Ethnic Groups and Boundaries
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Introduction

This collection of essays addresses itself to the problems of ethnic groups and their persistence. This is a theme of great, but neglected, importance to social anthropology. Practically all anthropological reasoning rests on the premise that cultural variation is discontinuous: that there are aggregates of people who essentially share a common culture, and interconnected differences that distinguish each such discrete culture from all others. Since culture is nothing but a way to describe human behaviour, it would follow that there are discrete groups of people, i.e. ethnic units, to correspond to each culture. The differences between cultures, and their historic boundaries and connections, have been given much attention; the constitution of ethnic groups, and the nature of the boundaries between them, have not been correspondingly investigated. Social anthropologists have largely avoided these problems by using a highly abstracted concept of 'society' to represent the encompassing social system within which smaller, concrete groups and units may be analysed. But this leaves untouched the empirical characteristics and boundaries of ethnic groups, and the important theoretical issues which an investigation of them raises.

Though the naïve assumption that each tribe and people has maintained its culture through a bellicose ignorance of its neighbours is no longer entertained, the simplistic view that geographical and social isolation have been the critical factors in sustaining cultural diversity persists. An empirical investigation of the character of ethnic boundaries, as documented in the following essays, produces two discoveries which are hardly unexpected, but which demonstrate the inadequacy of this view. First, it is clear that boundaries persist despite a flow of personnel across them. In other words, categorical ethnic distinctions do not depend on an absence of mobility, contact and information,

but do entail social processes of exclusion and incorporation whereby discrete categories are maintained despite changing participation and membership in the course of individual life histories. Secondly, one finds that stable, persisting, and often vitally important social relations are maintained across such boundaries, and are frequently based precisely on the dichotomized ethnic statuses. In other words, ethnic distinctions do not depend on an absence of social interaction and acceptance, but are quite to the contrary often the very foundations on which embracing social systems are built. Interaction in such a social system does not lead to its liquidation through change and acculturation; cultural differences can persist despite inter-ethnic contact and interdependence.

General approach

There is clearly an important field here in need of rethinking. What is required is a combined theoretical and empirical attack: we need to investigate closely the empirical facts of a variety of cases, and fit our concepts to these empirical facts so that they elucidate them as simply and adequately as possible, and allow us to explore their implications. In the following essays, each author takes up a case with which he is intimately familiar from his own fieldwork, and tries to apply a common set of concepts to its analysis. The main theoretical departure consists of several interconnected parts. First, we give primary emphasis to the fact that ethnic groups are categories of ascription and identification by the actors themselves, and thus have the characteristic of organizing interaction between people. We attempt to relate other characteristics of ethnic groups to this primary feature. Second, the essays all apply a generative viewpoint to the analysis; rather than working through a typology of forms of ethnic groups and relations, we attempt to explore the different processes that seem to be involved in generating and maintaining ethnic groups. Third, to observe these processes we shift the focus of investigation from internal constitution and history of separate groups to ethnic boundaries and boundary maintenance. Each of these points needs some elaboration.

Ethnic group defined

The term ethnic group is generally understood in anthropological literature (cf. e.g. Narroll 1964) to designate a population which:

      1. is largely biologically self-perpetuating

    2. shares fundamental cultural values, realized in overt unity in cultural forms

    3. makes up a field of communication and interaction

    4. has a membership which identifies itself, and is identified by others, as constituting a category distinguishable from other categories of the same order.

This ideal type definition is not so far removed in content from the traditional proposition that a race = a culture = a language and that a society = a unit which rejects or discriminates against others. Yet, in its modified form it is close enough to many empirical ethnographic situations, at least as they appear and have been reported, so that this meaning continues to serve the purposes of most anthropologists. My quarrel is not so much with the substance of these characteristics, though as I shall show we can profit from a certain change of emphasis; my main objection is that such a formulation prevents us from understanding the phenomenon of ethnic groups and their place in human society and culture. This is because it begs all the critical questions: while purporting to give an ideal type model of a recurring empirical form, it implies a preconceived view of what are the significant factors in the genesis, structure, and function of such groups.

Most critically, it allows us to assume that boundary maintenance is unproblematical and follows from the isolation which the itemized characteristics imply: racial difference, cultural difference, social separation and language barriers, spontaneous and organized enmity. This also limits the range of factors that we use to explain cultural diversity: we are led to imagine each group developing its cultural and social form in relative isolation, mainly in response to local ecologic factors, through a history of adaptation by invention and selective borrowing. This history has produced a world of separate peoples, each with their culture and each organized in a society which can legitimately be isolated for description as an island to itself.

Ethnic groups as culture-bearing units

Rather than discussing the adequacy of this version of culture history for other than pelagic islands, let us look at some of the logical flaws in the viewpoint. Among the characteristics listed above, the sharing of a common culture is generally given central importance. In my view, much can be gained by regarding this very important feature as an implication or result, rather than a primary and definitional characteristic of ethnic group organization. If one chooses to regard

the culture-bearing aspect of ethnic groups as their primary characteristic, this has far-reaching implications. One is led to identify and distinguish ethnic groups by the morphological characteristics of the cultures of which they are the bearers. This entails a prejudged viewpoint both on (1) the nature of continuity in time of such units, and (2) the locus of the factors which determine the form of the units.

1. Given the emphasis on the culture-bearing aspect, the classification of persons and local groups as members of an ethnic group must depend on their exhibiting the particular traits of the culture. This is something that can be judged objectively by the ethnographic observer, in the culture-area tradition, regardless of the categories and prejudices of the actors. Differences between groups become differences in trait inventories; the attention is drawn to the analysis of cultures, not of ethnic organization. The dynamic relationship between groups will then be depicted in acculturation studies of the kind that have been attracting decreasing interest in anthropology, though their theoretical inadequacies have never been seriously discussed. Since the historical provenance of any assemblage of culture traits is diverse, the viewpoint also gives scope for an 'ethnohistory' which chronicles cultural accretion and change, and seeks to explain why certain items were borrowed. However, what is the unit whose continuity in time is depicted in such studies? Paradoxically, it must include cultures in the past which would clearly be excluded in the present because of differences in form - differences of precisely the kind that are diagnostic in synchronic differentiation of ethnic units. The interconnection between 'ethnic group' and 'culture' is certainly not clarified through this confusion.

2. The overt cultural forms which can be itemized as traits exhibit the effects of ecology. By this I do not mean to refer to the fact that they reflect a history of adaptation to environment; in a more immediate way they also reflect the external circumstances to which actors must accommodate themselves. The same group of people, with unchanged values and ideas, would surely pursue different patterns of life and institutionalize different forms of behaviour when faced with the different opportunities offered in different environments? Likewise, we must expect to find that one ethnic group, spread over a territory with varying ecologic circumstances, will exhibit regional diversities of overt institutionalized behaviour which do not reflect differences in cultural orientation. How should they then be classified if overt institutional forms are diagnostic? A case in point is the

distributions and diversity of Pathan local social systems, discussed below (pp. 117 ff.). By basic Pathan values, a Southern Pathan from the homogeneous, lineage-organized mountain areas, can only find the behaviour of Pathans in Swat so different from, and reprehensible in terms of, their own values that they declare their northern brothers 'no longer Pathan'. Indeed, by 'objective' criteria, their overt pattern of organization seems much closer to that of Panjabis. But I found it possible, by explaining the circumstances in the north, to make Southern Pathans agree that these were indeed Pathans too, and grudgingly to admit that under those circumstances they might indeed themselves act in the same way. It is thus inadequate to regard overt institutional forms as constituting the cultural features which at any time distinguish an ethnic group - these overt forms are determined by ecology as well as by transmitted culture. Nor can it be claimed that every such diversification within a group represents a first step in the direction of subdivision and multiplication of units. We have well-known documented cases of one ethnic group, also at a relatively simple level of economic organization, occupying several different ecologic niches and yet retaining basic cultural and ethnic unity over long periods (cf., e.g., inland and coastal Chuckchee (Bogoras 1904-9) or reindeer, river, and coast Lapps (Gjessing, 1954)).

In one of the following essays, Blom (pp. 74 ff.) argues cogently on this point with reference to central Norwegian mountain farmers. He shows how their participation and self-evaluation in terms of general Norwegian values secures them continued membership in the larger ethnic group, despite the highly characteristic and deviant patterns of activity which the local ecology imposes on them. To analyse such cases, we need a viewpoint that does not confuse the effects of ecologic circumstances on behaviour with those of cultural tradition, but which makes it possible to separate these factors and investigate the nonecological cultural and social components creating diversity.

Ethnic groups as an organizational type

By concentrating on what is socially effective, ethnic groups are seen as a form of social organization. The critical feature then becomes item (4) in the list on p. 11 the characteristic of self-ascription and ascription by others. A categorical ascription is an ethnic ascription when it classifies a person in terms of his basic, most general identity, presumptively determined by his origin and background. To the extent that actors use ethnic identities to categorize themselves and others for

purposes of interaction, they form ethnic groups in this organizational sense.

It is important to recognize that although ethnic categories take cultural differences into account, we can assume no simple one-to-one relationship between ethnic units and cultural similarities and differences. The features that are taken into account are not the sum of 'objective' differences, but only those which the actors themselves regard as significant. Not only do ecologic variations mark and exaggerate differences; some cultural features are used by the actors as signals and emblems of differences, others are ignored, and in some relationships radical differences are played down and denied. The cultural contents of ethnic dichotomies would seem analytically to be of two orders: (i) overt signals or signs - the diacritical features that people look for and exhibit to show identity, often such features as dress, language, house-form, or general style of life, and (ii) basic value orientations: the standards of morality and excellence by which performance is judged. Since belonging to an ethnic category implies being a certain kind of person, having that basic identity, it also implies a claim to be judged, and to judge oneself, by those standards that are relevant to that identity. Neither of these kinds of cultural 'contents' follows from a descriptive list of cultural features or cultural differences; one cannot predict from first principles which features will be emphasized and made organizationally relevant by the actors. In other words, ethnic categories provide an organizational vessel that may be given varying amounts and forms of content in different socio-cultural systems. They may be of great relevance to behaviour, but they need not be; they may pervade all social life, or they may be relevant only in limited sectors of activity. There is thus an obvious scope for ethnographic and comparative descriptions of different forms of ethnic organization.

The emphasis on ascription as the critical feature of ethnic groups also solves the two conceptual difficulties that were discussed above.

1. When defined as an ascriptive and exclusive group, the nature of continuity of ethnic units is clear: it depends on the maintenance of a boundary. The cultural features that signal the boundary may change, and the cultural characteristics of the members may likewise be transformed, indeed, even the organizational form of the group may change - yet the fact of continuing dichotomization between members and outsiders allows us to specify the nature of continuity, and investigate the changing cultural form and content.

2. Socially relevant factors alone become diagnostic for membership, not the overt, 'objective' differences which are generated by other factors. It makes no difference how dissimilar members may be in their overt behaviour - if they say they are A, in contrast to another cognate category B, they are willing to be treated and let their own behaviour be interpreted and judged as A's and not as B's; in other words, they declare their allegiance to the shared culture of A's. The effects of this, as compared to other factors influencing actual behaviour, can then be made the object of investigation.

The boundaries of ethnic groups

The critical focus of investigation from this point of view becomes the ethnic boundary that defines the group, not the cultural stuff that it encloses. The boundaries to which we must give our attention are of course social boundaries, though they may have territorial counterparts. If a group maintains its identity when members interact with others, this entails criteria for determining membership and ways of signalling membership and exclusion. Ethnic groups are not merely or necessarily based on the occupation of exclusive territories; and the different ways in which they are maintained, not only by a once-andfor-all recruitment but by continual expression and validation, need to be analysed.

What is more, the ethnic boundary canalizes social life - it entails a frequently quite complex organization of behaviour and social relations. The identification of another person as a fellow member of an ethnic group implies a sharing of criteria for evaluation and judgement. It thus entails the assumption that the two are fundamentally 'playing the same game', and this means that there is between them a potential for diversification and expansion of their social relationship to cover eventually all different sectors and domains of activity. On the other hand, a dichotomization of others as strangers, as members of another ethnic group, implies a recognition of limitations on shared understandings, differences in criteria for judgement of value and performance, and a restriction of interaction to sectors of assumed common understanding and mutual interest.

This makes it possible to understand one final form of boundary maintenance whereby cultural units and boundaries persist. Entailed in ethnic boundary maintenance are also situations of social contact between persons of different cultures: ethnic groups only persist as significant units if they imply marked difference in behaviour, i.e.

persisting cultural differences. Yet where persons of different culture interact, one would expect these differences to he reduced, since interaction both requires and generates a congruence of codes and values - in other words, a similarity or community of culture (cf. Barth 1966, for my argumentation on this point). Thus the persistence of ethnic groups in contact implies not only criteria and signals for identification, but also a structuring of interaction which allows the persistence of cultural differences. The organizational feature which, I would argue, must be general for all inter-ethnic relations is a systematic set of rules governing inter-ethnic social encounters. In all organized social life, what can be made relevant to interaction in any particular social situation is prescribed (Goffman 1959). If people agree about these prescriptions, their agreement on codes and values need not extend beyond that which is relevant to the social situations in which they interact. Stable inter-ethnic relations presuppose such a structuring of interaction: a set of prescriptions governing situations of contact, and allowing for articulation in some sectors or domains of activity, and a set of proscriptions on social situations preventing inter-ethnic interaction in other sectors, and thus insulating parts of the cultures from confrontation and modification.

Poly-ethnic social systems

This of course is what Furnivall (1944) so clearly depicted in his analysis of plural society: a poly-ethnic society integrated in the market place, under the control of a state system dominated by one of the groups, but leaving large areas of cultural diversity in the religious and domestic sectors of activity.

What has not been adequately appreciated by later anthropologists is the possible variety of sectors of articulation and separation, and the variety of poly-ethnic systems which this entails. We know of some of the Melanesian trade systems in objects belonging to the highprestige sphere of the economy, and even some of the etiquette and prescriptions governing the exchange situation and insulating it from other activities. We have information on various traditional polycentric systems from S.E. Asia (discussed below, Izikowitz pp. 135 ff.) integrated both in the prestige trade sphere and in quasi-feudal political structures. Some regions of S.W. Asia show forms based on a more fully monetized market economy, while political integration is polycentric in character. There is also the ritual and productive cooperation and political integration of the Indian caste system to be con-

sidered, where perhaps only kinship and domestic life remain as a proscribed sector and a wellspring for cultural diversity. Nothing can be gained by lumping these various systems under the increasingly vague label of 'plural' society, whereas an investigation of the varieties of structure can shed a great deal of light on social and cultural forms.

What can be referred to as articulation and separation on the macro-level corresponds to systematic sets of role constraints on the micro-level. Common to all these systems is the principle that ethnic identity implies a series of constraints on the kinds of roles an individual is allowed to play, and the partners he may choose for different kinds of transactions.' In other words, regarded as a status, ethnic identity is superordinate to most other statuses, and defines the permissible constellations of statuses, or social personalities, which an individual with that identity may assume. In this respect ethnic identity is similar to sex and rank, in that it constrains the incumbent in all his activities, not only in some defined social situations? One might thus also say that it is imperative in that it cannot be disregarded and temporarily set aside by other definitions of the situation. The constraints on a person's behaviour which spring from his ethnic identity thus tend to be absolute and, in complex poly-ethnic societies, quite comprehensive; and the component moral and social conventions are made further resistant to change by being joined in stereotyped clusters as characteristics of one single identity.

The associations of identities and value standards

The analysis of interactional and organizational features of interethnic relations has suffered from a lack of attention to problems of boundary maintenance. This is perhaps because anthropologists have reasoned from a misleading idea of the prototype inter-ethnic situation. One has tended to think in terms of different peoples, with different histories and cultures, coming together and accommodating themselves to each other, generally in a colonial setting. To visualize the basic requirements for the coexistence of ethnic diversity, I would suggest that we rather ask ourselves what is needed to make ethnic distinctions emerge in an area. The organizational requirements are clearly, first, a categorization of population sectors in exclusive and imperative status categories, and second, an acceptance of the principle that standards applied to one such category can be different from that applied to another. Though this alone does not explain why cultural

differences emerge, it does allow us to see how they persist. Each category can then be associated with a separate range of value standards. The greater the differences between these value orientations are, the more constraints on inter-ethnic interaction do they entail: the statuses and situations in the total social system involving behaviour which is discrepant with a person's value orientations must be avoided, since such behaviour on his part will be negatively sanctioned. Moreover, because identities are signalled as well as embraced, new forms of behaviour will tend to be dichotomized: one would expect the role constraints to operate in such a way that persons would be reluctant to act in new ways from a fear that such behaviour might be inappropriate for a person of their identity, and swift to classify forms of activity as associated with one or another cluster of ethnic characteristics. Just as dichotomizations of male versus female work seem to proliferate in some societies, so also the existence of basic ethnic categories would seem to be a factor encouraging the proliferation of cultural differentiae.

In such systems, the sanctions producing adherence to group-specific values are not only exercised by those who share the identity. Again, other imperative statuses afford a parallel: just as both sexes ridicule the male who is feminine, and all classes punish the proletarian who puts on airs, so also can members of all ethnic groups in a poly-ethnic society act to maintain dichotomies and differences. Where social identities are organized and allocated by such principles, there will thus be a tendency towards canalization and standardization of interaction and the emergence of boundaries which maintain and generate ethnic diversity within larger, encompassing social systems.

Interdependence of ethnic groups

The positive bond that connects several ethnic groups in an encompassing social system depends on the complementarity of the groups with respect to some of their characteristic cultural features. Such complementarity can give rise to interdependence or symbiosis, and constitutes the areas of articulation referred to above; while in the fields where there is no complementarity there can be no basis for organization on ethnic lines - there will either be no interaction, or interaction without reference to ethnic identity.

Social systems differ greatly in the extent to which ethnic identity, as an imperative status, constrains the person in the variety of statuses and roles he may assume. Where the distinguishing values connected

with ethnic identity are relevant only to a few kinds of activities, the social organization based on it will be similarly limited. Complex polyethnic systems, on the other hand, clearly entail the existence of extensively relevant value differences and multiple constraints on status combinations and social participation. In such systems, the boundary maintaining mechanisms must be highly effective, for the following reasons: (i) the complexity is based on the existence of important, complementary cultural differences; (ii) these differences must be generally standardized within the ethnic group - i.e. the status cluster, or social person, of every member of a group must be highly stereotyped - so that inter-ethnic interaction can be based on ethnic identities; and (iii) the cultural characteristics of each ethnic group must be stable, so that the complementary differences on which the systems rest can persist in the face of close inter-ethnic contact. Where these conditions obtain, ethnic groups can make stable and symbiotic adaptations to each other: other ethnic groups in the region become a part of the natural environment; the sectors of articulation provide areas that can be exploited, while the other sectors of activity of other groups are largely irrelevant from the point of view of members of any one group.

Ecologic perspective

Such interdependence's can partly be analysed from the point of view of cultural ecology, and the sectors of activity where other populations with other cultures articulate may be thought of as niches to which the group is adapted. This ecologic interdependence may take several different forms, for which one may construct a rough typology. Where two or more ethnic groups are in contact, their adaptations may entail the following forms:

(1) They may occupy clearly distinct niches in the natural environment and be in minimal competition for resources. In this case their interdependence will be limited despite co-residence in the area, and the articulation will tend to be mainly through trade, and perhaps in a ceremonial-ritual sector.

(2) They may monopolize separate territories, in which case they are in competition for resources and their articulation will involve politics along the border, and possibly other sectors.

(3) They may provide important goods and services for each other, i.e. occupy reciprocal and therefore different niches but in close interdependence. If they do not articulate very closely in the political

sector, this entails a classical symbiotic situation and a variety of possible fields of articulation. If they also compete and accommodate through differential monopolization of the means of production, this entails a close political and economic articulation, with open possibilities for other forms of interdependence as well.

These alternatives refer to stable situations. But very commonly, one will also find a fourth main form: where two or more interspersed groups are in fact in at least partial competition within the same niche. With time one would expect one such group to displace the other, or an accommodation involving an increasing complementarity and interdependence to develop.

From the anthropological literature one can doubtless think of type cases for most of these situations. However, if one looks carefully at most empirical cases, one will find fairly mixed situations obtaining, and only quite gross simplifications can reduce them to simple types. I have tried elsewhere (Barth 1964) to illustrate this for an area of Baluchistan, and expect that it is generally true that an ethnic group, on the different boundaries of its distribution and in its different accommodations, exhibits several of these forms in its relations to other groups.

Demographic perspective

These variables, however, only go part of the way in describing the adaptation of a group. While showing the qualitative, (and ideally quantitative) structure of the niches occupied by a group, one cannot ignore the problems of number and balance in its adaptation. Whenever a population is dependent on its exploitation of a niche in nature, this implies an upper limit on the size it may attain corresponding to the carrying capacity of that niche; and any stable adaptation entails a control on population size. If, on the other hand, two populations are ecologically interdependent, as two ethnic groups in a symbiotic relationship, this means that any variation in the size of one must have important effects on the other. In the analysis of any poly-ethnic system for which we assert any degree of time depth, we must therefore be able to explain the processes whereby the sizes of the interdependent ethnic groups are balanced. The demographic balances involved are thus quite complex, since a group's adaptation to a niche in nature is affected by its absolute size, while a group's adaptation to a niche constituted by another ethnic group is affected by its relative size.

The demographic problems in an analysis of ethnic inter-relations in a region thus centre on the forms of recruitment to ethnic groups and the question of how, if at all, their rates are sensitive to pressures on the different niches which each group exploits. These factors are highly critical for the stability of any poly-ethnic system, and it might look as if any population change would prove destructive. This does not necessarily seem to follow, as documented e.g. in the essay by Siverts (pp. 101 ff.), but in most situations the poly-ethnic systems we observe do entail quite complex processes of population movement and adjustment. It becomes clear that a number of factors other than human fertility and mortality affect the balance of numbers. From the point of view of any one territory, there are the factors of individual and group movements: emigration that relieves pressure, immigration that maintains one or several co-resident groups as outpost settlements of larger population reservoirs elsewhere. Migration and conquest play an intermittent role in redistributing populations and changing their relations. But the most interesting and often critical role is played by another set of processes that effect changes of the identity of individuals and groups. After all, the human material that is organized in an ethnic group is not immutable, and though the social mechanisms discussed so far tend to maintain dichotomies and boundaries, they do not imply 'stasis' for the human material they organize: boundaries may persist despite what may figuratively be called the 'osmosis' of personnel through them.

This perspective leads to an important clarification of the conditions for complex poly-ethnic systems. Though the emergence and persistence of such systems would seem to depend on a relatively high stability in the cultural features associated with ethnic groups - i.e. a high degree or rigidity in the interactional boundaries - they do not imply a similar rigidity in the patterns of recruitment or ascription to ethnic groups: on the contrary, the ethnic inter-relations that we observe frequently entail a variety of processes which effect changes in individual and group identity and modify the other demographic factors that obtain in the situation. Examples of stable and persisting ethnic boundaries that are crossed by a flow of personnel are clearly far more common than the ethnographic literature would lead us to believe. Different processes of such crossing are exemplified in these essays, and the conditions which cause them are shown to be various. We may look briefly at some of them..

Factors in identity change

The Yao described by Kandre (19676) are one of the many hill peoples on the southern fringe of the Chinese area. The Yao are organized for productive purposes in extended family households, aligned in clans and in villages. Household leadership is very clear, while community and region are autochthonously acephalous, and variously tied to poly-ethnic political domains. Identity and distinctions are expressed in complex ritual idioms, prominently involving ancestor worship. Yet this group shows the drastic incorporation rate of 10 % non-Yao becoming Yao in each generation (Kandre 1967a: 594). Change of membership takes place individually, mostly with children, where it involves purchase of the person by a Yao houseleader, adoption to kinship status, and full ritual assimilation. Occasionally, change of ethnic membership is also achieved by men through uxorilocal marriage; Chinese men are the acceptable parties to such arrangements.

The conditions for this form of assimilation are clearly twofold: first, the presence of cultural mechanisms to implement the incorporation, including ideas of obligations to ancestors, compensation by payment, etc., and secondly, the incentive of obvious advantages to the assimilating household and leader. These have to do with the role of households as productive units and agro-managerial techniques that imply an optimal size of 6-8 working persons, and the pattern of intro-community competition between household leaders in the field of wealth and influence.

Movements across the southern and northern boundaries of the Pathan area (cf. pp. 123 ff.) illustrate quite other forms and conditions. Southern Pathans become Baluch and not vice versa; this transformation can take place with individuals but more readily with whole households or small groups of households; it involves loss of position in the rigid genealogical and territorial segmentary system of Pathans and incorporation through clientage contract into the hierarchical, centralized system of the Baluch. Acceptance in the receiving group is conditional on the ambition and opportunism of Baluch political leaders. On the other hand, Pathans in the north have, after an analogous loss of position in their native system, settled in and often conquered new territories in Kohistan. The effect in due course has been a reclassification of the settling communities among the congeries of locally diverse Kohistani tribes and groups.

Perhaps the most striking case is that from Darfur provided by Haaland (pp. 58 ff.), which shows members of the hoe-agricultural Fur of the Sudan changing their identity to that of nomadic cattle Arabs. This process is conditional on a very specific economic circumstance: the absence of investment opportunities for capital in the village economy of the Fur in contrast to the possibilities among the nomads. Accumulated capital, and the opportunities for its management and increase, provide the incentive for Fur households to abandon their fields and villages and change to the life of the neighbouring Baggara, incidentally also joining one of the loose but nominally centralized Baggara political units if the change has been economically completely successful.

These processes that induce a flow of personnel across ethnic boundaries will of necessity affect the demographic balance between different ethnic groups. Whether they are such that they contribute to stability in this balance is an entirely different question. To do so, they would have to be sensitive to changes in the pressure on ecologic niches in a feed-back pattern. This does not regularly seem to be the case. The assimilation of non-Yao seems further to increase the rate of Yao growth and expansion at the expense of other groups, and can be recognized as one, albeit minor, factor furthering the progressive Sinization process whereby cultural and ethnic diversity has steadily been reduced over vast areas. The rate of assimilation of Pathans by Baluch tribes is no doubt sensitive to population pressure in Pathan areas, but simultaneously sustains an imbalance whereby Baluch tribes spread northward despite higher population pressures in the northern areas. Kohistani assimilation relieves population pressure in Pathan area while maintaining a geographically stable boundary. Nomadization of the Fur replenishes the Baggara, who are elsewhere becoming sedentarized. The rate, however, does not correlate with pressure on Fur lands - since nomadization is conditional on accumulated wealth, its rate probably decreases as Fur population pressure increases. The Fur case also demonstrates the inherent instability of some of these processes, and how limited changes can have drastic results: with the agricultural innovation of orchards over the last ten years, new investment opportunities are provided which will probably greatly reduce, or perhaps for a while even reverse, the nomadization process.

Thus, though the processes that induce change of identity are important to the understanding of most cases of ethnic interdependence, they need not be conducive to population stability. In general, however,

one can argue that whenever ethnic relations are stable over long periods, and particularly where the interdependence is close, one can expect to find an approximate demographic balance. The analysis of the different factors involved in this balance is an important part of the analysis of the ethnic inter-relations in the area.

The persistence of cultural boundaries

In the preceding discussion of ethnic boundary maintenance and interchange of personnel there is one very important problem that I have left aside. We have seen various examples of how individuals and small groups, because of specific economic and political circumstances in their former position and among the assimilating group, may change their locality, their subsistence pattern, their political allegiance and form, or their household membership. This still does not fully explain why such changes lead to categorical changes of ethnic identity, leaving the dichotomized ethnic groups unaffected (other than in numbers) by the interchange of personnel. In the case of adoption and incorporation of mostly immature and in any case isolated single individuals into pre-established households, as among the Yao, such complete cultural assimilation is understandable: here every new person becomes totally immersed in a Yao pattern of relationships and expectations. In the other examples, it is less clear why this total change of identity takes place. One cannot argue that it follows from a universally imputable rule of cultural integration, so that the practice of the politics of one group or the assumption of its pattern of ecologic adaptation in subsistence and economy, entails the adoption also of its other parts and forms. Indeed, the Pathan case (Ferdinand 1967) directly falsifies this argument, in that the boundaries of the Pathan ethnic group crosscuts ecologic and political units. Using self-identification as the critical criterion of ethnic identity, it should thus be perfectly possible for a small group of Pathans to assume the political obligations of membership in a Baluch tribe, or the agricultural and husbandry practices of Kohistanis, and yet continue to call themselves Pathans. By the same token one might expect nomadization among the Fur to lead to the emergence of a nomadic section of the Fur, similar in subsistence to the Baggara but different from them in other cultural features, and in ethnic label.

Quite clearly, this is precisely what has happened in many historical situations. In cases where it does not happen we see the organizing and canalizing effects of ethnic distinctions. To explore the factors

responsible for the difference, let us first look at the specific explanations for the changes of identity that have been advanced in the examples discussed above.

In the case of Pathan borderlands, influence and security in the segmentary and anarchic societies of this region derive from a man's previous actions, or rather from the respect that he obtains from these acts as judged by accepted standards of evaluation. The main fora for exhibiting Pathan virtues are the tribal council, and stages for the display of hospitality. But the villager in Kohistan has a standard of living where the hospitality he can provide can hardly compete with that of the conquered serfs of neighbouring Pathans, while the client of a Baluch leader cannot speak in any tribal council. To maintain Pathan identity in these situations, to declare oneself in the running as a competitor by Pathan value standards, is to condemn oneself in advance to utter failure in performance. By assuming Kohistani or Baluch identity, however, a man may, by the same performance, score quite high on the scales that then become relevant. The incentives to a change in identity are thus inherent in the change in circumstances.

Different circumstances obviously favour different performances. Since ethnic identity is associated with a culturally specific set of value standards, it follows that there are circumstances where such an identity can be moderately successfully realized, and limits beyond which such success is precluded. I will argue that ethnic identities will not be retained beyond these limits, because allegiance to basic value standards will not be sustained where one's own comparative performance is utterly inadequate .3 The two components in this relative measure of success are, first, the performance of others and, secondly, the alternatives open to oneself. I am not making an appeal to ecologic adaptation. Ecologic feasibility, and fitness in relation to the natural environment, matter only in so far as they set a limit in terms of sheer physical survival, which is very rarely approached by ethnic groups. What matters is how well the others, with whom one interacts and to whom one is compared, manage to perform, and what alternative identities and sets of standards are available to the individual.

Ethnic identity and tangible assets

The boundary-maintaining factors in the Fur are not immediately illuminated by this argument. Haaland (pp. 65 f.) discusses the evaluation of the nomad's life by Fur standards and finds the balance between advantages and disadvantages inconclusive. To ascertain the comparability

of this case, we need to look more generally at all the factors that affect the behaviour in question. The materials derive from grossly different ethnographic contexts and so a number of factors are varied simultaneously.

The individual's relation to productive resources stands out as the significant contrast between the two regions. In the Middle East, the means of production are conventionally held as private or corporate, defined and transferable property. A man can obtain them through a specific and restricted transaction, such as purchase or lease; even in conquest the rights that are obtained are standard, delimited rights. In Darfur, on the other hand, as in much of the Sudanic belt, the prevailing conventions are different. Land for cultivation is allocated, as needed, to members of a local community. The distinction between owner and cultivator, so important in the social structure of most Middle Eastern communities, cannot be made because ownership does not involve separable, absolute, and transferable rights. Access to the means of production in a Fur village is therefore conditional only on inclusion in the village community - i.e. on Fur ethnic identity. Similarly, grazing rights are not allocated and monopolized, even as between Baggara tribes. Though groups and tribes tend to use the same routes and areas every year, and may at times try in an ad hoc way to keep out others from an area they wish to use, they normally intermix and have no defined and absolute prerogatives. Access to grazing is thus an automatic aspect of practising husbandry, and entails being a Baggara.

The gross mechanisms of boundary maintenance in Darfur are thus quite simple: a man has access to the critical means of production by virtue of practising a certain subsistence; this entails a whole style of life, and all these characteristics are subsumed under the ethnic labels Fur and Baggara. In the Middle East, on the other hand, men can obtain control over means of production through a transaction that does not involve their other activities; ethnic identity is then not necessarily affected and this opens the way for diversification. Thus nomad, peasant, and city dweller can belong to the same ethnic group in the Middle East; where ethnic boundaries persist they depend on more subtle and specific mechanisms, mainly connected with the unfeasibility of certain status and role combinations.

Ethnic groups and stratification

Where one ethnic group has control of the means of production utilized by another group, a relationship of inequality and stratification obtains. Thus Fur and Baggara do not make up a stratified system, since they utilize different niches and have access to them independently of each other, whereas in some parts of the Pathan area one finds stratification based on the control of land, Pathans being landowners, and other groups cultivating as serfs. In more general terms, one may say that stratified poly-ethnic systems exist where groups are characterized by differential control of assets that are valued by all groups in the system. The cultures of the component ethnic groups in such systems are thus integrated in a special way: they share certain general value orientations and scales, on the basis of which they can arrive at judgements of hierarchy.

Obversely, a system of stratification does not entail the existence of ethnic groups. Leach (1967) argues convincingly that social classes are distinguished by different sub-cultures, indeed, that this is a more basic characteristic than their hierarchical ordering. However, in many systems of stratification we are not dealing with bounded strata at all: the stratification is based simply on the notion of scales and the recognition of an ego-centered level of 'people who are just like us' versus those more select and those more vulgar. In such systems, cultural differences, whatever they are, grade into each other, and nothing like a social organization of ethnic groups emerges: Secondly, most systems of stratification allow, or indeed entail, mobility based on evaluation by the scales that define the hierarchy. Thus a moderate failure in the `B' sector of the hierarchy makes you a 'C', etc. Ethnic groups are not open to this kind of penetration: the ascription of ethnic identity is based on other and more restrictive criteria. This is most clearly illustrated by Knutsson's analysis of the Galla in the context of Ethiopian society (pp. 86 ff.) - a social system where whole ethnic groups are stratified with respect to their positions of privilege and disability within the state. Yet the attainment of a governorship does not make an Amhara of a Galla, nor does estrangement as an outlaw entail loss of Galla identity.

From this perspective, the Indian caste system would appear to be a special case of a stratified poly-ethnic system. The boundaries of castes are defined by ethnic criteria: thus individual failures in performance lead to out-casting and not to down-casting. The process

whereby the hierarchical system incorporates new ethnic groups is demonstrated in the sanscritization of tribals: their acceptance of the critical value scales defining their position in the hierarchy of ritual purity and pollution is the only change of values that is necessary for a people to become an Indian caste. An analysis of the different processes of boundary maintenance involved in different inter-caste relations and in different regional variants of the caste system would, I believe, illuminate many features of this system.

The preceding discussion has brought out a somewhat anomalous general feature of ethnic identity as a status: ascription is not conditional on the control of any specific assets, but rests on criteria of origin and commitment; whereas performance in the status, the adequate acting out of the roles required to realize the identity, in many systems does require such assets. By contrast, in a bureaucratic office the incumbent is provided with those assets that are required for the performance of the role; while kinship positions, which are ascribed without reference to a person's assets, likewise are not conditional on performance - you remain a father even if you fail to feed your child.

Thus where ethnic groups are interrelated in a stratified system, this requires the presence of special processes that maintain differential control of assets. To schematize: a basic premise of ethnic group organization is that every A can act roles, 1, 2 and 3. If actors agree on this, the premise is self-fulfilling, unless acting in these roles requires assets that are distributed in a discrepant pattern. If these assets are obtained or lost in ways independent of being an A, and sought and avoided without reference to one's identity as an A, the premise will be falsified: some A's become unable to act in the expected roles. Most systems of stratification are maintained by the solution that in such cases, the person is no longer an A. In the case of ethnic identity, the solution on the contrary is the recognition that every A no longer can or will act in roles 1 and 2. The persistence of stratified poly-ethnic systems thus entails the presence of factors that generate and maintain a categorically different distribution of assets: state controls, as in some modern plural and racist systems; marked differences in evaluation that canalize the efforts of actors in different directions, as in systems with polluting occupations; or differences in culture that generate marked differences in political organization, economic organization, or individual skills.

The problem of variation

Despite such processes, however, the ethnic label subsumes a number of simultaneous characteristics which no doubt cluster statistically, but which are not absolutely interdependent and connected. Thus there will he variations between members, some showing many and some? showing few characteristics. Particularly where people change their, identity, this creates ambiguity since ethnic membership is at once a question of source of origin as well as of current identity. Indeed; Haaland was taken out to see 'Fur who live in nomad camps', and I have heard members of Baluch tribal sections explain that they are 'really Pathan'. What is then left of the boundary maintenance and the categorical dichotomy, when the actual distinctions are blurred in this way? Rather than despair at the failure of typological schematism, one can legitimately note that people do employ ethnic labels and that there are in many parts of the world most spectacular differences whereby forms of behaviour cluster so that whole actors tend to fall into such categories in terms of their objective behaviour. What is surprising is not the existence of some actors that fall between these categories, and of some regions in the world where whole persons do not tend to sort themselves out in this way, but the fact that variations tend to cluster at all. We can then be concerned not to perfect a typology, but to discover the processes that bring about such clustering.

An alternative mode of approach in anthropology has been to dichotomize the ethnographic material in terms of ideal versus actual or conceptual versus empirical, and then concentrate on the consistencies (the 'structure') of the ideal, conceptual part of the data, employing some vague notion of norms and individual deviance to account for the actual, statistical patterns. It is of course perfectly feasible to distinguish between a people's model of their social system and their aggregate pattern of pragmatic behaviour, and indeed quite necessary not to confuse the two. But the fertile problems in social anthropology are concerned with how the two are interconnected, and it does not follow that this is best elucidated by dichotomizing and confronting them as total systems. In these essays we have tried to build the analysis on a lower level of interconnection between status and behaviour. I would argue that people's categories are for acting, and are significantly affected by interaction rather than contemplation. In showing the connection between ethnic labels and the maintenance

of cultural diversity, I am therefore concerned primarily to show how, under varying circumstances, certain constellations of categorization and value orientation have a self-fulfilling character, how others will tend to be falsified by experience, while others again are incapable of consummation in interaction. Ethnic boundaries can emerge and persist only in the former situation, whereas they should dissolve or be absent in the latter situations. With such a feedback from people's experiences to the categories they employ, simple ethnic dichotomies can be retained, and their stereotyped behavioural differential reinforced, despite a considerable objective variation. This is so because actors struggle to maintain conventional definitions of the situation in social encounters through selective perception, tact, and sanctions, and because of difficulties in finding other, more adequate codifications of experience. Revision only takes place where the categorization is grossly inadequate - not merely because it is untrue in any objective sense, but because it is consistently unrewarding to act upon, within the domain where the actor makes it relevant. So the dichotomy of Fur villagers and Baggara nomads is maintained despite the patent presence of a nomadic camp of Fur in the neighbourhood; the fact that those nomads speak Fur and have kinship connections with villagers somewhere does not change the social situation in which the villager interacts with them - it simply makes the standard transactions of buying milk, allocating camp sites, or obtaining manure, which one would have with other Baggara, flow a bit more smoothly. But a dichotomy between Pathan landowners and non-Pathan labourers can no longer be maintained where non-Pathans obtain land and embarrass Pathans by refusing to respond with the respect which their imputed position as menials would have sanctioned.

Minorities, pariahs, and organizational characteristics of the periphery

In some social systems, ethnic groups co-reside though no major aspect of structure is based on ethnic inter-relations. These are generally referred to as societies with minorities, and the analysis of the minority situation involves a special variant of inter-ethnic relations. I think in most cases, such situations have come about as a result of external historical events; the cultural differentiae have not sprung from the local organizational context - rather, a pre-established cultural contrast is brought into conjunction with a pre-established social system, and is made relevant to life there in a diversity of ways.

An extreme form of minority position, illustrating some but not all

features of minorities, is that of pariah groups. These are groups actively rejected by the host population because of behaviour or characteristics positively condemned, though often useful in some specific, practical way. European pariah groups of recent centuries (executioners, dealers in horseflesh and -leather, collectors of nightsoil, gypsies, etc.) exemplify most features; as breakers of basic taboos they were rejected by the larger society. Their identity imposed a definition on social situations which gave very little scope for interaction with persons in the majority population, and simultaneously as an imperative status represented an inescapable disability that prevented them from assuming the normal statuses involved in other definitions of the situation of interaction. Despite these formidable barriers, such groups do not seem to have developed the internal complexity that would lead us to regard them as full-fledged ethnic groups; only the culturally foreign gypsies clearly constitute such a group.

The boundaries of pariah groups are most strongly maintained by the excluding host population, and they are often forced to make use of easily noticeable diacritica to advertise their identity (though since this identity is often the basis for a highly insecure livelihood, such over-communication may sometimes also serve the pariah individual's competitive interests). Where pariahs attempt to pass into the larger society, the culture of the host population is generally well known; thus the problem is reduced to a question of escaping the stigmata of disability by dissociating with the pariah community and faking another origin.

Many minority situations have a trace of this active rejection by the host population. But the general feature of all minority situations lies in the organization of activities and interaction: In the total social system, all sectors of activity are organized by statuses open to members of the majority group, while the status system of the minority has only relevance to relations within the minority and only to some sectors of activity, and does not provide a basis for action in other sectors, equally valued in the minority culture. There is thus a disparity between values and organizational facilities: prized goals are outside the field organized by the minority's culture and categories. Though such systems contain several ethnic groups, interaction between members of the different groups of this kind does not spring from the complementarity of ethnic identities; it takes place entirely within the framework of the dominant, majority group's statuses and institutions, where identity as a minority member gives no basis for action,

though it may in varying degrees represent a disability in assuming the operative statuses. Eidheim's paper gives a very clear analysis of this situation, as it obtains among Coast Lapps.

But in a different way, one may say that in such a poly-ethnic system, the contrastive cultural characteristics of the component groups are located in the non-articulating sectors of life. For the minority, these sectors constitute a 'backstage' where the characteristics that are stigmatic in terms of the dominant majority culture can covertly be made the objects of transaction.

The present-day minority situation of Lapps has been brought about by recent external circumstances. Formerly, the important context of interaction was the local situation, where two ethnic groups with sufficient knowledge of each other's culture maintained a relatively limited, partly symbiotic relationship based in their respective identities. With the fuller integration of Norwegian society, bringing the northern periphery into the nation-wide system, the rate of cultural change increased drastically. The population of Northern Norway became increasingly dependent on the institutional system of the larger society, and social life among Norwegians in Northern Norway was increasingly organized to pursue activities and obtain benefits within the wider system. This system has not, until very recently, taken ethnic identity into account in its structure, and until a decade ago there was practically no place in it where one could participate as a Lapp. Lapps as Norwegian citizens, on the other hand, are perfectly free to participate, though under the dual disability of peripheral location and inadequate command of Norwegian language and culture. This situation has elsewhere, in the inland regions of Finnmark, given scope for Lappish innovators with a political program based on the ideal of ethnic pluralism (cf. Eidheim 1967), but they have gained no following in the Coast Lapp area here discussed by Eidheim. For these Lapps, rather, the relevance of Lappish statuses and conventions decreases in sector after sector (cf. Eidheim 1966), while the relative inadequacy of performance in the widest system brings about frustrations and a crisis of identity.

Culture contact and change

This is a very widespread process under present conditions as dependence on the products and institutions of industrial societies spreads in all parts of the world. The important thing to recognize is that a drastic reduction of cultural differences between ethnic groups does

not correlate in any simple way with a reduction in the organizational relevance of ethnic identities, or a breakdown in boundary-maintaining processes. This is demonstrated in much of the case material.

We can best analyse the interconnection by looking at the agents of change: what strategies are open and attractive to them, and what are the organizational implications of different choices on their part? The agents in this case are the persons normally referred to somewhat ethno-centrically as the new elites: the persons in the less industrialized groups with greater contact and more dependence on the goods and organizations of industrialized societies. In their pursuit of participation in wider social systems to obtain new forms of value they can choose between the following basic strategies: (i) they may attempt to pass and become incorporated in the pre-established industrial society and cultural group; (ü) they may accept a `minority' status, accommodate to and seek to reduce their minority disabilities by encapsulating all cultural differentiae in sectors of non-articulation, while participating in the larger system of the industrialized group in the other sectors of activity; (iii) they may choose to emphasize ethnic identity, using it to develop new positions and patterns to organize activities in those sectors formerly not found in their society, or inadequately developed for the new purposes. If the cultural innovators are successful in the first strategy, their ethnic group will be denuded of its source of internal diversification and will probably remain as a culturally conservative, low-articulating ethnic group with low rank in the larger social sytem. A general acceptance of the second strategy will prevent the emergence of a clearly dichotomizing polyethnic organization, and - in view of the diversity of industrial society and consequent variation and multiplicity of fields of articulation probably lead to an eventual assimilation of the minority. The third strategy generates many of the interesting movements that can be observed today, from nativism to new states.

I am unable to review the variables that affect which basic strategy will be adopted, which concrete form it may take, and what its degree of success and cumulative implications may be. Such factors range from the number of ethnic groups in the system to features of the ecologic regime and details of the constituent cultures, and are illustrated in most of the concrete analyses of the following essays. It may be of interest to note some of the forms in which it is made organizationally relevant to new sectors in the current situation.

Firstly, the innovators may choose to emphasize one level of identity

among the several provided by the traditional social organization. Tribe, caste, language group, region or state all have features that make them a potentially adequate primary ethnic identity for group reference, and the outcome will depend on the readiness with which others can be led to embrace these identities, and the cold tactical facts. Thus, though tribalism may rally the broadest support in many African areas, the resultant groups seem unable to stand up against the sanctioning apparatus even of a relatively rudimentary state organization.

Secondly, the mode of organization of the ethnic group varies, as does the inter-ethnic articulation that is sought. The fact that contemporary forms are prominently political does not make them any less ethnic in character. Such political movements constitute new ways of making cultural differences organizationally relevant (Kleivan 1967), and new ways of articulating the dichotomized ethnic groups. The proliferation of ethnically based pressure groups, political parties, and visions of independent statehood, as well as the multitude of subpolitical advancement associations (Sommerfelt 1967) show the importance of these new forms. In other areas, cult-movements or mission-introduced sects are used to dichotomize and articulate groups in new ways. It is striking that these new patterns are so rarely concerned with the economic sector of activities, which is so major a factor in the culture contact situation, apart from the forms of state socialism adopted by some of the new nations. By contrast, the traditional complex poly-ethnic systems have been prominently based on articulation in this sector, through occupational differentiation and articulation at the market place in many regions of Asia and Middle America, or most elaborately, through agrarian production in South Asia. Today, contending ethnic groups not infrequently become differentiated with respect to educational level and attempt to control or monopolize educational facilities for this purpose (Sommerfelt l967), but this is not so much with a view to occupational differentiation as because of the obvious connection between bureaucratic competence and opportunities for political advancement. One may speculate that an articulation entailing complex differentiation of skills, and sanctioned by the constant dependence on livelihood, will have far greater strength and stability than one based on revocable political affiliation and sanctioned by the exercise of force and political fiat, and that these new forms of poly-ethnic systems are probably inherently more turbulent and unstable than the alder forms.

When political groups articulate their opposition in terms of ethnic criteria, the direction of cultural change is also affected. A political confrontation can only be implemented by making the groups similar and thereby comparable, and this will have effect on every new sector of activity which is made politically relevant. Opposed parties thus tend to become structurally similar, and differentiated only by a few clear diacritics. Where ethnic groups are organized in political confrontation in this way, the process of opposition will therefore lead to a reduction of the cultural differences between them.

For this reason, much of the activity of political innovators is concerned with the codification of idioms: the selection of signals for identity and the assertion of value for these cultural diacritics, and the suppression or denial of relevance for other differentiae. The issue as to which new cultural forms are compatible with the native ethnic identity is often hotly contended, but is generally settled in favour of syncretism for the reasons noted above. But a great amount of attention may be paid to the revival of select traditional culture traits, and to the establishment of historical traditions to justify and glorify the idioms and the identity.

The interconnection between the diacritics that arc chosen for emphasis, the boundaries that are defined, and the differentiating values that are espoused, constitute a fascinating field for study .6 Clearly, a number of factors are relevant. Idioms vary in their appropriateness for different kinds of units. They are unequally adequate for the innovator's purposes, both as means to mobilize support and as supports in the strategy of confrontation with other groups. Their stratificational implications both within and between groups are important: they entail different sources and distributions of influence within the group, and different claims to recognition from other groups through suppression or glorification of different forms of social stigmata. Clearly, there is no simple connection between the ideological basis of a movement and the idioms chosen; yet both have implications for subsequent boundary maintenance, and the course of further change.

Variations in the selling for ethnic relations

These modern variants for poly-ethnic organization emerge in a world of bureaucratic administration, developed communications, and progressive urbanization. Clearly, under radically different circumstances, the critical factors in the definition and maintenance of ethnic boundaries

would be different. In basing ourselves on limited and contemporary data, we are faced with difficulties in generalizing about ethnic processes, since major variables may be ignored because they are not exhibited in the cases at our disposal. There can be little doubt that social anthropologists have tended to regard the rather special situation of colonial peace and external administration, which has formed the backdrop of most of the influential monographs, as if this were representative of conditions at most times and places. This may have biased the interpretation both of pre-colonial systems and of contemporary, emergent forms. The attempt in these essays to cover regionally very diverse cases is not alone an adequate defence against such bias, and the issue needs to be faced directly.

Colonial regimes are quite extreme in the extent to which the administration and its rules are divorced from locally based social life. Under such a regime, individuals hold certain rights to protection uniformly through large population aggregates and regions, far beyond the reach of their own social relationships and institutions. This allows physical proximity and opportunities for contact between persons of different ethnic groups regardless of the absence of shared understandings between them, and thus clearly removes one of the constraints that normally operate on inter-ethnic relations. In such situations, interaction can develop and proliferate - indeed, only those forms of interaction that are directly inhibited by other factors will be absent and remain as sectors of non-articulation. Thus ethnic boundaries in such situations represent a positive organization of social relations around differentiated and complementary values, and cultural differences will tend to be reduced with time and approach the required minimum.

In most political regimes, however, where there is less security and people live under a greater threat of arbitrariness and violence outside their primary community, the insecurity itself acts as a constraint on inter-ethnic contacts. In this situation, many forms of interaction between members of different ethnic groups may fail to develop, even though a potential complementarity of interests obtains. Forms of interaction may be blocked because of a lack of trust or a lack of opportunities to consummate transactions. What is more, there are also internal sanctions in such communities which tend to enhance overt conformity within and cultural differences between communities. If a person is dependent for his security on the voluntary and spontaneous support of his own community, self-identification as a member

of this community needs to be explicitly expressed and confirmed; and any behaviour which is deviant from the standard may be interpreted as a weakening of the identity, and thereby of the bases of security. In such situations, fortuitous historical differences in culture between different communities will tend to perpetuate themselves without any positive organizational basis; many of the observable cultural differentiae may thus be of very limited relevance to the ethnic organization.

The processes whereby ethnic units maintain themselves are thus clearly affected, but not fundamentally changed, by the variable of regional security. This can also be shown by an inspection of the cases analysed in these essays, which represent a fair range from the colonial to the poly-centric, up to relatively anarchic situations. It is important, however, to recognize that this background variable may change very rapidly with time, and in the projection of long-range processes this is a serious difficulty. Thus in the Fur case, we observe a situation of externally maintained peace and very small-scale local political activity, and can form a picture of inter-ethnic processes and even rates in this setting. But we know that over the last few generations, the situation has varied from one of Baggara-Fur confrontation under an expansive Fur sultanate to a nearly total anarchy in Turkish and Mahdi times; and it is very difficult to estimate the effects of these variations on the processes of nomadization and assimilation, and arrive at any long-range projection of rates and trends.

Ethnic groups and cultural evolution

The perspective and analysis presented here have relevance to the theme of cultural evolution. No doubt human history is a story of the development of emergent forms, both of cultures and societies. The issue in anthropology has been how this history can best be depicted, and what kinds of analyses are adequate to discover general principles in the courses of change. Evolutionary analysis in the rigorous sense of the biological fields has based its method on the construction of phyletic lines. This method presumes the existence of units where the boundaries and the boundary-maintaining processes can be described, and thus where the continuity can be specified. Concretely, phyletic lines are meaningful because specific boundaries prevent the interchange of genetic material; and so one can insist that the reproductive isolate is the unit, and that it has maintained an identity undisturbed by the changes in the morphological characteristics of the species.

Ethnicity in Complex Societies: Archaeological Perspectives

Geoff Emberling[1]

It is often difficult to identify ethnic groups in the archaeological record, yet archaeology has much to contribute to understanding the long-term social and political dynamics of ethnicity. This review considers recent anthropological perspectives on ethnic groups and their boundaries, emphasizing the role of state formation in their creation and maintenance. It then reviews recent archaeological studies of ethnicity in complex societies and discusses current questions facing archaeological research on these topics.

KEY WORDS: archaeology; ethnicity; ethnogenesis; states.

> "Ethnicity" can mean different things to different people, and is of questionable utility as a theoretical construct when viewed from the perspective of prehistory . . . [W]hile "ethnic" attributions, like "culture areas," may have some descriptive utility, their explanatory potential remains to be established.
>
> Kramer (1997, p. 95)

INTRODUCTION

The study of ethnicity over the last three decades marks a paradigm shift in anthropology: from viewing culture as a whole to focusing on subgroups of people (Wolf, 1994). Work on the subject has even been dated B.B. (before Barth) and A.B. (after Barth), according to its relationship to the founding work of the new paradigm (Barth, 1969b; Despres, 1975, p. 189). Ethnicity has been a topic of renewed interest since then, and recently elements of consensus over definitions and delineations of ethnic processes

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have begun to emerge. With some exceptions, anthropological treatments of ethnicity increasingly have the appearance of "normal science" (Kuhn, 1970), articulating the theory and exploring its ramifications.

In spite of great archaeological interest in ethnicity earlier this century, archaeologists have only recently begun to consider ethnicity within Barth's paradigm (Auger et al., 1987; Shennan, 1989b). Such delayed reactions are not uncommon in communication between the subfields, as continued archaeological interest in cultural evolution shows, but there are other reasons for the delay. Studies by Kramer (1977) and others suggested, quite rightly, that inferring ethnic difference from archaeological evidence was difficult. In addition, archaeologists have been wary of studying ethnicity because of the ends to which such studies have been put. Kossinna's work in identifying "Germans" in prehistory is only one well-known example (Arnold, 1990, 1995; Kohl and Fawcett, 1995; Trigger, 1989, pp. 163ff.; Veit, 1989). As Rowlands (1994, p. 132) points out, however, archaeological studies of ethnicity also can assist in providing identities for local groups, and so politically empower them; identifying ethnic groups in archaeological remains can have positive consequences. The work of social anthropologists on ethnicity gives archaeologists an opportunity to understand more clearly and accurately the dynamics of past societies.

Yet ethnicity is not important only as the prehistory of modern groups; it was an important structuring principle in many societies in the past (Brumfiel, 1994). Understanding ethnicity, then, is a necessary precondition to adequate understanding of the past, in spite of Kramer's doubts. Moreover, archaeologists have much to contribute to our understanding of ethnicity. In particular, processes of ethnogenesis—that is, the creation of ethnicity—and the long-term persistence and disappearance of ethnic groups often are accessible using archaeological data.

This review emphasizes the potential for archaeological study of ethnicity to contribute to questions of ethnic dynamics. I begin by discussing the background of anthropological approaches to group identities leading up to the work of Barth, summarizing common usage of "ethnicity" and related terms, and outlining their semantic range while comparing ethnicity to other important group identities. I then describe dynamics associated with ethnicity in early states and the importance of ethnic identity in these societies. Finally, I consider steps involved in identifying ethnic groups in the archaeological record. There is limited discussion of ethnicity in modern nation-states, where processes of ethnic differentiation are dissimilar not only in scale (migration and colonialism), but also in kind (the ubiquitous importance of racial distinctions).

ANTHROPOLOGICAL APPROACHES TO SOCIAL IDENTITIES

One early anthropological approach to group identity was to identify "culture areas": complexes of cultural traits common to inhabitants of a particular environmental zone (Kroeber, 1939). These cultural complexes were considered to be coherent, yet boundaries between them could be difficult to identify as they graded from one to another. The culture area was a classification of a culture from the outside, rather than an analysis of the symbols and meanings that divide one culture or group from another. It has not proven useful in analyzing ethnicity.

A second approach to group identity focused on defining boundaries of "tribes". The boundaries of these groups proved difficult to establish with certainty. Efforts to define and name them often were inextricably entangled with the needs of colonial administrators, and many so-called boundaries were imposed by colonial bureaucracy. Evans-Pritchard (1940, pp. 3–4), for example, studied groups he named the Nuer and the Dinka, citing use of these names for over a century as his basis for establishing such social units. Southall (1976; cf. Kelly, 1985, pp. 86ff.), however, later suggested that these groups were not clearly separable based on language or other distinctive cultural features and that even the names Evans-Pritchard chose were not their own.

The essential problem was that the trait distributions anthropologists used for defining boundaries and distinguishing groups did not coincide. The distribution of different languages, for example, often had boundaries where there were none in political systems, and political boundaries rarely corresponded to significant differences in material culture (e.g., Leach, 1954, p. 55; also Moore and Romney, 1994; Roberts *et al.*, 1995; Welsch and Terrell, 1994; Welsch *et al.*, 1992). In addition, the "boundaries" between them were often ambiguous (Moerman, 1965, 1968). It was therefore difficult to draw firm boundaries using such objective characteristics, as Naroll's (1964, 1968) unsuccessful efforts showed.

Even tribal names did not clearly mark group boundaries; "[F]ar from being a reliable 'natural' guide to the existence and composition of tribal groups, names point the way to confusion or worse" (Fried, 1975, p. 38). Colonial bureaucracies both divided culturally similar groups into different tribes, and gathered unlike groups into single tribes. Tribal names given by outsiders, then, do not often reflect shared self-identification by those so labeled. In fact, the widespread use of local words meaning "people" or "human beings" as group names (e.g., Inuit) seems not to suggest that group members considered outsiders to be subhuman, but rather reflects an absence of strong tribal boundaries. Having no overarching group iden-

Table I. Selected Archaeological Studies of Ethnicity in Different Areas

Valley of Mexico: Brumfiel, 1994; Brumfiel *et al.*, 1994; Pollard, 1994; Santley *et al.*, 1987; Spence, 1992; van Zantwijk, 1973

Maya: Adams, 1973; Ashmore *et al.*, 1987; Creamer, 1987; Fox and Joyce, 1991; Gerstle, 1987; Graham, 1973; Kepecs *et al.*, 1994; Leventhal *et al.*, 1987; Miller, 1986; Robles Castellanos and Andrews, 1986; Sabloff, 1973; Sanders and Michels, 1977; Schortman and Nakamura, 1991; Stuart, 1993; Wonderley, 1991; Wren and Schmidt, 1991

Oaxaca: Feinman *et al.*, 1989; Flannery and Marcus, 1983; Marcus, 1983; Marcus and Flannery, 1983; Paddock, 1983a, b; Spence, 1992

Peru: Aldenderfer and Stanish, 1993; Athens, 1992; Bawden, 1993; Conrad, 1993; Goldstein, 1993; Grosboll, 1987; Lyons, 1987; Murra, 1972, 1982; Osborn, 1989; Patterson, 1987, 1991; Pease, 1982; Powers, 1995; Rodman, 1992; Stanish *et al.*, 1993; Topic, 1993; Van Buren, 1993, 1996; Van Buren *et al.*, 1993; Wise, 1993

China: Gao and Lee, 1993; Lattimore, 1940; Ningsheng, 1989

Indus Valley: Kenoyer, 1991; Shaffer and Lichtenstein, 1996

Near East: Bernbeck, 1995; Dever, 1993; Emberling, 1995a, b; Esse, 1992; Henrickson, 1984; Hesse, 1990, 1995; Hrouda, 1989; Kamp and Yoffee, 1980; Kramer, 1977; Nissen, 1986; Özgüç, 1963; Parayre, 1986; Stein, 1993; Stein *et al.*, 1996; Yoffee, 1993a, b

Egypt: Baines, 1992; Engelbach, 1943; Fischer, 1963; Leahy, 1995; Snowden, 1993

Europe: Arnold, 1995; Bálint, 1989; Bartel, 1989; Binford, 1973; Binford and Binford, 1966; Bordes, 1961, 1973; Fisher, 1995; Geary, 1983; Kobyliński, 1989; Larsson, 1989; Martens, 1989; O'Shea, 1995; Pálóczi-Horváth, 1989; Voss, 1987

Africa: DeCorse, 1989; Eluyemi, 1989; Håland, 1977; Mack, 1982; Phillipson, 1979

tity, when asked to which group they belonged, tribal people around the world seem to have responded, "We are people" (Southall, 1976, p. 487).

Physical variation or race, one of the criteria often used to define tribal boundaries, also proved to be an unreliable guide to social boundaries. Anthropologists have questioned the utility of the race concept, using arguments similar to those employed against the reality of tribal divisions (e.g., Boas, 1931; Brace, 1964, 1982; Brace and Hunt, 1990; Livingstone, 1962; cf. Van den Berghe, 1981, pp. 2ff.). As cultural traits have continuous distributions that did not usually coincide, so do physical traits formerly used to distinguish races.

Barth solved these methodological problems largely by showing that not all features were equally important in defining the boundaries of a group. He began by summarizing previous understandings of ethnicity:

The term ethnic group is generally understood in anthropological literature...to designate a population which:
1. is largely biologically self-perpetuating
2. shares fundamental cultural values, realized in overt unity in cultural forms
3. makes up a field of communication and interaction
4. has a membership which identifies itself, and is identified by others, as constituting a category distinguishable from other categories of the same order (Barth, 1969, pp. 10-11).

Barth rejected the equation of race, culture, and language entailed in these designations, thereby following the position of Leach and Moerman

and, ultimately, of Boas. The previous view had assumed that the boundaries of the first three criteria would coincide. The first point defines a biological population, also sometimes called a race; the second defines a culture; and the third a linguistic group. It had become clear, however, that these traits were not necessarily isomorphic.

Instead, Barth focused on the fourth point: "Ethnic groups are categories of ascription and identification by the actors themselves" (1969, p. 10). This reduced definition (1) severed the necessary links among race, culture, language, and ethnicity; (2) implied that ethnic identity was part of a dynamic social process; and (3) introduced the possibility of change in actors' group membership. More specifically, Barth shifted the emphasis of study of ethnic groups to "the ethnic boundary that defines the group, not the cultural stuff that it encloses" (1969, p. 15); he considered the formation and maintenance processes of ethnic boundaries, instead of focusing solely on the cultural traits enclosed by those boundaries.

This focus on subjective meanings rather than on objective traits was extremely useful in identifying group membership. Anthropologists could no longer simply read "ethnic group" from the distribution of languages or other cultural traits across a landscape. Rather, it became critical to identify those specific features that were subjectively significant: "We can assume no simple one-to-one relationship between ethnic units and cultural similarities and differences. The features that are taken into account are not the sum of 'objective' differences but only those which the actors themselves regard as significant" (Barth, 1969, p. 14). Thus anthropologists could no longer assume that a given feature, such as language, would be a meaningful distinction between groups. Rather, they would have to identify the specific features or symbols that differentiated ethnic groups in each instance.

Barth's use of the term "boundary" was in some ways unfortunate; a more appropriate term might have been "difference." A boundary suggests a sharp separation between members of one group and those of another. In a sense this is exactly what ethnicity does: provides a clear separation between people, even though the characteristics that define this boundary are unclear. In other ways, however, the term is misleading. First, it may suggest that people in a single ethnic group are completely separate from members of other ethnic groups. Ethnic identity, however, is one of many social identities a single person may have; membership in status or occupational groups, for example, may connect members of different ethnic groups. Second, a boundary has a physical sense that is sometimes inappropriate. The metaphor leads us to use other physical terms: ethnic groups construct and maintain boundaries, boundaries are permeable (or not), and boundaries enclose cultural traits. These associations tend to make us view

ethnicity as absolute, rather than based on perception of difference. For these reasons, "difference" may be a more appropriate term than boundary (Bateson, 1972; Lotman, 1990).

Ethnicity

Barth's work had established the importance of subjectively recognized boundaries to social group identification, but the processes of ascription by outsiders and identification by group members apply to most kinds of social groups. So we must consider what features are distinctive of ethnic groups.

There is a variety of possible ways to approach a term as ambiguous and susceptible to such varied uses as "ethnicity." One is to avoid discussing the term. After all, everyone uses the term, so we must all know generally what we mean by it. This strategy has been surprisingly common; Isajiw (1974) found two decades ago that only 13 of the 65 anthropological and sociological studies he examined included an explicit definition of ethnicity. Recent archaeological treatments have not fared much better. This does not solve so much as it avoids the issue; it leaves the term entirely implicit.

A related strategy is to create a new term, attempting in so doing to avoid the associations of familiar terms. A. Smith (1986), for example, suggests that we use the French term "ethnie" instead of ethnic group. But such neologisms quickly take on the associations of the words they are designed to replace. If we are going to use the term "ethnicity" to refer to social groups in the past, we must be prepared to accept its meanings in the present.

Another approach is to attempt a comprehensive definition of what the phenomenon really is, or what the term really means. If the meaning of the term were so obvious, however, there would not be such divergent views about it: reasonable people may still differ on the appropriate definition. It is difficult, therefore, to propose such a definition, given the variation in ethnicity in different societies, and the range of perspectives different observers bring to bear on the topic. No definition can encompass both the variation in its subject and variations in approaches.

One could also choose to define ethnicity in a particular way according to the theoretical or methodological needs of a particular study, in order to draw conclusions based on the phenomenon so defined. This approach has its advantages, to be sure. It acknowledges the relativity of the observer's position and defines the term in a way useful to the analysis. However, choosing to define our terms in a particular way lends itself to the suspicion that we constructed the definition post hoc simply to make a par-

ticular argument true. Such a definition has an arbitrary, nonnatural character to it. This approach shares with the previous one the general problems with definition (see Wittgenstein, 1958). To define a term is to limit it, to draw a sharp boundary where the set of such phenomena is fuzzy. A definition is more rigid and absolute than the membership of terms in it. This rigidity makes definitions open to contradiction by counterexample. Finally, although proposing an arbitrary definition in this way makes our use of the term explicit, it leaves our reasons for choosing this particular definition implicit.

A successful description of ethnicity must include the following points. First, we must describe the term specifically enough to be able to use it, and to distinguish it from closely related terms. Second, given the ambiguity of the term, we should avoid defining it rigidly. Third, we ought to use the term in a nonartificial way. When we use a word, regardless of how we define it, the word evokes associations and connotations we heard in learning to use it. To the degree that we use it naturally, it seems plausible and appropriate. Finally, we should make our description and use of the term, and our motivations for so describing it, as explicit as possible. So before discussing the characteristics of ethnic groups, and their importance to political and economic processes in ancient states, I clarify how I use the term.

My solution to this problem attempts to avoid these difficulties by making explicit what is implicit in other approaches. I survey my sense of ordinary use of the term "ethnicity," the associations this usage evokes, and the shared characteristics of the phenomenon in these associations and examples. The resulting description does not have the rigidity of a definition, and attempts to avoid specialized usage and jargon. The process of arriving at this description, however, makes my preconceptions about the term as clear as possible and specifies my reasons for using this description.

Terminology

The term "ethnic" has had a relatively consistent range of meanings since its origins. "Ethnic" derives from Greek *ethnos*, a nation or a race, which relates in turn to *ethos*, "character and spirit of a people" (Partridge, 1983), and *ethos*, custom [*Oxford English Dictionary (OED)*, 1989; R. Williams, 1983]. *Ethnos* also referred to tribe, occupational group, gender, and religious group. Its basic sense is "a number of people or animals living together and acting together," especially referring to their cultural similarity (A. Smith, 1986, p. 21). Early English usage (beginning in the 14th century) referred to non-Christian, non-Jewish nations or people as "ethnic." There

is a possible connection or confusion from this sense of the term, through "hethnic" and "heathenic" to heathen (*OED*, 1989). The term has more recently come to mean a racial or cultural (minority) group existing within a larger social system.

The term "ethnicity" comes from Greek *ethnikos*, the adjectival form of *ethnos*. Before the mid-20th century, it meant "heathendom" and was rarely used. Its meaning of ethnic character is modern, first appearing in print in 1941 [in a book by W. Lloyd Warner (Sollors, 1989, p. xiii)]. This does not suggest, *contra* Glazer and Moynihan (1975, p. 2) and Sollors (1989, p. xiv), that ethnicity itself is a recent phenomenon; indeed ancient ethnic groups are common. Rather, the new use of the term marks the revival of a social phenomenon that had, until recently, been reduced in importance by the strong development of nation and class identities in the West since the Renaissance, and by trends in sociological work to diminish the importance of ethnic groups in modern nation-states (Brass, 1985; R. Cohen, 1978; A. Smith, 1986).

If "ethnic" refers to group-level phenomena, then "ethnic identity" means an individual's ethnic group membership, and "ethnic identification" is the process of identifying oneself or another with such a group. We use "ethnicity" so widely because it refers both to ethnic groups and to their individual members. It has become the most general term for ethnic phenomena.

I begin a fuller description of these terms with the observation that members of an ethnic group usually see themselves as having a common ancestry, as sharing common descent (Keyes, 1976). Such genealogies are culturally constructed, some more recently and arbitrarily than others. For example, the relatively recent emergence of Native American identity—as distinct from previous individual tribal identities—has involved emphasizing such common ancestry (Roosens, 1989). Jewish identity similarly includes a common genealogy, which developed somewhat less recently but is no less a cultural construction. This self-ascription is perhaps the most fundamental characteristic of ethnicity.

It should be emphasized that a constructed common ancestry is quite different from genetic relatedness. The claim that Native Americans form a single ethnic group does not suggest that Native Americans as a group are a closed biological population. Although they may to a greater or lesser extent be based on notions of physical relatedness, ethnicity and kinship are social facts, not simply biological facts.

The notion of common ancestry implies, on the one hand, that members of an ethnic group see themselves as related by kinship or tend to construct such relations. Ethnicity extends the kinship idiom to include groups larger than the family, clan, or lineage. Members of these smaller

kin groups would rarely belong to separate ethnic groups. In extending the idiom, some specificity is lost: ethnic groups do not trace descent from a single ancestor as lineages and clans do. To the extent that ethnicity is reckoned according to biological relationship, members of an ethnic group will be physically similar. In any case, states or surrounding groups may culturally stereotype the physical appearance of ethnic group members. This is not to say, however, that such common physical traits necessarily differentiate a particular ethnic group from another.

The notion of common ancestry suggests, on the other hand, a collective memory of a former unity, of a time when an ethnic group was geographically unified (Weber, 1922, pp. 389–390). Often in this past time, the group was autonomous or held political control. Ethnic groups without such histories frequently construct them. Afro-American ethnicity, for example, has at times depended on a sense of common origin in Africa, in spite of the historical diversity of societies and ethnicities there.

A frequent, but not universal, concomitant of this memory of past togetherness is the hope of a political reunification in the future. Two examples are Jewish and Palestinian movements for statehood.

Remembrance of the past in many cases leads to sorrow or bitterness over the present, with good reason. Ethnic groups often exist in hierarchical relationships—whether dominant or subordinate—to other groups or to a state (Comaroff, 1987; Shibutani and Kwan, 1965), although stratification is not an essential feature of relations between ethnic groups (Horowitz, 1985, pp. 21ff.; van Zantwijk, 1973). Examples of this phenomenon are numerous, but mention of Native American, African-American, and Jewish experience should suffice.

Because ethnicity is a kin-based identity larger than the family or lineage, ethnic groups must include members of more than one extended family, clan, or lineage. This is a structural necessity—these smaller units would otherwise provide the focus of identification. It is also a minimum limitation on size, although less directly. As the most inclusive of kinship identities, ethnicity encompasses all smaller such identities, including lineage or family membership.

Members of an ethnic group usually—but not always—speak a mutually intelligible language. Some large and long-lasting ethnic groups, such as Arabs and Jews, have diverged in their vernacular language, particularly in the modern era. Biblical Hebrew and classical Arabic—their languages of scripture—have maintained a sense of unity and the potential for communication within the group. It is difficult, on the other hand, to imagine either of these groups persisting in the same form without these languages. The formation of a Native American identity encompassing formerly distinct tribal identities also has depended upon use of English as a common

language. The common language of an ethnic group may differ from the
languages of surrounding groups. Yet even in multilingual societies, lan-
guage may not differentiate ethnic groups (Karpat, 1985).

Finally, ethnic groups exist in relation to some larger sociopolitical en-
tity, usually a state. Relationships between ethnic groups and states vary
widely. Many ethnic groups exist entirely within a state: "Afro-American,"
"Hispanic," and "Asian" exist as categories only within the context of the
United States: there is no ethnic category "Asian" in East Asia. Such states
are "plural societies" (Furnivall, 1939; M. Smith, 1969). Other ethnic
groups, such as the Arabs, form the elite of many states. Some, like the
Kurds, live within many states but are rulers of none. Finally, ethnic groups
may exist only in contact with states, but not within them. This last situation
pertains less to the modern world, when states have partitioned most of
the world's territory among themselves, but was common in the ancient
world. As these examples suggest, ethnic groups are generally longer-lived
than states themselves (Marcus, 1992; Spicer, 1971; Yoffee, 1993b).

While ethnicity is fundamentally an extension of kinship, the state is
essentially a political institution. Ethnicity frequently does have political
effects, and states may inspire notions of relatedness among their inhabi-
tants, but the basis for these forms of organization differs. Membership in
states is not defined by kinship, but by control from the state itself. Such
control may be based on other symbols that override kinship. To the extent
that an ethnic group is coterminous with a state, members of the state may
tend to identify with the state rather than the ethnic group. In this case
we refer to a "nation" or "nation-state." Ethnic groups and states are rarely
isomorphic, however.

To summarize, then, an ethnic group is most essentially a group whose
members view themselves as having common ancestry, therefore as being
kin. As kin units larger than any others, they must include members of
more than one lineage or extended family. Members of an ethnic group
usually possess some common language. Ethnic groups often are unified
by constructions of their past, by perception of injustice in the past or in
the present, and often by hopes of a future reunification. Finally, ethnic
groups are not states but exist in some relationship to them.

Other Social Identities

Like many social identities, a person's ethnic identity comes both from
ascription by outsiders and self-identification by group members (Barth,
1969). Nobody can meaningfully claim ethnic group membership without
some agreement from those outside the group and those inside. Because

of the potential for disagreement, ethnic identity can be a source of nego-
tiation or struggle between an individual, the ethnic group, and the state.

Ethnicity differs from other types of group identity in states. As an
identity based on kinship it differs from political, national, regional, status,
class, and professional identities. Although kinship may be important within
each of these categories, or within individual regions, statuses, classes, or
professions, it is not the organizing principle of the category as a whole.
These categories tend to be based on common interest, rather than kinship
(A. Cohen, 1969).

There is little evidence for any notion of state identity in premodern
societies. While rulers and bureaucrats may have used terms of citizenship
to label their subjects, the subjects did not use such designations them-
selves.

More recently, nation-states have attempted to use the principles of
ethnicity to inculcate such notions of loyalty to the state in their citizens.
Although usage of the term "nation" varies widely, it is useful to reserve
it for societies in which the boundaries of an ethnic group closely match
the political boundaries of a state. As such, nationality is in many ways
similar to ethnicity, being based on a common history and notions of re-
latedness. It differs in being closely linked to a specific polity.

Regional identity may approximate ethnicity in situations of little
population movement, although its basis in kinship is less certain. In such
situations, regional identity may become significant in structuring interac-
tion between regions (Bourdieu, 1991; Graves, 1994; Kraus, 1970). In the
more common situation of significant population movement within and be-
tween regions, regional identity seems likely to be weak. The importance
of regional identity in early civilizations is not clear, however.

Status and class, in contrast to ethnicity, are fundamentally hierarchi-
cal. Status, in the Weberian sense, is a principle based on prestige that
ranks members of a society according to culturally specific principles, which
may include wealth, education, or distinctive beliefs or practices (Weber,
1922, pp. 302ff.). A class, in the Marxian sense, is a group with a single
relationship to the means of production that is economically connected to
"higher" and "lower" groups. Status and class may crosscut ethnicity in
many societies: members of a particular ethnic group may be high and low
status, upper and lower class, and members of a given status or class may
belong to more than one ethnic group. Although ethnic groups within a
society may be ranked, this is not a defining characteristic of ethnicity.

A specialized occupation may form the basis for ethnic identity, al-
though for the most part such groups are not based on common ancestry
and do not create or maintain any memory of past unity. Castes in South
Asia are perhaps the most significant exception; they have occupational

specialties, and kinship determines their membership. A further exception
is pastoral nomadism, a specialized herding occupation whose development
relates to the rise of the state as much as that of ethnicity (Barth, 1961;
Chang and Koster, 1986; Lees and Bates, 1974; Zarins, 1990). Groups of
itinerant craft specialists also have assumed ethnic identity, both in the past
and in the present (Postgate, 1987, pp. 268–269).

Finally, we must address the "problem of tribe" (Caton, 1990; Fried,
1975; Helm, 1968; Tapper, 1990; Whitehead, 1992; Zagarell, 1995). While
the terms "ethnic group" and "tribe" overlap, they are not the same. One
use of the term "tribe" refers to a nonhierarchical political system between
"bands" and "chiefdoms" on a trajectory of political evolution. A different
usage applies to socially bounded cultural groups existing within states or
on their peripheries. The disparity between these two uses—one being a
group defined by political characteristics, the other by cultural differences—
makes "tribe" a highly ambiguous term. Ethnicity does not specify a par-
ticular form of political organization, so we could not use it to describe a
group of prestate societies (Kamp and Yoffee, 1980, pp. 88–89). On the
other hand, the second usage of "tribe"—bounded cultural groups—
matches quite closely the general use of "ethnic group." Because of this
overlap, it would perhaps be best to reserve "tribe" for the prestate form
of political organization and to use "ethnic group" for cultural groups that
form part of complex societies.

Ethnic Dynamics: Strategies of Identity

Ethnicity is best seen as a process of identification and differentiation,
rather than as an inherent attribute of individuals or groups. Much has
been made in this literature about differing reasons for the persistence of
this process (Bentley, 1987). The "primordialists" (primarily Geertz, 1963)
think that ethnic groups maintain their identities because of emotional at-
tachment to the symbols of the group. The "instrumentalists," on the other
hand, suggest that ethnic groups maintain their ethnicity for political or
economic gain. These positions are overdrawn, and there have been a num-
ber of attempts to reconcile them (Bentley, 1987; Nagata, 1974). As Nagata
points out, "primordial" cultural traditions can change in response to al-
tered social and political conditions.

Barth's approach had implied that the ethnic identity of individuals is
not fixed but can be altered by manipulation of the appropriate symbols.
"Situational ethnicity," as this process has come to be called, was investi-
gated further by Nagata (1974), among others (Okamura, 1981). In her
study of Malaysia, a society in which there is no single dominant ethnic

group, Nagata found that individual ethnic identity may vacillate for expediency and status mobility. The situational nature of ethnicity provides a further reason for anthropologists' difficulties in using trait lists to locate ethnic groups: people may display ethnic identity differentially according to political and social context.

Ethnicity varies in a hierarchical way according to the situation. Iraqis in the United States may identify themselves as Arab, while in Iraq they may be *bedu*, since "Arab" is not a distinguishing category. Among *bedu*—or other tribal, lineage, or clan identities—they may belong to one subgroup or another. Each of these identities is ethnic and, within the appropriate situation, is accurate and likely to form a basis of social action. In a sense, then, ethnicity fundamentally depends on context.

In most societies, there are limitations on this situational manipulation of ethnic identity. Status and power differences between ethnic groups can limit individuals' efforts to claim membership in a more prestigious or more powerful group (Okamura, 1981). Lockwood (1981) suggests further that the fluidity of ethnic identity depends in part on the nature of the symbols used to differentiate groups. When language differences create social groupings, group membership is relatively fluid; it is simple in multilingual societies for individuals to switch languages. Lockwood suggests that groups marked by religious differences may be less permeable; in multilingual areas, people are likely to speak more than one language, but a religious affiliation is likely to be exclusive of all others. Finally, ethnic groups marked by (culturally defined) physical characteristics would be the least flexible of all. In addition, we may tend to overestimate the potential for manipulation in past societies, which would not have been as anonymous and bureaucratic as our own. As Van den Berghe (1981, p. 27, original italics) puts it, "Ethnicity can be *manipulated* but not *manufactured*."

It is worth noting here that definition of ethnic groups by physical, racial characteristics is relatively rare throughout history; its prevalence in the West today depends on recent large-scale migrations and forced displacements of groups of people, which were then juxtaposed to groups with markedly different physical characteristics (e.g., Van den Berghe, 1981, p. 32).

Ethnogenesis

Explanations for the development of ethnicity and identifications of the first ethnic groups diverge widely. Van den Berghe (1981) puts its origin among independent hunter-gatherer bands. Lockwood (1981), Brass (1985), A. Smith (1986), and many others suggest that ethnic groups arose with

the state. Finally, Gellner (1983) and Nash (1987) have argued that ethnicity is a product of capitalism. The association between the earliest ethnicity and state formation seems correct. There remain doubts about the boundedness and identities of prestate societies, and few studies have shown social identities very similar to ethnicity to exist without states. On the other hand, there are numerous examples of ethnic groups matching the description given above that have developed in relationship with early states (Shennan, 1989, p. 15; e.g., Michalowski, 1995). To some extent, however, this is an empirical question: the nature of prestate social boundaries is not well understood.

There are several types of ethnogenetic processes associated with state formation and state control. Early states frequently develop within a network of culturally similar polities, a grouping that may be called a "civilization" (Renfrew, 1986; Yoffee, 1993a). Civilizations themselves are not self-identifying groups; their development operates under different principles.

A new ethnic identity often develops when a state conquers or otherwise encompasses previously independent groups. These may be relatively bounded, well-defined groups such as other states, or they may be less-bounded, relatively undifferentiated agricultural communities or hunter-gatherers. The newly formed ethnic groups in these situations thus arise on the margins of expanding states. States very often attempt to dramatically increase the rigidity of cultural differences between these groups, as a strategy of control (Feinman *et al.*, 1996, pp. 68–71). This is the case for ancient empires like the Inca or Aztec (Brumfiel, 1994; Patterson, 1991), for more recent states and empires in Africa (M. Smith, 1969, p. 130), and for modern colonial administrations throughout the Third World. The process of incorporation may provide the foundation for a notion of former unity, along with some sense of current injustice and hope of future independence. States and newly incorporated groups may struggle over control of production. Understanding ethnicity as a form of resistance also makes some sense of the variety of relationships between ethnic groups and states.

A similar situation arises when people migrate, or are forced to move, from one state to another or from one area within a large state or empire to another. Whereas they may not have formed a particularly distinctive group before moving, in their new context they become more distinctive. Many of the ancient empires, such as the Assyrian and Inca, practiced large-scale forced resettlement that produced ethnic enclaves of this type (Oded, 1979; Patterson, 1991; Postgate, 1989). The process of urbanization, in which people from a variety of areas move into a single city, might be expected to encourage ethnic distinctiveness (Bernbeck, 1995). Mobile populations are even more common in the modern world, producing, for

example, the "Afro-American," "Asian-American," and "Hispanic" ethnic groups within the United States. The shared experience of movement and isolation in such cases enhances the sense of unity for these groups.

In any of these ethnogenetic processes, naming and bounding a group can be a source of struggle affected by power relations between the state and a newly forming ethnic group (McGuire, 1982; B. Williams, 1992). Names imposed by more powerful groups often do not match local cultural groupings.

Maintenance and Disappearance of Ethnic Identity

After the development of an ethnic group, political strategies of ethnic group members and of the state itself may preserve, enhance, or suppress the distinctiveness of the group. States may attempt to divide and conquer by forcing such groups to maintain their traditional cultural practices, as the Inca empire did. The practice of deportation forms a part of a similar strategy. On the other hand, states may attempt to suppress local identities to encourage a unified identity of the state itself (Gailey, 1985). The "melting pot" ideology in the United States is one such example, but some ancient empires pursued this strategy as well (Patterson, 1987, p. 122).

Ethnic groups, particularly their elite (Barth, 1969, p. 33; Brass, 1985), may react in different ways to incorporation within a state. They may resist state attempts to maintain their distinctiveness or resist attempts to suppress their identity (A. Cohen, 1969). This resistance can take the form of ideological or military opposition (Gailey, 1985; McGuire, 1982; Scott, 1990). These strategies also may vary, as an ethnic group may initially assimilate and subsequently resist incorporation within the state (e.g., Nugent, 1994).

The potential opposition of ethnic and state strategies and the frequent resistance posed by ethnic groups to the state suggest a general principle: state control and the political influence of nongoverning ethnic groups are inversely related. As the state loses control of ideology and the production and maintenance of symbols, other groups within the state—including ethnic groups—may appropriate them (Greenwood, 1985).

The description of ethnicity given above implies how ethnic groups may disappear. An ethnic group will persist to the extent that it has, and maintains, the characteristics of ethnicity listed above. If an ethnic group forms a state, for example, the importance of that ethnic identity will decrease within the new state. If the group does not maintain kinship ties or a common language, it will likely fragment into smaller groups. In addition,

if members of an ethnic group pursue a strategy of assimilation, they may succeed and the group may disappear.

This discussion has focused on the group-level dynamics of ethnogenesis, but these are products of the daily practices and decisions of ethnic group members and of states. The strategies that individuals pursue after initial incorporation into a state vary: they may choose to minimize or emphasize their ethnicity. Their choices depend in part upon their perception of the social, economic, and political advantages of each (e.g., Despres, 1975; cf. A. Cohen, 1969, 1981; Hodder, 1979). Emphasizing ethnic identity promotes cooperation among group members (see Axelrod, 1984). Socially, this leads to a greater sense of belonging to the group. Economically this might lead to a decreased likelihood of cheating or stealing between members of a group. Politically, this would give a larger basis of support for members of the group. Instead of being simply individual members of a state, a member of an ethnic group has the potential to represent the entire group, thus dramatically increasing the political influence he or she might have.

In the long run, if a number of people in similar situations choose to emphasize a particular ethnic identity, whether as outsiders or insiders, the significance of that ethnic identity in structuring political and economic processes will increase: "As long as ethnic affiliations and identities provide the terms of communal action, such action—whatever its immediate goals, and regardless of the successes or failures of any given grouping—reinforces the experiential salience of ethnicity as a social principle" (Comaroff, 1987, p. 316). In such situations, maintenance of the identity itself may become a cultural value in its own right apart from any calculation of gain involved (Epstein, 1978; Geertz, 1963; cf. Bentley, 1987).

ARCHAEOLOGICAL APPROACHES TO SOCIAL IDENTITIES

Having described ethnicity and outlined some of its interactions in politics and economics of early states, I now consider some methodological problems in the archaeological study of ethnicity: how to recognize the material remains of an ethnic group and how to distinguish ethnicity from other kinds of social groups (Table I).

Recent anthropological work on ethnicity suggests that differences in almost any cultural feature can distinguish one ethnic group from others (Table II). Typically such cultural features include language, religion, culturally defined physical characteristics, body ornamentation, cuisine, and such material culture as architecture, clothing, and household objects like

Table II. Selected Archaeological Studies of Ethnicity Using Different Materials

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Ceramics: Creamer, 1987; Emberling, 1995a; Engelbrecht, 1974; Esse, 1992; Feinman *et al.*, 1989; Flannery and Marcus, 1983; Gerstle, 1987; Graves, 1994; Hegmon, 1994; Hill, 1987; Kramer, 1977; Miroschedji, 1986; Parayre, 1986; Sabloff, 1973; Washburn, 1989; Wonderley, 1991

Architecture: Aldenderfer and Stanish, 1993; Baldwin, 1987; Bawden, 1993; Conrad, 1993; Flannery and Marcus, 1983b; Goldstein, 1993; Hegmon, 1989, 1994; Stanish, 1989; Stanish *et al.*, 1993; Wise, 1993

Lithics: Binford, 1973; Binford and Binford, 1966; Bordes, 1961, 1973; Håland, 1977; Magne and Matson, 1987

Basketry and textiles: Bernick, 1987; Ribeiro, 1987; Rodman, 1992 (cf. Wobst, 1977)

Food: Crabtree, 1990; DeBoer, 1987; Hesse, 1990, 1995; Langenwalter, 1980; Stein, 1993

Body ornaments: Brumfiel *et al.*, 1994; Graham, 1973; Kenoyer, 1991

Burial: Beck, 1995; Carter and Parker, 1995; Larsson, 1989; Piperno, 1986

Multiple categories: Athens, 1992; Emberling, 1995b; Flannery and Marcus, 1983; Grosboll, 1987; Leventhal *et al.*, 1987; Paddock, 1983; Santley *et al.*, 1987; Spence, 1992; Stein *et al.*, 1996

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pottery. These aspects of culture may vary throughout economic or political systems without having significant associations with one social group or another. The distribution of a pottery style, for example, may not indicate the existence of an ethnic group, but may instead mark political boundaries or simply the spatial limits of a particular system of distribution (Feinman *et al.*, 1989; Kramer, 1977). While it is undoubtedly true that pottery does not always constitute a significant difference between social groups, this is not the same as saying that it may never do so. Rather, archaeologists must identify the social significance of pottery, and other cultural features, for each social situation independently. The problem for archaeologists is to identify which characteristics would have been socially meaningful in a particular social situation, and which were unimportant. A further problem for archaeologists is to consider which nonmaterial characteristics might have been important to ethnic identity, and how they would be visible in archaeological remains.

Identifying material markers of ethnicity has several steps. The initial step is to identify a potentially distinctive group, whether through a constellation of types or styles, through names in historical documents, or through modern informants. We may then attempt to establish the social and geographical boundaries of the group by comparing distinctive practices or artifacts with those of neighboring groups. By careful study of contexts of production and use, we can then attempt to identify the kind of group that such a practice might mark. Finally, comparison of these results with analyses of other categories of evidence may support an identification of ethnic difference.

Defining the Group

The most detailed study of ethnic groups and their material culture has been ethnoarchaeological. Hodder's (1982) study focused on pastoralists and agriculturalists in Kenya, but also briefly discussed identity within the Lozi state of Zambia and among agricultural groups in the Nuba Mountains of the Sudan. Hodder clearly showed the complexity of relations between material culture and social organization, although he scarcely discussed the involvement of the state in the formation of these local group identities. Beginning with the locations of named groups, he plotted the distributions of styles, showing that some corresponded to the locations of these groups, while others did not. In the Baringo district of Kenya, for example, ceramics and wooden stools differed between the Njemps, Tugen, and Pokot, while the distribution of spears and calabashes had more to do with age sets and gender, respectively, than with ethnic boundaries (also Larick, 1991). In covering groups with a variety of political and ecological relationships, Hodder showed that group distinctiveness differed according to political and ecological conditions.

Wiessner's (1983, 1984) work on San arrows and beaded headbands attempted to correlate stylistic differences with various levels of social organization from band to language group, and found that the styles differentiated distinct language groups most clearly from each other. These studies show that material culture differences may match language distributions in cases where language differences act as a form of political organization: where speakers of a single language interact preferentially with speakers of that language.

The Kalinga Ethnoarchaeological Project in the highlands of the northern Philippines has produced a number of studies relevant to questions of group identity and its relationship to material culture (Longacre and Skibo, 1994). In particular, the work of Stark (1994, 1995) and Graves (1994) suggests that ethnicity is not a particularly salient social identity among these agricultural villages. Instead, smaller kin units provide a focus of local social action, and larger groupings of people are regionally based, rather than ethnic (cf. Feinman et al., 1989; Rogers, 1995). This social organization would be archaeologically visible: ceramic exchange networks operate primarily within regions and lead to internal stylistic homogeneity within regions and heterogeneity between regions (Graves, 1994).

Finally, the Mandara Archaeological Project conducted ethnoarchaeological work among nonhierarchical agriculturalists in Cameroon (David et al., 1991; MacEachern, 1992, 1995; Robertson, 1992; Sterners, 1989). As among the Kalinga, ethnicity in this area is not a salient or stable social identity; larger and smaller group identities are more visible and more im-

portant. Even so, the scholars could suggest that "ethnicity in this area is situational, that material culture helps to constitute its several levels, and that the patterns of that constitution are determined in part by relations of production..." (David *et al.*, 1991, p. 175).

These studies are of fundamental importance for archaeological study of ethnicity. They show that ethnicity is not always an important social identity and that material culture does mark salient social identities (at least when we know what to look for). But ethnoarchaeology has its limits too: it does not provide a universally applicable middle-range theory regarding the importance of ethnicity. We should not be tempted to argue, for example, that because ethnicity has been shown to be relatively unimportant in Cameroon and the northern Philippines, that it should be unimportant in all small-scale agricultural societies. It would be useful for the study of ethnicity to know more about the impact of states on local social identities in these situations. In addition, ethnoarchaeology will contribute little to understanding ethnogenesis or social, political, and economic change.

A different approach has been to locate groups named in historical texts. As recent examples we might cite Conrad's (1993) attempt to match differences in architectural form in south central Peru to groups known from Colonial documents and Pollard's (1994) use of Tarascan ethnohistory to generate expectations of where archaeological boundaries should occur.

This method, while obviously tempting because of the abundant and rich source material, can be difficult to project very far into the past (Marcus and Flannery, 1983); in spite of the abundance of ethnic names in such records, it can be very difficult to match them to distributions of material culture. For one thing, names recorded in texts are usually those preserved by rulers and bureaucrats, rather than self-identifications by the people involved. Thus, in situations in which the bounding of groups is a source of struggle, the names may not match ethnic identification as preserved in the archaeological record. Brumfiel's (1994, p. 96) distinction between ethnic identification, which is defined by group members and visible in material culture, and ethnic attribution, which is defined by outsiders and may be visible in stereotyped representations in art, suggests one way this struggle may define itself. In addition, moving from names attested in texts to earlier group identities ignores the flexibility of ethnic identity: group identity does not persist indefinitely (Stahl, 1991).

Archaeologists also often use languages like "Sumerian" or "Zapotec" as group names. But in the absence of convincing evidence of ethnic distinctions based on language, we should not expect the speakers of a single language to be grouped into a single ethnic group. Neither should we expect distributions of material culture to coincide with linguistic distributions (Renfrew, 1987; Yoffee, 1990).

As an example, consider the old debate over the identity of the first settlers of the Mesopotamian Plain. The timing of the migration and its origin have come to be known as the "Sumerian Problem" (Becker, 1985; Jones, 1969). Given the view prevailing in the early part of this century that the Mesopotamian Plain was a recent geological formation, and given the current assumptions about the correspondence of language, other cultural features, and "race," scholars began to think that "the Sumerians" must have migrated from elsewhere. This supposition led to a variety of wild speculations about long-distance, large-scale movements of people from as far away as the Indus Valley and from locations as unlikely as the sparsely inhabited Arabian Desert.

To complicate the situation, however, some scholars began to point out that some terms in the earliest texts seemed to be non-Sumerian. These terms included many names of the earliest cities and terms for professions. Again basing themselves on the notion of a primeval purity of race, language, and culture, many suggested that these terms indicated that a pre-Sumerian population existed in the area, the so-called "substrate." Landsberger's (1943–1945) early investigation of the "Proto-Euphratian" or "Proto-Transtigridian" substrate language suggested that the substrate speakers had terms for a number of specialized crafts, including herald, overseer, smith, carpenter, leather-worker, clothes-washer, and potter.

There are, however, many objections to both the notion of a large-scale migration of a unified group, "the Sumerians," and that of a substrate language. More recent geological study of the area has shown that the Mesopotamian Plain has existed longer than previously thought (C. Larsen, 1975; Sanlaville, 1989), thus pushing back the time scale involved. It still seems to be the case that agriculture and settled communities on the alluvial plain would have been limited by the absence of irrigation before the sixth millennium B.C. Nevertheless, the area may well have been used by hunter-gatherers before then. In addition, the surveys of Adams and others (Adams, 1965, 1972, 1981; Adams and Nissen, 1972; Gibson, 1972; Wright, 1981) show that there were no migrations massive enough to alter all the cultural practices in the region. As for the substrate language, it is perhaps premature to claim that we understand Sumerian well enough to identify all the "foreign" and "native" words in it. As a general rule, we cannot expect all words in Sumerian or any other language to have meaningful etymologies in that language. Most importantly, the notion of original linguistic purity suggested by this perspective is manifestly false; languages continually borrow terms, often manipulating them to fit their own grammatical or etymological rules.

If the Sumerians migrated from elsewhere, then the appearance of Akkadian names and texts written in Akkadian in the midthird millennium

suggest to others that Akkadian speakers must have migrated as well (Steinkeller, 1993; Zarins, 1990). There are, however, other explanations for these phenomena: the later introduction of writing in central Mesopotamia, rather than the later arrival of "Akkadian" immigrants, could account for these language differences. Such differences may as easily have political explanations as cultural ones.

Quite apart from the question of supposed Sumerian and Akkadian migrations, many have debated whether the terms "Sumerian" and "Akkadian" could refer to ethnic groups at all. Early in the debate, Jacobsen (1939) suggested that the basis for conflict in third millennium Mesopotamia was political, rather than ethnic. He presented a contrasting case, that of Mesopotamian references to the "barbaric" Guti, that does demonstrate consciousness of and enmity for a foreign group.

Kraus' (1970) detailed review of the use of the various terms should have resolved the problem. He showed that Sumer and Akkad were used in native terminology as regions and as spoken and written languages. Nevertheless, there were no terms corresponding to ethnic groups. The conclusions that Kraus himself drew from this analysis, however, seem to contradict his own evidence. He suggests that we cannot doubt that Sumerians and Akkadians were ancient groups, but that the evidence is just too poor for us to reconstruct their boundaries. Nevertheless, these areas had entered into a symbiosis very early in Mesopotamian history (Kraus, 1970, p. 99). The presumption that a language group is necessarily a social group is deeply ingrained!

To summarize, there is no evidence for separate Sumerian and Akkadian ethnic groups in third millennium Mesopotamia. There are different languages, and terms for different regions. It must be repeated, however, that part of the basis for ethnic identity is self-identification and ascription by others. Kraus' exhaustive search of the contemporary literature failed to find any native term for these different groups. While it is not likely that ethnic groups in these contexts would have encompassed speakers of more than one language, it is unlikely that language groups as a whole formed the basis of self-identification.

As a further methodological point, the Sumerian Problem illustrates for archaeologists that textual sources are not infallible guides to ethnicity. Texts very often do not address these concerns directly. In addition, texts represent the perspective of the elite and the center, and may not accurately represent the diversity of social identities on the periphery. It is the case, however, that judicious use of texts and possible inferences from them about the distribution of languages can be extremely helpful to archaeological research.

Locating the Boundary

In the absence of historical documents, archaeologists must rely on differences in material culture as indices of social difference. Such differences are most strongly marked in the case of ethnic enclaves, a highly visible form of ethnic group distinctiveness brought about by the movement of members of one group. The boundaries established in such enclaves are revealing of a number of ethnic processes, including strategies of assimilation or maintenance of differences, and the importance of stylistic redundancy in maintaining group differences (Emberling, 1995b).

Expanding states of Uruk-period Mesopotamia established enclaves of various types in areas to the north and east (Algaze, 1993; Johnson, 1988–1989; Schwartz, 1988; Stein, 1993; Stein et al., 1996). These enclaves are highly visible, using Mesopotamian styles of public architecture, seals, and mass-produced pottery. It is not yet clear whether these differences represent implantation of a Mesopotamian government in the periphery or whether this is more widespread cultural marking: to date, the Mesopotamian styles archaeologists have studied are primarily those related to central governing institutions. A later well-known enclave in Northern Mesopotamia is that of Assyrian merchants in the Anatolian town of Kanesh. These merchants clearly pursued a strategy of cultural assimilation; were it not for their account tablets and letters, it is claimed, we would not recognize them as foreigners (Emberling and Yoffee, 1997; M. Larsen, 1976, 1987; Özguç, 1963).

A number of enclaves have been excavated in Mesoamerica. Most convincing is a Zapotec enclave at Teotihuacan (Paddock, 1983; Spence, 1992; cf. Flannery and Marcus, 1983), marked by Zapotec ceramics produced within the enclave, by burial practices common in the Valley of Oaxaca, and by a carved jamb with Zapotec writing. Oaxacan practices were not uniformly maintained in the community, but those that were retained were expressed in both public and private contexts (Spence, 1992, p. 77).

There also have been detailed studies of Teotihuacanos living at Kaminaljuyú (Sanders and Michels, 1977) and at Matacapan (Santley et al., 1987). At Kaminaljuyú, the evidence for their presence includes public architecture, burial practices, and ceramic vessels. Two enclaves at Matacapan display similarities in public architecture and burial practices to Teotihuacán. In addition, the ceramic inventory is similar, although locally produced, and suggests commonalities in food preparation and domestic ritual. Teotihuacan identity is thus expressed in both public and domestic contexts. These enclaves seem to have been established for purposes of trade, whether for the state or on behalf of merchants.

Perhaps least convincing of the Mesoamerican studies of ethnic enclaves and migrations have been those focused on the Maya. There have been persistent suggestions of an invasion of the "Chontal" or "Putun" at the end of the Late Classic, based on representations of foreigners in art, as well as styles of ceramics and architectural differences (Graham, 1973; Miller, 1986, pp. 202ff; Sabloff, 1973). The foreignness of the individuals represented on stelae at Seibal could be questioned, however, and to understand the relevance of changes in ceramic styles, we would have to know more about their production, distribution, and contexts of use. A similar debate exists over the possible presence of the Toltec at Chichén Itzá in the Terminal Classic and later, based primarily on similarities in public architectural style (Kepecs et al., 1994; Lincoln, 1986; Robles Castellanos and Andrews, 1986; Wren and Schmidt, 1991). The processes involved here are complicated: Is this migration, or emulation of Toltec culture by the Maya, or is it merely new Maya styles in art and architecture?

Similar problems with ethnicity are found within the Inca empire. Murra's (1972) vertical archipelago model suggested that members of an ethnic group would pursue different economic activities in different ecological zones to promote ethnic group self-sufficiency. The archaeological remains of these ethnic enclaves have been analyzed in several cases (Aldenderfer, 1993; Van Buren, 1996), with emphasis on domestic architecture and household structure. The expansion of the Inca empire also produced a number of ethnic enclaves, as the Inca pursued a strategy of incorporating groups and forcing them to maintain their distinctiveness (Murra, 1982; Pease, 1982).

While it is often simple to recognize a complex of foreign artifacts or practices, a number of these studies have too quickly assumed that the complex maintains its ethnic identity. In several cases, for example, the cultural distinctiveness may relate to elite status and attempts by rulers to justify their position by emulating the symbols of more powerful neighboring states. Nevertheless, studies of ethnic enclaves offer the potential to understand in detail the material, symbolic negotiation over ethnic identity that may occur with migration. Spence's (1992) study remains among the best examples of this potential.

In spite of the abundance of enclaves among archaeological studies of ethnicity, however, there are other types of ethnogenetic processes. Ethnic groups may form at the boundaries of polities, in connection with secondary state formation. Archaeological study of frontiers and boundaries has tended to focus on center-periphery relations rather than on the construction of social differences (DeAtley and Findlow, 1984; Green and Perlman, 1985; Lightfoot and Martinez, 1995; Trinkhaus, 1987). It is clear neverthe-

less that ethnic groups in such situations could share a greater proportion of cultural practices with their neighbors. Their remaining differences might thus assume a proportionally greater value.

In these cases, identifying social group differences depends on analyzing artifact style (Carr and Neitzel, 1995; Conkey and Hastorf, 1990; Hegmon, 1992; Wobst, 1977) or typology (Dunnell, 1986). Archaeologists earlier this century approached this question through the notion of an "archaeological culture," defined by Childe as a set of recurring artifact types (summaries by Hodder, 1982, pp. 2ff.; Trigger, 1989, pp. 167ff.). Archaeologists quickly realized that the relationship between an archaeological culture and an anthropological culture is not straightforward. It is not the case, however, that archaeological cultures so defined have no relevance to understanding the past. We must now exercise more care in identifying them with ethnic groups, however.

A variety of methods for identifying boundaries has been proposed. Hodder (1974; Hodder and Orton, 1976; Kimes et al., 1982) plotted the frequency of various artifacts with increasing distance to find changes in the slope of the falloff curve. Others (e.g., Voss, 1987) have approached the problem through similarity measures. Rapid decreases in similarity could also be interpreted as boundaries between style zones. In both of these cases, inflection points could be interpreted as boundaries, but the nature of the social or political group enclosed is not specified.

Graves (1994) developed a method for analyzing ceramic design variation analogous to statistical analysis of variance. He considered not only stylistic differences between two regions, but also the homogeneity of designs within each region. Measures of difference and homogeneity together comprise a measure of distinctiveness: not only did the designs differ between the two regions, but the design within each was homogeneous relative to the other.

I have recently emphasized the importance of redundancy to identification of social boundaries (Emberling, 1995b): important social boundaries or those being negotiated are likely to be marked redundantly. Comparing stylistic distributions of multiple categories of material culture gives a greater likelihood of locating important social boundaries. This approach has its difficulties in archaeological application. A single archaeologically preserved artifact type may have been redundant with cultural features not preserved in the archaeological record. In this situation, an important social difference would not appear redundantly marked in the archaeological record. Nevertheless, a redundantly marked difference will be more likely to have been important in the past.

Identifying the Group

In identifying which kind of social unit a boundary constitutes, the critical problem becomes interpreting the meanings of stylistic variation (Hodder, 1986). Meanings in artifacts were not fixed in the past, however; understanding some of their meanings requires careful contextual analysis of their production and use (Emberling, 1995a; Hodder, 1987).

The first step in analyzing a stylistic distribution should be to consider whether it constituted a meaningful social difference, or whether it has no greater significance than identifying the limits of a system of production and exchange (Findlow and Bolognese, 1984; Hodder, 1974, 1978; Renfrew, 1977). A necessary precondition for such study is knowledge of the scale of production and exchange. A stylistic distribution larger than the scale of production and distribution suggests that some larger social meaning maintained the unity of the style. I have suggested that objects produced at a small scale within the territory of an ethnic group are more likely to be distinctive to that group than are objects produced at large scales and widely distributed (Emberling, 1995c). In any case, examination of surrounding styles may provide further proof of the meaningfulness of the style: sharp geographical or social boundaries are more likely to have been intentionally produced and maintained than clinal distributions.

Meaningful stylistic boundaries may encompass different kinds of social and political groups, however. Some have suggested that political boundaries may be so marked, although the mechanism for such correspondence is rarely explicit (Engelbrecht, 1974; Fisher, 1995; Henrickson, 1984; Kimes et al., 1982; cf. Zimansky, 1995). One assumption is that states would discourage trade outside their territory, particularly if they were highly centralized (Kowalewski et al., 1983). It seems unlikely from a Mesopotamian perspective that early states maintained borders that limited such movement. It is not until the development of highly centralized territorial empires that such control becomes practical. The nature of early state boundaries is not well understood.

Such boundaries also may mark a particular class in society, which is not to say that different classes may not be marked by ethnicity as well. If a style is an elite good, its possible ethnic meaning must be demonstrated independently. Athens (1992) presents a case in the highlands of Ecuador in which he argues that a type of ramped mound distinctive to a series of highland basins are in fact elite residences. Athens takes these mounds, and large painted jars found in association with them, to be ethnic markers. Yet these are clearly elite goods, and we would need a more convincing demonstration of their meaning within these highland basins—as opposed

to their differences with architecture and ceramics of surrounding areas—to interpret them as ethnic markers.

Several studies of ethnicity on the Southeast Maya periphery have suggested ethnic differentiation in areas east of Copán (Ashmore et al., 1987; Creamer, 1987; Gerstle, 1987; Leventhal et al., 1987). In this area, it is primarily artifacts of the elite that are Maya, while the material culture of lower classes may be non-Maya. In such situations, the possibility of elite emulation of foreign, prestigious cultures must be considered before ethnic interpretations can be established.

Social identities in prestate societies may differ significantly from ethnicity; Comaroff (1987) suggests that "totemic" identity may be more common than ethnicity in such societies. Whether or not ethnicity can be found in prestate societies, boundaries have been suggested to mark risk-reducing units (Hegmon, 1994; Wiessner, 1982) and, less convincingly, language groups (Wiessner, 1983, 1984).

Early Third Millennium Mesopotamia

As an example of how an analysis of ethnicity in an archaeological case might proceed, I present here a brief discussion of social identity and material culture in Mesopotamia of the early third millennium B.C. (for references and details, see Emberling, 1995a, b). Painted ceramics of this period attracted attention from their earliest excavation at Susa at the end of the 19th century. In spite of continuing typological and chronological interest in these ceramics, there has been little work on their social importance. The only painted vessel form is a carinated jar, which ranges from 10 to 50 cm in height (Fig. 1). Because of their wide range of size and the fact that the pots are often unstable on their base, one of their functions may have been simple decoration or display. These ceramics have variously been termed "Jemdet Nasr," "Scarlet Ware," and "Proto-Elamite," but to emphasize their similarities I propose to group them under the term "Hamrin Polychrome."

Hamrin Polychrome was made and used in a series of plains and valleys along the foothills of the Zagros Mountains, from the Diyala River in the northwest to the Susiana Plain in the southeast, as well as on a limited part of the Mesopotamian alluvial plain (Fig. 2). The foothills formed an important route from southern Mesopotamia to the large site of Susa and the mountains beyond.

Artifact styles and cultural practices along this route are only meaningful in reference to contemporary developments in southern and northern Mesopotamia. States first developed in the south by the Middle Uruk pe-
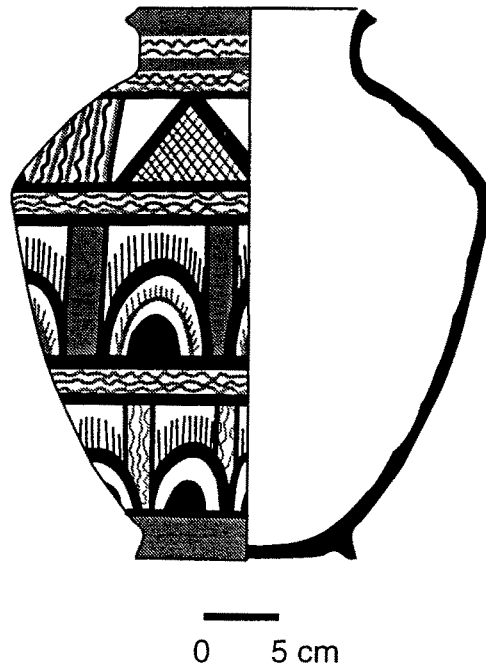
Fig. 1. Hamrin Polychrome jar (Louvre L6433).

riod (approximately 3500 B.C.). These states extended administrative control over most of Greater Mesopotamia, including the entire Zagros foothills, perhaps for the purpose of extracting raw materials. By the beginning of the third millennium B.C., the states had diminished in size and lost control of the areas to the north and east of the alluvial plain.

What kinds of boundaries are marked in ceramic design style? The design structure of early third millennium ceramics suggests three separate, meaningfully differentiated groups of ceramics. In the Zagros foothills, including some areas in the northern alluvial plain, Hamrin Polychrome comprises 8% or more of the entire ceramic assemblage. These ceramics differ in the structure of their design from the Ninevite 5 pottery of the north and from the undecorated ceramics predominant in southern Mesopotamia. The progressive differentiation of Ninevite 5 pottery—which was initially painted and, later, only incised and excised—from Hamrin Polychrome suggests the creation and maintenance of meaningful differences between the groups using the pots.

A detailed study of motif distribution suggests a division between types of motifs within the painted pottery. The framing motifs—those placed in
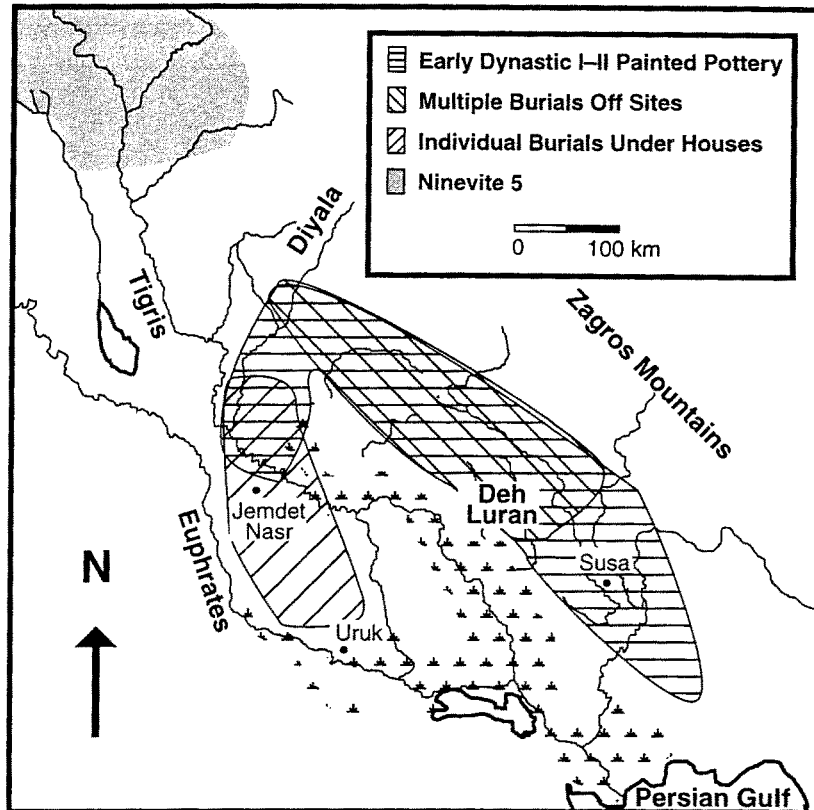
Fig. 2. Distribution of painted ceramics and burial practices in Mesopotamia during the early third millennium BC.

bands to divide the vessels into panels—varied simply by distance; there was no evidence that these were viewed as meaningful or distinctive by users of the vessels or by the potters themselves. Many of these motifs also were used in Ninevite 5 painted pottery. The main motifs, on the other hand, were more or less discretely distributed, each being statistically associated with only one region. Furthermore, each region had at least one such distinctive motif. This distribution suggests a hierarchy of meaningful differences constituted by this pottery. At the largest level, the ceramic style as a whole is distinguished from surrounding ceramic styles, in spite of some common use of minor decorative motifs. At a lower level, a series of subgroups is represented by relatively discrete distributions of the major motifs.

The distribution of Hamrin Polychrome is clearly bounded with respect to neighboring ceramic traditions, and also is internally structured. Did it

mark a particular social or political unit? Neutron activation analysis of ceramics from the Zagros foothills shows that this pottery was not traded between valleys. Microstylistic variation in the ceramics from the Deh Luran Plain suggests that as few as one and later two producers made all the painted ceramics used there. Production was small scale and likely kin-based. The small scale of ceramic production and distribution relative to the spatial extent of these painted ceramics makes it likely that this pottery had an important social meaning, rather than simply marking the limits of an economic production and distribution system.

Hamrin Polychrome was used in a wide variety of contexts through most of its chronological and spatial distribution. These contexts include public, domestic, and burial contexts; higher- and lower-status contexts; and areas used by settled urbanites as well as those used by nomads. They were virtually ubiquitous within contexts of Jemdet Nasr and Early Dynastic date within the main area of distribution. Their use is thus not consistent with that of a high-status good.

Political units along the Zagros foothills are likely to have been relatively small during the early third millennium; there is no textual or archaeological evidence of supraregional control. Comparison of the spatial scale of the Hamrin Polychrome distribution with that of contemporary political units shows that these ceramic groups do not simply mark the limits of states.

The most likely explanation of the production and use of Hamrin Polychrome is that it functioned as an ethnic marker. The sharpness of its boundaries and its large geographical distribution relative to the scale of production suggest that it was a meaningful style. Its lack of fit with what we would expect of a status good or of a marker of state boundaries strengthens this suggestion. In addition, the political context in which the ceramics were used—an area recently under state control—is a highly plausible situation in which ethnicity may have been useful, either as a rejection of state control or as a means of exploiting the growing trade along the Zagros foothills routes.

Contemporary evidence from the site of Uruk supports this suggestion. In one area of Early Dynastic occupation, Hamrin Polychrome comprised as much as 25% of the ceramic assemblage, whereas in the other excavated area of domestic occupation, none of this pottery was recovered. Such a distribution would be consistent with the existence of an ethnic enclave at Uruk.

Further support for identifying Hamrin Polychrome as an ethnic marker comes from the examination of early third millennium burial practices. The rituals and other practices surrounding death and treatment of the dead are a likely source of ethnic differentiation. These events are

highly meaningful in all cultures, being symbolically related to many fundamental cultural values including, significantly, the maintenance of lineages and other kin relations. For Mesopotamia, in particular, later literary texts distinguish the Amorites from "civilized" people by their ignorance of proper burial practice. Contrasts in the location of burial and the existence of multiple burials suggest social differences that correspond remarkably well with the ceramic distributions discussed above.

In the northern alluvium, including the Lower Diyala region, burials tended to be individual inhumations under occupied house floors. Along the Zagros foothills, however, burials were multiple inhumations in areas or on mounds away from settlements. In the Zagros Mountains, cemeteries of nomadic groups—themselves economically and politically dependent on settled communities—also correspond to this pattern. The southern alluvium may represent a different practice, in which individual burials were placed on unoccupied areas of settled mounds. Burials in northern Mesopotamia seem to have been on separate sites, but the sample is very small.

Comparing the distributions of ceramic styles and burial practices in Early Dynastic Mesopotamia shows a similar distribution of the two (Fig. 2). With the exception of the Lower Diyala region, the areas having multiple burials in visible locations outside settlements also produced and used the painted wares. The lack of correspondence in the Diyala, which is a border zone between these areas, is interesting. It does not demonstrate, as Eickhoff (1993, p. 199) suggests, that the ceramics do not demarcate an ethnic group. Neither does it correspond with Barth's (1969) suggestion that ethnic markers should be most prominent at the boundaries of ethnic groups. I would suggest that Barth's approach to ethnic boundaries is essentially static, concerned more with maintenance of boundaries than with possible changes and negotiations through time in these boundaries. The Lower Diyala region, then, would be an area in which this ethnic identity was perhaps the most flexible and open to situational manipulation. Thus, some individuals would have emphasized their (by this time) traditional ties to this ethnic group, while others would have increasingly conformed to the practices of the urban alluvial plain.

DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

I have suggested that ethnic groups similar in fundamental ways to modern ethnic groups existed in the past, and that archaeologists can identify ethnicity in cases in which ethnicity was a salient social identity. It is now possible to disagree with Kramer (as quoted in the epigraph): ethnicity is in many cases a necessary construct for interpreting the past and ex-

plaining variation in material culture. In particular, attention to ethnicity is essential to understanding political dynamics in early states and empires. Although most discussion of these societies has focused on their vertical, hierarchical dimension, such structures of control are frequently constructed on an ethnic basis. Beyond being an essential component of past societies, of course, ethnicity is a potent, often destructive principle in the modern world. While archaeology is not the most direct way of confronting these contemporary problems, it may contribute to understanding the causes and consequences of ethnicity.

Considering a number of case studies, I was led to several methodological suggestions for understanding ethnicity in the archaeological record. It is helpful to begin with detailed studies of contexts of production, distribution, and use in order to understand the meanings of material culture to those who used it. Studies of redundantly marked social boundaries, as have been conducted on enclaves, may support these interpretations (Emberling, 1995b).

The perspective of cultural anthropologists may seem to suggest that there are no regularities in ethnic expression: since ethnicity is flexible, it can be marked by any aspect of material culture. Yet there are reasons to think that some aspects of material culture are more likely than others to mark ethnic difference. In particular, we suggest that household structure (Bawden, 1993; Stanish, 1989) might be methodologically valuable because of its close, meaningful relationship with daily life. Similarly, aspects of ritual practice, including mortuary ritual, may be particularly useful (Beck, 1995; DeCorse, 1989; Ribeiro, 1987; Santley *et al.*, 1987; Spence, 1992). Finally, the importance of cuisine—perhaps most accessible through analysis of faunal remains—has only recently been appreciated (Crabtree, 1990; Hesse, 1990, 1995). When we have many more archaeological studies of ethnicity, we may be in a position to evaluate the general usefulness of different categories of evidence.

Beyond methodology, there are several outstanding questions that archaeologists can address to advance our understanding of ethnicity. What are the forms of prestate social identities, and how do they differ from ethnicity? Do strong regional identities develop under conditions different from those of ethnogenesis? Do early states foster some kind of unified state identity that would compete with ethnogenesis? Finally, what can archaeologists contribute to understanding changes in ethnicity over long spans of time (Stein, 1995)?

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PATTY JO WATSON / WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY, ST. LOUIS

Archaeology, Anthropology, and the Culture Concept

What follows is the text of the Distinguished Lecture presented at the 93rd Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, held in Atlanta, Georgia, in November 1994.

ALTHOUGH I HAVE belonged to the American Anthropological Association since 1953, my first year in graduate school, I have been so deeply immersed in my own archaeological corner for the past 20 years that I hadn't noticed, until I began thinking about this talk, how *very* different the current anthropological landscape is from the one in which I came of age in the discipline. That fact makes the present assignment a considerable challenge: to say something that might hold the attention of an audience representing the diversity of 1990s anthropology. So I decided to structure much of my discussion around something central to anthropology and anthropologists since the formational period of the discipline: culture.

As a University of Chicago graduate student, I encountered the anthropological culture concept not long after my commitment to a particular form of Protestantism, as a matter of personal faith and belief, had faded away. So it is perhaps not surprising that during my pre-M.A. period I concluded culture was a crucial tenet of anthropological faith. It seemed to me absolutely necessary to commit myself to one of the many definitions of *culture* then under discussion (Kroeber and Kluckhohn 1952) before I could be confirmed as a real anthropologist (before I could pass the comps). After that, I would earn a Ph.D. and live my anthropological career in accord with my own personal understanding of culture, which might also be Kluckhohn's or Kroeber's or Linton's. As a matter of fact, it was Robert Redfield's version of E. B. Tylor's classic definition that I chose to cleave to. Tylor said,

"Culture . . . is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, customs, and any other capabilities and habits acquired . . . as a member of society" (Tylor 1871:1). In Redfield's rendering, "Culture is 'an organized body of conventional understandings manifest in art and artifacts which, persisting through tradition, characterizes a human group' " (Redfield 1940; see Kroeber and Kluckhohn 1952:61).

Redfield's definition is a little shorter and snappier than Tylor's, and hence easier to memorize for a person struggling—as I was then—not only with detailed culture-historical sequences in several parts of the Old and New Worlds but also with Murngin, Naskapi, and Nuer kinship systems; with how to tell a phoneme from a phon; and with how precisely the Australopithecine pelvis differs from ours and from a chimpanzee's. Also relevant was the fact that Redfield was a senior member of the Chicago anthropology faculty and someone my adviser (Robert J. Braidwood) respected. Moreover, Redfield's definition specifically mentions manifestations of culture ("art and artifacts") and explicitly invokes duration through time, two characteristics that appeal strongly to archaeologists.

Secure in my grip on the culture concept, I passed my comps, got an M.A., and went on to dissertation research in Near Eastern prehistory. Redfield, Eggan, Tax, Braidwood, Washburn, and McQuown taught us that anthropology was a unitary enterprise made up of four equal parts: social anthropology or ethnology, archaeology, physical anthropology, and linguistics. A prominent Harvard archaeologist, Philip Phillips, also formally emphasized the close ties between archaeology and the broader field of anthropology in an influential article published in 1955, concluding that "American archaeology is anthropology or it is nothing."

I wholeheartedly accepted all this and identified with anthropology as fervently as with archaeology. Sometime during the late 1950s when I was completing my Ph.D. dissertation, I received an initial reality check concerning

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the relation between archaeology and anthropology. Having attended a lecture and subsequent reception for Ruth Landes, whose Ojibwa ethnographies I had read and admired, I introduced myself to her as an anthropologist. She asked what my specialty was and I said Near Eastern prehistory, at which point she turned away abruptly saying, "Then you're *not* an anthropologist, you're an archaeologist." Her remark was my first inkling that the anthropological world was not as well integrated as my mentors had led me to believe.

I had ample opportunity to confirm the inkling while carrying out research in the Old World, and then later as I transferred my fieldwork locale to eastern North America. By the early 1980s I knew of at least two North American departments of archaeology completely separate from anthropology (Calgary and Simon Fraser) with another (Boston University) on the way. There were also separatist themes clearly voiced in the literature by several archaeologists.[1] A few years later a full-scale anti–"archaeology as anthropology" assault was launched from England and northwestern Europe.[2] "American archaeology as anthropology" was rejected along with other tokens of American imperialism. And, of course, during the 1960s and 1970s I had noticed that the subdisciplinary balance in my alma mater department at Chicago had become markedly asymmetric in favor of one kind of sociocultural anthropology and against archaeology and physical anthropology.

All this I knew, but until I heard Kent Flannery's distinguished lecture at the annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association in December 1981 (Flannery 1982), I had not noticed that the other foundation of my basic anthropological training—the culture concept, even culture itself—was under attack within American sociocultural anthropology. Flannery quotes Eric Wolf's 1980 assessment:

An earlier anthropology had achieved unity under the aegis of the culture concept. It was culture, in the view of anthropologists, that distinguished humankind from all the rest of the universe, and it was the possession of varying cultures that differentiated one society from another. . . . The past quarter-century has undermined this intellectual sense of security. The relatively inchoate concept of "culture" was attacked from several theoretical directions. As the social sciences transformed themselves into "behavioral" sciences, explanations for behavior were no longer traced to culture: behavior was to be understood in terms of psychological encounters, strategies of economic choice, strivings for payoffs in games of power. Culture, once extended to all acts and ideas employed in social life, was now relegated to the margins as "world view" or "values." [Wolf 1980]

Flannery mourns the loss of an integrating concept of culture in ethnology, and fears the threat of such loss in archaeology. Now, somewhat more than ten years later,

it appears that the culture situation in ethnology and sociocultural anthropology is even more problematic.

Back in 1952, Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952:149) noted that after Tylor published his definition of *culture* in 1871, there were no other formal definitions offered for 32 years. Between 1900 and 1919, they found six; between 1920 and 1950 there were 157. The word *culture* had great currency throughout this whole time, including the three decades post-Tylor, but it was being used without explicit definition.

According to a recent summary volume (Borofsky 1994), research on or about the culture concept, or "the cultural," now ranges from linguistic, cognitive, and psychological approaches to a variety of postmodern and post-postmodern experimental efforts on the literary side to politically, historically, empirically, and/or methodologically oriented work, to that which focuses explicitly on the nexus of biology and culture, of natural science and human science, and to that which concentrates on intercultural encounters in premodern, modern, or postmodern world systems.[3] I return to this issue below, in the concluding section, but first take up something with which I am somewhat more familiar: recent travels of the culture concept in archaeology.

The culture concept in anthropological archaeology has followed a well-marked but nonlinear trajectory over the past several decades. After a freewheeling and primarily data-free speculative period in the 19th century (Willey and Sabloff 1993: ch. 2), North American archaeology developed around a culture-historical approach parallel to but separate from concurrent processes in European archaeology (Trigger 1989:187, 195). At the turn of the century, "the term culture was first applied to groups of sites containing distinctive artifact assemblages in the Ohio Valley. By 1902 William C. Mills had distinguished the Fort Ancient and Hopewell cultures" (Trigger 1989:187).

At this time in North American archaeological parlance, Trigger says a "culture" was mainly a geographical entity—a taxon for one of several synchronic units—because so little was known about chronology. The period between World War I and World War II was characterized by intense concern with temporal relations and by a great deal of historical particularism in North American archaeology. Trigger notes, as have other scholars, that Americanist archaeologists of the 1930s and 1940s paid no attention to human behavior, to function, ecology, or even quantification.[4] There was no interest in culture per se, although widely used classificatory units (foci, aspects, phases) were implicitly understood to be cultural units, possibly reflecting ancient tribes or groups of related tribes. Archaeological cultures in North America were believed to be conservative, changing slowly if at all in response to diffusion of objects and ideas, and/or to migration of large and small human groups. Walter Taylor's

detailed critique of Americanist archaeology, published in 1948 and promoting a very different view of culture to and for archaeologists, was a radical departure from mainstream 1940s archaeological practice.

Taylor's argument (1948: ch. 4) included a view of culture as composed of two concepts, one holistic—Culture—and one partitive—cultures. Holistically speaking, Cultural phenomena are distinguished from natural phenomena, both organic (nonhuman biological) and inorganic (geological, chemical). Cultural phenomena are emergent, more than the sum of the partitive parts, they are in a realm of their own, a realm created and maintained solely by human cognitive activity.

Partitively, the culture concept also denotes a specific *piece* of the whole of human Culture, *a* culture. Either way, C/culture "is a mental phenomenon, consisting of the contents of minds, not of material objects or observable behavior" (Taylor 1948:96). Cultural content is cumulative: "The culture-whole existing today owes its form and at least the majority of its content to what is called the cultural heritage" (Taylor 1948:98). The (or a) cultural heritage consists of mental constructs. "Mere physical form is extraneous as far as culture is concerned, being a property of the world of physics and not of culture" (Taylor 1948:99). What was once called "material culture" (as distinct from "nonmaterial culture" or "social culture"), according to Taylor, is not culture and is in fact two removes from the real thing: the locus of culture is mental, ideas in people's minds.[5] Artifacts and architecture are the results of behavior, which itself derives from mental activity. "Culture [the first-order phenomenon for Taylor] is unobservable and non-material." Behavior (second-order phenomenon) is observable but nonmaterial, and only with third-order phenomena resulting from behavior do we come to artifacts, architecture, and other concrete materials making up the archaeological record: "this [third] order consists only of objectifications of culture and does not constitute culture itself" (Taylor 1948:100).

Taylor's handling of the culture concept is seemingly a departure from the position held more or less contemporaneously by Kroeber, who says that materials and objects are all part of culture equally with ideas and customs: "We may forget about this distinction" (Kroeber 1948:295–296). If one reads Kroeber's whole discussion, however, one realizes that his view is probably the same as Taylor's (and Redfield's). He says,

What counts is not the physical ax or coat or wheat but the idea of them, their place in life. It is this knowledge, concept, and function that get themselves handed down through the generations, or diffused into other cultures, while the objects themselves are quickly worn out or consumed. [Kroeber 1948:295]

So it is not difficult to see how Taylor, beginning with the traditional, then-current views on culture, and think-

ing about how to transform observations on the archaeological record into information about culture, came to the formulation outlined above. If only the ideas and knowledge in people's minds are culture and the ultimate source of culture, then archaeologists who want to contribute to cultural anthropology, the discipline that studies culture, must address their thrice-removed materials in ways calculated to delineate past cognitive patterning. The archaeological record can reveal ancient culture—the mental activities of long-dead people—if skillfully interrogated. The archaeologist as archaeologist is merely a technician digging up physical materials and their associations, in space and time, but the archaeologist as anthropologist is uniquely qualified to produce truly cultural information about ancient peoples and extinct societies throughout time and space.

One might think that to be an exciting and appealing prospect, but virtually no one heeded Taylor's call to reshape the practice of archaeology and make it more anthropological. Nothing happened even after two eminent, well-respected members of the archaeological establishment, Gordon Willey and Philip Phillips, repeated Phillips's earlier admonition that "American archaeology is anthropology or it is nothing" in a widely read and highly influential volume, *Method and Theory in American Archaeology* (Phillips 1955; Willey and Phillips 1958:2). Why not?

One very immediate and practical obstacle was the ad hominem, or straight-to-the-jugular, technique Taylor used to highlight the sins and errors committed by living, active, and highly influential senior archaeologists, who, he said, preached anthropology but practiced "mere chronicle," sterile time-space distributions of selected artifacts. Such personal assaults are almost never successful as a long-term strategy. In a published Ph.D. dissertation, they are suicidal.

Another a priori reason why Taylor's program was never implemented, not even by Taylor himself, is that the demands it placed upon field and laboratory recording and analysis were simply impossible to meet at the time *A Study of Archaeology* was published. Even now, with quite powerful computer hardware and software available to archaeologists, and with greater knowledge of site-formation processes as well as more widespread interest in ancient ideational patterns, Taylor's conjunctive archaeology is a rather tall order.

As Dunnell (1986:36) has pointed out, there is yet another possible explanation why Taylor's reform call was virtually totally ignored, and that is the concept of culture he provided as the source and center of his formulation. Taylor asserted, with most sociocultural anthropologists of his day, and indeed since Tylor, that the locus of culture is mental. Artifacts are not culture, they are only *objectifications* of culture at several removes from the real thing. Moreover, he insisted that the highest goal

archaeologists could aspire to was eliciting cultural anthropology from archaeological remains, which meant the mental processes (the true, the real culture) of those past peoples. This argument easily led to a view of archaeology as being highly marginal within general anthropology.

As indicated earlier, Taylor's views also ran counter to the basic operating assumptions of most Americanist archaeologists at the time he was writing (Binford 1987:397), many of whom did not believe that the original meanings—to their creators—of the items they excavated could be retrieved, and most of whom were less immediately interested in this proposition than they were in basic time-space systematics. In 1943, Griffin matter-of-factly stated,

> The exact meaning of any particular object for the living group or individual is forever lost, and the real significance of any object in an ethnological sense has disappeared by the time it becomes a part of an archaeologist's catalogue of finds. [Griffin 1943:340]

Almost exactly 20 years after Taylor completed the dissertation published in 1948 as *A Study of Archaeology*—a closely reasoned, devastating critique that seemingly sank without a trace—another reformer published a much shorter and much more successful appeal, similar in some ways to that of Taylor but quite different in others: Lewis Binford's 1962 *American Antiquity* article, "Archaeology as Anthropology," initiated a period of dominance by processual archaeology, or "the New Archaeology," as it is often called.[6] Like Taylor, Binford and the New Archaeologists were intent upon expanding the goals of Americanist anthropological archaeology beyond those of typology and stratigraphy. Although Binford insisted that *all* aspects of past societies could be investigated archaeologically, in practice he focused almost exclusively upon subsistence and ecology. Processual or New Archaeology came to be a kind of neo-evolutionary "econothink" (Hall 1977) with heavy emphasis on hypothetico-deductive method, quantification, computers, and statistics. Binford's concept of culture, appropriate to the general tenor of New Archaeology and quite different from Taylor's, was that of his professor at the University of Michigan, Leslie White: "culture is man's extrasomatic means of adaptation" (Binford 1962; White 1959:8, 38–39).

Binford himself—like another of his Michigan professors, James Griffin—had little interest in the meanings archaeological materials might once have had for their makers and users, and he paid no serious attention to ideational issues, regarding them as epiphenomena at best. Thus, under his highly influential leadership, Americanist archaeology was materialist, functionalist, and evolutionist in orientation, overtly anthropological and scientific in its aspirations. This trajectory was very successful during the 1960s and 1970s. In fact, it still represents the mainstream of practicing archaeology in the United States

(Willey and Sabloff 1993:317), partly because of the great initial success of the New Archaeology and partly because of the 1974 federal legislation (the Moss-Bennett Bill, or the Archeological Conservation Act) mandating the inclusion of archaeology in federally funded environmental impact assessments. This legislation formalized and routinized archaeological procedures in an early-1970s mode that persists throughout the United States today.

In the late 1960s, however, Binford's attempts to understand the morphological variation in Middle Paleolithic (Mousterian) assemblages in France resulted in his turning the full force of his research into ethnography in northern Alaska and elsewhere (Binford 1983:100–106). Largely, although not by any means entirely, owing to Binford's influence, ethnoarchaeology became a standard research focus during the 1970s and 1980s for Americanist and other prehistorians and is now an established, productive sub-subdiscipline.[7]

Meanwhile, in the late 1970s and the 1980s, the few anthropological archaeologists who were not entirely swept away by Binfordian, processualist New Archaeology with its heavy methodological emphasis received powerful reinforcement from British and European advocates of postmodernist (postprocessualist) directions in archaeology, wherein ontological issues were central. The most influential among these—at least in the anglophone world—is usually said to be Ian Hodder (1982a, 1985, 1991a, 1991b). Although Hodder strongly opposes nearly everything Binford advocates, and Binford wholeheartedly embraces their adversarial relations, both are deeply committed to ethnoarchaeology as an essential archaeological technique.[8] Obviously the foci of their ethnographic observations differ. Binford, to whom culture is humankind's extrasomatic means of sustaining themselves in a wide array of physical environments through space and time, documents the interplay of climatic, topographic, floral, faunal, geological, and other natural factors with human hunter-gatherer-forager subsistence and technology. Hodder, to whom culture is mental (symbolic), material, social behavioral, and the recursive relations among all three, takes note of the important roles played by artifacts in the complex, dynamic tensions characterizing human social and societal encounters. He insists on the primacy of archaeology as archaeology and archaeology as history, rather than archaeology as anthropology, and stresses an empathic, particularistic approach to understanding the past, much like that of R. G. Collingwood (1939, 1946).

Binford rejected the traditional anthropological culture concept (Tylor's, Kroeber's, Redfield's, Taylor's) because it was not appropriate to his goals and practice as an archaeologist, not even as an explicitly anthropological one. Hodder is committed to a fluid semiotic version of the traditional culture concept in which material items, artifacts, are full participants in the creation, deployment,

alteration, and fading away of symbol complexes. Hodder advocates a contextualist archaeology—as did Walter Taylor—but one in which artifacts are not just objectifications of culture, they *are* culture.

Like Binford's earlier explicit rejection of an archaeologically unworkable, mentalist-idealist concept of culture in favor of Leslie White's functionalist, neo-evolutionist formulation, Hodder's move is clever and strong; but it is in the opposite direction of Binford's. Hodder begins with the mentalist concept of culture, then takes archaeology from a completely peripheral position with regard to that concept and places it squarely in the center of symbolic-structuralist inquiry. Artifacts—their creation, use, and discard—are "symbols [i.e., Culture] in [social] action" (Hodder 1982a). Hence, archaeology with its primary focus on material culture is very centrally and strategically located in the arena of social theory.

Binford does not deny that artifacts had intrinsic meaning, semiotic content, for their makers and users, but this does not interest him. He rejects the traditional archaeologist's narrow focus on artifacts solely as markers of time and space, and he also rejects Taylor's focus on artifacts as mere *clues* to—objectifications of—cultural patterns in minds long gone, as he rejects the further implication that, no matter how hard they try, archaeologists who accept Taylor's program can never be more than cultural anthropologists manqué. Binford views artifacts and associated non–artifactual/ecofactual information as the essential means to interpret the interactive dynamics of paleoenvironments and human paleoeconomies in synchronic and diachronic detail, important work that only archaeologists can do. To make the artifacts and ecofacts comprising the archaeological record speak substantively to these issues, however, those artifacts and ecofacts must be approached via site formation processes and ethnoarchaeology, all of which Binford refers to as "middle range theory."

Hodder is not interested in matters of subsistence and brute livelihood. Rather, the intrinsic meanings with which the artifacts were imbued, the roles they once played in complex social actions and interactions, are central. He agrees with the symbolic anthropologists and other social theorists that symbol systems are what distinguish the human primate from all other beasts; those symbol systems include and are importantly shaped by material objects and architectural forms. Hodder approaches these issues of symbolic systems, past and present, via ethnoarchaeology (Hodder 1982a, 1982b).

So what is this thing called ethnoarchaeology, upon which the most influential representatives of contemporary Euro-American archaeology have converged? Ethnoarchaeology is one of the multitudinous ways in which archaeologists obtain information relevant to creating and expanding their inferences from archaeological data, and to making those inferences more plausible. Ethnoar-

chaeology can be as simple as collating descriptive and functional details about objects and processes archaeologists frequently encounter—stone scrapers, bone awls, sherds from wheel-made pots, metallic ore, and slag—from archival sources, such as old ethnographies, ancient histories, museum exhibits and collections; or from published and unpublished photos, drawings, paintings. But, classically, ethnoarchaeology means designing and carrying out ethnographic research in one or more contemporary locales, chosen for their relevance to some archaeological problem. Binford picked the Nunamiut of northern Alaska because he believed the caribou hunting techniques they practice in an arctic environment are relevant to his archaeological interpretation of Middle Paleolithic caribou hunters in arctic western Europe during the Late Pleistocene. The Nunamiut also instructed Binford about the dynamics of mobile, successful hunting-gathering groups in close touch with relevant natural resources in their landscapes. Binford's books and articles on lessons learned from the Nunamiut were, and are, highly influential among Americanist archaeologists, as is the other ethnoarchaeological or actualistic research he has done in the interests of middle-range theory: "the relationship between statics and dynamics, between behavior and material derivative."[9]

Hodder initially chose East Africa as a suitable place to investigate, for archaeological purposes, spatial patterning of artifacts in relation to ethnic boundaries (Hodder 1982a), but then he was distracted by other aspects of the contemporary scene in Baringo and turned to the study of material objects, symbol systems, and their intersection with archaeological interpretation. In examining ideas about spatial patterning of material culture, ideas that were widely held among archaeologists, Hodder found that his observations among several East African groups (the Njemps or Ilchamus, the Lonkewan Dorobo and Samburu, the Lozi, the Nuba) contradicted these ideas, or at any rate made them appear highly problematic. For example, most archaeologists would readily agree that material culture reflects the degree of interaction between groups: the more interaction, the greater the similarity of artifacts, and vice versa. Hodder noted that the nature of the interaction and the degree of competition between the groups play an important role in how basketry or styles of ear decoration are used "to constitute and reproduce ethnic group distinctions despite the long history and high degree of inter-ethnic flows" (Hodder 1982a:35). He also found that the symbolic status and functioning (the cultural meaning) of material items, such as the spears carried by young unmarried men and the calabashes decorated by young married women, determine the morphology and distribution of those items within and beyond a single society (Hodder 1982a: ch. 4, 1991a:109–119). Finally, he was strongly impressed with the fluidity and activity of symbolic loading on and in

objects of material culture, which are continually created but also continually act back on their creators, users, and perceivers to maintain or to disrupt culturally defined boundaries within and between social groups (young men versus old men, men versus women, Samburu versus Dorobo):

> material culture transforms structurally rather than reflects behaviorally ... refuse and burial patterns relate to social organization via such concepts as purity and pollution. ... So, how material culture relates to society depends on the ideological structures and symbolic codes.[10]

Hodder and other postprocessualists are also very concerned about the sociopolitical setting of contemporary archaeology. They urge archaeologists to be aware and self-critical about their biases and preconceptions, lest they unwittingly create a past in the image of their own present, a past that then helps legitimate contemporary social or political themes (Hodder 1991a: ch. 8; Shanks and Tilley 1988: ch. 7).

In sum, regarding the two men and their programs: one may, and should, quarrel with Binford's narrow "econothink" focus, as does Robert Hall (1977:499), who coined the word in reference to 1970s New Archaeology (see also Fritz 1978; Redman 1991). And one may object to the ahuman (no people in it) ecosystemic orientation (Brumfiel 1992), and the general theoretical underpinning of Binford's position (P. Watson 1986a, 1986b; Wylie 1985), but his influence has instigated and continues to impel a considerable amount of fruitful archaeological research. That is, Binford has been successful in defining goals and methods that many archaeologists find feasible and rewarding.

Much of the work of Hodder, his students, and his postprocessualist colleagues has been heavily dependent on ethnographic and historic information, and the method he advocates has yet to be comprehensively demonstrated for purely prehistoric data, although such a demonstration is perhaps forthcoming from the work he is currently directing at the famous site of Chatalhöyük in Turkey. Meanwhile, however, Hodder and other postprocessualists (by now a diverse group scattered through Europe, Australia, and North America) *have* certainly influenced contemporary archaeological practice in the heartland of the old Binfordian New Archaeology, and even in parts of the cultural resource management universe. There is much more interest now than even five years ago in semiotic approaches and in critical theory applied to the archaeological record and to the practice of archaeology. It is perhaps too soon to see a comprehensive synthesis emerging, but some manner of rapprochement is definitely underway (see Willey and Sabloff 1993:312–317).

Beginning in 1989, the Archeology Division of the American Anthropological Association requested a

prominent archaeologist to deliver a distinguished lecture at the yearly divisional get-together during the annual meeting of the association. Very conveniently for my purposes here, the four lectures published so far all address this very issue.[11] The four distinguished archaeological lecturers provide a series of authoritative opinions and examples concerning relations between archaeological theory—past and present—and the actual doing of archaeology (fieldwork, laboratory and library work, interpretation and publication). Each speaker focuses upon crucial themes in archaeological theory and practice, past and present, and provides suggestions about how to improve our present understanding of the past.

Redman (1991) begins the series by pointing out how much continuity there is between 1970s and 1980s archaeology. He also notes that although contextualist or postprocessualist archaeology and New Archaeology (processual archaeology) are obviously complementary, it is unlikely that there will be significant integration. He thinks coexistence is the best we can expect because a major impetus for postprocessualist critiques comes from fundamental differences between archaeologists with humanistic goals and those committed to science. He advocates making the most of both approaches, and recommends that "we encourage serious scholars to do what they are best at doing and to coordinate diverse thinking to form a loose but lasting alliance for new knowledge of the past and present" (Redman 1991:304).

In spite of Redman's well-founded reservations about explicit integration between processual and postprocessual archaeology, Bruce Trigger (1991) sets himself the task of indicating what such a synthesis might look like. He characterizes processual archaeology as neo-evolutionism and ecological determinism, counterposing it to postprocessualist emphases on "the contingent, psychological, and mental aspects of human experience" (Trigger 1991:553). In other words, the confrontation is between "reason" and "culture" (Trigger 1991:551, 554). Trigger then discusses external and internal constraints on human behavior: ecological, technological, and economic factors and forces being the most familiar external constraints, whereas cultural traditions made up of mental constructions—some unique to specific societies, some much more widespread cross-culturally—are the internal constraints. Because cultures are "historical precipitates," the invention of new concepts is not random, but is strongly affected by earlier concepts and their history. The best means archaeologists have to get at the cultural meanings of historically related archaeological evidence is to develop the direct historic approach, Trigger says (1991:562), admitting that we will probably never know the specific meaning that Upper Paleolithic cave art, say, had for its creators. Nevertheless, he urges archaeologists to embrace wholeheartedly "the study of cultural traditions as well as of ecological and systemic con-

straints . . . to take account of the constraints imposed on human behavior by cultural traditions as well as by rational accommodations to external factors," thus synthesizing the ecological determinism of processual archaeology with the historical particularism of postprocessual archaeology (Trigger 1991:562–563).

Trigger's optimism about the possibility for synthesis is encouraging, but he fails to give any consideration to the very significant problems involved in deciding what is "cultural" ("internal") and what is "natural" ("external") in ethnographically or archaeologically documented societies. Hence, this part of his discussion misses the whole point of the anthropological enterprise, which is to obtain knowledge about that very conjunction: How is it that human individuals and human societies—past and present—intricately blend and intertwine nature and culture?

Brumfiel's distinguished lecture (1992) is a clear and eloquent argument about the importance of paying attention to social change in ways that the dominant ecosystemic orientation of New Archaeology discouraged or disallowed. She is especially concerned with gender, class, and faction, and argues three points:

> First, the ecosystem theorists' emphasis upon whole populations and whole adaptive behavioral systems obscures the visibility of gender, class, and faction in the prehistoric past. Second, an analysis that takes account of gender, class, and faction can explain many aspects of the prehistoric record that the ecosystem perspective cannot explain. Third, an appreciation for the importance of gender, class, and faction in prehistory compels us to reject the ecosystem-theory view that cultures are adaptive systems. Instead, we must recognize that culturally based behavioral "systems" are the composite outcomes of negotiation between positioned social agents pursuing their goals under both ecological and social constraints. [Brumfiel 1992:551]

In the body of the address, Brumfiel succeeds in showing how thoughtful archaeologists could actually begin to forge the synthesis Trigger speaks of, or at least the "loose but lasting alliance" Redman hopes for.

Cowgill's distinguished lecture to the Archeology Division (1993) is an even more explicit attempt to bring together and build upon the most successful aspects of processual archaeology and the most exciting promises of postprocessual archaeology. In describing the achievements and shortcomings of processual archaeology, Cowgill notes that one characteristic of most archaeologists is underconceptualization of the past at different levels: On the lowest level there are no people at all, just pots or potsherds, projectile points, or other artifacts. At the second level, people are present but they have no individuality; they are Ruth Tringham's "faceless blobs" (Tringham 1991). At the third level, people are "rational actors." Cowgill points out that we badly need a fourth level, where people not only find food, shelter, mates, allies, and enemies while creating, using, modifying, losing, breaking,

and discarding material things, but also these people perceive, they think, they plan, they make decisions, and in general they are ideationally active. In the rest of his paper, Cowgill discusses how archaeologists might hope to approach the ideational realms of prehistoric peoples by trying harder to get at ancient ideation; by becoming more sophisticated about direct historical approaches (here he obviously agrees with one of Trigger's points); and by working imaginatively and responsibly to develop what he calls "Middle Range Theory of the Mind." By this he means, in part, seeking out widespread aspects or principles of symbolization, attempting to link design properties (in art styles or architecture) with social features and/or culturally specific cognitive maps, and in general taking seriously what he dubs "psychoarchaeology."

What is most interesting and heartening to me about this suite of distinguished lectures is that all four explicitly, creatively, and thoughtfully address the major schism in contemporary Americanist archaeology, and all four explicitly, creatively, and thoughtfully recommend ways to bridge the schism at various points, as well as ways to advance archaeological knowledge using methods from both sides of the fault line.

Another very promising development is the new generation of ethnoarchaeological fieldworkers who are undertaking and completing longer-lasting, finer-grained investigations than those of Binford and Hodder. Of many good examples I note just three here: the 30-year trajectory of ethnoarchaeology among the San of Botswana from the work of Yellen and Brooks to that of Hitchcock, Weissner, and Kent; Longacre's 20-year-long Kalinga ceramics project in northern Luzon; Herbich and Dietler's ten years of research on Luo pottery and on Luo settlement biographies in western Kenya.[12]

As regards the other focus of this paper, is there an edifying conclusion to be drawn from comparing the odysseys of the culture concept in Americanist sociocultural anthropology/ethnology and in archaeology? Yes, there is. In each subdiscipline, certain practitioners took that concept very seriously, not just as a more or less meaningless piece of antiquated anthropological dogma. Because archaeologists of the 1930s did not attempt to operationalize the prevailing culture concept, but rather ignored it while absorbed in creating time-space frameworks essential to North American prehistory, Walter Taylor (1948) made a strenuous effort to align Americanist archaeology with Americanist sociocultural anthropology by taking the traditional, Tylorean culture concept as a central tenet in his argument. He had very little immediate influence on his archaeological colleagues, in large part because that culture concept could not be implemented or operationalized in ways congruent with archaeological concerns of the 1940s and 1950s. Binford enjoyed much greater success in the 1960s and 1970s by insisting with Taylor that archae-

ology must be anthropology, while highlighting a non-Tylorean, nontraditional concept of culture, that of Leslie White. Hodder has gone back to something like the traditional culture concept but modified it to place artifacts, architecture, and archaeology in the center of anthropology and social theory, while explicitly rejecting Phillips's conclusion that "archaeology is anthropology or it is nothing." "Archaeology is archaeology," he and the postprocessualists insist, even as portions of their program are being incorporated into both academic and cultural resource management Americanist anthropological archaeology, partly to reinforce certain minority themes present there before the postprocessualist movement, and partly to further syntheses between processual and postprocessual goals in archaeology.[13]

The revisionists in sociocultural anthropology and ethnology eventually found that the traditional culture concept was not very useful to them, so they modified it to suit their purposes. Many of them, past and present, are quite explicit about this, and many of them were quite successful at initiating productive research lines based upon their new formulations.[14] In sociocultural anthropology over the past 40 to 50 years, there has accordingly been a proliferation in approaches to culture from the earlier essentialist concept to cultures as configurations of a psychological sort, as a series of distinctive cognitive maps, as symbolic and/or adaptive systems, as infinitely varying surface phenomena that may reveal deep truths about universal human thought processes, as social knowledge networks, and as trait complexes defined and studied within neo-Darwinian frameworks.

Does this mean that the center of anthropology—belief by all anthropologists in some widely sanctioned variant of a unified culture concept—has been destroyed? If so, does the lack of unanimity about culture—what it is and where it is and whether it matters—mean that anthropology itself as a holistic discipline is, or is about to be, no more?

More than 20 years ago, that was Rodney Needham's prediction for the very near future about academic anthropology (Needham 1970). He thought that pieces of anthropology would be redistributed among neighboring disciplines. That was Wolf's conclusion 14 years ago (Wolf 1980), the theme picked up by Flannery in his 1981 American Anthropological Association Distinguished Lecture; and apparently James Clifford (1986:4) was of the same opinion eight years ago when he remarked that " 'Man' as *telos* for a whole discipline" has disintegrated. Clifford Geertz, in his *Current Anthropology* interview with Richard Handler (Handler 1991) says 50 to 75 years from now academic anthropology departments will no longer exist because anthropology will have evolved into several different disciplines.

Perhaps these conclusions are correct; perhaps general, integrated anthropology is already or soon will be

gone. Although I care deeply about this issue, owing to my 1950s imprinting in holistic anthropology, I cannot get too worked up over the disintegration prediction. Anthropologists have been worrying about this for at least 40 years and recently went through another bout of explicit fretting in the pages of the *Anthropology Newsletter* (see Givens and Skomal 1992). Those who contributed to the discussion are pro-integration and pro–four fields. Givens and Skomal (1993) conclude that a four-field holistic anthropology is, at the present time, both myth and reality.

Another reason that I manage to remain calm in the face of savage attacks on the old-time culture concept, attacks supposed by some to mark or presage the disintegration of anthropology, is that the sociocultural subdiscipline, and, ultimately, all of anthropology benefits from the culture conceptual shifts briefly referred to above. In sociocultural anthropology, as in archaeology, each new research trajectory counterposed to some aspect of the traditional culture concept results in new data, new insights, and new knowledge. Moreover, the old-time culture concept still plays an integrating role as a central reference point even for the radically revisionist anthropologists, for whom it is variously a bête noire, a punching bag, or a springboard to alternative perspectives on the human condition, past and present.

Finally, the 1950s characterization of anthropology is true enough and strong enough to bear the weight of most contemporary, intradisciplinary construction and reconstruction. Anthropology is still the only human science all about humankind, from four million years ago to the present: Who are we? Where did we come from? What happened to us between origin and now? What is the scope in all its compelling detail of past and contemporary human physical and cultural variation, and what does that variation mean in biological, social, and cultural terms?

No other discipline has ever asked these questions about the entire spatial and chronological sweep of the human past and present, as well as about the particulars concerning specific portions of that sweep. And certainly no other scholarly band ever set out to actually obtain answers to such questions. In spite of episodic skeptical crises within anthropology, and a chronic agoraphobia about where our center is and where our boundaries are, anthropology is still here—even Geertz gives it another half-century: an undisciplined discipline, an unruly semi-aggregate, but one with research methods and research results of enormous global importance and great intrinsic interest.

Notes

many lively discussions about contemporary developments in sociocultural anthropology, and to Richard A. Watson for commentaries on postmodernism in literature and elsewhere. David Browman and Richard Fox kindly supplied important reference material on short notice; a chance remark of Jean Ensminger's was the inspiration for the direction taken by this essay. My account of the culture concept in archaeology originated during a short course on archaeological theory that Don Fowler invited me to teach in the Cultural Resource Management program at the University of Nevada–Reno in January 1992, and was developed further during successive meetings of a seminar on archaeological theory at Washington University, St. Louis: I owe a special debt of gratitude to the students in those classes. Prepublication revisions to this paper were made at the Camargo Foundation, Cassis, France; I am grateful to Michael Pretina, director, and Anne-Marie Franco, administrative assistant, for their support.

1. Dunnell 1980; Gumerman and Phillips 1978; Meltzer 1979; Wiseman 1980.

2. Chippindale 1989:69; Clarke 1968:13; Hodder 1991a: ch. 9; Shanks and Tilley 1988:213, item 6.5; Shennen 1986; Tilley 1989: especially 110.

3. Barth 1994; Bernard 1994; Bloch 1994; Goodenough 1994; Harris 1994; Keesing 1994; Kottak and Colson 1994; Marcus 1994; Sahlins 1994; Salzman 1994; Scheper-Hughes 1994; Strauss and Quinn 1994; Tambiah 1994; Tishkov 1994; Wolf 1994; see also A. Watson 1992–94; J. Watson 1994; R. A. Watson 1964; R. R. Watson 1978; R. S. Watson 1994.

4. Bennett 1943; Binford 1962; Kluckhohn 1940; Taylor 1948.

5. See also Kroeber 1948:295–296; Kroeber and Waterman 1931:11.

6. Caldwell 1959; P. Watson, LeBlanc, and Redman 1971, 1984; R. A. Watson 1972.

7. Gould 1978; Kleindienst and P. Watson 1956; Kramer 1979, 1994; Longacre 1974; P. Watson 1979; Yellen 1977.

8. Binford 1987, 1988; Binford and Stone 1988; Hodder 1988, 1989, 1991a; P. Watson 1991.

9. Binford 1976, 1978a, 1978b, 1980, 1981, 1982. Quotation comes from Binford 1981:29; see also parts 3 and 4 in Binford 1989.

10. Hodder 1982a:210–211; see also pp. 155–170 for his detailed discussion of bone refuse disposal and burial customs among the Nuba.

11. Redman 1991; Trigger 1991; Brumfiel 1992; Cowgill 1993.

12. Kramer 1994 provides references and commentaries on the San work; see Longacre 1991 for overviews of the Kalinga research, and of other work in ceramic ethnoarchaeology, some of which long predates the era of New Archaeology; Herbich and Dietler's project is summarized in Herbich 1987 and Herbich and Dietler 1991.

13. See, for example, Fritz 1978; Hall 1976, 1977; Kehoe and Kehoe 1974; Marshack 1972.

14. For earlier and more recent examples, see Aunger 1992, in press; Benedict 1934, especially ch. 3; Geertz 1973:4–5; Fox 1989; Harris 1964; Kroeber 1952: part 1; Lévi-Strauss 1955, 1962; Tyler 1969.

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