

Book Reviews

PINKERTON, Evelyn (Ed.) *Co-operative Management of Local Fisheries: New Directions for Improved Management & Community Development*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press. 1989. ix-299 pp.

Most fisheries nations struggle with basically the same problem, how to promote economic development in marginal, and often impoverished, fishing communities, and at the same time, avoid over-exploitation of the fish stocks. A key word here, launched by the World Commission on Environment and Development set up by the United Nations, is "sustainable development," a "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (The World Commission on Environment and Development, *Our Common Future*. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1987, p. 43).

In few other industries is this challenge more pressing than in the fishery. From experience we know that resource depletion has often been the long term effect of well-intended development strategies aimed at helping the poor. From numerous cases we know that efforts to control the resource base have led to community decline. This because restrictions on access to the fishery have benefitted large scale operators at the expense of small scale ones. Also, endeavors to ensure over-all planning and control have often resulted in top-down management practices which have alienated those whose survival depends on the fishery. Such consequences are, again following the World Commission, contradictory to sustainable development, which in order to be effective, requires "... effective citizen participation in decision making" (p. 65).

For the present international debate on the environmental crisis, triggered largely by the World Commission, Evelyn Pinkerton's book comes at the right time. The book also adds a new dimension to the political and academic debate on the commons problems as it has been experienced in the fishery. In both instances, workable solutions to the development/management/participation dilemma are needed. Before such solutions are found, one should not expect practical results in accordance with the criteria of the World Commission.

Here, Pinkerton offers the co-operative management approach: a decision-making process which involves local communities and groups of fishermen in a participatory and responsible fashion. Co-management means delegation of management authority to local groups, or the formal recognition by government of indigenous local management systems. By institutionalizing co-management, central-local relationships among the actors in the fishery, as well as the relationships that exist among individual fishermen and among fishermen's groups, are fundamentally altered. Co-management "is power-sharing but it is also responsibility-sharing" (p. 278).

For Pinkerton, co-management is a multi-purpose tool which will provide more effective, more equitable, and more appropriate management. These are indeed common concerns of both government and fishermen. In particular, she argues, co-management promotes conservation and enhancement of fish stocks, improves the quality of data and data analysis which are needed for stock estimation, reduces excessive investments by fishermen in competitive gear, makes allocation of fishing opportunities more equitable, promotes community economic development, and reduces conflicts between government and fishermen, and conflict among fishermen's groups.

Given the many failures of fisheries management schemes in the past, one may think

that this is too good to be true. In theory it sounds great, but does it work in practice? Pinkerton admits that co-management is a difficult process, and that there are many pitfalls and problems to be overcome. In her opinion, it is therefore essential to be aware of the preconditions which are favourable to co-management, and which arrangements are most favourable to maintain it.

Grounded in the many empirical examples and practical experiences of co-management described in the book, she develops a long list of propositions of what contributes to successful management. To mention a few, co-management operates most favourably where: the mechanisms for conserving and enhancing the fishery can at the same time conserve and enhance the operation of the cultural system; the number of fishermen or communities is not too large for effective communication, or where there are well-organized sub-groupings (villages, kinship groups, organizations) which communicate well with each other or have effective umbrella organizations; a higher (possibly citizens') authority can act as an appeal body on local equity studies.

The book is an edited volume of sixteen chapters, containing a variety of analytical case-studies and descriptive examples of co-management agreements. All the case-material is from Canada and the United States and most of them (except three) involve aboriginal groups exercising treaty or aboriginal rights in harvesting and managing fish on a small scale. This makes generalizations to other contexts somewhat difficult. It is argued, however, that even though aboriginal fishermen do have a head-start on co-management because of their kinship and territorial systems which define group boundaries as well as the obligations of members of the group, co-management may also be effective in non-aboriginal groupings. The question of whether or not co-management will work, and under what conditions, in a highly mobile, industrialized fishery is not addressed. Following the argument in the concluding chapter (co-authors Bruce Rettig and Fikret Berkes), no fishery can be managed effectively without co-operation of fishermen. Considering the specificity of the aboriginal case as merely a head-start, however, seems to be an over-simplification in light of the vast differences from the main commercial inshore and offshore fishery.

The authors include academics of various disciplines as well as practitioners of fisheries management. This is both a strength and a weakness, at least from the perspective of a foreigner. Half of the chapters are written by people with a hands-on experience of co-management, but with no training in social science. It strengthens the case for co-management when it is advocated by people who have really tried it in practice but it also means that general insights and analytical points are less developed than one may have preferred, particularly for the purpose of comparative research. However, this is well balanced with a good introduction and conclusion which summarize the lessons to be drawn from these case-studies, as well as the more academic papers.

In my view, Pinkerton's book brings the debate on fisheries management a step further, and should be inspiring to researchers as well as fisheries managers on this side of the Atlantic as well as in North America. It also suggests a practical approach to many of the problems of economic development and environmental protection addressed by the World Commission. Thus, it has a message to the public at large and not only to people with special interest in fisheries.

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JOENSEN, Joán Pauli *Fra bonde til fisker. Studier i overgangen fra bondesamfund til fiskersamfund på Færøerne*. Tórshavn: Føroya Fornminnisavni, 1987. 159 pp., English summary. (From Peasant to Fisherman. Studies in the Transition from a Peasant Society to a Fishing Society on the Faroe Islands. Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Aarhus).

This book is a piece of long-term research in two ways. First, it deals with developments on the Faroe Islands over a long period (1800-1939). Secondly, the author has worked with this material for several years and published books and articles in Faroese, Danish, and English about aspects of this society. The present dissertation is not an original piece of research, but a compilation of the main findings during the past ten years. There can be no doubt about Joensen's enormous firsthand knowledge of Faroese society, history, and culture. Yet, the book is disappointing both as measured against its declared intentions and as measured against norms for scientific work.

The title indicates a study of change. The list of contents suggests a systematic approach. The introduction promises a combined ethnological, historical, and structural investigation of the transition from peasant society to fishing society in which the material, social, and spiritual aspects of culture will be examined within a holistic and comparative perspective. Various forms of consciousness and cultural articulation will be investigated and related to different categories of the population. Cultural variation, change and continuity will be viewed against the background of forms of production, conditions of housing, leisure expenditure, spiritual values, lifestyles, conditions of life, etc., etc. (p. 9). These are almost breathtaking intentions, very interesting and very ambitious. One would have liked a study like that.

As it is, Joensen has bitten off more than he can chew. The book contains no processual analysis, no holistic approach to culture, and no comparative perspective. The author seems to be caught up in the schism between painting a "representative and multi-faceted picture of all kinds of aspects of life on the Faroe Islands" and presenting an ethnological analysis of the material. The latter implies selecting a focus for the ordering of material, it implies selecting analytic concepts for the interpretation of findings, and it implies presenting an argument that relates to the research findings from different, yet comparable communities elsewhere. This is not done. Instead we are presented a flat and very insular compilation of Joensen's no doubt tremendous knowledge of these islands, lacking in depth, focus, and spice.

The "old and stable" peasant society is Joensen's point of departure (quotation marks mine). In this society, households were largely self-supporting, knitting being the only cash-yielding activity. Ownership of land defined fishing rights and the rights to whaling and driftwood, extremely important resources in this bare and windy environment. Trade was monopolized by Danes, and the Faroes were then an extremely isolated and semi-colonial island-society under Danish administration. Although there would appear to be some differences in power and wealth, Joensen characterizes Faroese society of the 18th and 19th centuries as a "unitary culture": a fortress of traditionalism saturated by Lutheranism. The turning point in this stable peasant society is the abolition of the Danish trade monopoly and the introduction of free trade in 1856. This enabled merchants to establish shops, where fish soon became the currency with which imported goods were obtained. Faroese fishermen and merchants started to invest in ships for deep-sea fishing, and the fishing fleet grew tremendously in the last two or three decades of the century. Farm hands increasingly left the farms to engage in fishing. Farming slowly lost its importance but in this transitional phase the economy of most households was still based on both farming and fishing. Fishing involved entirely different relationships between em-

ployers and employees. To avoid paying cash wages, employers developed the so-called truck-system, by which they urged employees to accept goods from their own shops instead of wages. Later this truck-system developed into the credit-book system, by which a fisherman exchanged his labour power for credit facilities in the shop. These systems cracked in 1929 with the world crisis, while at the same time trade unions became more important.

Along with these changes in the economic sphere, the Faroes gradually became less isolated. There were thin layers of society where middle-class culture dominated, but no great changes occurred in the daily life on the Faroese population in general. Yet, Joensen writes, the tension between folk culture and middle-class culture "gave rise to a romantic national movement which in time assumed a political aspect, and a conscious Faroese national culture emerged" (p. 155).

These, in short, were the main lines along which Faroese society developed when changes started to "appear" after 1865. In Joensen's treatment they literally appear, almost like *dei ex machina*. Merchants "appear," roads, harbours and knitting machines "come," changes in the system "happen," social differentiation "arrives in the population," the plough is "introduced," and the bourgeois way of life "comes" (p.76). Some changes do not "come," because - Joensen explains - "people were not ripe for innovation" (!), or because "there was opposition against it" (p. 40). My point is that a "from-to" description with in-between the "appearance" of changes can hardly be said to constitute a processual analysis of a transition. One important reason is that in Joensen's study there are no actors up against other actors, no specified interest groups conflicting amongst each other, no local level politics. Whaling, cod fishing, hay collecting, investment in shops and ships, and the spread of bourgeois culture - it is all described, but without any sense of the dynamic relationship between people and groups competing for scarce resources. In the end, we have a changed society, indeed, but we are still ignorant as to *how* things changed, *who* did what, and *why*. This basic criticism goes for the entire book, but it is most serious when it comes to the lack of information on the group of "merchants," because they seem to be central in the transition from farming to fishing, which is really a process of commercialization. In this process, capital is needed and people willing to risk that capital (merchants, shopkeepers, innovators, or entrepreneurs - they have been called many names in the anthropological literature). Given the semi-colonial situation, the demographic pressure with its ensuing proletarianization, and the "traditional" division of power resources - three lines along which this transition might have been analyzed more systematically and more dynamically - it is essential to know *who* these merchants were and how they were recruited (Robert Paine wrote a most instructive study in the 1960s about very similar processes and activities along the Norwegian coast, to which, however, no reference is made). Were they immigrants or where they local men, ex-landowning peasants, or something else? How did they acquire the capital needed, and whom were they up against? Were *they* the carriers of bourgeois culture? And how did this group relate to the emerging Faroese national culture? Joensen gives no clear and specific answers to these and similar questions which are central to his enterprise.

A comparative perspective is missing altogether. It is surprising that no reference is made to research findings produced by scholars from universities specializing in North Atlantic fishing communities, like Memorial University in Newfoundland and Tromsø in Norway. Joensen acknowledges having been inspired by Le Goff, Löfgren, and Barth (the latter mentioned, but missing in the bibliography). However, neither the working methods, nor the research findings of these scholars are integrated in Joensen's presenta-

tion of material. They appear only to function as figureheads in the introduction. Instead Joensen continuously refers to Joensen.

Joensen typically begins a chapter by telling the reader that he has already dealt with all this before. Instead of summing up the relevant findings from this or that previous study, he refers the reader to his publications (10 random pages yielded an average of 6,4 references a page to Joensen himself). Thus the book is full of statements, the validity of which the reader cannot judge. This becomes boring and even irritating, not in the least because of poor language (misspellings, wrong use of terms, ever shifting tenses and use of non-existing words). The limit of sloppiness and non-scholarship is reached in the closing pages. Here Joensen summarizes the occupational differentiation which has evolved in Faroese society by taking over a page-long enumeration of occupation from the 1938-39 telephone-book - bakers next to banks, barbers, and boat-builders (p. 132). Easy does it!

In short, as a dissertation this study is not convincing, lacking as it is, not only in argument and theoretical discussion, but also in language and style.

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MARCHAK, Patricia, Neil GUPPY and John McMULLAN (Eds.) *Uncommon Property: The Fishing and Fish-Processing Industries in British Columbia*. Toronto, New York, London, Sydney and Auckland: Methuen. 1987. xvi, 402 pp. (tables, figures, index), paper. ISBN 0-458-80991-0-X.

This is one of those books that is so good that it is likely to displease those in the policy business who read it. I can already hear Canadian fisheries bureaucrats saying that this team of sociologists does not understand the fishing industry. They understand it all too well. In contrast to the disparity exhibited by many collections, especially in economic anthropology, this book benefits from the shared analytical framework of political economy. Using intensive community studies, analysis of state statistics, historical materials, records and observations of meetings, in their fifteen articles, the seven contributors (the three editors and Stephen Garrod, Alicja Muszynski, Evelyn Pinkerton, and Keith Wariner) concentrate on describing the history and functioning of the fisheries of British Columbia rather than vacuous abstractions or fatuous "theoretical" debate, which makes this book a bonanza for anyone interested in fisheries, modern economics, economic history, relationships among native peoples and states, and formation and control of public policy and its effects.

The writers do not uncritically accept the definitions of reality offered by processors, policy makers, bureaucrats, or fishermen. In the introduction Marchak argues, contra fishermen and state ideologies, that the fishery is not common property, and that the issue is not the tragedy of the commons but the mismanagement of state or crown property. While the fishery is only a small portion of B.C.'s economy, a substantial number of biologists have interests in maintaining government machinery that costs about as much as the landed value of the catch. The government spends as much on bureaucrats as the fishermen produce.

In the first section about capital and the state, McMullan provides a history of work organization and relationships with the developing area infrastructure, packing industry,

markets, fishery stocks, and fishing technologies. Muszynski describes the history of the relations of the processing industry with evolutions of railroads, technology, capital, European markets, fishing and processing in the United States, and sources of labor. Pinkerton connects a number of such structural dimensions in her discussion of oligopolistic pricing and degrees and methods of vertical integration. Garrod examined relationships among consumer tastes, relative values of national currencies, tariffs, and salmon farming to assess the evolution of B.C.'s status in the world salmon market since the 1950s. McMullan chronicles the shifting relations between government policy and capital in the salmon fishery to show how recent policies have reduced the fleet but increased catching capacity, commoditized the right to fish, strengthened the dominant position of one packing firm, and contributed to the subordination of fishermen to result in rapacious overfishing and destruction of stocks. The remedial efforts beginning in 1975 followed the formula "More state capital = more fish = more capacity = more concentration ..." (p. 147). The inconsistencies and paternalistic ad hoc policies, decision-making, and administration of biologists and bureaucrats of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans convinced fishermen that the state was uncaring and incompetent which contributed to their resentment, mistrust, and resistance to regulation. Marchak recounts how the shared military interests of the USSR and the United States, the ascendancy of a U.S. mining lobby during the Reagan administration, access to oil, fears of oil spills, and other concerns shape Canadian-U.S. and international fisheries questions.

In the second section, on labor and organization, Guppy explores variations among fishermen's gear types, income, education, alternative employment, access to state unemployment insurance schemes, and attitudes. He examines the myth of individualism and shows that fishermen are integrally dependent on families for access to boats, labor, and linkages with shoreworkers as well as processors. In the next chapter he characterizes processing work and workers ashore, their gender and ethnic divisions, the extreme volatility of the work, and the decreasing influence of family connections among workers as processing has relocated in urban areas. He illustrates the arbitrariness of gender divisions by pointing out that filleting is considered men's work on the Atlantic but women's work on the Pacific. Marchak describes the tangle of fishermen's organizations, unions, and cooperatives and how they have had mutual and conflicting interests over time. Pinkerton shows how Indians are united by continuities in non-cash economic and related social and political forms but divided by such schisms as gear types in the larger fishery. Muszynski chronicles the development of the United Fishermen and Allied Workers Union (UFAWU). In the United States, fishermen unions were effectively outlawed by anti trust litigation which found fishermen to be firms which could not collude to fix prices (p. 275). The UFAWU included processing workers so they had some legitimacy as representatives of labor as well as the power to close processing plants to back up fishermen demands.

In the third section about community and region Pinkerton discusses two communities on the west coast of Vancouver Island that are dependent on fishing and how fishing pervades the social fabric as well as economy of each. Fearing the competition of a local enterprise, a large processor caused the Agriculture and Rural Development Agency (ARDA) to delay a half million dollar payment, whereupon banks refused to pay creditors thus making certain their fears of the firm's bankruptcy would be realized. Here the hand of business in policy and policy determining conditions of business is clear. Business is not so much at stake in Ahousaht, an Indian community where fishing is like a total institution, entering many aspects of the social order from socialization to residence. On this island where the whim of a fisheries policy maker is directly felt through the community,

the residents are united in their opinion that fisheries management policies operate to their detriment. Warriner explains that British Columbia's economy is a peripheral hinterland governed by the political and economic interests of metropolitan Vancouver and Victoria. Marchak reviews developments since the Davis Plan in 1968, whose buy back had been more than compensated for by the upgrading of the fleet with government subsidies and loans. Conservation was a rhetoric of justification for the 1968 policy, dropped abruptly for fleet modernization when processors demanded it. Native claims and the bankers fears of having bad loans or repossessed boats take precedence over conservation since a 1985 policy provides financial aid to Indians to buy boats and pay debts. The government yielded fishing rights in return for forestry rights, which Indians had contested, and which large corporations insisted upon having to themselves. The policy would also benefit the one major processing firm and reduce the bargaining power of the union. The conclusion to the paper is an apt summary of the whole book:

The contradiction is in the property rights of the fishery: the provincial government has formal ownership of land and resources; the federal government claims formal ownership of the fish and of the right to allocate fishing licenses; private individuals with licenses are obliged to compete for capture; and captured fish, now as commodities, are private property. The whole situation is further complicated by the ideology of common property and by the efforts of federal conservation officers to save the fish in the name of common property. The complexities mount when the private property interests of other industries and other users of the fish habitat are brought into the picture. ... Fishers ... have tried to work out their common interests and resolve their internal conflicts. ... What they need now is an equally serious commitment by governments to a genuine consultation process.

Each study is well articulated and meshed with all of the others but independent of them so one can understand individual chapters without reading the whole volume. The effort the collaborators put into organization has paid off in overall coherence. The organizers no doubt had this in mind rather than trying to develop a single organizational scheme for the work as a whole that would make each contribution dependent on the overall structure and its place in it. Only those who read the book straight through will detect the slight repetition this entails.

One theme that recurs is the nature and place of petty commodity production, household production as opposed to firms, which has been and remains economically and socially important and politically significant. These co-workers allocated their resources, time, and patience best to analyze the structure that contains such forms and its history to transcend the worm's eye view of local ethnography. To have provided such analyses would have over-loaded the volume, so I hope we can look forward to further work from this group.

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