

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-31948-5 - People and the State: An Anthropology of Planned Development

A. F. Robertson

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Cambridge Studies in Social Anthropology

General editor: Jack Goody

52

PEOPLE AND THE STATE

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-31948-5 - People and the State: An Anthropology of Planned Development

A. F. Robertson

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

For other titles in this series turn to page 333

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-31948-5 - People and the State: An Anthropology of Planned Development

A. F. Robertson

Frontmatter

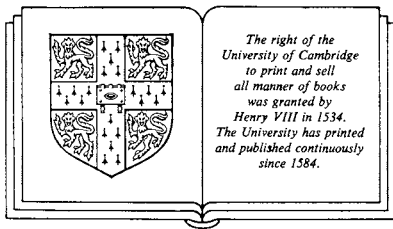
[More information](#)

People and the state

An anthropology of planned development

A. F. ROBERTSON

Darwin College, Cambridge



CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge

London New York New Rochelle

Melbourne Sydney

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-31948-5 - People and the State: An Anthropology of Planned Development

A. F. Robertson

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, São Paulo

Cambridge University Press

The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 8RU, UK

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521265492

© Cambridge University Press 1984

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 1984

Re-issued in this digitally printed version 2007

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Catalogue Card Number: 84-7652

ISBN 978-0-521-26549-2 hardback

ISBN 978-0-521-31948-5 paperback

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-31948-5 - People and the State: An Anthropology of Planned Development

A. F. Robertson

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

For Francesca

Contents

<i>List of figures and map</i>	<i>page</i> ix
<i>Preface</i>	xi
<i>Introduction</i>	1
1 History	7
Introduction	7
1917–39: Foundations	9
1939–55: Techniques for growth	18
1950–70: Modernisation	26
1950–70: The Third World – Us and Them	35
The 1960s: The rise of Development Studies	43
1970–80: Underdevelopment and the crisis in planning	48
Conclusion: The development of planning	61
<i>Appendix A: Aid and development planning</i>	69
<i>Appendix B: Planning in Britain</i>	75
<i>Appendix C: Some significant dates in the history of national development planning</i>	78
2 Structures and processes	85
Introduction	85
The state and the planners	88
The planning process: ideal and reality	97
Planning ideas: symbols and languages	106
Planning time: targets and phases	111
Planning economies: sectors and regions	115
Planning resources: development projects	120
Planners and the public	128
<i>Appendix D: Thirty-eight thousand development programmes</i>	139

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-31948-5 - People and the State: An Anthropology of Planned Development

A. F. Robertson

Frontmatter

[More information](#)*Contents*

3 Organisations	140
Introduction	140
The community and its development	142
Administrative organisation: development agents and agencies	150
Economic organisation: cooperatives and communes	160
Political organisation: councils and committees	170
Organising ideas: the mass media and education	175
4 Contradictions	182
Introduction	182
People as planners	185
Social movements and utopian images	191
Utopia created: reformist movements	196
Utopia pursued: revolutionary movements	204
Utopia, the state and social science	211
Populism: an ideology of national development planning	221
5 Malaysia – a case study	232
Introduction	233
The emergence of pluralism, the state, and planning	236
Federation, centralisation and the emergence of FLDA	244
Tun Razak and the First Malaysia Plan	249
The crisis of May 1969: the search for a National Ideology	251
Restructuring the nation: the New Economic Policy	255
FLDA and the expansion of public enterprise	260
The Third Malaysia Plan: reorganising society	269
FLDA and social development	276
The Fourth Malaysia Plan: reorganising the polity	280
Towards 1990 – and thereafter	289
Summary and conclusion	291
6 Conclusion: Anthropology and planned development	293
<i>Bibliography</i>	307
<i>A: Introduction, Chapter 1 and Chapter 2</i>	307
<i>B: Chapter 3</i>	314
<i>C: Chapter 4 and Chapter 6</i>	317
<i>D: Chapter 5</i>	321
<i>Index</i>	325

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-31948-5 - People and the State: An Anthropology of Planned Development

A. F. Robertson

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Figures and map

Figures

1.1	Aid to India, 1951–65	<i>page</i> 38
A.1	Economic assistance appropriated by US Congress, 1948–79	71
A.2	‘Genealogy’ of the American foreign aid organisations	72
2.1	Planning organisations in Kenya, c. 1967	134
3.1	Some attitudes of officials at three levels of a development organisation	156
3.2	Cooperatives and communes: an explanatory scheme	162
5.1	Changing proportions of Malays, Chinese and Indians in the population of West Malaysia (Malaya) since 1884	238
5.2	Malaysia: a balance of power	243
5.3	Rukunegara	253
5.4	Formal structure of planning organisations in Malaysia, c. 1973–4	272
5.5	‘Sectoral Development Programmes’ in the four successive Malaysia Plans, 1966–85	281
5.6	Contribution of agriculture, manufacturing and government services to Malaysian GDP, 1970–90	290

Map

Malaysia	234
----------	-----

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-31948-5 - People and the State: An Anthropology of Planned Development

A. F. Robertson

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Preface

The two great wars of this century have generated much despair, but after each there was an efflorescence of reformist zeal throughout the world, on a scale hitherto unknown.

Now, as world recession places severe limits on material ambitions, it seems the great enthusiasm for planned development of the 1950s and 1960s is burning itself out. Planning continues, but more grimly than before, and with fewer assurances of success. Idealists are mistrusted, and the study and practice of development is more concerned with technical refinements than with grand schemes for human progress. Increasingly, we are confronted with decay and the threat of what might well be the last great war – matters very much more urgent than dreams of wealth and welfare.

Nevertheless, this book proceeds from an assumption that we need, more urgently than ever before, to take stock of our collective future. If we choose not to rely on luck, or on divine intervention, or on ‘scientific’ teleology, we must recognise that redemption will tax to the utmost our imaginative and organisational capacities. Every intellectual resource, including anthropology, must be pressed into service. But the only effective way of coming to grips with the future is to understand, and work upon, the world as it is and has been. We need sufficient realism to acknowledge that people are not angels, and the states which they inhabit are not, and are unlikely to become, an earthly paradise.

Some anthropologists are enthused by development efforts, but most are perplexed about how we should become constructively involved. This book was initiated by a suggestion from Jonathan Benthall, Director of the Royal Anthropological Institute, for a ‘handbook’ on applied anthropology. This seemed timely and useful, but early drafts soon revealed that the task could not be done with conviction and honesty until some more general questions had been answered. Accordingly, the book became a search for a perspective which might prove illuminating for anthropologists and perhaps also for others interested in development.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-31948-5 - People and the State: An Anthropology of Planned Development

A. F. Robertson

Frontmatter

[More information](#)*Preface*

By some mysterious process, the authorial 'we' has established itself in the text. I doubt that this is false modesty or a desire to evade responsibility. I can only assume it is tacit recognition of the extent to which I have depended on the influence and ideas of others. I am aware that none of them would wish to be associated too explicitly with what I have written – other than by proper bibliographical attribution. Nevertheless, for very particular debts I must offer my heartfelt thanks to John Barnes, Francesca Bray, Moses Finley, Jack Goody, David Lehmann and John Toye.

Much of the content of this book has been worked over, in and out of class, with colleagues and students here in Cambridge over the last dozen years. I am particularly grateful to the Development Studies students: planners, administrators, technicians and teachers from some seventy countries; friendly, sceptical and garrulous; men and women who have given me an education, and continue to give me all the comforts of an international dining club.

Conducting enquiries in development agencies, one is persistently aware of how much one's presence taxes the goodwill and patience of busy staff. 'As between pellagra and tourists', an official of the Tennessee Valley Authority complained to Philip Selznick many years ago, 'I'll take pellagra' (Selznick 1949: 211). Having visited dozens of organisations I remain astonished by the kindness with which they receive inquisitive people like myself. I have particular debts to the staffs of AVA and CADU in Ethiopia, of Comilla in Bangladesh, of Gezira in The Sudan, and of FLDA in Malaysia. In Malaysia, where I have been privileged to work in 1972, 1977 and 1981, my pestering has assumed epidemic proportions: no major organisation has been immune, and I can only hope that all those who have helped me so generously find nothing in Chapter 5 to offend them. Again, I am at a loss about how I should deliver thanks to those (mostly civil servants) who might not welcome such attention. Let me, then, in their capacity as good friends, thank Wan and Sarah, Baim and Fadillah, Jayos, Johari, Kamaruzzaman, Pa'Chu and Rohaini. To the Malaysian Government at large I offer a formal and sincere thank-you, especially for the privilege of a briefing in the National Operations Room in 1981.

A few comments on the text: there are no footnotes: publishers' tendency to place these as endnotes is usually a nuisance to the reader. A hazard of this is that the text is occasionally fuller or more detailed than it would otherwise have been. References appear in the text thus: (Smith 1970: 123). The Bibliography is arranged in four sections: the first covers the Introduction, and Chapters 1 and 2 – there being a substantial overlap in references. The bibliographies for Chapter 4 and the Conclusion are similarly combined, but Chapters 3 and 5 each have their own. The inten-

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-31948-5 - People and the State: An Anthropology of Planned Development

A. F. Robertson

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Preface

tion is to present references thematically. The potential bibliography of the subjects treated is monstrous; the references are augmented by a severely restricted number of additional titles which I have found useful.

Two points of detail: I have used the expression 'Third World' quite often to describe poorer countries variously engaged in planning development. There is no polemic intention behind this usage, it is just a vague descriptive phrase. I have also used the word Marxian in relation to the writings and expressed ideas of Karl Marx, and the word marxist in relation to his disciples and their work.

Darwin College

Cambridge

January 1983

A.F. ROBERTSON