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ANTHROPOLOGY, THE COLD WAR AND THE MYTH OF PEASANT CONSERVATISM

Eric B. Ross

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the idea of peasant conservatism as a part of the body of modernisation theory and the role of (applied) anthropologists in helping to construct and legitimise that concept. It considers how such views reflected Western concerns during the Cold War when peasant mobilisation for radical reform was a pre-eminent feature of the Third World landscape and it explores how it lent credibility to many of the assumptions on which the U.S. strategy of 'community development' was based. Particular attention is paid to the Cornell Peru Project at Vicos in the Peruvian highlands as one of the classic examples of applied anthropology and of the contradictions that this sub-discipline embodied.

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¹This paper was first presented at the annual meetings of the American Anthropological Association in Chicago (19-22 November 2003) and, shortly thereafter, in the seminar series, 'Global Development, Population and Rural Livelihoods' at the Institute of Social Studies, The Hague (15 December). I'm grateful to Dustin Wax for inviting me to present the paper initially in the AAA session which he organised and, subsequently, for supportive comments from David Stoll, William Mitchell, Raj Patel and, as ever, David Price.

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1 INTRODUCTION

Peasants, as George Foster once noted, did not really become an explicit subject of anthropological study until after the Second World War (Foster 1967:4). The reason for this, which did not concern him however, is very much part of the history of the Cold War. As such, the new interest in peasants that emerged rather rapidly in the nineteen-fifties was associated, sometimes explicitly, often not, with 'modernisation theory', a highly influential body of writing through which Western academics and policy-makers described certain goals – and the way to achieve them – as desirable for the developing world (cf. Latham 2000).

Such writing, it has since become clear (Ross 1998b, Cumings 1998), was a part of the West's strategic and ideological response to a post-war world of insurgent peasantries whose aspirations filled it with foreboding because, in the words of former U.S. Secretary of Defense and ex-World Bank president Robert McNamara, a 'sweeping surge of development...[had] turned traditionally listless areas of the world into seething caldrons of change' (cited in Shafer 1988:80). Such views were not new. Stanford economist Eugene Staley had made much the same point, more elaborately, a decade earlier, in the year that the Vietnamese defeated the French colonial army at Dien Bien Phu:

Countries in early stages of modernization – the underdeveloped countries of today – are the most vulnerable. The impact of a new commercial and industrial culture breaks down the old pattern of life and the old social system. Only gradually can the society find the necessary new adjustments and learn to operate satisfactorily a more complex and dynamic modern system. The period of transition gives the Communists, with their tactics of hatred and force, their deceptively simple solution (Staley 1954: 111-112).

Hence, according to Staley, and many others:

Underdeveloped countries have become the weakest links in the world system of capitalism which it is the Communist aim to overthrow and to conquer (Staley 1954: 119).²

²Such views made Staley an obvious choice seven years later, when the Kennedy Administration needed an academic to visit South Vietnam to advise on the best way for it to mobilise for a more intensive war against communist influence in rural areas (Scheer 1995:153). Staley's report took as its point of departure the assumption that

Viet Nam is today under attack in a bitter, total struggle which involves its survival as a free nation. Its enemy, the Viet Cong, is ruthless, resourceful, and elusive. This enemy is supplied, reinforced, and centrally directed by the international Communist apparatus operating through Hanoi. To defeat it requires the mobilization of the entire economic, military psychological, and social resources of the country and vigorous support from the United States (Gravel 1971).

This assessment, which was less the view of a rigorous economist than of a Cold War ideologue, encouraged Washington to increase its military support for its client state of South Vietnam.

As I have discussed elsewhere (Ross 1998), such ideas were strongly coloured by Malthusian thinking which had a long history of obscuring the root causes of poverty and inequality and which, in the decades following the Second World War, lent force to the view that the adverse effects of the modernisation process had their origin more in population pressures than in economic or social injustice. But, the main source of the concern that lay behind such arguments was how to deal with the rising tide of rural mobilisation and insurgency that seemed to have become a dominant feature of the global political landscape and which was unavoidably linked in the capitalist West with the advance of communism.

The decisive moment was the Communist Chinese revolution in 1949, when the attention of Western policy-makers – and, with them, the Ford, Rockefeller and Carnegie Foundations, which were increasingly intertwined with the highest echelons of the U.S. government – turned to South Asia (and most notably to India), as the region that seemed most vulnerable to immediate communist influence, precisely because – according to the Cold War Malthusian thinking exemplified by Frank Notestein, director of the Rockefeller-sponsored Population Council and his colleague, Kingsley Davis, at Princeton's Office of Population Research (OPR) – it was 'the glut of people in the poorer areas' of that region that made them 'conducive to communism' (cited in: Wilmoth and Ball 1992: 647). 3,4

Notestein underscored that what Asia – and, by inference, the rest of the developing world- – needed most was *not* land reform and social justice, but a cheap and effective method of contraception. 'We doubt', he wrote, on his return from a Rockefeller Foundation-sponsored survey of the Far East and Southeast Asia in 1948, 'that any other work offers a better opportunity for contributing to Asia's and the world's fundamental problems of human welfare' (cited in: Caldwell and Caldwell

³Paul Hoffman, who became the head of the Ford Foundation in 1951 had previously been in charge of the Marshall Plan (Ross 1998:144). In 1952, Rockefeller Foundation president, John Foster Dulles, became (republican) Eisenhower's Secretary of State --just as Dean Rusk would, under (democrat) Kennedy eight years later. John J. McCloy, former head of the World Bank, served informally as Eisenhower's chief political adviser during the fifties, while he was simultaneously head of the Ford Foundation, chair of the Rockefellers' Chase Manhattan Bank and head of the Council on Foreign Relations (Bird 1992:108, 426-9). One of his successor's as head of the Ford Foundation, McGeorge Bundy, had been a prominent adviser to Kennedy and Johnson (Ross 1998:195).

⁴Notestein was the individual who had most helped to adapt demographic transition theory to the imperatives of the Cold War (Ross 1998: 87-95; cf. Hodgson 1983).

1986:1 9).⁵ This prescription, which peasants did not seem to endorse, had its counterpart in another (intertwined) strategy to forestall radical agrarian transformation: what came to be called the Green Revolution.⁶

In a paper to The Eighth International Conference of Agricultural Economists in 1952, it was Notestein again who observed that, if modernisation typically brought disorder, increased food production might be a way to ameliorate it. But, echoing the views that the Rockefeller Foundation had developed over many decades of support for agricultural missionary work in pre-revolutionary China (Ross 1998: 139-144), he argued that this must only be achieved through *moderate* change (Notestein 1953:26). As with fertility, this meant relying primarily on technological innovation. And, as the prevailing view was that 'The social organization of a peasant society is ill-adapted to the achievement of high technological proficiency' (Notestein 1953), a view that was consistent with the main tenets of dominant modernisation theory (cf. Lerner 1958, Hagen 1962), this necessarily implied that it would have to be large land-owners and commercial farmers to whom the task of agricultural innovation would be entrusted. So it was that writers - many of them (such as sociologist Daniel Lerner and anthropologist Clifford Geertz) associated with the Center for International Studies (CENIS)(see below) at Harvard/MIT - embarked on the quest to identify local counterparts to Weber's Protestant capitalists, who could oppose radical change, in the words of Milton Singer, with "'compromise formations' which with varying degrees of stability combine novel and traditional elements" (Singer 1972: 248-249).

In this manner, modernisation theory was not only a reaction to the post-war advance of a socialist development alternative, but became, in the hands of many academics (including anthropologists), a way of mystifying the very origins of peasant discontent which seemed so threatening to Western dominance during the days of the Cold War. Such thinking would not only make peasant unrest seem to be unrelated to the history or to the nature of the global economy; it would also help to

⁵On that basis, in 1952, when John D. Rockefeller 3rd convened a special 'crisis conference' on population in Williamsburg, Virginia (Caldwell and Caldwell 1986:25), it was Notestein who formulated the agenda (Ryder 1984:13).

⁶As the classic work of Mahmood Mamdani has clearly demonstrated (1972).

⁷One of the most famous and influential U.S. agricultural missionaries in China, John Lossing Buck, had already noted in the years just after World War I, when he was working at the Presbyterian mission in Nanhsuchow, that 'resident landlords were the best hope for introducing new ideas in to agriculture because they were educated, they could understand, and they were well enough off to try something new' (Buck 1962: 10).

rationalize a whole new set of post-war strategies – foremost among them, the Green Revolution – which would advance Western interests and further intensify rural inequalities. In this, anthropology had an especially important role to play by helping to create the myth that peasants – despite being regarded as a reservoir of radical political change throughout the Third World – were somehow too conservative in their cultural values to be autonomous agents of rural change, let alone of agricultural innovation. Agrarian change was therefore argued to be something that had to be guided by outsiders – as long as they were not communist 'agitators', but Westerners – many of whom would work within the framework of what became known as 'community development', with its emphasis on changing – that is, Westernizing—'traditional' attitudes and values.

2 THE EMERGENCE OF 'APPLIED ANTHROPOLOGY'

Thus, in 1961, anthropologist Charles Erasmus, in a book entitled *Man Takes Control: Cultural Development and American Aid*, fervently proclaimed that 'Even in countries that have not yet had land reforms, I do not think that the major problem is who owns the land or how large the holdings are' (Erasmus 1961: 326). It was a view that was certainly at odds with the experience of, for example, the UN Economic Commission for Latin America (UNECLA 1968) and of later writers on peasant economy such as Griffin (1979), Byres and Crow (1988) and others. But, Erasmus subscribed to the values of an era which suggested that developing countries would be better off if they could be refashioned in the image of the United States.⁸ The main problem, in Erasmus's view, was only for the U.S. to 'make sure that we are providing sufficient incentive for those best qualified to help win the race for free society' against what he called 'coercive society', an allusion to communism and socialism (Erasmus 1961:331). It was not a view that was conducive to an objective appraisal of the contradictions of contemporary development or of the realties of peasant livelihoods.

⁸Or as Adolph Berle, a prominent member of FDR's government, close associate of Nelson Rockefeller and member of the Council on Foreign Relations, put it: 'The ideal of every sincere agrarian reformer is to produce a situation something like that in the United States, where on a relatively small farm a family cannot only live but live in comfort' (Berle 1962: 55).

The Cold War did not just define the whole point of development for such writers. A significant number of anthropologists who worked for government agencies, directly or indirectly, did so – as Erasmus and George Foster did – under the heading of what came to be called 'applied anthropology', the society for which had been established in 1941, and aligned themselves with the implicit objectives of U.S. government policy. Without seeming to feel any need to criticise the aims of such policy, they sought simply to demonstrate how anthropology could help to make such policy more effective.

This was the import of the address to the 23rd annual meeting of the society in 1962 by Ward Goodenough, author of *Cooperation in Change: An Anthropological Approach to Community Development* (1966), when he noted that anthropologists could meet a growing demand by government for the behavioural sciences, but that this required the discipline to be more operational if it was really to fulfil the 'intelligence-gathering function' that he felt applied anthropology did so well (1962: 174).⁹

Goodenough specifically regarded the U.S. Army as a notable 'potential market for the ethnographic skills of anthropologists'. ¹⁰ The timing is interesting. Peasant insurgency had dominated the minds of Western policy-makers ever since the dramatic victory of the Chinese communists in 1949. In 1954, the Vietnamese victory at Dien Bien Phu had coincided with the election of Jácobo Arbenz as president of Guatemala and the beginning of one of the most important land reforms that Latin America had ever witnessed—and one which the U.S. subverted through military intervention. By 1959, the Cuban Revolution had taken place and, just a few years later, when Goodenough gave his talk, the U.S. was committing growing numbers of troops to a counter-insurgency war in Southeast Asia (Gettleman et al. 1995). Goodenough's view of the contribution that anthropology could make to this effort was unambiguous and, in retrospect, alarming in its implications: 'The successful conduct of modern guerilla warfare', he wrote:

⁹ In his call for anthropologists to provide government with the "'dictionary' and 'grammar' of social conduct" that agencies --such as USAID-- wanted (Goodenough 1962:176), one can see the rationale for the ethnoscience with which Goodenough would be identified over the following years.

¹⁰ Just after the Second World War, Goodenough had himself participated, along with George Peter Murdock, in a U.S. Navy-sponsored project, one of the largest in which anthropologists had ever engaged, known as the Coordinated Investigation of Micronesian Anthropology (CIMA). It was intended to help the U.S. manage its new Pacific island possessions.

obviously requires both extensive and intensive ethnographic intelligence. At present, it is impossible to say what requests, if any, for our ethnographic services may emerge from government agencies, but there are straws in the wind suggesting that we may be called upon (Goodenough 1962: 175).

Making Anthropology Useful

Of course, Goodenough was hardly alone in considering ways to ensure that anthropology could be as useful in the Cold War period as it had been during the preceding world war, when Washington had employed anthropologists – as Harvard's Clyde Kluckhohn observed in *Mirror for Man* (1967) – in 'Military intelligence, the Department of State, OSS [Office of Strategic Services], Board of Economic Warfare, the Strategic Bombing Survey, the Military Government, Selective Service Organization, Office of Naval Intelligence, the Office of War Information, the FBI', etc (cited in: Colby and Dennett 1995: 130). Kluckhohn was in an especially good position to know. He himself had served with the OSS (the precursor of the CIA) during the war and continued to work within the broad intelligence community in the decades thereafter, most notably as the head of Harvard's Russian Research Center. That Center – funded by the Rockefeller and Ford Foundations, but especially by the Carnegie Corporation – was, as Bruce Cumings has noted, 'based on the wartime OSS model...[and] deeply involved with the CIA, the FBI, and other intelligence and military agencies' (Cumings 1998: 165).¹¹

Kluckhohn was one of the most prominent of the figures in post-war U.S. anthropology who maintained a close involvement in U.S. Cold War strategic activities and who reflected a widespread view that anthropology had little to lose from such associations. In the process, this meant reshaping the discipline to establish new alignments with old sources of finance –Ford, Rockefeller and Carnegie among them—that were already deeply embedded in the U.S. structure and with new ones, such as Axel Wenner-Gren's Viking Fund (later called the Wenner-Gren Foundation

¹¹The most detailed account of the emergence and the activities of Harvard's Russian Research Center is Sigmund Diamond's notable work, *Compromised Campus* (1992:50-110).

for Anthropological Research). 12

This all took place as U.S. anthropology underwent a major reorganisation, at the heart of which was a major restructuring of its professional association, the American Anthropological Association. As David Price has observed, it was essentially the promise of funding – much of it related to the priorities of the Cold War – that drove this process. One of the consequences was that the Association was reluctant to be seen to voice any criticism of the West's stance in the Cold War or of the wave of anti-communism that swept across the political landscape of the United States during the late nineteen-forties and -fifties.

By 1947, the House Committee on Un-American Activities was already investigating Hollywood. Within a few more years, McCarthyism was in full swing and by 1954 the so-called Reece Committee – the Special Committee to Investigate Tax-Exempt Foundations and Comparable Organizations – was casting a shadow over many philanthropic organisations and tax-exempt professional associations. As the Committee's chief counsel, Rene Wormser, wrote, 'the emphasis on a search for organized Communist penetration of foundations absorbed much of the energy of the investigators' (NameBase 2003). The Committee's targets included the Social Science Research Council (Worcester nd: 26-30), in which the AAA had played an important role since its inception in 1924. But, more importantly, as Frederick Johnson, Executive Secretary of the AAA, wrote to one of U.S. anthropology's pre-eminent figures, Julian Steward, in 1954, the Reece Committee had 'put its finger upon the Association' (Johnson 1954: 1). As the AAA was in the process of a reorganisation which was meant to attract government and foundation funding, it was under great

.

¹²The Swedish industrialist and millionaire, Axel Wenner-Gren, was once widely known for his associations with the interests of Germany, before, during and after the Nazi era. As a result, he had been blacklisted by the U.S. and British governments during the Second World War (Ross 1999). Despite this, in the decade after the war, the Fund developed 'a symbiotic relationship with anthropology, playing a key role in supporting the growth of the field' (Anon 1989:551). The question that ultimately needs to be addressed is why the U.S. anthropological community was so willing to overlook the nature of Wenner-Gren's Nazi sympathies. The answer lies principally in the process of professionalizing anthropology which, especially in a time of political repression, made a special virtue of pragmatism. Besides, by the late 'forties, former Nazi sympathies were no longer a liability. On the contrary. So, when, Ashley Montagu wrote to Margaret Mead in January, 1946, about his concern that the Viking Fund was financed by a 'well-known Nazi sympathizer', Mead quickly dismissed his qualms:

To say that because money has been badly come by it should not be used for a good cause seems highly sentimental. Perhaps all the more because it has been badly come by it should be used for a good cause (Howard 1984: 272).

pressure, as Steward had replied, to dissociate it from any hint that it was anything other than "'a purely scientific organization' without political orientation" (Steward March 9 1954).

One result was that the anthropological establishment was not only weak in its support for colleagues being harassed by the FBI, but that some leading figures – most notably George Peter Murdock, who became president of the Association in 1955 – actually launched pre-emptive strikes against their colleagues (Price 1997, 1998, 2000) and informed for the FBI because they professed to believe that the AAA was under threat from left-wing members (Price 1997). Others countenanced various degrees of collaboration between the AAA and the CIA (Price 2000) while still others actively, if covertly, worked with the intelligence services in the course of their academic activities.

Most notable among the latter group was Kluckhohn. The fact that the Russian Research Centre at Harvard, of which he was the director (Ross 1998b:488), was 'deeply involved with the CIA' (Cumings 1998: 165) and that one of the Centre's projects had involved bringing Nazi collaborators into the U.S. (Price 1998; Oppenheimer 1997), may help to explain why McCarthy's investigations at Harvard, in the words of Talcott Parsons, 'did not even mention the Russian Research Center' (Parsons and Vogt 1962: 147). So, it was also convenient that Kluckhohn was 'one of the principal advisors to and participants in the activities of the Wenner-Gren Foundation' (Parsons and Vogt 1962: 146), which did so much to finance the professionalisation of anthropology during the nineteen-fifties.

3 THE FOUNDATIONS AND THE COLD WAR: THE CASE OF FORD

The Wenner-Gren Foundation, however, was far less important that the great philanthropic foundations such as Rockefeller, Carnegie, Kellogg and Ford, which, by 1950, were influential actors in the making of U.S. policy, both at home and abroad, and which helped to shape the contours of Western development policy into which anthropology sought to insert itself.

If these foundations all reflected, from their inception, the interests of the U.S. ruling elite class, it was the Chinese Revolution in 1949 which most helped to shape their modern role in the making of U.S. foreign policy. In this regard, the Rockefeller Foundation was clearly affected because of its long-standing involvement in China, in

support of missionary activities and the marketing of the products of Standard Oil, which was the ultimate source of the Foundation's wealth.¹³ But, in many ways the impact of events in China was even greater on the Ford Foundation, with resources that dwarfed those of Rockefeller (Mattelart 1979:156).¹⁴

The Ford Foundation was relatively parochial in its activities until the late 1940s when a report by California lawyer, H. Rowan Gaither – who had just helped to organise the RAND Corporation (with Ford support) as a non-profit Air Force think-tank focusing of issues of 'national security' (Snead 1999: 51) – helped to define a new agenda for the Foundation which set it firmly within the framework of the emergent Cold War. The report noted:

As the tide of communism mounts in Asia and Europe the position of the United States is crucial. We are striving at great cost to strengthen free peoples everywhere. The needs of such peoples, particularly in underdeveloped areas, are vast and seemingly endless, yet their eventual well-being may prove essential to our security (quoted in: Rosen 1985: 4).

Thus, according to George Rosen, an economist who worked both for the Ford Foundation and RAND, 'when the foundation began to consider its larger role, there was certainly an implicit, if not explicit, agreement between the assumptions and broad policy conclusions of the authors of the Gaither report [for Ford] and the assumptions underlying American foreign policy at the time' (1985: 7).

This was underscored by way the Foundation, in the wake of Gaither's report, had enlarged its board of trustees, affirming its increasingly intimate relationship to Washington policy-makers. One of the new board members, for example, was John J. McCloy (a long-standing partner in the Rockefeller law-firm of Milbank, Tweed) (Bird 1992:273-274), who had just left the presidency of the World Bank. The first director after the reorganisation was Paul Hoffman, the former president of the Studebaker Corporation and the recent head of the Marshall Plan (Caldwell and Caldwell 1986: 20-21; Rosen 1985: 7-8). Hoffman later went on to head the UN Development Program (Raffer and Singer 1996: 61).

¹⁴In 1951, Ford assets were estimated at 'between \$750,000,000 and \$1 billion, depending on appraisal of the value of the Ford stock' (Golden 1951).

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¹³Tuchman has observed – and the Rockefellers were the best evidence – that 'American infiltration of China...was a two-pronged affair of business and gospel' (1971: 38).

Another notable figure was Joseph Slater, who had served as secretary-general of the Allied High Commission for Germany in the nineteen-forties and had then been the chief economist for the Creole Petroleum Corporation, a subsidiary of Rockefeller's Standard Oil of New Jersey. Before going to Ford, to run its International Affairs Program (Caldwell and Caldwell 1986:49), he had served as the Staff Director of the Draper Committee, which Mass has described as 'the first official body of the U.S. government to advocate Neo-Malthusian policies' (Mass 1976: 41; Piotrow 1973: 36 ff; Ross 1998b: 95-100). 15

Not surprisingly, according to Rosen,

The foundation staff...soon established a more or less informal network of relationships with officials of various public agencies, American and international, working in the foreign development field, including the State Department, the Point Four organization, the United Nations, and the Food and Agricultural Organization; with the Rockefeller Foundation, another nonprofit private foundation with lengthy experience in Asia and elsewhere... (Rosen 1985:8).

Hoffman's writings after he had taken over as head of the Foundation make even clearer the extent to which, at the beginning of the fifties, the thinking of Ford leadership exemplified the Cold War rhetoric which prevailed in Washington. Like many of his contemporaries, Hoffman's vision of the world as the Korean War was beginning was uncompromisingly Manichean. As he wrote in his book, *Peace can be won*:

...the Kremlin is looking with ever more naked avidity upon the oil fields of Iran and Saudi Arabia. In Indonesia, Communist agitation, subversion, propaganda and sabotage are increasing in speed and scope. Like a thunderhead over Western Europe is the menace of a Red Army march to the Atlantic (Hoffman 1951: 14).

The ideological convergence between the Ford Foundation and the policy-makers in Washington was confirmed when Gaither, who became the president of the Ford Foundation in 1953 (while remaining chairman of RAND's board of trustees), was requested in 1957 by President Eisenhower's National Security Council to chair a

Dillon Read, which had figured prominently in financial dealings in Nazi era Germany (Simpson 1993: 47-49; Kolko and Kolko 1972: 113). Draper went on to play an influential role in the national and international population establishment, eventually becoming the head of the fund-raising arm of

Planned Parenthood (Chase 1977: 383).

¹⁵The Draper Committee was officially the President's Committee to Study the United States Military Assistance Program. It was chaired by William H. Draper, a former investment banker at the firm of

committee to assess U.S. military security needs (Snead 1999: 49-51). The intimate operational association between Ford and the policy elite was further consolidated when McCloy became chair of the Foundation in 1958. From 1953 onward, he was also the chairman of the Rockefeller's Chase Manhattan and of the Council on Foreign Relations. Moreover, all through the 1950's, while he headed the Foundation, McCloy served informally as Eisenhower's chief political adviser and did nothing to discourage relations between Ford and the CIA (Bird 1992: 426-429). By the early nineteen-sixties, it had become routine for the CIA to channel funds through the Ford (and Rockefeller and Carnegie) Foundation, to give support and respectability to selected international projects, programs and centers that served its sense of U.S. strategic interests (Church Committee 1976: 182-183; Cumings 1998).

4 THE EMERGENCE OF THE CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

This was to be the case with the Russian Studies Center at Harvard. And that center demonstrated so well how valuable a contribution social scientists could make to the intelligence-gathering efforts of government, that, according to David Horowitz, 'within a year a new Center for International Studies was being formed as a sister project on the MIT campus, with Harvard and MIT faculty (and others) participating'. This would be CENIS.

According to Kai Bird, 'Though CENIS drew on scholars throughout Cambridge, it had to be housed at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology because of Harvard's ban on classified research' (Bird 1998: 139). But, MIT was an ideal site because of its existing associations with the U.S. military and industrial establishment (Snead 1999: 56-57). The Advisory Board on Soviet Bloc Studies at MIT included Allen Dulles of the CIA (Horowitz 1967). So, after the Provost of MIT, Julius Stratton informed his friend, Rowan Gaither, who became president of the Ford Foundation in 1953, about plans to establish the new centre, which would attract funding from the

Carnegie Corporation and the Rockefeller Foundation, Ford – with its close ties to Washington – took a prominent role in the discussions that led to its creation. ¹⁶

That the centre's 'ultimate aim ... [was] the production of an alternative to Marxism' (Rosen 1985: 27-29). was hardly surprising in light of the fact that CENIS was very much a product, not only of Ford, but of the CIA (Horowitz 1969; Cumings 1998: 171-173; Bird 1998: 138-140) and that its principal staff included two students of the economist, Richard Bissell (Rosen 1985: 28), a former MIT professor (Bissell 1971) who was then at Ford, but who chiefly worked for the CIA (cf. Bissell 1996). These were Walt Rostow, who, a decade later, was the hawkish head of Kennedy and Johnson's Policy Planning Staff at the State Department (Horowitz 1969), and Max F. Millikan, the Centre's head, who came in 1952 from his job as director of economic research at the CIA (Rosen 1985: 28; Bird 1998: 139).

CENIS became a major source of literature on the psychology of development, through the works of people such as Daniel Lerner, Lucien Pye and Everett Hagen, whose Weberian conceptualisations of the so-called modernisation process emphasised the vital role of groups with 'a rationalist and positivist spirit' (Lerner 1958: 45). In this sense, modernisation was virtually synonymous with Westernisation and participation in the capitalist world market economy. The conflicts and disruption which often accompanied such modernisation were, in the view promoted by the CENIS scholars, less the product of the inequalities which the development process either generated or exacerbated than of the way that new ideas clashed with the 'stabilizing elements in traditional society' (Millikan and Blackmer 1961: 16). The challenge, in their view, as Rostow would observe in a talk to the graduating class of the Counter Guerilla Course at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, was for the West to use the modernisation process to its own advantage while cutting off the opportunities that it offered Communist insurgency (Latham 2000: 167-168). One way was to transform

¹⁶Stratton and Gaither had known each other since the war when they both were on the staff of MIT's Radiation Lab. Stratton was a trustee of the Ford Foundation between 1955 and 1971, and the Foundation's chair during the last five years of that period (MIT Libraries 1995).

¹⁷Robert McNamara described modernisation as 'the difficult transition from traditional to modern societies' and worried about how a 'sweepiong surge of development...has turned traditionally listless areas of the world into seething caldrons of change' (quoted in Shafer 1988: 80). For McNamara, modernisation was especially insidious because the Soviet Union and China regarded it as an ideal environment for the growth of Communism' (McNamara 1968: 147).

indigenous culture – a goal which was an open invitation to anthropology.

The focus on the modification of traditional values also meant that CENIS scholars placed great emphasis on the so-called psychology of development, which meant that the formulators of modernisation theory produced a substantial body of work on communications theory and propaganda (cf. Simpson 1994). In 1951, Lerner, for example, had edited *Propaganda in war and crisis: materials for American policy*, and 25 years later would write an article, 'Is International Persuasion Sociologically Feasible?' for the U.S. Army publication, *The art and science of psychological operations: case studies of military application* (1976).

5 THE FOUNDATIONS TURN TO INDIA

Development theory was never far removed from U.S. geo-political strategy. And India, even more than Mexico, was of central concern, as it seemed especially vulnerable to communist influence. The Rockefeller Foundation had had a field office in New Delhi since 1935 which, between 1942 and 1946, had temporarily replaced the Shanghai office as the Foundation's headquarters for the Far East; after 1949, it was permanently located in Bangalore (Rockefeller Foundation 1995). The nineteen-fifties also saw the Ford Foundation's activities in India expand to the point where they overshadowed all its other programs outside the United States (Caldwell and Caldwell 1986:4).

The potential significance of India had been heralded by a visit to China for the Rockefeller Foundation by Frank Notestein, to survey 'public health and demography' in that region, on the eve of Chinese communist victory (Ryder 1984: 13). On his return, he not only described population pressure as the ultimate source of rural discontent – a view that dovetailed precisely with the view of U.S. policy-makers that the misery of the Asian peasant was chiefly a Malthusian problem of 'too many people, too little land' (Ladejinsky, in Walinsky 1977: 131) – but, most importantly, concluded that, if one looked around the developing world and considered the impact of population on social and political stability, it was 'The subcontinent of India ... [that]comes most forcibly to mind as the next possible location for a serious outbreak of communism' (quoted in Ryder 1984: 676).

There was ample reason to expect peasant insurgency in a country where rural conditions were so oppressive (yet where, for well over a century, famines and land hunger had been routinely attributed to Malthusian pressures.) Thus, peasant movements had become a notable feature of late colonial India. In north Bihar alone, there were six major peasant uprisings between 1917 and 1942 (Henningham 1982: 1-2). Most such movements had failed to challenge the fundamental structural conditions of rural poverty, until the Telangana revolt in former Hyderabad State in South India (in what was later part of the state of Andhra Pradesh), which began in 1946 (Banerjee 1984: 17-19; Dhanagare 1991: 154-212). Led chiefly by the Communist Party of India, it threatened the economic and political structure of what was the largest princely state in pre-Independence India, whose despotic ruler, the Nizam, was one of the wealthiest men in the world. The revolt, which took place in the Telangana districts, where the exploitation of peasants was the most intense in the entire state (Dhanagare 1991: 184-189), represented 'an agrarian liberation struggle to get rid of feudal landlordism and the Nizam's dynastic rule' (Banerjee 1984: 19): During the course of a struggle that continued until 1951, insurgent forces succeeded in distributing some one million acres of land among the peasantry (Banerjee 1984: 19; cf. Dhanagare 1991: 200).

Despite its eventual suppression, the coincidence of the Telangana insurrection with the final victory of the Chinese communists underscored the revolutionary potential of peasant India. Indeed, in 1954, in a book published for the Council on Foreign Relations, Stanford economist, Eugene Staley, explicitly referred to Hyderabad as a potential 'Indian Yenan' (Staley 1954: 137; Selden 1971), in reference to the Chinese city which was the focal point of Mao's communist movement in the thirties and forties. In the light of such comparisons, it is hardly surprising, that Paul Hoffman, the new head of the Ford Foundation, wrote to the U.S. ambassador to India, Chester Bowles, of the need for a rural development program in India like the one that had been undertaken recently in Taiwan, commenting:

¹⁸And, even as open armed rebellion waned, the CPI began to emerge as an important electoral force in many regions of the country, especially as the franchise was broadened after independence (Harrison 1960: 178-245). By 1957, it would form the government in the south-western state of Kerala (Nossiter 1982). But, the fact that electoral success did not exclude the possibility of further uprisings became evident in 1967 with the short-lived Communist-led insurgency at Naxalbari in the northern part of West Bengal (Banerjee 1984:i).

If in 1945 we had embarked on such a program and carried it on at a cost of not over two hundred million dollars a year, the end result would have been a China completely immunized against the appeal of the Communists. India, in my opinion, is today what China was in 1945 (quoted in Rosen 1985: 11).

There was another program that Hoffman drew upon as a model: the Marshall Plan, of which he had been the head. Well aware of the role it had played in suppressing an effective political role for indigenous communist parties in Europe (Pisani 1991), he could well writes, 'We have learned in Europe what to do in Asia.' (quoted in Raffer and Singer 1996: 61).

Bowles heartily concurred with Hoffman's warning and in an article in *Foreign Affairs*, the journal of the Council on Foreign Relations, he himself underscored the supreme importance of what would happen now in India. '[T]he success or failure', he wrote,

of the effort being made in India and other Asian countries to create an alternative to Communism in Asia may mark one of those historic turning points which determine the flow of events for many generations...

The future of Asia, and eventually the world balance of power, may rest on the competition between democratic India on the one hand and Communist China on the other. If democracy succeeds in India, regardless of what happens in China, millions of Asian doubters will develop new faith in themselves, in their ancient cultures, and in the ideals of the free world (Bowles 1952:80).

The solution was more or less what the Rockefeller Foundation had learned from its decades in China, working with Cornell-trained agricultural missionaries, when it evolved a strategy of rural development as a source of economic and social stability, which

eschewed social revolution—and most notably was silent on the issue of land reform. But it provided unique support for those who sought to change the conditions of life in village China (Thomson 1969:150).

A crucial element in this scenario was the view that peasants could not themselves be the principal agents of change. Thus, as it looked around for a special professional niche in the post-war geo-political climate, one of anthropology's notable contributions to the Western discourse of the Cold War era – and especially to the modernization theory which gave credence to Western policies – turned out to be precisely its conceptualization of peasant conservatism. Through such constructions as George Foster's 'Image of the Limited Good' etc., the view took shape that

peasants were more constrained by 'tradition' than by agrarian structures and therefore could not really be expected 'to improve their living standards at their own initiative' (cited in Huizer 1972: 53).

6 THE VICOS PROJECT, CARNEGIE AND THE COLD WAR

Even before the idea of peasant conservatism had taken shape, anthropology was pre-adapted to carry such ideas into the developing world by locating itself within what would become the post-war structures of community development. Among these, the so-called Vicos Project, run by Cornell University in the Peruvian highlands, was perhaps the prime example. In this project, Cornell anthropologists became the managers of a hacienda that was owned and rented out by a Public Welfare Society, located in the town of Huaraz, the capital of the Andean department of Ancash (Stein 1985:233-236). Within a short time, the so-called Peru-Cornell Project at Vicos – initially run by Allan Holmberg – achieved near-legendary status. George Foster, for one, would write that 'the history of the project tells much about the problems of development and modernization of a traditional community' (1966).

What neither he nor anyone else ever said was what Vicos could also tell us about post-war anthropology. Specifically, how did anthropology, during the decades of the Cold War, help to develop arguments that denied the necessity of peasant-driven, radical agrarian transformation and how, within the accepted framework of modernisation theory, did it gave stature to an alternative, gradual process of what the Vicos personnel liked to call 'controlled change'?

Latin America had, of course, long been a prime concern of U.S. strategists, but the Second World War certainly intensified this. So, between 1943, when it was established, and 1952, when it ceased to exist, the Washington-based Institute of Social Anthropology (ISA), where George Foster embarked on his career in applied anthropology, had as one of its principal aims 'to keep Latin America within the U.S. political orbit' (Adams 1964: 2). When it was disbanded, most of the anthropologists working there went to work for the International Cooperation Agency (ICA), the

¹⁹Huaraz was destroyed by an earthquake in 1970 (Stein 1985: 234).

predecessor of USAID.²⁰ The ICA – like its successor, USAID – was closely connected with the CIA and, as Adams observes,

Within the ICA, anthropologists in Bolivia and southern Peru were, I presume, more than coincidentally, utilized in areas where there were thought to be serious problems of communist agitation (Adams 1964:2).

So, anthropologist Allen Holmberg, a Yale contemporary of Goodenough, a student of George Peter Murdock and one of his assistants in the creation of the Human Relations Area Files (Doughty personal communication), had emerged from the Bolivian tropical lowlands, where he had studied the Sirionó during the early nineteen-forties (Holmberg 1950: 1-3), to finish his doctoral dissertation at Yale in 1947 and to initiate the Cornell-Peru Project just a few years later.

According to Henry Dobyns, a prominent member of the project, 'The Cornell-Peru Project has been, throughout its history, a cooperative effort of the Peruvian Indian Institute ... and Cornell University represented by Allan Holmberg' (Discussion 1962: 122). But, not unexpectedly, there were other actors as well. Thus, in 1962, Cornell sociologist, William F. Whyte, remarked that he had 'had occasion to see Allan Holmberg working in Peru, constantly in touch with various levels and agencies of the Peruvian government and ICA' (Discussion 1962: 122).

The project was, from the start, funded by the Carnegie Corporation. Carnegie had been one of the principal funders of the Human Relations Area File, so Holmberg would have had relatively easy access. Moreover, Charles Dollard, the president of Carnegie (and one of the original trustees of the RAND corporation) was the brother of one of Holmberg's Yale supervisors, psychologist John Dollard (Simpson 1994: 58-59; Holmberg 1950: 1; RAND Corporation).

Project members always freely admitted Carnegie support because Carnegie's links to the U.S. intelligence community were not yet widely known. But, we now know that the Carnegie Corporation was a major supporter of such U.S. government intelligence-oriented projects as the Russian Research Center at Harvard (Diamond 1992: 65-80), which had arisen out of its long-standing and intimate associations with

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²⁰Beals (1964: 186) refers to Louis Miniclier, who served as the head of the Community Development Division of the ICA from 1954, when the division was founded, to 1964, as 'the nation's largest *employer of anthropologists*.'

the U.S. power elite. Indeed, at the time that the Center was established, Carnegie's president, Devereaux Josephs, was spoken about as one of the most influential individuals in the country (Horowitz 1969). So, it is not surprising that any project such as Vicos that had the backing of Carnegie was also funded by USAID and the U.S. Department of Defense (Colby and Dennett1995: 871). Or that it represented more than it first seemed.

7 THE CARNEGIE FOUNDATION AND THE CIA

If Clyde Kluckhohn was a strategic bridge between professional post-war anthropology and the intelligence industry, it was the Carnegie Corporation which connected the two at an even more profound level, where the interests of the U.S. power elite brought unity to a seeming diversity of people and aims.

The Russian Studies Center was just one conspicuous example of the Carnegie Corporation's role as a source of funding of projects of interest to the ruling class (Trumpbour 1989: 66). As in the case of the Ford and Rockefeller foundations, that particular affinity had long been reflected, on a less public level, by the fact that it was a major sponsor of the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), with which its presidents and trustees had been associated since the 1920's (Feldman 2002; Oppenheimer 1997).²¹ And, when the RAND Corporation was created in 1948, psychologist Charles Dollard, the then president of Carnegie, was on its first board of trustees (RAND 2003; Simpson 1994:58).

So, as Oppenheimer (1997) notes, Carnegie 'was not entirely a dispassionate funder of educational and scientific projects'. As a result, it had come about that, in July 1947, when Carnegie Vice President Gardner was in Washington to assess the state of government research on the Soviet Union, he learned that the State Department and the Central Intelligence Group, a forerunner of the CIA, would be interested in the creation of a Russian center (Oppenheimer 1997). Through the rest of that year and into the next, Gardner had frequent discussions with the CIA.

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²¹According to Trumpbour (1989: 66), 'A 1971 study identified fourteen out of nineteen directors of the Rockefeller Foundation and ten out of seventeen of the Carnegie Corporation's directors as belonging to the CFR ... [while] the Ford Foundation ... was run from 1966 to 1977 by CFR members

Gardner must have felt at home. He himself had been a member of the OSS during the war—before joining Carnegie as executive associate in 1946 and becoming president in 1955, a role he continued in until 1965, when he became US Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare (Smith 1972: 29). So, when Harvard was selected as the location for the new Russian center, it was not odd that the non-Russian specialist, Clyde Kluckhohn, was appointed to direct it. Kluckhohn had other credentials.

Like Talcott Parsons, who was also drawn into the Center, during the early thirties Kluckhohn had been a participant in Harvard's Pareto seminar, which, according to Gouldner, 'was clearly searching for a theoretical defence against Marxism' (Gouldner 1970: 149) and had managed to come up with the Italian economist, Vilfredo Pareto, who was an early supporter of Mussolini and his fascist movement.²² Kluckhohn had also been in the OSS (Horowitz 1967) and knew Gardner; both had been members of the OSS's psychological group – Gardner had a PhD in psychology and Kluckhohn had published in the field – which played an important role in the organization's recruitment process (OSS Assessment 2003). Conveniently, Kluckhohn, who had also been elected President of the American Anthropological Association in 1947, had 'top secret' security clearance from the R&D Board of the new Department of Defence and was actively involved in Air Force Intelligence projects.

Beyond Kluckhohn, Harvard was a leading focus of OSS alumni who sought to maintain their war-time connections with Washington (Diamond 1992: 73), so there was much to commend it as the site for the new centre, in the eyes of both the CIA and Carnegie officials. Accordingly, after Gardner secured a grant from the Carnegie Corporation's Trustees, the Russian Research Center at Harvard came into existence in early 1948. Ford would later pick up the tab (Oppenheimer 1997; Horowitz 1967).

²²Another member of the seminar was the sociologist, George Homans. In the nineteen-thirties, engaged in a political debate in Massachusetts with a Democratic and Socialist, he reports how 'The Socialist quoted Marx at me; I quoted Pareto back' (1984: 102).

8 THE CORNELL CONNECTION

Another major figure at Carnegie was James Perkins, who had joined in 1950 as an executive associate and became vice president a year later. In 1951-52, he took a brief leave to serve as the deputy chair of the Research and Development Board of the Department of Defense (Cornell) and in 1957 served as a member of the Gaither Committee (Snead 1999: 47; Domhoff 1970: 135). He would later become a director of Chase Manhattan, the Rockefeller bank, and of Nelson Rockefeller's International Basic Economy Corporation (IBEC), the family's highly diversified vehicle for investment in Latin America, promoting Green Revolution-style seeds and inputs (Colby and Dennett 1995: 474, 784-786). He was also on the Board of Trustees of the RAND Corporation and was for many years a director of the Council of Foreign Relations (Melanson 2003).

Perkin's ascendancy to the presidency of Cornell in 1963 consolidated that university's historic role as a key player in foundation-sponsored agrarian change, dating from early in the twentieth century when it was the favoured training ground for agricultural missionaries such as John Lossing Buck (Ross 1998: 141). When the Philippines – as a country whose U.S.-backed regime had long been challenged by leftist guerrillas – was targeted for the Green Revolution and the Rockefeller and Ford Foundations decided to establish a rice research centre there 'to help solve the world food problem in such a way that [their] economic and political concerns about Asia would be allayed' (Anderson et al. 1991: 1), it was set up at the College of Agriculture at Los Baños, which, since 1952, was virtually a 'special project of Cornell University' (Ramon Magsaysay Foundation 1977; Pomeroy 1974: 106-107). When the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) was finally created at Los Baños in 1960, Robert Chandler, former Cornell Professor of Agronomy and Associate Director for Agriculture of the Rockefeller Foundation, became the center's first director (Chandler 1992: 79; Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation 1969); and, in 1963, Cornell's former provost, Forrest Hill, then vice president of the Ford Foundation, became its Chairman of the Board (Anderson et al. 1991: 48; Chandler 1992).

Meanwhile, in India, where the Rockefeller and Ford Foundations played a major role in defining its 'population problem' and gave priority to the Green Revolution as the solution, and where Ford staff were a major influence on the country's Planning Commission (Bowles 1954: 340), Cornell became the first U.S.

university to establish – with Ford sponsorship – an anthropological project (in 1953), which was led by Morris Opler. It was set in Uttar Pradesh (then called United Provinces) and had as it chief objective to examine 'the impact of the community development program at the local level' (Rosen 1985: 35).

But, there was more than this. In the early years of Independence, UP had been the location of India's first experiments in what was called 'community development'. In 1947, a pilot project had been initiated in Etawah district. Its appeal, as George Rosen has observed, was that it met 'the political need of the Congress [Party] to do something to improve conditions in the rural areas' (Rosen 1985: 49) which were then marked by great unrest. 'If it was successful', he wrote,

It would serve as a model for meeting the revolutionary threats from left-wing and communist peasant movements demanding basic social reforms in agriculture (Rosen 1985: 49).²³

By the early fifties, the so-called Etawah Project seemed so effective that Paul Hoffman, head of the Ford Foundation proclaimed that 'There is no reason why all 500,000 of India's villages could not make a similar advance' (quoted in Rosen 1985: 11). Of course there was. But, both Ford and the Rockefeller Foundation nonetheless offered to sponsor a nation-wide Community Development programme modelled on Etawah (Rosen 1985:50 because, among other reasons, according to Robert Chandler,

It was feared that rapidly increasing population pressure in relation to food supplies in South and Southeast Asia would result in the developing countries falling into the Communist camp (Chandler 1992: 5)

Eventually, the U.S. government and Ford would provide more than \$100 million for such programs during the course of India's First and Second Plans in the nineteen-fifties (Brown 1971: 4). U.S. anthropologists would play an important role in these programs, with Cornell's India Project under Opler being a major framework for many of them (Cohen 1955: 53).

²³The Communist Party of India (CPI) had been founded in December, 1925, at an all-India conference held in Uttar Pradesh. But, more than that UP had a long tradition of a peasant unrest and protest.

9 VICOS: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AS 'CONTROLLED CHANGE'

Peru was where the idea of Community Development Programs would find expression just a few years after the establishment of the Russian Studies Center, when Carnegie combined forces with Cornell, to create the Cornell-Peru Vicos Project.that George Foster would describe as 'as a milestone in the development of applied social science'.

Goodenough went further when he characterised the project, which was run in association with the *Instituto Indigenista Peruano*, as 'a very visible example' of where 'cultural knowledge has been successfully used to accomplish objectives that would have been unattainable without it' (Goodenough 1962: 174). Though today it is one of the most famous cases in the annals of applied anthropology, Goodenough's comment – taken together with his ideas about how anthropology should make itself relevant in the cause of counter-insurgency – should be taken as a point of departure to consider the deeper import of Vicos.

Even today, these questions are not easy to answer. We know that the major overt support for the Cornell-Peru project, which involved the running of a hacienda in the central Andes, came from the Carnegie Corporation. What is less often noted is that the Peru project was actually one aspect of a larger study funded by Carnegie – but also with support from USAID – in which Cornell anthropologists Lauristen Sharp, Morris Opler, John Adair and Allan Holmberg sought to compare the process of modernization in Thailand, India, Peru and on a Navajo reservation in the U.S. (Keyes 1994). Twenty years later, Sharp's work in Thailand would raise questions about its relationship to U.S. counter-insurgency efforts, which were associated with USAID (Wolf and Jorgensen 1970). Surprisingly little effort has been made to submit Holmberg's work to deeper scrutiny, however.

Yet, there is much about the Vicos project which is contradictory, starting with the published references to when it actually began—1949 or 1952. What is clear is that it began *after* Peru had been taken over by a military coup. In 1945, a coalition of liberal and leftist parties, including the *Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana* (APRA) had elected José Luis Bustamante y Rivero as president (1894-1989). Bustamante instituted numerous liberal reforms and certain dictatorial powers of the presidency were abolished by constitutional amendment. But, in October 1948, rightist revolutionary leaders unseated Bustamante, seized the government and

outlawed APRA. On July 2, 1950, General Manuel A. Odría (1897-1974), the leader of the 1948 coup d'état, was elected president, without any effective opposition. He remained in power until 1956.

It is hardly to Holmberg or Cornell's credit that it was during Odria's rule that the Vicos project was initiated. Nor does Paul Doughty's comment (in a footnote) in 1987 reflect any serious political concerns on the part of the Cornell team:

Just why the conservative Odria dictatorship would permit such a project to begin with was often conjectured by the CPP personnel, but plausible reasons or policy have never been identified (Doughty 1987: 441).

Yet, Doughty himself gave part of the answer when he pointed out that

In 1960, Indian communities and haciendas serf populations were increasingly pressuring the government to take action on land reform. The government response was invariably hostile to these efforts and on the adjacent hacienda of Huapra, Vicosinos and CPP personnel were witness to a political massacre of serfs who were attempting to construct a school 'like Vicos' (Doughty 1987: 444).

Land reform in Peru had been a political issue since the period immediately after the First World War, but was resisted by the ruling oligarchy (Lastarria-Cornhiel 1989: 127). The lack of any effective democratization of land holding in the highlands eventually gave birth to an era of peasant mobilization, the most notable of which was led by Hugo Blanco (Lastarria-Cornhiel 1989: 136; Colby and Dennett 1995: 69). There is no doubt that Holmberg, Henry Dobyns, etc. and their Peruvian partners (after all, the *Instituto Indigenista Peruano* included army generals on its executive board) were aware of such developments. In fact, in a 1962 paper, Dobyns and others noted that, in the departmental capital of Huaraz, there was resistance to the Vicos project from the Communist Party 'which appears to recognize that every success of the project diminishes by that much their chances of fomenting a violent revolution' (Dobyns et al. 1962: 112-113). There is little doubt that the U.S. was equally aware of this possibility.

Thus, in the period immediately following the Cuban Revolution and especially after the failure of U.S.-backed armed intervention at the Bay of Pigs, the Vicos model grew in importance. This was readily apparent in John Gillin's observation to the Society of Applied Anthropology, that

The experience of Vicos contains numerous suggestions for the 'cold war.' Through our foreign-aid programs, I presume that we are trying to bring the peoples of the modern world to our side. The numerous defects in our national programs can be corrected on the basis of the experience of Vicos (Gillin in *Informaciones* 1961: 142).

Gillin had learned his lessons from Guatemala. In 1954, he had watched as the U.S. backed the overthrow of the progressive, elected president of Guatemala, Jácobo Arbenz, and, in a 1960 work published by the Council on Foreign Relations, *Social Change in Latin America Today*, he had effectively endorsed that coup as a necessary response to the fact that the Arbenz government had been a 'Communist-dominated regime' (Adams 1960: 270, 274).²⁴

In fact, this was just an argument that had been constructed for the purposes of Washington policy-makers by the Council itself, under the leadership of John J. McCloy, David Rockefeller and Allen Dulles, men who had powerful interests in Guatemala (Ross 1998b:481). 25, 26 The study group on "Political Unrest in Latin America" that the CFR had called in response to Arbenz's land reform efforts was led by Spruille Braden, the son of a copper magnate who had spent most of his life representing the interests of multinational corporations, had been U.S. ambassador to Argentina and Colombia, had served as Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, and whose arch-conservatism would later reveal itself in his leading role in the John Birch Society during the nineteen-fifties (Cockcroft 1989; Braden 1971). Above all, he had been a spokesperson for the United Fruit Company, whose corporate interests in Guatemala were really the issue.

²⁴Even earlier, in 1956, Gillin had co-authored an essay with Kalman Silvert, called 'Ambiguities in Guatemala', published in *Foreign Affairs*, which argued that Guatemala under Arbenz had been so deeply influenced by communists that 'it matters little whether the President or other outstanding members of his givernment actually carried Party cards or not' (Gillin and Silvert 1956: 472. A decade later, Silvert became the head of the Ford-sponsored Latin American Studies Association; he subsequently became the programme advisor on Latin America for the Ford Foundation (Horowitz 1969).

²⁵And promoted by all the means of modern advertising. Indeed, the veritable father of that field, Edward Bernays, had advanced this argument on behalf of United Fruit (Streeter 2002; Bernays 1965). ²⁶David Rockefeller, of course, represented the family's interests which had a strong Latin American focus. Allen Dulles and his brother, John Foster Dulles, both had worked for the prominent New York law firm of Sullivan and Cromwell, when the latter drafted United Fruit's 1936 contract with the Ubico dictatorship which granted the company a ninety-nine year lease with large tax emptions. Foster was later the head of the Rockefeller Foundation, until 1952 when he became Eisenhower's Secretary of State, while Allen became head of the CIA. McCloy, the former head of the World Bank, had become the chairman of the Rockefeller Bank, Chase Manhattan, and sat on United Fruit's Board (Colby and Dennett 1995;849; Ross 1998;121-122)

Although the CFR volume in 1960, to which Gillin and Richard Adams both contributed, had been planned earlier, it was the Cuban Revolution that ultimately brought it to light (Adams 1964: 2). In his essay, Gillin had not only reflected the dominant Cold War perspective which had countenanced the overthrow of Arbenz – the outcome of a CIA operation called PBSUCCESS (Cullather 1994) – but also showed that he understood the problems the U.S. faced as a result of its intervention against the Arbenz government when he wrote that, although 'Communists and fellow travellers had succeeded in infiltrating and practically taking over the government' – a highly contentious view even then (NACLA 1954), let alone in terms of later evidence²⁷

it is still widely believed throughout Latin America that the US government or its agents engineered and financed this 'liberación', and this belief has been exploited so successfully by Communist and other antagonists of the United States that the 'Yankee Colossus' has suffered a severe loss of prestige (Gillin 1960: 17-18).

The point obviously was to devise more subtle forms of intervention. The Vicos project, which Gillin hailed, was certainly one of these.

10 HAROLD LASSWELL JOINS THE VICOS TEAM

It is instructive that Vicos eventually attracted the attention and support of a figure such as Harold Lasswell, then at the Yale University Law School. In the late 1920's, Lasswell – along with Edward Bernays and Walter Lippmann (Simpson 1994: 16) – had been one of the pioneers, not just of the nascent field of public relations, but of the techniques of propaganda and, as it was sometimes called, 'psychological warfare' (Simpson 1994: 43-44).²⁸ By the fifties, he was working closely with such people as Abraham Kaplan and his former students, Nathan Leites, of the RAND Corporation – where Lasswell was a 'permanent consulation' for a quarter of a century (Oren 2000: 553) – -and Daniel Lerner of CENIS, who would become 'a fixture at Pentagon-sponsored conference on U.S. psychological warfare in the Third World during the 1960s and 1970s' (Simpson 1994: 84). Lasswell, who had become a

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²⁷Even the Arbenz land reform programme has since been described as a modest one in which 'only uncultivated land could be expropriated and then only from large farms' and which never even sought to eliminate private property (Thiesenhusen 1995:76; Handy 1994:87-89; Dunkerley 1988:148)

²⁸Lasswell's PhD dissertation, published in 1927, was entitled *Propaganda Technique in the World War* (Almond 1987:269.

member of the influential Council for Foreign Relations, was also on the planning committee which directed the disbursement of a substantial Ford Foundation grant for CENIS's communication studies which, as Simpson observes, 'were from their inception closely bound up with both overt and covert aspects of U.S. national security strategy of the day' (Simpson 1994: 82-83).

In the twenties and thirties, Lasswell also had been involved in studies of the relationship between politics, power and personality (Almond 1987: 253-257), which brought him into contact with a number of notable anthropologists, including Edward Sapir, whom he met and with whom he collaborated at Chicago, until Sapir moved to Yale in 1931 (Darnell and Irvine nd). Some fifteen years later, just after the Second World War, Lasswell took up an appointment at Yale as well, in the law school (Almond 1987: 261), and where he may have come into contact with Allan Holmberg who completed his doctoral dissertation there in 1946. But, Lasswell's official interest in Vicos 'dates from his contact with Allan R. Holmberg when both were Fellows of the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences in 1954-55' (Dobyns, Doughty and Lasswell 1971: 237). ²⁹ According to Doughty, the two men

apparently hit it off right from the start, both having complementary backgrounds at Yale, in Bronislaw Malinowski who had been at Yale, in development issues and comprehensive, wholistic [sic] approaches to human issues. They also shared common interests in areas of the social psychology of that era, and in the central issue of power as it related to other value areas. At Vicos, of course, the matter of power was central in understanding how the old hacienda system controlled the lives of the colonos in everything they did. Consequently, Holmberg was much taken with Harold Lasswell's concepts of institutional human values and their inter-relationships and how that could be utilized in the context of analyzing and, to the degree possible, guiding what the project was able to do (Doughty personal communication).

By the sixties, with his CENIS experience still fresh, Lasswell had begun seriously to address the implications of Vicos for his own work (Lasswell 1962). He

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²⁹Stanford's Center for Advanced Study in the Berhavioral Sciences represented intersection of elite interests. Established in 1954 with an enormous grant from the Ford Foundation, one of its founder members was Dr. Frank Stanton (who also served as one of the Centert's trustees between 1953 and 1971), the president of the Columbia Broadcasting System, 1946-71. Stanton was also the chair of the RAND Corporation, 1961-67 and one of its trustees from 1957 to 1978, in addition to serving as a trustee of the Rockefeller Foundation during part of this time. One of the first fellows of the Center was Clyde Kluckhohn.

During this period, Lasswell also had associations with Stanford's Hoover Institute, publishing several works under its auspices, co-authored with Daniel Lerner and Ithiel de Sola Pool.

did some research at Vicos (Dobynhs, Doughty and Lasswell 1971: 237) and collaborated with Holmberg on a 'general theory of directed value accumulation and international development' (Lasswell and Holmberg 1966), – very much in the CENIS vein – and, by the mid-sixties, was such an intimate part of the Vicos group, that he co-edited one of its most important products, *Peasants, power and applied social change: vicos as a model* (1971; orig. 1964), with Henry Dobyns and Paul Doughty, two of the project's foremost anthropological members (Dobyns, Doughty and Lasswell 1971).

By the early fifties, Lasswell – who would use Vicos to shape his notion of the 'policy sciences', that is of social sciences that could meaningfully contribute to the formulation of policy – had already developed his concept of the 'continuing policy (or decision) seminar' which was 'concerned with working out the implications of the contextual, problem-oriented, multi-method approach' as a means of informing and guiding the direction of an on-going project. Vicos played a major role in his elaboration of this technique. As a result,

One of the earliest explicit seminars was installed at Stanford in 1954-55 as a means of aiding Holmberg in his reassessment of the project as a whole. Cooperating with Holmberg were a political scientist, a psychologist, and an economist. They met regularly for the academic year in the same environment and developed a chart room to provide an auxiliary to recall and to effect the concept of systematic study (Lasswell 1971: 191).

While this all sounds highly academic, Lasswell's own career – and particularly his centrality in the emergence of modernisation theory and his membership in the CFR – should remind us that there was more going on here than neutral social science. As developed at CENIS, where it was sponsored by the Ford Foundation and the CIA, modernisation theory played an important role in the U.S. strategy of dealing with the nature of change in the developing world from the perspective of its social and economic elite. As such, it was also closely allied with communications theory – long patronised by the Rockefeller, Ford and Carnegie Foundations – which itself evolved in close association with U.S. army interests in propaganda/psychological warfare, as part of a multifaceted strategy to control the course of change in Third World societies. That it was also closely linked to the

general concept of 'community development' requires that this approach be set within a wider field of critical inquiry.

If anything brought together the ideas of Rostow, Lasswell, Gillin and Holmberg about the development process in the context of the Cold War and particularly reflected the 'prototype' that Lasswell had in mind, it was certainly the Peace Corps. Created by the Kennedy Administration in early 1961, the Peace Corps embodied many of the salient concepts of modernization thinking. According to Latham, instructors assigned recruits – who went through a thorough course of intellectual preparation – readings such as Staley's *The future of underdeveloped countries* and rostow's *the stages of economic growth* (Latham 2000: 119-120). Above all, the training centered on 'an image of the "traditional' peasant or lower-class urban worker that stressed both passivity and malleability' (Latham 2000: 124) and placed the volunteer in much the same position as Holmberg and his colleagues, as the source of Western values and innovations.

So, it was not only the case that Cornell became an important Peace Corps training center but that volunteers were actually placed in Vicos. When they arrived in Vicos in October, 1962, it was shortly after a military coup (Doughty 1964: 223), and

Their jobs involved close collaboration with the development and research programme initiated there in 1952 by the Cornell-Peru Project. Since 1957, the development aspects of this program had been under the direction of the Peruvian Ministry of Labor and Indian Affairs and its agency, the National Plan for Integrating the Aboriginal Population ... (Doughty 1964: 233-234).

The aim of such a plan has to be seen in relationship to the peasant mobilisations that were taking hold in the highlands. But, if, according to one of the agency's promotional brochures, research by Cornell anthropologists had concluded 'that young Americans fresh out of college with only three months of training can have a significant and lasting impact on developing societies' (quoted in Latham 2000: 129), it was not because they had come to promote anything so fundamental as land reform. Cornell's actual management of Vicos had come to an end and the Vicosinos themselves had purchased the hacienda; but, the Peruvian government still ran a program there and Cornell staff continued to play a central role in a process of on-going community development which, through the influence of the Peace Corps, helped to ensure that change remained safely within the framework of Western aims and aspirations.

11 CONCLUSIONS

If Vicos was specifically regarded as a model, in Lasswell's words, for 'integrating communities into more inclusive systems' its appeal in the period of the Cold War was that it

throws light upon the strategies open to advanced industrial Nation States possessed of democratic ideology whose members act unofficially to assist other less modernized states whose body politic is divided by heterogeneous ideologies and techniques that interfere with integration, modernization, and democratization (Lasswell 1962: 116).

Such vague references to integration are perhaps more clearly defined, in reference to the modernization paradigm, by Holmberg's view 'that lack of integration between the Sierra and Coast meant that the enormous Sierra labour reserve could not be efficiently tapped as an industrial work force ...' (1982: 3). Along with this was an increasing concern that, if this did not happen, the unacceptable alternative would be mounting conflict between land-poor peasants and the privileged landlord class who were allied, at the national level, with the geopolitical interests of the West.

Beyond that, there was always the question of whether the case of Vicos, however compelling a model it might seem to strategic thinkers such as Lasswell, was ever really replicable. Certainly William Foote Whyte – who was intimately associated with the Project – and Giorgio Alberti, came to the conclusion that

Provocative as the Vicos case is, it hardly provides an intervention model that can be widely used. There just are not enough available people or institutions with money to invest in taking over haciendas for the purpose of transforming them into progressive, democratic communities (Whyte and Alberti 1976: 247).

Far better, in their view, for the outsider to

Help organize the peasants against the hacendado and link them with other outsiders in this struggle. In other words, he must become a leader or supporter of a peasant movement (Whyte and Alberti 1976: 247).

Certainly in the early 1950's, when the Cornell Project began, such highland communities were already far from the 'traditional' way of life that modernization presumed. Much of their apparent 'backwardness', as Gunder Frank (1967) pointed out, was the product of an historical process of underdevelopment—which, by the

nineteen-forties, had given rise to peasant mobilizations from Bolivia to the Philippines. But, that was *not* the starting-point for most anthropological analysis. Had it been, as Huizer has noted and as Whyte and Alberti suggested, they might have 'come to help [local people] to struggle against the repressive system, rather than with minor improvement schemes' (Huizer 1972: 53). Most anthropologists tended to adopt the Rostow model, with its roots in the CENIS view of modernization, which became the prevailing development paradigm in Washington when one of Washington's chief strategic goals was to produce self-sustaining economic growth in the Third World to help immunize developing countries against agrarian insurgency and communism (Packenham 1973: 61-65), in particular by promoting the shift of a so-called rural population surplus into industrial urban centres (cf. Ross 2003).

To the extent that anthropology subscribed to such a view, as Bonfil Batalla noted, it certainly 'increased its employment possibilities' (1966: 91). Focus on communities – and on the shifting of attitudes and values toward a Western standard – rather than on their structural context, gave anthropologists a unique vantage point which ensured them a professional role in the burgeoning community development field, even if it did little to place anthropological expertise at the service of the dispossessed (cf. Stein 1985: 249).

The Vicos Project, like so much of anthropology's contribution to community development, did little to address the need for structural change. Indeed, according to William Stein, who participated in the Cornell Project, the emphasis on cultural values meant that researchers viewed Vicos society 'in terms of pluralism and cultural dimorphism, not as a whole, which led us to justify existing conditions and, in large part, to ignore the significance of exploitation' (Stein 1985: 238). That being the case, it is surely worth while to ask what the Project actually was able to give to Vicosinos. Unfortunately, the answer is problematical at best. According to J. Oscar Alers's short overview of demographic trends at Vicos, the crude death rate actually rose from 14.5 to 24.6 per thousand between 1952 and 1963, while the infant mortality rate increased from 122.0 to 142.9 (Alers 1971: 199-200. Alers attributes 'some' of the increase in death rates to improved registration, but clearly not all.

There may be some connection between these trends and the declining status of women. According to Florence Babb, who examined not only the Vicos literature but unpublished field data by project members (Babb 1985: 164), the Cornell project had 'unequal consequences' for men and women, especially in regard to productive

relations. In particular, she observes that 'women's position in Vicos has degenerated as ties to the dominant capitalist economy grow stronger' (Babb 1985: 185). More generally, according to Babb:

... men were the targets of modernization and women were affected only indirectly in ways which have been largely ignored in the Vicos literature ... the male bias of Western social science and community development programs is clear in the Vicos Project (Babb 1985: 172).

Thus, when new potato varieties were introduced, project personnel failed to take account of the role of women in the household decision-making process. In general, an emphasis on men in the process of agricultural innovation – particularly where this involved cash crops which brought about further contact with the market economy – was accompanied by a tendency for women to be relegated to a more domestic role (Babb 1985: 173187). Thus, while men acquired new ways of articulating with the wider world, 'women's work has seen little change in Vicos, as it is still geared to production for family use rather than for exchange in the cash economy' (Babb 1985: 187). Thus, the project actually intensified the dependent status of women.

Beyond gender inequalities, the project's aim of integrating Vicosinos into the national economy entailed certain interventions that actually promoted a general process of differentiation among the peasants of Vicos. One of the first of these was an initiative that was closely related to Cornell's agricultural involvements elsewhere in the world and one that reflected a widespread view in Western development policy circles that there were relatively simple technical solutions to complex socioeconomic and historical problems.³⁰ It was the introduction of 'improved' potato varieties. Barbara Lynch's 1982 report for USAID on the impact of the Vicos Project observed that, by 1954, Vicos had already become the region's largest potato producer. But, as with the Green Revolution elsewhere – whether the crop was potatoes, rice or wheat – the technology required was not equally accessible; the

³⁰See above. Cornell has also had an enduring involvement both in Andean research and potato development. When the International Potato Center (CIP), a constituent of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research, was established in 1971, the first Director General was Richard Sawyer, who had been professor of vegetable crops at Cornell, 1953-1966. The current DG, Herbert Zandstra, has a PhD from Cornell. He was formerly deputy DG of the International Rice Research Institute.

means to develop such potatoes 'was available only to wealthy and middle class Vicosinos' so, for small-holders, 'their relative position in the community deteriorated' (Lynch 1982: iii).

Above all, Lynch concluded that

The successes of the project were qualified. The project was constrained by regional and national economic, social and political structure ...Integration into the national society resulted in the reproduction of inequalities in the local society (Lynch 1982: iv).

Yet, such integration had been a major aim. So, either something had gone seriously wrong or the professed goals of the Vicos Project were rather different from the real agenda. Thus, when Foster wrote that 'the history of the project tells much about the problems of development and modernization of a traditional community', (1966), he was probably right, but not in the way he meant.

As Foster noted, the significance of Vicos (in part) was that 'the anthropologists ...were project administrators, with authority to make and execute decisions as well as to carry out research' (Foster 1969: 30). But, this was just part of the story. What also needs to be asked is what interests and aims led to those decisions, what premises and assumptions justified them, and what anthropologists did, as individuals and/or as a discipline, to give credibility to such assumptions. How did anthropology give legitimacy to a view of development which, by emphasizing the community as a unit of analysis, denied one which looked toward large-scale economic and social transformation? Specifically, what relation did anthropologists' engagement in projects such as Vicos have to the general geo-political strategy of the U.S. during the Cold War?

U.S. foreign policy objectives over four decades since the end of the Second World War were founded on a set of assumptions about the parameters of what was called modernisation and about who should properly be the agents (and beneficiaries) of change. Far from doing very much to question those assumptions – particularly with regard to the position of peasants in rural change – anthropology did a great deal to enhance them. Its notion of 'peasant conservatism' was essential to the viability of the community development paradigm as an integral feature of modernisation. In so doing, it contributed to the making of a world in which the fate of peasants has become highly problematical.

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