punjab and Haryana's irrigation. The remaining irrigation is canal-based, but only around ten percent of the canals in Punjab and slightly more than twenty percent of the canals in Haryana are fed by Bhakra waters.

The Green Revolution in Haryana and Punjab had a steep price. The increase in tubewell-based water mining has resulted in a drastic fall in groundwater levels. The extensive chemical fertilizer use as well as a cropping pattern dominated by high-yield rice and wheat have destroyed the soils of Punjab and Haryana. Today's farmers are struggling to pay ever-increasing prices for agricultural inputs and electricity for pumping water, while having to cope with declining agricultural returns. The author reports, "[i]n almost every village we went, we found large numbers of farmers who were in debt – and where trapped in it." The suicide rate amongst farmers in Punjab and Haryana is fast increasing. The agricultural system is on the verge of collapse.

Still, the author demonstrates that the farmers in Punjab and Haryana are not the only ones paying a high price for a development model that favours quick returns for some over sustainable progress for many. Fifty years after their displacement, the oustees of the Bhakra project are still struggling to put their lives back on line. More than 36,000 people had to leave their homes and fertile lands on the river banks to make room for

the dam reservoir. Before displacement, they cultivated corn, wheat and cotton, had fruit orchards and a thriving cattle economy. Chemical fertilizers or pesticides were not used.

The land in the resettlement sites was of very poor quality. The weather was hot and dry with frequent dust storms. Dharmadhikary quotes Ajmer Singh, who lives in a rehabilitation site in Haryana, as saying, "[w]hen we came here this was all a jungle. There was overgrowth and thick bushes. The land was completely uncultivable. [...] There were also many wild animals and snakes, making habitation on these plots very dangerous." Irrigation was almost non-existent. Most families were given plots of land that were much smaller than what they had left behind. It took almost twenty years before the displaced had access to drinking water and electricity.

"Unravelling Bhakra" is essentially a report about the double failure of modern irrigation policies. The first mistake is to strive towards a dramatic increase in agricultural output by increasing the inputs, both natural (water) and chemical (fertilizers and pesticides). This intervention does irreparable harm to the very basis of agricultural food production, the soil and water. The second mistake is to believe in large infrastructure projects. Bhakra demonstrates that huge sums of money, large stretches of fertile land and thousands of self-sufficient farmers were sacrificed for a project that was not able to fulfil the water needs of the area it was meant to serve.

The report's finding that unsustainable groundwater mining, rather than dam and canal irrigation, was the most important driving force behind agricultural growth in India has important implications for today's development decisions. Dharmadhikary reminds readers that it is impossible to continue unlimited groundwater mining. Sustainable irrigation methods, such as conserving the water in soils and local rainwater harvesting are proving to be more promising

than both groundwater mining and large water infrastructures. The author describes the case of Sukho Majri in Haryana, where farmers successfully harvest a large variety of crops, irrigated by rainwater and fertilized by organic manure.

Dharmadhikary reminds us that in making choices about agriculture and food in India, the choice is between "spectacular" and "sustainable" growth. "Unravelling Bhakra" shows that the "spectacular" option has high social and environmental costs that are difficult if not impossible for future generations to manage. The "sustainable" option, like the tortoise in his race against the hare, can keep going for generation after generation, and ultimately, wins the day.

Ann Kathrin Schneider

### **Boike Rehbein: Globalisierung in Laos. Transformation des Ökonomischen Feldes**

Münster: Lit-Verlag, 2004, 308 S., 29,90 €

Wenn von Transformation die Rede ist, denkt man zunächst an Mittel- und Osteuropa sowie an Ostasien, insbesondere China und Vietnam. Das vorliegende Buch lenkt die Aufmerksamkeit auf die Prozesse in einem bislang in der Debatte eher unterrepräsentierten Land. Die dabei eingenommene Perspektive ist die des Soziologen, nicht des Wirtschaftswissenschaftlers. Dies führt zu interessanten Betrachtungsweisen der Transformationsproblematik, wie sie auch bei Anthropologen wie Hann (2002)<sup>1</sup> zu finden sind. Rehbein stützt sich massiv auf die Soziologie seines Lehrers Pierre Bourdieu und stellt damit die Transformationsfälle der Gegenwart in eine Reihe mit postkolonialen Prozessen in Nordafrika, insbesondere Algerien, auch wenn er die durchaus andere Dimension der gegenwärtigen

Globalisierungstendenzen betont. Es wird deutlich, dass Transformation lange vor 1990 ein Thema war und dass diese nicht notwendigerweise nur den Übergang von einer sozialistischen zu einer marktwirtschaftlichen Ordnung bedeuten muss – eine Aussage von enormer Wichtigkeit, erweitert sie doch das zur Verfügung stehende methodische Instrumentarium schlagartig und beträchtlich.

Der Autor betont die kulturelle Eigenständigkeit und Besonderheit inmitten der Interdependenz und Vereinheitlichung des Globalisierungszeitalters, das auch vor einem Land wie Laos nicht Halt macht. Vor diesem Hintergrund wird die Frage nach angemessenen Untersuchungs- und Analysemethoden aufgeworfen und mit der Notwendigkeit eines ausgereiften, die Einflüsse der "Weltbühne" (11) berücksichtigenden soziologischen Ansatzes beantwortet.

Die Struktur des Buches folgt im Wesentlichen der Bourdieu'schen Theorie. Der Begriff des Habitus erinnert dabei stark an jenen der Institution aus der Ökonomik (Richter und Furubotn 1999);<sup>2</sup> beim Begriff der Konstellation denkt man an die neorealistische Konstellationsanalyse der Politikwissenschaft (Kindermann 1991).<sup>3</sup> Das Buch beginnt eher deskriptiv. Nach einer ausführlichen Einleitung wird der Untersuchungsgegenstand Laos mit seiner geschichtlichen und gesellschaftlichen Entwicklung vorgestellt. Es folgt eine Untersuchung der geltenden Muster und Regeln und der diversen Ressourcen.

Die folgenden Betrachtungen des Habitus und der Konstellationen auf dem Feld bilden mit dem eher kurzen Fazit den analytischen Hauptteil des Buches. Der Text ist mit Schwarz-Weiß-Fotos aufgelockert, deren

<sup>2</sup> Richter, Rudolf and Eirik G. Furubotn (1999): *Neue Institutionenökonomik*, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck.

<sup>3</sup> Kindermann, Gottfried Karl (1991): *Grundelemente der Weltpolitik*, München und Zürich: Piper.

<sup>1</sup> Hann, C.M. (ed., 2002): *Postsocialism. Ideals, Ideologies and Practices in Eurasia*, London and New York: Routledge.