



**Kathleen Gough**

## VOLUME ABSTRACT

### ANTHROPOLOGY, IMPERIALISM AND RESISTANCE: THE WORK OF KATHLEEN GOUGH

This volume developed out of conference sessions held in Chicago in 1991 and Montréal in 1992. In their Introduction, Richard Lee and Karen Brodtkin Sacks survey aspects of Gough's work which are addressed by other contributors. These include theoretical and ethnographic work on kinship and marriage, the sociology of underdevelopment in South Asia, anthropology and imperialism and the anthropology of women. Gough's political and academic commitments, which led her to support the Cuban and Vietnamese revolutions, resulted in battles with the administrations at three universities.

Three papers discuss Gough's work in India. Joan Mencher reports on her work on kinship, paying particular attention to her publications concerning incest, female initiation rites and the definition of marriage. She also discusses Gough's analysis of local politics in Kerala, which investigated the reasons for the successes as well as the failures of the Left in that province.

Hira Singh observes that Gough avoids the sterile, ahistorical, equilibrium-centred approach of the structural-functionalists as well as the idealism of the Indologists, who believe that Indian culture is unique in its acceptance of an elaborate principle of hierarchy. In contrast, Gough's approach is structural and historical, and concerns itself with peasant resistance in colonial and post-colonial India. She rejected the notion that the Indian caste system encouraged passivity, and instead described many organized rebellions whose significance had often been neglected.

Joseph Tharamangalam discusses the Marxist perspective applied by Gough to class, caste and colonialism and peasant movements. Gough detailed the close links between rural class structure and capitalist imperialism. In contrast to Dumont and his followers, she demonstrated that caste systems were unlikely to impede any peasant rebellion.

Hy Van Luong writes about Gough's long relationship with Vietnam, explaining how she deconstructed the dominant U.S. version of Vietnam, in terms of material wealth, women's roles and accusations of human rights violations.

Joseph Jorgensen traces the history of Gough's unpleasant encounters with university administrations over her political views. There is an extended discussion of Gough's time at Simon Fraser University and the events preceding and consequent upon her dismissal.

Marianne Gosztonyi Ainley explores the "ingrained sexist attitudes" faced by women academics. Throughout her career, Gough also suffered from the effects of formal nepotism rules. The article goes on to question assumptions about the definition of a successful career.

Eleanor Smollett recalls the help Gough gave her when she was about to start her own field work in India. She remembers the hopes they shared for socialism in India and Vietnam. The author acclaims Gough's realistic perception of events in these two countries.

Pauline Gardiner Barber and Belinda Leach address an overlooked contribution of Kathleen Gough. She not only wrote about marriage and the family, gender and feminist scholarship, but also warned of distorting interpretations of gender divisions of labour to fit ideals of matriarchal societies.

Gerald Berreman discusses the principle of "positive responsibility" which acknowledges the political meaning behind the study of any social science. Berreman uses examples from Gough's work in India and Vietnam to exemplify her commitment to that premise.

"Anthropology and Imperialism Revisited," Gough's last article, is reprinted here. In it, she wrote of the continued threat of imperialism and the problems that her own anti-imperialist politics had caused in her academic life. She attempts to explain the widening gaps between the developed and the less developed countries. She identifies three issues which will be significant foci of worldwide struggle: the redistribution of the world's wealth in the New Economic Order, nuclear and conventional disarmament, and the environment.

The volume also contains brief tributes by Susheila Raghavan Bhagat, Peter Boothroyd, Peter Limqueco, Nguyen Minh Luan and Mordecai Briemberg. A bibliography of Gough's writing, which has been updated by her husband David Aberle, is supplied at the end of the volume.