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ETHNICITY: PROBLEM AND FOCUS IN ANTHROPOLOGY

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Quite suddenly, with little comment or ceremony, ethnicity is an ubiquitous presence. Even a brief glance through titles of books and monographs over the past few years indicates a steadily accelerating acceptance and application of the terms "ethnicity" and "ethnic" to refer to what was before often subsumed under "culture," "cultural," or "tribal." New journals have appeared using the terms in their titles, and special programs of ethnic studies are showing up in university catalogs. Almost any cultural-social unit, indeed any term describing particular structures of continuing social relations, or sets of regularized events now can be referred to as an "ethnic" this or that. This can be seen in the proliferation of titles dealing with ethnic groups, ethnic identity, ethnic boundaries, ethnic conflict, ethnic cooperation or competition, ethnic politics, ethnic stratification, ethnic integration, ethnic consciousness, and so on. Name it and there is in all likelihood someone who has written on it using "ethnic" or "ethnicity" qualifiers to describe his or her special approach to the topic.

Is it a fad? Is it simply old wine (culture) in new bottles? Is it merely a transparent attempt by anthropologists to adapt to "ethnic" studies, dropping terms like "tribe" because those we study find it invidious when applied to themselves? In making such an adjustment, is anthropology simply jettisoning its own traditions to save its rapport? Is it, in other words, not anything more than a means, a shift in jargon, to achieve old ends? Or is it, as Kroeber once said disparagingly of "structure" when it burst onto his scene years ago, that we like the sound of the words—"ethnic," "ethnicity" —that they connote a posture toward our work or some hoped for achievements we are striving to make part of our message, our quest?

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Possibly it is all of these. But Kroeber was wrong about "structure"; it wasn't just a momentary fad. It went on to replace the older term "pattern" and developed into a, perhaps the, central concept of the discipline. Something about "structure" reflected more adequately what we had previously meant by pattern; it implied the newfound rigor of detailed field studies in the 1940s and 1950s and indicated the directions toward which we were moving. So too, I believe, with ethnicity. Certainly it encompasses problems and foci from the past. But it does more; it represents newer foci not easily equatable to older emphases, not simply conditioned by the same factors that "produce" or "cause" or make up culture and tribe. "Ethnicity," like "structure" before it, represents a shift toward new theoretical and empirical concerns in anthropology. In this sense, "ethnicity" signals a change that should be understood from several angles—historical, theoretical, and ideological.

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The Problem in Perspective

With only a few exceptions (3, 21, 32, 43, 49, 50), anthropologists have assiduously avoided any central concern with problems of ethnicity.[1] Despres (14) has examined 13 of the leading textbooks of anthropology from 1916 to 1971 and found no index listings for "ethnic," "ethnic group." Ethnology, ethnocentricism yes, but "ethnic" if it appears at all is without definition or sufficient importance to be given an index entry. After 1971, however, things change. Beals & Hoijer (2) and Harris (22) both have index items mentioning "ethnic" and discussions of "minorities" and "ethnic populations."

Analyzing this trend, Despres (14) has suggested that it may be due to the impact of Barth's (1) influential book on ethnic groups and boundaries. But this begs the question. Why should Barth (1) and others (12, 33) have been well received when theoretical and empirical works that came out earlier were avoided or considered peripheral to the major theoretical concerns of the discipline?

Certainly it was not for want of awareness. The fieldwork greats of the 1940s and '50s knew they were dealing with what we now call ethnic groups; they knew they were often as not creating arbitrary and artificial boundaries. This was especially true among the nonstate peoples such as *the* Tiv or *the* Nuer or *the* Tallensi. In such cases, and they are the majority, the anthropologist tried as best he or she could to provide a name for the "tribe" even when the group faded imperceptibly into other named groups more or

[1]These points and the references dealing with them are taken from Despres (14, pp. 188–89). In this same piece, Despres also provides useful review of the anthropological literature and what he sees as its main currents of thought.

less similar and was broken up into named subgroupings that had strong we/they feelings dividing them. Such problems were partly resolved by the concept of the stateless society with its segmentary opposition between internal divisions that could unite (variously) against outside foes, then divide and remain in opposition afterwards. However, what about possible cultural differences between internal divisions? What about alliances and oppositions and obligations that cut across the named ethnic entity into other nearby units with distinct "tribal" identities but roughly similar cultures?

At more complex levels of scale, the same problem appeared in reverse, albeit less severely. The multiethnic nature of complex chieftaincies and states was too obvious to avoid. Still, many of us were led by theoretical concerns to underplay the multiethnic quality of the societies we studied and chose one dominant ethnic group as our main focus. Thus, I wrote of the Kanuri of Bornu (7), knowing and reporting that ethnicity itself has always been one of the dimensions of social rank in the society (8). Where this was not the case, as with Leach's (34) work on Highland Burma or in studies of modern interactions in multiethnic societies, such works were in a sense peripheral to the traditional thrust of the discipline. This was, in effect, to understand assumedly homogeneous sociocultural units as entities, the relations of their parts to one another and to the whole, and the relation of the whole and its parts to their physical and sociocultural environments. Those who did not look for or create homogeneous settings or could not were forced by their data to admit that multiethnicity was central to the understanding of social process and structure as they had recorded it in the field. But throughout the 1940s and 1950s and into the 1960s, such studies were still in the minority within anthropology. The main concern was to understand non-Western societies as isolates (ethnography) or as a universe of such units (cross-cultural comparison).

But things change and ethnicity is moving onto center stage. The reasons are complex, but I would choose two as major determinants. These are first the unit problem and secondly the problem of context.

Hinted at above, the unit problem highlights what others (14, 23, 31, 47) have called the subjective/objective issue in ethnicity theory. Should ethnic units be isolated on the basis of social-cultural categories and analysis? Or should they be seen as valid when they reflect only those loyalties and ascriptions made by a people about themselves. In traditional ethnography, this issue is often noted, then bypassed. By contrast, ethnicity opens up the question of categorization by nonmembers (the objectivist emphasis) as opposed to a person's own identity or identification with a particular ethnic group (the subjectivist emphasis). Some workers (1) stress the subjectivist perspective; others (20, 31) try to include both categorization and identity

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in their conceptualization. Categorization is what anthropologists do when they name a "tribe." It is also done by all outsiders. Group X may see itself as A in specific circumstances and be labeled as B by others. A and B are invariably related but not necessarily congruent. Thus, Kanuri people refer to congeries of non-Muslim peoples to the southeast as *Kirdi.* But Kirdi see themselves as a number of quite distinctive ethnic groups. The problem becomes more complex when it is realized that in Kanuri-dominated towns such people often accept the dominant group's term and claim they are Kirdi. Only much closer questioning elicits their home-based subjective identifications.

Ethnographers as outsiders must also categorize. Earlier fieldworkers decided on the basis of their own training, their theoretical problems, and the distribution of cultural traits in a region who were and were not Dinka, Tiv, Dogrib, Nuer, or Kanuri. The views of the people as to who they were was recorded and some attempt was made to link the fieldworker's unit to the local conception. However, if there was a lack of agreement, it was noted, then largely ignored (44).

In cross-cultural research, problems associated with sociocultural units have become a central methodological issue. Naroll (37, 38) has tried to resolve it in two ways: (*a*) by asking what factors are usually associated with the fieldworker's (objectivist) delineation of a "cultunit," and (*b*) by developing techniques for coping with situations in which separately named and described units are in fact differently named outgrowths of a common culture. The latter causes autocorrelational errors (Galton's problem) that Naroll feels must be dealt with if valid generalizations are to emerge from crosscultural survey techniques.

Galton's problem includes the notion that an ethnography generally does not isolate a unique system or one that is sufficiently differentiated to be a separate unit. But then, what does? To resolve this issue, Naroll (37) has derived six factors from the work of ethnographers based on the distribution of traits generally used for categorizing, namely, political organization, language, ecological adjustment, territorial contiguity, and local community structure. These he claims are the most often used correlates of differentiated "cultunits." But no set of criteria fits all cases. Instead, they vary with societal complexity, regional and continental contexts, the ethnographer, and probably with time as well. In the end, Naroll's criteria do not solve the problem. They are instead useful techniques which attempt to set conventions for coding and comparing cultures. What the reality-status of such "cultunits" is, how they fit into a changing world and a developing anthropological epistemology, is left unresolved.

The problem is most dramatically raised by Southall's (46) attempt to reevaluate the reality-status of Nuer and Dinka. He records how Evans-

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Pritchard (16) chose the name because it was "hallowed by a century of use" (p. 463) but was in fact a term used by the Dinka to refer to the Nuer who in actual fact call themselves Naath. The Dinka call themselves Jieng, and both of these are made up of a number of named groups whose linguistic and cultural unity and diversity is still unknown. Nor do we know enough about them to know whether there was ever a sense of ethnic unity that pervaded all Nuer or all Dinka "until the colonial administration told them (who) they were . . ." (46, p. 463). People from one Nuer (or Dinka) subgroup often did not know the names of all other subgroups in their own ethnic unit and could be treated as alien strangers when among one of the other groups of the cluster. Southall then goes on to ask how Dinka and Nuer might have differentiated from one another and from each of their own subgroupings. By using a subjective approach to widely accepted ethnic or "tribal" entities, he shows them to be both imposed from outside and to be the result of complex processes of differentiation, all of which went unremarked because Evans-Pritchard and Lienhardt both adopted the accepted colonial labels attached to groupings of peoples in the southern Sudan.

The unit problem then has made us aware that the named ethnic entities we accept, often unthinkingly, as basic givens in the literature are often arbitrarily or, even worse, inaccurately imposed. Barth's (1) contribution was in seeing this problem and deciding to view ethnicity as a subjective process of group identification in which people use ethnic labels to define themselves and their interaction with others. Southall (46) went even further to suggest that the confusion over ethnic labels should provide a key to the evolution of social-cultural differences. It ought not, therefore, to be glossed over by a naming convention or a set of coding techniques. Instead, the ethnicity concept suggests that there is a problem here whose solution will take us toward an understanding of specific culture histories and general evolutionary processes of culture growth and change.

The context problem is both ideological and historical. Anthropology has always stressed context as a basic methodological tenet. Behavior, material culture, beliefs, values, taboos, are all to be understood in their own contexts, otherwise their meaning and significance escapes us. Once the new states of the third world emerged, once American Indian groups, Inuit (Eskimo), and others saw themselves as parts of larger wholes and used this as a major feature of their own group identities, then multiethnic contexts became essential to the understanding of these groups. The older units, culture, tribe and so on had been excised from context because (*a*) they often were isolated (indeed, the more so the better!) and (*b*) we assumed an analogy between the "tribal" unit and an aboriginal culture of the same structural type. The assumption was useful and still is for comparative and

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evolutionary studies. But the study of contemporary peoples in a complex world has now clearly shifted from ethnic isolates, "tribes" if you will, to one in which the interrelations between such groups in rural, urban, and industrial settings within and between nation-states is a key, possibly *the* key element in their lives.

In ideological terms, "tribes" are a fundamentally colonial concept derived from the Latin term *tribus* meaning barbarians at the borders of the empire. This etymology reflects and explains the significance of the word in Western culture, its link to imperialist expansionism and the associated and overgeneralized dichotomization of the world's peoples into civilized and uncivilized—the "raw" and the "cooked" of human historical experience. Unfortunately, anthropology has become the Western technical-scientific vehicle for the development of this invidious distinction, describing, tabulating, and generalizing about the "raw" side of the dichotomy. In more recent times, the pejorative and atavistic quality of the word has been rejected by third world scholars who call anthropologists to task for having accepted such a distinction in the first place. From their perspective they find little difference between their own internal socioculture divisions and those of the wealthier societies. Yet ethnic divisions in their societies are "tribal," those in ours are "ethnic." A smaller, more comparable, and a more equitable world demands of us one term to describe similar distinctions across all societies.

In the table below, the shift is shown in outline form. The "boundary" and "system" features of the shift are more theoretical and are dealt with in the discussion to follow. The table shows, however, that the shift from "tribe" to "ethnicity" involves fundamental changes in anthropological perspectives. It is much more far reaching a change than a simple shift from one term to a more acceptable one.

Table 1 The shift from "tribe" to "ethnicity"

	Unit term	
	"Tribe"	"Ethnic"
Basic epistemological features	isolated	nonisolated
	primitive–atavistic	contemporary
	non–Western	universally applicable
	objectivist emphasis	subjectivist emphasis or both objectivist and subjectivist
	bounded units	a unit only in relation to others, boundaries
	systemic	shift
		degree of systemic quality varies

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The Definitional Problem

The qualities discussed above are predefinitional or what I refer to as an "approach" (9, p. vii), i.e. they describe assumptions about what is the most important aspect of a problem. The table is intended to demonstrate that the shift from "tribe" to "ethnic" is a fundamental one involving changes in our basic paradigms and postures concerning the nature and shape of things we study. It does not, however, say much about what ethnicity is, and it is to that task we must now turn.

Most people using the term "ethnicity" find definitions unnecessary. Isajiw (27) looked at 65 studies of ethnicity in sociology and anthropology and found only 13 that defined the term. My own experience has been much the same. Writers generally take it for granted that the term refers to a set of named groupings singled out by the researcher as ethnic units. Membership in such groups (defined subjectively and/or objectively) are then shown to have an effect on, or correlation with, one or more dependent variable(s). In this sense, ethnicity is widely used as a significant structural phenomenon. But that is hardly a definition.

In sociology where the concept has had its major use up to now, ethnicity is seen as a set of sociocultural features that differentiate ethnic groups from one another. Max Weber (52) defined it as a sense of common descent extending beyond kinship, political solidarity vis-à-vis other groups, and common customs, language, religion, values, morality, and etiquette. In anthropology, Barth (1) summarizes anthropological definitions as usually having four elements: 1. a biologically self-perpetuating population; 2. a sharing of culture values and forms; 3. a field of communication and interaction; 4. a grouping that identifies itself and is identified by others as constituting a category different from other categories of the same type. He criticizes anthropology for having isolated the ethnic unit conceptually so that cultural and social forms are seen as relatively isolated outcomes of local ecological adaptation. This assumes some kind of continuity of the unit as an entity over time and a relation to a particular location. Empirically this may or may not be true with differential effects on cultural and social forms.

To go beyond this, Barth (1, p. 13) uses the "most general identity, presumptively determined by . . . origin and background." Ethnic groups are then those widest scaled subjectively utilized modes of identification used in interactions among and between groups. The location and reasons for the maintenance of a we/they dichotomization becomes the crucial goal of research and theorizing. Vincent (49), using a Weberian definition from Smith & Kronberg (44), adds a crucial element. By focusing more squarely on the political aspects of ethnicity, she sees what Fried (18) has already

noted for the concept "tribe." Ethnicity is not a "most general" or widest scaled identity but rather it can be narrowed or broadened in boundary terms in relation to the specific needs of political mobilization.

More recently, Kunstadter (29) has tried to differentiate types of ethnicity. Using ethnicity as a generic notion, he distinguishes three varieties: ethnic group, ethnic identity, and ethnic category. By ethnic group he means a set of individuals with mutual interests based on shared understandings and common values. How much is shared is an empirical question, and common interests may lead to a degree of organization. By ethnic identity, he refers to a process by which individuals are assigned to one ethnic group or another. It therefore implies boundaries, their creation, maintenance, and change. Ethnic categories, says Kunstadter, are classes of people based on real or presumed cultural features. It involves more or less standardization of behavior toward the category by others in the society. Ethnic categories may or may not correspond to ethnic groups, even when they share the same name, depending on where and when the categorization is being made, and by whom (14).

Anthropologists have not, in their conceptualization of ethnicity, taken up the Wirthian (53) tradition in which the indicators of ethnicity are dispensed with as trivial. Instead, ethnicity is seen as one among several outcomes of group interactions in which there is differential power between dominant and minority groups. From this perspective, ethnicity is an aspect of stratification rather than a problem on its own (cf 43). As we shall see, this is more a theoretical issue than a definitional one.

To summarize, ethnicity, as presently used in anthropology, expresses a shift to multicultural, multiethnic interactive contexts in which attention is focused on an entity—the ethnic group—which is marked by some degree of cultural and social commonality. Membership criteria by members and nonmembers may or may not be the same, and the creation and maintenance of the ethnic boundary within which members play according to similar and continuing rules (1) is a major aspect of the phenomenon.

The structural features however, are still there. Terms like "group," "category," "boundary," connote an actual entity, and Barth's concern with maintenance tends to reify it still more. On the other hand, Vincent (49) warns us that it is inherently a mercurial fluency that evades analysis if it is stopped and turned into a thing. The situational quality and multiple identities associated with ethnicity lead me to see it as a set of sociocultural diacritics which define a shared identity for members and nonmembers. The diacritics most often used are those discussed by Isaacs (26) in his analysis of the roots and effects of ethnicity in the modern world (physical appearance, name, language, history, religion, nationality), although to be more exact the variety, numbers, and kinds of such markers are as numerous as

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humankind's capacity to attach significance to any and all objects and behaviors that provide some common characteristics for group membership.

To get round the reification problem, I would define ethnicity as a *series* of nesting dichotomizations of inclusiveness and exclusiveness. The process of assigning persons to groups is both subjective and objective, carried out by self and others, and depends on what diacritics are used to define membership. The nesting quality is similar to that of a social distance scale in which the greater the number of diacritical markers, the closer one gets to a particular person and/or his kin group. It differs from a social distance scale because ethnicity is an historically derived lumping of sets of diacritics at varying distances outward from the person, so that each of these lumpings acts as a potential boundary or nameable grouping that can be identified with or referred to in ethnic terms, given the proper conditions. It is similar to a social distance scale, however, in that the number of diacritics decreases inversely with the scale of inclusiveness. Diacritics that take in the largest numbers of people are used at the most inclusive levels of scale, while those that distinguish at lower scale levels become more important when more localized or smaller scaled distinctions are being made. The division into an exclusive grouping is always done in relation to significant others whose exclusion at any particular level of scale creates the we/they dichotomy.

As writers since Max Weber have noted, the diacritics always have about them an aura of descent. Even when acquired by assimilation, they are quickly incorporated into the microculture of individuals and families as part of their own heritage and identity. Once acquired by whatever process, such identity is then passed down the generations for as long as the grouping has some viable significance to members and nonmembers.

Ethnicity, then, is a set of descent-based cultural identifiers used to assign persons to groupings that expand and contract in inverse relation to the scale of inclusiveness and exclusiveness of the membership. The important point is that ethnic boundaries are not, as Barth (1) implies, stable and continuing. They may be in some cases and may not be in others. They are multiple and include overlapping sets of ascriptive loyalties that make for multiple identities (20, 23).

Situational Ethnicity

In his recent attempt to develop a theory of ethnicity, Despres (14) admits that so far conceptions and theories are too ambiguous to go much beyond Barth's (1) formulation. As already noted, Barth sees ethnicity as a continuing ascription which classifies a person in terms of his most general, most inclusive identity. It structures interaction between co-ethnics and between

persons of different ethnic groups and is dependent on cultural differentials that persist. The problem with Barth's conception has already been discussed. Group A can be labeled A in relation to B, C, and D. But among themselves, A people are keenly aware of subgroup differences in which groups X, Y, and Z all understand the ethnic distinctions among themselves and the possibility of greater or lesser differences in the future, depending upon a large range of factors.

Ethnicity is first and foremost situational (cf 20, 36, 39). Using our definition, the interactive situation is a major determinant of the level of inclusiveness employed in labeling self and others. As already noted, "the same person can be categorized according to different criteria of relevance in different situations" (20, p. 192). In one situation it may be occupation, in another education, in a third, ethnicity. The labels are applied in the situation in order to explain behavior. A particular action or appearance is referred to as "ethnic," or meaning is attributed to actions because of the ethnic label available for application. This label then infers other culturally related characteristics and provides an explanation, an origin in socialization and tradition concerning the behavior of actors. A similar set of categories can be based on nonethnic labeling, e.g. education or occupation. The scale level of confrontation in the situation generally determines the scale level of ethnic inclusiveness. The label used provides self and/or others with a set of features that explain what to expect, where such behavior comes from, and often as not how one should react to such a syndrome.

The problem is closely illustrated in African settings in which segmental named groupings based on descent cut across "tribal" units based on locality. Working in Bura-speaking areas of northeastern Nigeria, I have found two major subethnic groups, Pabir (centralized) and Bura (uncentralized), that traditionally shared most but not all their cultural traits (10). Each is subdivided into clans and major segments with putative descent ties becoming distant and dimmer with increased scale. Clans are strongly identified with groupings that at times seem to vie with larger categories such as Pabir, Bura, Kanuri, Hausa, or Marghi. Yet clans cut across presently accepted ethnic units (tribes) and were tied to historic migratory patterns westward from the Cameroon mountains associated with population expansion. Today the major town of the area, Biu, is becoming urbanized. Locals also talk of "Biu people" as a special category who have common interests and a developing commonality of semimodernized ways. At the same time, the contemporary period has witnessed great changes in the traditional Bura religious baseline so that Pabir are (mostly) Muslim and Bura (mostly) Christian. Islam is spreading, however, at the expense of Christianity, and the division of the area is also seen in religious terms that have many

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cultural correlates but which are not clearly congruent with Pabir/Bura distinctions. If we take into account the steady spread of Hausa language and dress patterns in the 1960s and '70s, the situation becomes even more complex. Depending upon the situation, a person from the area can, among others not mentioned here, identify himself as Pabir or Bura, by clan or subclan or minor lineage segment, by village or town, by religion, by middle-belt status in the Muslim north, or by northerner status in the larger Nigerian setting in relation to southerners.

In operational terms, situational ethnicity can be observed in the interaction of two or more persons from separate groups in which labels are used to signify the sociocultural differences between them. It results from multiple memberships in differently scaled sociocultural groupings, one of which is used to signify the differences between actors in the situation. However, the situational character of ethnicity is only a starting point for theorizing. As long as we believe that the emergence and persistence of ethnic differences is not a random event in any particular instance, we must be prepared to ask what factors determine its qualities and variation.

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Ethnic Relations

Ethnicity has no existence apart from interethnic relations. It is in this sense that Hoetink (23) describes it as "segmentary" since the use of ethnic labels depends upon a proclaimed difference between groups. Some writers (e.g. 18) suggest that the labeling reflects political relations when groups compete for scarce resources. Others qualify this point (e.g. 49) by noting that for the most part ethnicity does not come into play in interactive situations because it is often in no one's interest to utilize this particular form of status delineation. The degree to which ethnicity enters into intergroup relations is, therefore, a variable. What determines the salience of this quality and how it in turn affects intergroup relations is what defines the field of interethnic relations.

Leaving aside for the moment how and why salience occurs, the ethnographic record includes a bewildering array of interethnic relations stemming from "silent trade" to colonial expansion and the incorporation of migrant populations. To simplify these materials, we can classify the conditions of interaction in terms of the nature and degree of contact between them and the relative power available to each in the interactive situation. If, for sake of brevity, we reduce these variations to dichotomous categories, then interethnic relations can be described as fragmented, indirect, balanced, and stratified as seen in Table 2. These polar types are distinctively different; but as the classification criteria change, e.g. from unequal to equal or from less to more contact, then intermediate types or conditions of interaction are reported.

Table 2 Types of interethnic relations

Interactive situation	Power relations: Equal	Power relations: Unequal
Groups in contact in face-to-face interactions	Balanced	Stratified
Groups remain relatively or totally isolated from each other	Fragmented	Indirect

Fragmented relations between ethnic groups occur when the groups involved have little or no necessary reasons for interaction. Conditions for such isolation are low population density and self-sufficiency within local groups. Empirically, only hunting bands and camp groups approach such conditions. Kinship relations extend across local groupings, creating degrees of social distance based on marriage and descent; and there is increasing mistrust, hostility, and fear the greater the distinctions between groups in sociocultural terms. Relations among Eskimo groups and between Eskimo and Indian groups were of this sort, as were relations between Shoshoni and Plains peoples.

Indirect relations occur when groups are unequal and contacts between them are infrequent. In such instances, the groups live in clearly separate and mutually isolated contexts relating to one another through special institutions or functionaries that allow for peaceful interchange. The same institutions also restrict the dominance capabilities of the stronger group, providing the weaker group with more autonomy than would otherwise be the case if the groups were in contact more frequently. The "silent trade" of West Africa exemplifies such relations. In Bornu, the dominant Kanuri had such relations with Budduma peoples of Lake Chad. The latter lived on islands in the lake and traded only intermittently with Kanuri. Kanuri power was restricted because they could not get to Budduma home villages on the waters of the lake, and much of the trade and other relations were carried out through a few Budduma "big men" or local chiefs who emerged in the nineteenth century when the Kanuri capital moved close to the lake.

Balanced relations between ethnic groups occur in equilibrium situations of symbiosis and homeostatic interactions described by field workers in the classic structure-function mode of analysis. Relations between nomadic pastoralists and agriculturalists, between coastal and interior peoples in New Guinea, or among and between islanders in Melanesia, or between mountain Konjo dwellers in Uganda and Amba lowlanders, or between

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different agricultural peoples of the Nigerian middle belt (Kagoro and Tacherak), all exemplify such relations. In theoretical terms, the elements are remarkably similar. The groups involved live near each other or share the same territory. Each has some distinctive subsistence and productive practices due to historically determined cultural differences or ecology or both. This results in ethnically based differential productivity that supports trading relations advantageous to all concerned. Each group maintains its ethnic distinctiveness and then trades with nearby groups for goods not produced at home. Cross-ethnic blood brotherhoods, joking relations, inherited trading partners, extension of incest taboos to trading partners, rights, duties, and privileges of sanctuary, all these and more develop to sustain the balanced relations as these are described.

Unquestionably, ethnicity is (partially) sustained by mutually advantageous exchange relations among and between separate ethnic groups. However, the lack of time depth in these earlier studies and the tendency to label all exchange relations as equilibria situations reflecting equality between the partners gave them an unreal quality—the so-called ethnographic present—in which what is observed at a point in time is turned into a frictionless and timeless "system" whose parts all function to sustain the whole. There are two related problems here. First, groups that exchange mutually advantageous goods and/or services may or may not be equal in power. The exchange by itself says little or nothing about power differences. Secondly, the relationship between the groups changes over time depending upon factors affecting the trade and power relations between the groups. So-called symbiotic relations between Fulani and Hausa (24) or Fulani and Bornoans (47) broke into open conflict once population pressures and migration patterns increased the numbers of pastoralists in relation to agriculturalists (11). This produced increased demand for pasturage and increased exactions by the sedentary owners of the land, resulting ultimately in warfare and nomad conquest of the region. Salzman (41) has noted a similar process for Baluchistan in which access to water became the chief source of conflict resulting in a similar conflict and a similar result. Thus, changes in the relations between ethnic groups over access to resources can produce conflicts and ultimate shifts in the reversals in the power relations between them.

By far the most commented upon relations between ethnic groups are those based on differential power. Unequal relations between ethnic groups occurs when membership helps significantly to determine access to scarce resources. By resources, I mean any and all instrumentalities used to satisfy culturally defined needs and desires. Examples would be means of subsistence, means of social mobility such as jobs, education, or offices, medical, judicial, and other government services, land wealth, i.e. all of the goods,

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services, and social statuses defined as socially desirable in a multiethnic society. Years ago, Louis Wirth (53) theorized that ethnicity was a recognized distinction between groups based on inequality in which some are dominant and others are "minorities," i.e. they are consistently deprived of access to favored resources. The assumption here is that where there is equity between groups, ethnic differences are lacking in significance. Wirth developed his ideas from an American model in which he saw assimilation as the ultimate goal and "minority" relations as a social problem. As we have noted, however, a more cross-cultural perspective indicates that interethnic relations can be relatively equal and nonassimilative. Ethnic distinctions are not based solely on power relations between groups.

Using a similar perspective in anthropology, Vincent (49) notes that ethnicity is an aspect of social stratification and conflict theory and adopts the terms majority and minority groups for situations in which stratification is a determining feature. In her view, a minority is not necessarily a smaller sized group. Its "members are subject to disabilities in the form of prejudice, discrimination, segregation, or persecution . . . at the hands of another group . . . the majority" which has greater power over economic, political, and social sectors of the society (51 cited in 49).

In this sense, ethnicity is a wider sociocultural category than minority/majority. These latter terms refer to ethnic relations that are stratified. Unlike ethnic groups in general, stratified groups—minorities and majorities—are more clearly structured and seen to be unchanging from above; unstratified ethnic groups, on the other hand, have the capacity to be constantly redefined by members themselves (49).

The problem here is that ethnicity and stratification may very independently. This is easily seen by using Schermerhorn's paradigm (42) in which relations between (ethnic) groups are related to size and power. This produces four types of stratified groups each of which could be multiethnic or homogeneous. Thus in Table 3 any of the group types could be made up of several ethnic groups or just one. And the entire society might be developing an "ethnic" status vis-à-vis others it confronts with as a whole. As

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Table 3 Minority/majority relations[a]

Type of stratified grouping	Power	Size
dominant majority	+	+
dominant elite(s)	+	–
subjugated masses	–	+
minority group(s)	–	–

[a](cf 42)

Benedict (3) has demonstrated, stratification and ethnicity may correlate. Eventually, through social change and increased mobility, they may start to crosscut one another so that members of all ethnic groups are found in all strata.

Stratification intensifies when one or more ethnic groups have control over resources that become scarcer and more valuable. In Baluchistan and Nigeria, nomads were deprived and then later subdued the sedentary farmers and set up a kingdom with sedentarized nomads as a ruling class who could, whenever necessary, call out their ethnic brethren. Ramifying unilineal clanship created greater mobilization potential for nomads, giving them military advantages over localized agriculturalists once interethnic conflicts over resources became intense (11, 41).

Stratification associated with such cultural-ecological and sociological distinctiveness as nomad/sedentary relations are rare. More commonly, stratification occurs because of migration, incorporation, and conquest. Migration without conquest generally produces occupational specialization in which ethnicity and occupational stratification enhance one another with the lower status ethnic groups restricted to lower regarded and poorly paid economic positions. The kind of ethnic categorization that results depends on how disparate the original groups were who now have minority status. Ukranians in Canada retain their ethnic identity and are categorized by others as Ukranians as is the parent population in Russia (5). On the other hand, groups of Teda, Kaza, Tubu, and other partially distinctive (at least to themselves) central Saharan nomads who enter and settle in desert towns such as Bilma are all *Kamadja.* They learn a new language, are restricted to more menial occupations, and are categorized by townsmen as one ethnic group, despite the differences of their backgrounds (6).

Possibly the most instructive case is that of the Ndendeuli (19). These were in the early nineteenth century a congeries of peoples in southwestern Tanzania known by different local names for localized groupings. During the 1940s, Ngoni peoples entered the area, subdued and incorporated these dispersed cultivators who previously had no overall political organization. The Nguni-speaking overlords taught them the Zulu form of warfare and called the entire grouping Ndendeuli. In the 1960s, more Ngoni came and pushed the original conquerors into present-day Malawi. Some of the incorporated Ndendeuli then went with their new overlords and became the Gomani Maseko Ngoni of contemporary Malawi. The rest stayed and were split between two chiefdoms in which the category Ndendeuli came to mean subject people whose numbers were continually added to through Ngoni raids on diverse surrounding ethnic groups for captives. Today only a few Ndendeuli can trace actual descent to the original people so designated by the first Ngoni conquerors.

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After European conquest, first German then British organizational differences led to a number of Ndendeuli shifting eastwards while others were absorbed and became assimilated to Ngoni ethnicity. The more easterly Ndendeuli groups tended to become Islamized in the twentieth century while the Ngoni and westerly Ndendeuli more often became Catholics. Missionaries bought cash crops from Christian farmers and avoided aiding the Muslims in this way. Western schooling was more common in the western areas, Koranic schooling in the east. Western Ndendeuli ultimately assimilated to the Mashope Ngoni among whom they lived. On the other hand, Eastern Ndendeuli differentiated. In economic terms, tobacco growing was environmentally favored among Eastern (Muslim) Ndendeuli, giving them an interest to protect. All of this contributed to a growth of distinctiveness and a sense of deprived minority status on the part of eastern Ndendeuli leading to an abortive attempt at separation lacking in popular support in the early 1930s. By the 1950s, eastern Ndendeuli had a strong sense of ethnic history, political solidarity, and a sense of cultural difference from Ngoni. Their leaders began to demand (with well-organized popular support) a separate and equal administrative (political) status which was finally granted, against Mashope Ngoni wishes, in 1952. Today Ndendeuli are a recognized ethnic entity.

What then is "Ndendeuli"? Certainly not an isolated evolving cultural unit. Created by conquest, there were two alternatives: total assimilative incorporation with more or less lower status because of subject background, or an increasing degree of ethnic identity. Both occurred. But the latter was dependent upon separate territorial, cultural, and ecological influences that turned political subordination into increasing cultural differentiation in relation to the overlord group and increasing homogeneity and self-identity within the group itself. Thus, stratification can lead to increased incorporation. This, in turn, is associated with the maintenance, decrease, or increase (tending toward castes) of status distinctions based on ethnicity. Alternatively, ethnic stratification may lead to increased differentiation culturally and socially in which a lower strata ethnic group unites and secedes to become an equal political segment among the politically organized groups of the area. The Ndendeuli data demonstrate that ethnic stratification can develop in a number of directions depending on conditions affecting group solidarity and interaction.

On the other hand, anthropological data do not support the notion that ethnicity is simply an aspect of social stratification. As we have seen, some interethnic relations are not based on inequities between the groups. Furthermore, ethnicity may be of such positive value to members that lack of stratification and possible incorporation with loss of separate identity can produce countermovements to revive and revere the cultural distinctiveness being lost. Certainly such revivals are stimulated by inequalities. If, how-

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ever, they do not exist to any great extent, they may be created to help maintain dissolving boundaries (17). This points to the place and salience of ethnicity in "plural" societies, to which we must now turn.

The Saliency of Ethnic Identity

The view of ethnicity accepted here is one in which the identities of members and categorizations by others is more or less fluid, more or less multiple, forming nesting hierarchies of we/they dichotomizations (cf 54). Although this conceptualization makes theorizing difficult, the triggering and maintenance of specific we/they dichotomizations is not an endless or random process (25, 49). So far, however, much less attention has been given to understanding what conditions tend to evoke ethnic identities of particular scale and intensity than to describing what ethnicity is as a phenomenon (25).

From a traditional anthropological perspective, it is clear that regional and territorial isolation produces increasing adaptation to local conditions and, therefore, greater sociocultural differentiation. This makes for more apparent we/they distinctions when semi-isolated groups come together to interact. Examples would be agriculturalists vis-à-vis nomads, or hunter and gatherers, hill people and those down on the plains, mountain peoples who spend most of their time in their own valleys, and so on.

Situations such as that described for the Ndendeuli above in which social experience itself is a continuously multiethnic one are in all likelihood much the most common given the open quality of most environments. Early work by Gluckman in Southern Africa produced generalizations about multiethnic situations based on what came to be called cleavages. Briefly the theory states that the more differences ("cleavages") between groups culturally, socially, politically, economically all lumped within one boundary setting them apart, then the greater the probability of conflict between them. Conversely, the greater the number of crosscutting cleavages, the greater the degree of integration and the lower the probability of intergroup conflict. The theory has a face validity that is persuasive. Supporting examples are easy to find; the Indians in Uganda, black-white conflict in South Africa, French in Canada, Muslims in Russia, or Indians in Latin America all exemplify severe ethnic cleavages and associated conflicts. Dahl (13) explains the theory very succinctly by noting that the severity of conflict in a society depends on the way in which conflicts are related:

> A society offers a number of different lines along which cleavages in a conflict can take place; differences in geography, ethnic identification, religion, and economic position, for example, all present potential lines of cleavages in conflicts. If all the cleavages occur along the same lines, if the same people hold opposing positions in one dispute after another, then the severity of conflicts is likely to increase . . . But if . . . the cleavages occur along different lines, if the same persons are sometimes opponents and sometimes other, then conflicts are likely to be less severe.

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Recent research has, however, tended to qualify the theory by asking whether or not, for any particular time and place, all cleavages are equally salient. In reviewing these materials, Rabushka & Shepsle (40) note that in Norway crosscutting cleavages actually intensify conflicts (15) while the reverse has been documented for Holland (35). Therefore, without some means of understanding the significance of any particular cleavage, no a priori predictions can be made about the nature of cleavages and the probability of conflict (40). Applying this finding to ethnicity, i.e. to dichotomous we/they groupings, we can say that ethnic distinctions are a function of salient boundary conditions that trigger ethnic identity and/or categorization in a population. The boundary conditions are, as already noted, lumpings of sociocultural differences at a particular level of scale. In this sense, a "boundary" is equivalent to Gluckman's concept of "cleavage."

To have salience, a cleavage must be understood and accepted as involving an important issue or set of them. If members of a societal sector that has some potential for ethnic identity are barred from achieving desired ends because of particular sociocultural distinctions, then a potentially salient issue is available for mobilization. This can lead to a belief in ethnic unity based on all of the sociocultural diacritics that the sector has in common and which differentiate it from the rest of society. Conversely, if the distinction leads to no frustration of desired ends, the issue cannot arise and its salience is absent. In Holland, religion is a potentially conflicting distinction; but the crucial problem is not religion itself but public versus parochial schools. Once this has been resolved, then religion is much less an issue than it could be (35). The reverse is true for French language use in Quebec, where promotion to top management positions, political ideology, type of schooling, religious differences, historical experience, and cultural values are all reflected in native language grouping.

Salience, however, doesn't just happen. Ethnic mobilization "requires the active instigation of individuals and organizations" (49) that aggregate and channel individual support for confrontations in which ethnicity is a basis for collective action and/or antagonism. Rabushka & Shepsle (40) expand on this point by suggesting that the quality and content of leadership is crucial at this point. Leaders, they note, enhance their own positions or desire for position by defining conflicts, raising hopes, and articulating and explaining fears and frustrations. In this sense, they are entrepreneurs who help to generate demands by articulating issues and demonstrating their saliency. In so doing, they also try to unify ethnic-based support for such issues behind themselves as leaders.

However, it is important to stress that efforts at ethnic mobilization are not always successful. In the 1930s, leaders of the eastern Islamized Ndendeuli described above tried to mobilize ethnic solidarity and to create popular demand for a separate political administration outside Ngoni

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jurisdiction. The attempt failed for lack of support (19). People were not convinced that following the would-be leaders was in their own best interests. In the Biu area of northeast Nigeria, attempts by Western educated Bura leaders to obtain their own district chief in the late 1930s also failed for very similar reasons. Bura villagers disliked their Islamic overlords but mistrusted their own would-be leaders even more. If successful at ethnic mobilization, these latter would be assuming a more powerful office than any ever held by a Bura in their own political history. Several decades later, ethnic solidarity and antagonism to previous rulers was much greater; and the new leaders succeeded in having Bura leaders appointed (10).

It seems as if there is a threshold of issue salience which must be present in a cognitive and evaluative sense before leaders can use socioculturally significant diacritics to trigger ethnicity into a mobilized ethnic grouping at a particular level of we/they dichotomization. For this to happen the leaders must be trusted to act dependably for the entire ethnic group (as it is being defined at this point in time) rather than some subsection of it with which they are also known to be identified. Other outside ethnic groups defined by leaders and the people must be seen as competitors for scarce resources and rewards so that their own recognized, and now salient, ethnic status is seen as a real factor in the denial or achievement of desirable goals. The ethnic identity being mobilized must have real diacritics of ascribed status lumped within its boundaries so that the we/they is based on deeply felt and valued distinctivenesses. Finally, the inception of the modern state itself lowers the threshhold of issue salience by increasing the value and the scarcity of goals and rewards, and the number and instances of competing events. There are simply many more things—offices, scholarships, development projects, cabinet posts, patronage, licenses, jobs, etc—in the sociopolitical environment that are considered important ends (28 cited in 40). In other words, ethnicity is (potentially) more, not less, salient in modern nation states because there is increased competition for scarce rewards, and the opportunities for ethnic mobilization are therefore greater.

In this regard, it is important to note that ethnic group formation is a continuing and often innovative cultural process of boundary maintenance and reconstruction (25). Once the ethnic identities and categories are triggered into being salient, cultural rationalizations for the legitimacy of the mobilized grouping are actively sought for and created by those involved. Thus the Ndendeuli created a new and quite fictional but functional origin myth telling of their putative and centralized political organization in precolonial times as a supporting argument for their claims to an independent "tribal" organization in the 1950s. The Fang of West Africa were weakened and dispersed by colonial conquest which divided them between Gabon and Cameroon. They developed a rivalry with the better educated Mpongwé peoples and then began reviving and reaffirming stories of their

past unity and greatness. The emerging "history" was part real, part fancy. Today they have transcended older (rivalrous) divisions of clan and language and support instead a Fang-dominated modern political movement (17). Horowitz (25) notes that similar legends have served to dramatize newly discovered ethnic unity among Lozi, Bakongo, Ba Konjo, and Yoruba peoples in Africa, Kurds in the Near East, Basques in Spain, and among Sikhs in India.

The salience of ethnic affiliations is also dependent upon the fact that they often antedate their incorporative contexts. Kuper (32) notes that ethnic group members often recognize that they have an historical tie to one another that precedes or is external to those societies in which they now find themselves.[2] This tie is reflected in a common language that facilitates communication and maintains solidarity and in forms of family life and social organization that make group members feel common or shared understanding of interpersonal relations. In effect, salience is a function of whether or not issues can be translated into a shared set of meanings and a consensual set of responses in which the ethnic grouping acts as a unit in the wider multiethnic context. The degree to which this is possible is the measure of how much mobilization can be predicted for any particular ethnic group and to the degree to which ethnicity is an important feature of the society as a whole.

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The Context of Ethnicity

Without focusing upon it specifically, the discussion of ethnicity so far has implied multiethnicity as the arena within which ethnicity emerges as a relevant category of human grouping. The term most often used to describe this quality is pluralism or plural society (14, 31, 33, 40, 45). Pluralism refers to a society with diverse political interest groups that may or may not be ethnically defined while plural societies generally refer to ones in which ethnically diverse segments are organized into politically relevant units. Following Furnivall and building on his work, M. G. Smith has restricted the concept to those multiethnic societies whose parts have separate institutions or structures held together through some form of force and a concomitant system of social stratification.

Discussions of the differences in usage and the utility of "plural society" or "pluralism" are now widespread in the literature (14, 30, 40, 48). In my view, the entire controversy boils down to whether or not we need a special term to apply to situations in which ethnic stratification is the primary characteristic of a social system. If so, then "plural society" as used by Smith (45) and others (14) is probably the best conceptual vehicle to de-

[2]I am indebted to Victoria Bernal for raising this point in her seminar paper on "Class and Ethnicity in Modern Africa" (fall 1977) at Northwestern University.

scribe such a quality. My problem with this literature is the obvious empirical fact that almost every modern society is multiethnic. In social evolutionary terms, the emergence of the centralized state (not chieftaincies) carries with it the potential for "plural society." The differentiation of the political sector as a semi or wholly specialized activity that accompanies statehood requires that groups within the state relate to it politically, i.e. as citizens. This differentiation allows for culturally distinctive groups to retain their ethnic differences as long as they accept the sovereignty of the central government (11). Modern nation-states have clarified and codified citizenship roles. However, both early and modern states quite clearly allow for a multiethnic population.

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Pluralism is thus a concept that bridges the gap between the distortions ensuing from the classic anthropological presumption of "tribal" uniformity and isolation and that of a multiethnic and therefore a more realistic context. If we accept, as I believe we must, the notion that "tribal" society never really existed in pristine isolation except in a very few out-of-the-way places, that often as not its entitivity was imposed by the anthropologist, and that multiethnicity is a quality of all societies in their own contexts, then the "pluralist" society concept (as *now* used) is quite superfluous. It contrasts with ethnic homogeneity and isolation which were never really so homogeneous or isolated or unitary as our paradigms required and assumed them to be. The change from "tribe" to ethnicity presently occurring in our terminology means an acceptance of multiethnicity, pluralism if you will, as a major feature of cultural distinctiveness and identification. Only if we retain the (unreal) perspective that sees "tribal" society as unitary and isolated do we then require a concept that describes something different, i.e. multiethnic and nonisolated or plural. In other words, "pluralism" helps to correct for older mistaken notions, if we choose to keep yesterday's errors as part of the contemporary paradigm for an anthropological epistemology. If, on the other hand, we admit that isolated "tribal" units were probably always a rare phenomenon, and if we hold on to what was valuable in the older tradition (i.e. the excellent ethnographic descriptions and analyses), then terms like society, polity, and ethnicity assume varying degrees of multiethnicity and interethnic relations as a given aspect of all social situations. Pluralism is then an understanding and a perspective included in all our basic terms.

Plural society as a special term for ethnically stratified societies with separated sociocultural institutions is less easy to evaluate. The logical test of conceptual differentiation is independent variation requiring a separate body of theory for explanation of the variance in each concept. Do ethnically stratified societies differ significantly from others? Are the set of factors that explain any particular instance different from those that explain other forms of social stratification? Or is this simply one type of a social

differentiation among others in which the same variables used to explain other types of stratification are in operation but lumped into or targeted at ethnic distinctions? Plural society in this sense is one aspect of the wider theoretical thrust which deals with inequality in human experience. This is the position taken by Berreman's (4) use of a common set of factors to describe inequality between economic classes, ethnic categories and groups, castes, and races within any particular society. Although it is possible to agree or disagree with details of Berreman's arguments, the overall approach appears valid: inequality is the basis of stratification, not ethnicity.

In complex multiethnic societies within nation-states, political incorporation and the culture produced by political unification tend ultimately to have ethnicity creating capabilities. Over time, Saxons and Normans became English, a congeries of peoples in the Chad basin conquered by the incoming Magumi of Kanem became the Kanuri of Bornu. In the new nation-states of Africa and Asia, this same process is going on crosscut by older ethnic divisions and newer socioeconomic ones that in turn variably cut across ethnic groups. Elsewhere (11), taking a lead from Benedict's (3) work, I have described this process for Africa as one in which there are two semiseparate "class" systems, rural and urban, crosscut diagonally by ethnic groupings whose traditional basis is maintained by poverty and the rural character of the population majority as in Figure 1.

For present purposes, it is important to note two points. First, new we/they distinctions become possible in the emergent new nation giving rise to the possibility of new ethnic distinctions once such divisions obtain culturally recognizable diacritics and a sense of common descent. Secondly, and much more importantly, the usually accepted direction of social evolution is reversed in the emergence and/or persistence of older ethnic distinctions as salient categories and/or social groupings within the nation (Heisler, personal communication).[3] As societal roles become more differentiated and relationships more culturally and socially specific, the associated alienative pressures build up a tension for a counterdevelopment. Roles cannot act in society; and thus as they differentiate, becoming less diffuse, the relation between role and person creates social-psychological pressure for greater diffuseness in at least some of the role-sets played by actors. Because actors are not easily confined within the bounds of activities and actions defined by a role, roles can change, can be played differently by different actors; and there is always the tendency for individuals to interact as persons whose mutual interests may override the restrictions

[3]I am indebted to Martin Heisler for making this point to me in personal discussions. I have spelled it out in my own way, but had not thought of it before Heisler communicated it to me as his own particular theory of ethnicity in modern society.

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placed upon their behavior by the role expectations they are obligated to enact. Such tendencies stimulate the emergence of informal networks in organizations, office love affairs, corruption, and creative innovations that improve organized activity. They cannot be stopped because persons are not roles.

Ethnic groups are universally available membership roles than can ease the tensions that are created by the lack of correspondence between person and role. Ego is related to his ethnic group in multiple ways. He is variably socialized to feel that this set of memberships is a part of himself. It relates him to others by ascriptive criteria which define his identity and give him a sense of shared fate as a person with "his people." This sense of peoplehood and membership in it counteracts the structured and artifical isolation of persons who must act and interact with one another within legitimated boundaries restricted to the differentiation of roles in complex societies. If alienation is a malfunction of modern society, ethnicity is an antidote. Local community, family, clubs, or unions may fulfill similar functions, but ethnicity provides a fundamental and multifaceted link to a category of others that very little else can do in modern society.

Although Heisler's point is speculative, it is (*a*) a researchable hypothesis, i.e. other things being equal, the greater the participation in ethnic group activities the less persons feel alienated in contemporary society, and (*b*) it helps to explain the continuing value placed on ethnicity as incorporative and assimilative forces act to weaken and decrease ethnic distinctions.

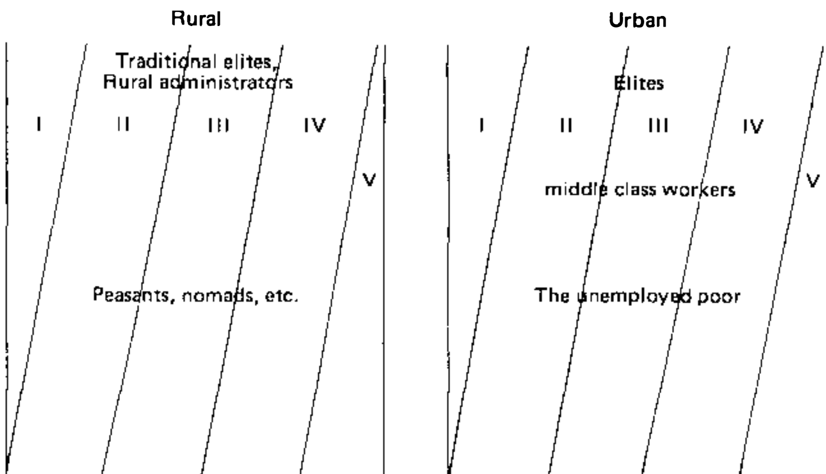

Figure 1 Rural and urban "class" systems. I, II, III, IV, and V are different ethnic groups. Each ethnic group is represented as present in all classes and in both rural and urban settings. Diagonals are used to express the notion of unequal distribution across classes and rural/urban location of ethnic group members.

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My last point is related to this but has to do more with distributive justice than with alienation. In a multiethnic society in which a plurality of groups, ethnic and nonethnic, vie for scarce rewards, stressing individual rights leads ultimately to unequal treatment. From the Renaissance onward, Western political philosophy has been centrally concerned with the rights of individuals in relation to authorities who could often treat them as means, not ends. Western democratic theory has developed largely out of a recognition of this problem. Today the theory is being affected by the awareness and acceptance of the fact that individuals are also fated to obtain more or less rewards because of their group identities and categorizations. Organized ethnic groups can fight for equal rights, or persons within them can leave and try to become members of more privileged groups; but many inequities remain group determined. Therefore, we and others are moving to include group rights and group access to societal rewards in order to counter invidious access by some and impossible or rare access by others. Democratic theory and ideology has shifted to include both individual and group rights. In this sense, ethnicity has been legitimized in political theory, making it a means not only of anti-alienative, diffuse identity but also a means of asserting one's rights in a political community in which ethnicity is a recognized element. This being so, ethnicity is not just a conceptual tool. It also reflects an ideological position claiming recognition for ethnicity as a major sector of complex societies and points the way to a more just and equitable society.

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