



UNIVERSITY OF GONDAR

COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND THE HUMANITIES

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY

‘Ethnicity, Identity & Nationalism’ (SoAn 2072)

Teaching Material for undergraduate students of Social Anthropology

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Relevance of the Course:

Issues like ethnicity, race, identity, and nationality pose one of the greatest challenges to the survival of humankind in the 21st Century. Because,

- they touch the very core of the social fabric, personal identity and individuality;
- they influence how we think of others and ourselves;
- they play a role in our morality and political behavior;
- they affect our everyday existence in significant ways;
- they affect most things we do and think, from the most mundane ways in which we behave to the beliefs we hold about ourselves and others; and
- Such identities have much political, sociological and economic salience

Therefore, ideas regarding ethnicity, identity and nationality should be discussed openly and democratically which will allow us to achieve a better society by managing conflict and differences.

1. Ethnicity and Nationalism: Historical Backgrounds

During the 1980s and early 1990s, there were an explosion in the growth of scholarly publications on ethnicity and nationalism, particularly in the fields of political science, history, sociology and social Anthropology. In the case of social Anthropology, ethnicity has been a main preoccupation since the late 1960s and it remains a central focus for research in the 1990s.

An important reason for the current academic interest in ethnicity and nationalism is the fact that such phenomena have become so visible in many societies that it has become impossible to ignore them. In the early twentieth century, many social theorists held that ethnicity and nationalism would decrease in importance and eventually vanish as a result of the forces of modernization, industrialization and individualism. It was assumed that in the modern industrialized, bureaucratic and individual based societies, allegiance to ethnic groups would no longer be profitable. For many years, sociology and social anthropology contended that the process of modernisation would eventually level out and remove ethnic

distinctions and cultural differences between groups. However, this never came about. On the contrary, ethnicity has not only proved resilient in situations of change; it has also often emerged in forceful ways during the very processes of change. Ethnicity and nationalism have grown in political importance in the world, particularly since the Second World War. For example,

- ✓ ethnic conflicts became common in different countries,
- ✓ there were also non-violent ethnic movements,
- ✓ in many parts of the world nation-building was high in the political agenda;
- ✓ the issues of ethnic and national identities became pertinent following the continuous influx of labor migrants and refugees to Europe and North America which led to the emergence of ethnic minorities in these areas.

It was following the anthropological study of non-European societies; the political and historical studies of nation-building processes; and through studies of migration and integration into the host societies that the concept of ethnicity entered into the social science discourse.

The first usage of the term ethnicity is attributed to the American Sociologist David Riesman in 1953. However, the word 'ethnic' is much older. It is derived from the Greek *ethnos* (*ethnikos*), which originally meant heathen or pagan. It was used in this sense from the mid fourteenth century up to the mid nineteenth century. It gradually began to refer to 'racial' characteristics.

None of the founding fathers of sociology and social Anthropology- with the partial exception of Max Weber- granted ethnicity much attention. Since the 1960s, ethnic groups and ethnicity have steadily grown in currency and have become major research focus in Social Anthropology. The causes are the change in the social world and changes in the dominant way of thinking in social Anthropology:

1.1. Changes in the Social World

- ✓ Changes in the world after the Second World War have brought many of the "tribal" societies into increased contact with each other, with the state and with the global society.

- ✓ National liberation movements and ethnic conflicts in post-colonial states
- ✓ Some ethnic groups move to towns and regional centers where they are brought into contact with people with other customs, language and identities, and where they frequently enter into competitive relationships in politics and the labor market. People who migrate try to maintain their old kinship and neighborhood social networks in the new urban context; ethnic political groupings often emerged in such urban settings.
- ✓ Migration to Europe and North America which brought an interest to study the relationship between them and the host society

All these kind of social changes became new issues of interest for Anthropological studies.

1.2. Changes in the dominant way of thinking in social Anthropology

The growing interest in ethnicity also reflects changes in the dominant anthropological mode of thought. Instead of viewing societies and cultures as more or less isolated, static and homogeneous units many anthropologists began to portray flux and process, ambiguity and complexity in their analyses of social worlds. In this context ethnicity has proven a highly useful concept, since it suggests a dynamic situation of variable contact and mutual accommodation between groups. The use of terms like ethnicity and ethnic groups suggests contact and interrelationships. Ethnic groups are in contact with members of other ethnic groups and they are created through that very contact. Group identities are defined in relation to that which they are not- in other words, in relation to non-members of the group.

1.2.1. From tribe to ethnic groups

Before the adoption of the concept of ethnicity, “tribe” was a commonly used concept to represent the people whose ways of life the anthropologist had set out to document. However, the changes in the world after the Second World War have brought many of these “tribal” societies into increased contact with the rest of the world which paves the way for the study of “ethnic minorities” in different parts of the world. The terminological change also lessens the Eurocentric bias which classical anthropologists have often been accused. The term tribe was used to imply a strong distinction between modern and traditional or so called primitive societies. If we talk of ethnic groups or categories, such a sharp distinction becomes difficult to maintain. Virtually every human being belongs to an ethnic group,

whether he or she lives in Europe, America, England, New Guinea highlands or Africa. The concepts and models used in the study of ethnicity can be applied to modern as well as non-modern contexts, to Western as well as non-Western societies. In this sense, the concept of ethnicity can be said to bridge two important gaps in social Anthropology: it entails a focus on dynamics rather than statics, and it lessens the boundaries between 'US' and 'Them' between moderns and tribals.

2. What is Ethnicity?

Brainstorming Question:

What do you understand by ethnicity/ethnic group? Does ethnicity only refer to a minority agenda?

Since its inception in the Social sciences, the concept of ethnicity has remained a "hot potato," becoming a contested and debatable issue. Different scholars define the term differently. In everyday language the word ethnicity is considered as a minority issue. However, majorities and dominant peoples are no less 'ethnic' than minorities.

2.1. Culture as a Basic Defining Feature of Ethnicity

The criteria which constitute ethnicity vary. For a long time it was common to equate ethnic groups with cultural groups; any category of people who had a shared culture was considered as an ethnic group. However, this position has become difficult to justify. This is because; the sharing of cultural traits frequently crosses group boundaries and, moreover, people do not always share all their 'cultural traits' with the same people. One may have the same language as some people, the same religion as some of those as well as of some others, and the same economic strategy as an altogether different category of people. In other words, cultural boundaries are not clear-cut, nor do they necessarily correspond with ethnic boundaries. Ethnicity is an aspect of relationship, not a cultural property of a group. If a setting is wholly mono-ethnic, there is effectively no ethnicity, since there is nobody there to communicate cultural difference to.

Some social anthropologists use to define ethnic groups basically based on objective criteria, others mainly depend on subjective elements, and still some others use a mix of objective and subjective ethnic elements. For example, Smith (1986) defined ethnic groups as a named human population (a collective name) with myths of common ancestry/descent, shared historical memories, elements of common/shared culture, a link with a homeland (specific territory) and a sense of solidarity among at least some of its members (Smith, 1986).

Max Weber (1968) defined ethnic groups as human groups that entertain a subjective belief in their common descent because of similarities of physical types or customs or both, or because of memories of colonization and migration (Weber 1968). Some ethnic groups may be marked by shared culture; some others may be defined by shared religion, language, and/or customs. Nonetheless every ethnic group tends to have notions of common ancestry justifying their unity. For Isajiw (1992), ethnic group refers to either a community-type group of people who share the same culture or to descendants of such people who may not share this culture but who identify themselves with this ancestral group. The Ethiopian constitutional triplet of "Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples" (the Amharic *behieroch*, *behiereseboch*, *ena hezboch*) are defined in Article 39 of the Federal Constitution defines as: *"a group of people who have or share a large measure of a common culture, or similar customs, mutual intelligibility of language, belief in a common or related identity, and who predominantly inhabit an identifiable, contiguous territory."*

It is clear that the criteria which constitute ethnicity vary. Some ethnic groups may be marked by shared culture; some others may be defined by shared religion, language, and/or customs. Nonetheless every ethnic group tends to have notions of common ancestry justifying their unity.

There are three main kinds of ethnic community in the historical record. These are: ethno-linguistic communities, in which language is the most salient and vital element in the definition of ethnicity and the mobilization of ethnic sentiments; ethno-religious communities, which have been defined and have defined themselves, primarily in terms of religious beliefs, practices, and symbols; and ethno-political communities, that have defined themselves, and been defined, by historical memories and political traditions (Harris,

1995:133-34). It is misleading to state simply that ethnic groups are identical with cultural groups and that shared culture is the basis of ethnic identity. Many anthropologists concluded that we should focus on social interaction and social organization rather than cultural content.

2.2. Boundary/Ascription as a Defining Feature of Ethnicity:

Arguing against those anthropologists who identify ethnic groups with cultural units, Fredrik Barth (1969a) develops a model for the study of ethnic relations which displaces 'culture' from the front stage of ethnic studies and argues that the focus of research ought to be the *boundaries* which delimit the group and not the 'cultural stuffs' it encloses .

He argued that a focus on the cultural uniqueness of ethnic groups wrongly presupposes that groups tend to be isolated. On the contrary, Barth suggests, shared culture may be seen as an implication or result of a long-term social process, rather than as a primordial feature of groups. Since groups are in continuous contact with one other, Barth argues that the main task for the anthropological study of ethnicity consists in accounting for the maintenance and consequences of ethnic boundaries. Instead of listing traits of 'objective culture,' which members often share with non-members anyway, Barth defines ethnicity as categorical ascriptions between 'Us' and 'Them'.

For Fredrick Barth (1969), an ethnic group is a group of people who identify with one another, or are so identified by others, on the basis of a boundary that distinguishes them from other groups. Fredrik Barth (1969a) argues that: the focus ought to be the *boundaries* which delimit the group and not the 'cultural stuffs' it encloses. Cultural variation may be an effect and not a cause of boundaries. If the mutual dichotomization between two groups (that were formerly same group) continues and the national borders between their states become permanent, it is likely that languages as well as other aspects of culture of the two will gradually become more distinctive.

In other words, an ethnic group is defined through its relationships to others, highlighted through the boundary. Ethnicity refers to aspects of relationships between groups whose members consider themselves, and are regarded by others, as being culturally distinctive. When cultural differences regularly make a difference in interaction between members of

groups, the social relationship has an ethnic element. There is no ethnicity unless groups have a minimum of contact with each other and entertain ideas of each other as being culturally different from themselves. Barth defines ethnicity as categorical ascriptions between 'Us' and 'Them'.

The boundary may take any of a number of forms: racial, cultural, linguistic, economic, religious, political. If a setting is wholly mono-ethnic, there is effectively no ethnicity, since there is nobody there to communicate cultural difference. Contrary to a commonsense view, cultural difference between two groups is not the decisive feature of ethnicity. The group's culture and forms of social organization may change without removing the ethnic boundary.

In some cases, groups may actually become culturally more similar at the same time that boundaries are strengthened; i.e., culturally similar, but with volatile interethnic relationships between them. For example, the Norwegian and the Sami of the Norwegian Arctic coast have been in contact for many centuries. They occupy the same economic niche; they live in the same kinds of houses, wear the same kind of clothing and practice the same protestant religion. Although there are no contrasting cultural traits between the two, the Sami are considered as primitive, backward, stupid and unclean by the dominant Norwegians. These ethnic labels are attached to communities as well as families and individual persons. On the other hand, there may be a considerable cultural variation within a group without ethnicity. In some poly-ethnic societies where cultural differences are pervasive, there are many situations where ethnicity does not matter. For instance, Mauritian Hindus and Creoles often meet without referring to their respective ethnic identities where the situation is defined through their statuses. Therefore, it is only in so far as cultural differences are perceived as being important, and are made socially relevant, do social relationships have an ethnic element.

All approaches agree that ethnicity has something to do with the classification of people and group relationships. Ethnicity is the application of systematic distinctions between insiders and outsiders; between Us and Them. Dichotomization between insiders and outsiders; the process of self-ascription/attribution and ascription by others shapes the process of interaction among groups (Barth, 1969). If no such principle (social contact) exists there can be no ethnicity. However, ethnic boundary may change through time; it may shrink or

expand, blurred or glared depending on situations and contexts. The compass of the 'We' category may expand and contract according to the situation. Depending on situations, different levels of group membership could be activated. There are different Us and Them groups. In some cases, ethnic identities are imposed from outside, by dominant groups, on those who do not themselves want membership in the group to which they are assigned.

For ethnicity to come about, the groups must have a minimum of contact with each other, and they must entertain ideas of each other as being culturally different from themselves. If these conditions are not fulfilled, there is no ethnicity, for ethnicity is essentially an aspect of a relationship, not a property of a group. Contrary to a widespread commonsense view, cultural difference between two groups is not the decisive feature of ethnicity. For example, some groups may seem culturally similar, but with volatile interethnic relationships between them. For example, the Norwegian and the Sami of the Norwegian Arctic coast have been in contact for many centuries. They occupy the same economic niche; they live in the same kinds of houses, wear the same kind of clothing and practice the same protestant religion. Although there are no contrasting cultural traits between the two, the Sami are considered as primitive, backward, stupid and dirty/unclean by the dominant Norwegians. These ethnic labels are attached to communities as well as families and individual persons. On the other hand, there may be a considerable cultural variation within a group without ethnicity. In some poly-ethnic societies where cultural differences are pervasive, there are many situations where ethnicity does not matter. For instance, Mauritian Hindus and Creoles often meet without implicitly or explicitly referring to their respective ethnic identities where the situation is defined through their statuses. Therefore, it is only in so far as cultural differences are perceived as being important, and are made socially relevant, do social relationships have an ethnic element.

Ethnicity is an aspect of relationship between agents who consider themselves as culturally distinctive from members of other groups with whom they have a minimum of regular interaction. When cultural differences regularly make a difference in interaction between members of groups, the social relationship has an ethnic element. Ethnic groups tend to have myths of common origin.

There are different approaches to the study of ethnicity. However, all of the approaches agree that ethnicity has something to do with the classification of people and group relationships. In social Anthropology ethnicity refers to aspects of relationships between groups whose members consider themselves, and are regarded by others, as being culturally distinctive. These groups may be ranked hierarchically within a society.

The first fact of ethnicity is the application of systematic distinctions between insiders and outsiders; between Us and Them. If no such principle exists there can be no ethnicity, since ethnicity presupposes an institutionalized relationship between delineated categories whose members consider each other to be culturally distinctive. Ethnicity is thus constituted through social contact. On the bases of perceptions of social distance various degrees of group inclusion and exclusion are created. In other words, there are different us and them groups. The compass of the 'We' category may expand and contract according to the situation. Depending on the situation, different levels of group membership could be activated. In some cases, ethnic identities are imposed from outside, by dominant groups, on those who do not themselves want membership in the group to which they are assigned.

By considering the various definitions of ethnicity, Hutchinson and Smith (1996) identified six main features that are predominantly constituted in the definition of an ethnic group:

1. A common proper name, to identify and express the "essence" of the community;
2. A myth of common ancestry that includes the idea of common origin in time and place and that gives an ethnic group a sense of fictive kinship;
3. Shared historical memories, or better, shared memories of a common past or pasts, including heroes, events, and their commemoration;
4. One or more elements of common culture, which need not be specified but normally, include religion, customs, and language;
5. A link with a homeland, not necessarily its physical occupation by the ethnic group, only its symbolic attachment to the ancestral land, as with Diaspora peoples;
6. A sense of solidarity on the part of at least some sections of the ethnic's population.

3. The Concepts of Acculturation and the Melting-Pot Metaphor

The work of the Chicago School sociologist and anthropologists could be accredited as one of the earliest empirical research on polyethnic societies. Among the main problems investigated by Robert Park and his associates in the 1920s and 1930s was how it could be that ethnic groups remained distinctive in American cities- and to what extent they did so through time. In other words, they were concerned with continuity and change in ethnic relations.

Park and his colleagues developed concepts of “acculturation” and the “American melting-pot”. By acculturation, they meant the adaptation of immigrants to their new cultural context. It could, but did not have to, eventually lead to total assimilation or loss of ethnic distinctiveness. Park stressed that ethnicity and ethnic conflict (or prejudice), was an aspect of the relationship between groups and that it was caused by threats, real or imaginary, to an existing pattern of mutual adjustment. In other words, the social mobility- downwards or upwards- of any ethnic group would lead to tension in relation to the other groups.

A main point in Park’s work is that every society is a more or less successful melting-pot where diverse populations are merged, acculturated and eventually assimilated, at different rates and in different ways, depending on their place in the economic and political systems. Although the American melting-pot was expected to fuse diverse population into one, it never took place and that American society remained ethnically heterogeneous. Following the ‘ethnic revival’ of the 1960s and 1970s, it has become commonplace to criticize the notion of the melting-pot for having been empirically wrong since it predicted the demise of ethnicity. As a matter of fact, the critics would maintain, the diverse ethnic groups never merged, and indeed the differences between them seem to have been accentuated after two generations or more of mutual adaptation.

Insights of the Chicago school have proved to be of lasting value in the study of ethnicity: they showed that ethnic relations are fluid and negotiable; that their importance varies situationally; and that, for all their claims to primordality and cultural roots, ethnic identities can be consciously manipulated and invested in economic competition in modern societies.

3.1. The Concept of Stereotypes

Stereotypes are often mentioned in connection with racism and discrimination. For example, white Americans may justify discrimination against blacks by referring them as lazy. Stereotypes tend to be more or less pejorative, although this is not necessarily the case.

In social Anthropology the concept of stereotyping refers to the creation of and consistent application of standardized notions of the cultural distinctiveness of a group. Stereotypes are held by dominated groups as well as by dominating ones and they are widespread in societies with significant power differences as well as in societies where there is rough power equilibrium between ethnic groups. In most poly-ethnic societies, ethnic stereotypes exist, although there may exist individuals who do not hold such stereotypes. Below is an example of Mauritian ethnic stereotypes:

	Stereotypes held by others:	Stereotypes of self
Creoles	lazy, merry, careless	Fun-loving, compassionate, friendly
Hindus	Stingy, dishonest, hardworking	Sensible, Care for family
Muslims	Religious fanatics, non-minglers	Members of a proud, expanding culture

Stereotypes need not be true, and they do not necessarily give good descriptions of what people actually do. Therefore, we must reflect on the causes and uses of stereotypes.

3.2. The Causes and Uses of Stereotypes

- ✓ Stereotypes help the individual to create order in an otherwise unbearably complicated social universe. They make it possible to divide the social world into kinds of people, and they provide simple criteria for such a classification.
- ✓ Stereotypes can justify privileges and differences in access to a society's resources. Conversely, negative stereotypes directed towards a ruling group may alleviate feelings of powerlessness and resignation: they can be seen as the symbolic revenge of the down-trodden (the suppressed group).
- ✓ Stereotypes are crucial in defining the boundaries of one's own group. They inform individual of the virtues of his or her own group and the vices of the others, and they

thereby serves to justify thinking that 'I am an x and not a y'. In the vast majority of cases stereotypes imply, in some way or other, the superiority of one's own group. However, there are also minorities who have largely negative stereotypes of themselves and positive ones of the dominant group.

- ✓ Stereotypes can be morally ambiguous and contested by different parties (A stereotype that is considered as a mark of moral superiority may not be considered the same way by other group).

Stereotypes can sometimes function as self-fulfilling prophecies. A dominating group can stunt the intellectual development of a dominated group by systematically telling them that they are inferior.

4. Ethnic Dichotomisation and Complementarisation:

Many studies of ethnicity have stressed the relative distinctiveness of ethnic groups. Very often it is taken for granted that the groups in a poly-ethnic social system remain a part and different in most regards, and a great number of studies focus on the ways in which the groups manage to remain discrete. However, since ethnicity is an aspect of relationship, one may equally well stress the mutual contact and the integrative aspect. For instance, different ethnic groups could be mutually interdependent through trade, through exchanging necessities and services (e.g. transhumance practice of interethnic accommodation).

Sometimes group membership and loyalties are confirmed and strengthened through stereotyping and the articulation of conflict or competition. Such types of mutual demarcation process can be called 'dichotomization'. However, for interethnic interaction to take place there must be some mutual recognition inherent in the process of communicating cultural differences. Otherwise, the ethnic identity of at least one of the parties will necessarily be neglected and under-communicated in a situation of interaction. Such an acknowledgement of differences can be labelled 'complementarisation'. It is necessary to establish a field of complementarity in interethnic relationships. This could be a shared language within which interaction can take place.

Interethnic relations are not necessarily conflictual. Although there are frequently discrepancies of power, interethnic systems of communications and/or exchange may well

be based on cooperation and mutual acknowledgment. To sum up: ethnicity entails the establishment of both Us-Them contrasts (dichotomisation) and a shared field for interethnic discourse and interaction (complementarisation).

4.1. Boundary Maintenance vs. Boundary Transcendence:

Boundary maintenance:

Barth advocates a relational and processual approach to ethnicity because he stresses that the focus of investigation ought to be the boundary that separates the ethnic groups from each other. The ethnic group is defined through its relationships to others, highlighted through the boundary. The boundary is a social product which may have variable importance and which may change through time. The group's culture as well as forms of social organization may change without removing the ethnic boundary. In some cases, groups may actually become culturally more similar at the same time that boundaries are strengthened. The case of the Serbs and Croats in the former Yugoslavia is a good example. There had been peace between the two since 1945 but following the outbreak of civil war in 1991 the two groups were irreconcilable and culturally incompatible. Ethnic boundaries, dormant for decades, were activated; presumed cultural differences which had been irrelevant for two generations were suddenly 'remembered' and invoked as proof that it was impossible for the two groups to live side by side. It is only when they make a difference in interaction that cultural differences are important in the creation of ethnic boundaries.

Barth further argues that cultural variation may indeed be an effect and not a cause of boundaries. If the mutual dichotomization between two groups (that were formerly same group) continues and the national borders between their states become permanent, it is likely that languages as well as other aspects of culture of the two will gradually become more distinctive.

Boundary transcendence:

Ethnic boundaries are not necessarily territorial boundaries. They do not isolate groups entirely from each other; rather, there is a continuous flow of information, interaction, exchange and sometimes even people across them (i.e. people could change ethnic membership through the process of assimilation). However, identity change is not always

possible. For example, even if the Blacks in the United States spend several generations, the boundaries between Whites and Blacks are more rigid.

Brainstorming:

Discuss the nature of ethnic boundaries among the different ethnic groups of Ethiopia in the pre- and post- 1991 period.

5. Ethnic Identity: Definition and Features

Ethnicity and identity are defined or conceptualized in a number of ways and studied from a variety of perspectives because of the diversity of questions researchers have sought to answer. Definitions also vary according to the underlying theory embraced by researchers & scholars. Ethnic terminologies reflect various ideological frames of reference and different theoretical approaches. As a result, there is some confusion over meanings surrounding the field of ethnic phenomena.

Typically, ethnic identity is an affiliative construct, where an individual is viewed by themselves and by others as belonging to a particular ethnic or cultural group. Ethnic identity is the part of one's identity associated with membership in a particular racial/ethnic group. Affiliation can be influenced by racial, natal, symbolic, and cultural factors (Cheung, 1993).

- Racial factors involve the use of physiognomic and physical characteristics,
- natal factors refer to "homeland" (ancestral home) or origins of individuals, their parents and kin, &
- Symbolic factors include those factors that typify or exemplify an ethnic group (e.g., holidays, foods, clothing, artifacts, etc.).

Symbolic ethnic identity usually implies that individuals choose their identity; however, to some extent the cultural elements of the ethnic or racial group have a modest influence on their behavior (Kivisto & Nefzger, 1993). On the individual level, ethnicity is *a social-psychological process*, which gives an individual a sense of belonging and identity.

Ethnic identity can be defined as a manner in which persons, on account of their ethnic origin, locate themselves psychologically in relation to one or more social systems, and in which they perceive others as locating them in relation to those systems.

- By **ethnic origin** is meant either that a person has been socialized in an ethnic group or that his or her ancestors, real or symbolic, have been members of the group.
- The **social systems** may be one's ethnic community or society at large, or other ethnic communities and other societies or groups, or a combination of all these (Isajiw, 1990).

Locating oneself in relation to a community and society is not only a psychological phenomenon, but also *a social phenomenon* in the sense that the internal psychological states express themselves objectively in external behaviour patterns that come to be shared by others. Thus, individuals locate themselves in one or another community:

- ✓ Internally, by states of mind and feelings, such as self-definitions or feelings of closeness, and
- ✓ Externally, by behaviour appropriate to these states of mind and feelings. Thus, behaviour according to cultural patterns is an expression of identity and can be studied as an indication of its character.

External aspects refer to observable behaviour, both cultural and social, which includes the following:

1. speaking an ethnic language, practicing ethnic traditions,
2. participation in ethnic personal networks, such as family and friendships,
3. participation in ethnic institutional organizations, such as churches, schools, enterprises, media;
4. participation in ethnic voluntary associations, such as clubs, 'societies,' youth organizations and
5. participation in functions sponsored by ethnic organizations such as picnics, concerts, public lectures, rallies, dances (Isajiw 1990)

On the other hand, the internal aspects of ethnic identity refer to images, ideas, attitudes, and feelings. The internal aspects of ethnic identity are interconnected with the external behaviour. But, it should not be assumed that, empirically, the two types are always dependent upon each other. They may vary independently, as for example, a third-generation person may retain a higher degree of internal than of external aspects.

We can distinguish at least three types of internal aspects of identity: (1) cognitive, (2) moral, and (3) affective. The cognitive dimensions of EI include the self image of the people towards their own ethnic group; and the knowledge of ethnic members about their heritage and historical past. The moral dimension of EI is basically associated with the feeling of group obligation in the form of the importance a person attaches to his/her group. Eg., of teaching the ethnic language to one's children, of helping members of the group in times of difficulty. The affective dimension of EI constitutes the feeling of attachment to one's group which can be manifested in the associative preference for members of one's group & the feeling of security and comfort with the cultural patterns of the group.

Le (2009) also identified two forms of ethnic identity. The first is “**resurgent ethnic identity**” in which the traditional or ancestral identities reemerge through historical events and particular circumstances. The other is “**emergent ethnic identity**” which involves the creation of new forms of group identity due to the convergence of particular circumstances. “More specifically, because of demographic changes or competition and conflict with other groups, a new ethnic identity based on group solidarity and similarity of experiences might form”.

Hwang and Murdock (1991) presented two competing models with opposing views of ethnic identity: “ethnic enclosure” and “ethnic competition” perspectives. The “ethnic enclosure” thesis explained that ethnic identity erodes over time as minorities learn the host's language, adopt its cultural patterns, improve their socio-economic standing, and are exposed to and interact more frequently with majority members and other minorities on a primary basis. In sum, the ethnic enclosure thesis maintains that lack of opportunities for inter-group contacts and socio-economic advancement sustains ethnic identity. As cultural and structural barriers fall, most minority members relinquish their ethnic identity and seek full assimilation. The second view, “ethnic competition,” counters the above and sees ethnic identity as a

“dormant political consciousness” aroused among minorities as they confront majority prejudice and discrimination. Ethnic identity heightens as minority increase their knowledge about the host society, enter mainstream occupations, and interact more frequently with majority members. In sum, the ethnic competition thesis asserts that greater inter-group contact intensifies minority ethnic identity.

Similarly, Royce (1982) also identified two types of approaches what he labeled as “isolationist” and “interactionist”. In the “isolationist” approach scholars felt that ethnic identity could persist only in the absence of interaction, it was assumed that with contact inevitably comes change and loss of traditions. On the other hand, “interactionists” assume that interaction and contact with others who are different often prompt a strengthening of each group’s identity, ethnic identity is more often the product of increasing interaction between groups than the negative result of isolation.

Scholars like Phinney (1990) proposed that ethnic awareness, group solidarity, and the potential for collective mobilization grow stronger under conditions of contact and competition with a dominant group. Ethnic identity is meaningful only in situations in which two or more ethnic groups are in contact over a period of time. In an ethnically or racially homogeneous society, ethnic identity is a virtually meaningless concept. Without the contrast between “us” and “them”, ethnic identity does not exist. “We define ourselves in large measure in terms of what we are not, and that derives from our experience of what others are and how we differ” (Royce, 1982).

5.1. Degrees of Ethnic Incorporations:

Don Handelman (1977) has constructed a useful typology of degrees of ethnic incorporation- from the very loose and socially almost insignificant category to the tight corporate group. He distinguished between the ethnic category, the ethnic network, the ethnic association and the ethnic community.

5.1.1. Ethnic Category:

The least incorporated kind of ethnic collectivity is the ethnic category, which provides its members little in terms of tangible valuables. The ethnic category is constituted by the fact that contrastive categories are used to identify members and outsiders; ethnic category

membership teaches the individual appropriate behavior vis-a-vis others, passes on knowledge about his or her (imputed) origins, and legitimizes the existence of the ethnic category.

Members of ethnic categories consider themselves and are considered by others as distinctive. However, politically they are fragmented, and lack overarching organizations as well as effective interpersonal networks based on ethnicity.

In a system of interaction where corporate ethnic groups do not exist, but where ethnic categorization is used, ethnicity may still be highly important as a guiding principle for interaction.

5.1.2. Ethnic Network:

The next degree of ethnic incorporation in Handelman's typology is the ethnic network. This concept 'suggests that people will regularly interact with one another in terms of an ethnic membership set'. Such a network, while based on principles of ethnic categorization, creates enduring interpersonal ties between members of the same category and can also serve to organize contacts between strangers. The main difference between categories and networks consists in the latter's ability to distribute resources among group members. In situations where members of one's own group are preferred in the job market, ethnic networks are activated.

The ethnic category is constituted through the consistent application of mutually exclusive identity labels, and the ethnic network additionally channels a great deal of interaction along ethnic lines.

5.1.3. Ethnic Association:

When members of an ethnic category feel that they have shared interests, and develop an organisational apparatus to express them (e.g. shared political organization), it would be appropriate to talk of an ethnic association. The ethnic association, then, embodies the presumed shared interests of the ethnic category at a collective corporate level. Such organizations may be political parties or religious associations.

5.1.4. Ethnic community:

The highest degree of ethnic incorporation is that of the ethnic community. This kind of collectivity has, in addition to ethnic networks, and shared political organisation, a territory with more or less permanent physical boundaries. Ethnic groups in political command of nation-states are eminent examples of ethnic communities in this meaning of the word.

Handelman's typology can be seen, as he suggests himself, as a *developmental framework* useful for the analysis of ethnogenesis or the emergence of ethnic corporate groups out of categories. There seem to be a clear development in time from the category through the network and the association to the community.

It should be noted that not all ethnic categories undergo these transitions from ethnic category to ethnic community. In many cases, a very real alternative to ethnic incorporation can be assimilation. A great number of ethnic categories or groups have disappeared from the face of the earth in this way.

5.2. Ethnicity and Rank

In some societies ethnic groups compete for scarce resources on an equal footing whereas others are based on systematically unequal access to resources. Therefore, ethnicity appears as either horizontal or vertical aspects of social classification. If we regard ethnicity in its horizontal aspect, it may be relevant to focus on competition for scarce resources. If we focus on the vertical aspects of ethnicity, it will be more relevant to focus on power relations. Both the vertical and the horizontal aspects of ethnicity vary in importance: situationally, historically and between societies.

However, there is no a simple one-to one relationship between ethnic membership and rank in a society. The reason is that there are additional criteria for rank. Gender, age and other criteria also contributes to defining a person's rank.

5.3. Race/Racial Identity: Definition and Features

Race is an elusive concept like ethnicity. It is used in a variety of contexts and meanings. Sometimes it is used interchangeably with ethnicity, but the relationships between the two

concepts remain complex. When first appeared, ethnicity/ethnic identity was used in synonym with race or racial identity. But, the boundary between the two concepts is historically variable. What was 'racial' before 1945 may be more publicly acceptable as 'ethnic' as today. In general 'Race' has dubious descriptive value.

5.3.1. Racial Classification: A Short Historical Overview

For some time, it was common to divide *humanity into four main races*, which [was] recognized both on the *scientific* and *folk notions* of the concept. Race was used both as a *system of human classification and social stratification* which is as follows:

- *Europeaeus*: White; muscular; hair – long, flowing; eyes blue – Acute, inventive, gentle, and governed by laws.
- *Americanus*: Reddish; erect; hair – black, straight, thick; wide nostrils – Obstinate, merry, free, and regulated by custom.
- *Asiaticus*: Sallow (yellow); hair black; eyes dark – Haughty, avaricious, severe, and ruled by opinions.
- *Africanus*: Black; hair –black, frizzled; skin silky; nose flat; lips tumid – Crafty, indolent, negligent, and governed by caprice or the will of their masters. [Source: *Linneaus (1758)*; in the module “Anthropology of Ethiopian Societies, 2012]

On the other hand, the *folk Notions* of the concept perceived race as *a non-overlapping and distinguishable categories of people* which is fixed and/or natural (immutable) in its character. These, “folk” and “scientific” notions of race however, begin to diverge in the early 20th century.

Modern genetics abandon race as a variable in biomedical research and tends not to speak of races, & this has two main reasons:

1. There has always been so much interbreeding between human populations that it would be meaningless to talk of fixed boundaries between races.

2. The distribution of hereditary physical traits does not follow clear boundaries. There is often greater variation within a "racial" group than there is systematic variation between two groups.

Genetic studies concerning human variation show that humans are > 99% genetically alike. In other words, *there lack a unifying genetic essence for people of the same race*. People of the same race are not necessarily “*closely related*” when compared to people of different races. Because of the blending of people from different parts of the world, there is no such thing as a “**pure**” race. So, the use of race as a system of human categorization/identification lacks scientific validity. Nevertheless, when used as a social construction of human categorization: ‘Race’ is *human groups defined by itself or others as distinct by virtue of perceived common physical characteristics/traits that are held to be inherent*. In other words, race is a ‘*socially defined group which sees itself and is seen by others as being phenotypically different from other such groups*’. In this sense, the concept of race would be important to the extent that *it will inform people's actions* (where it exists as a *cultural construct*), whether it has a "biological" reality or not.

Racism, builds on the assumption that *personality is somehow linked with hereditary characteristics*, which differ between "races", and in this way race may assume sociological importance even if it has no “objective” existence. Social scientists who study race relations need not themselves believe in the existence of race, their object of study is the social and cultural relevance of the notion that race exists. Hence, in societies, where the notions of race are important, ideas of race may be studied as part of local discourses on ethnicity. As a social construction of human categorization/identification ‘racial group’ is a group of people, defined by themselves or by others as distinct by virtue of perceived common physical characteristics that are held to be inherent.

Self Reflection:

Do race/racial relations or racial identity distinguishable from ethnicity/ethnic relations or ethnic identity?

Different anthropologists and other scholars have different views about the relationships between race/racial relations or racial identity on the one hand and ethnicity/ethnic relations or ethnic identity on the other. For example; other than differentiating the two concepts, Pierre van den Berghe (1978, 1983) regard "race" relations as a special case of ethnicity. He describes race as "*a special marker of ethnicity*" that uses biological characteristics as an ethnic marker. In other words, 'race' is a social construct, where phenotypic attributes [not genotypic traits] are popularly used to denote in-groups from out-groups. There is no sound biological or sociological foundation for its use in an analytical sense. So, one should treat 'race' as no more than a special case of ethnicity. When the term 'race' is used in popular discourse, it cannot refer to a '*sub-species of Homo sapiens*'. Contrary to this, other scholars (e.g., Georges Vacher de la Poughe 1896, Max Weber 1992, John Rex 1973, Michael Banton 1967, and Gerald Berreman 1972 & 1981) argued that while there is much overlap between race and ethnicity, they are distinct concepts that need to be distinguished. For example,

a) Max Weber (1922): proposed that a *blood relationship was necessary for racial identification but not for ethnic identification*.

b) John Rex (1973): explained that ethnicity is a wider classificatory or organizational principle than 'race'. In the case of ethnic groups, a far wider set of situations are based upon cultural differentiation of groups than those which are commonly called racial. But, few of ethnic groups have anything like the same conflictual consequences like racial situations do. That means, few ethnic conflicts are as bloody as 'racial' ones (e.g. the comparison between the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda).

C) Gerald Berreman (1972, 1981): viewed ethnicity as something linked in a dichotic relationship with race:

- racial stratification/ categorizations is associated with birth-ascribed status based on physical and cultural characteristics defined by outside groups.
- ethnicity is also ascribed at birth, but the ethnic group normally defines its cultural characteristics itself.

Thus, racial categorizations are normally laced with inaccuracies and stereotypes, while ethnic classification is normally more accurate of a cultural group because it is defined by

the group itself. Yet, ethnic classifications can also be defined and used by outside groups to stereotype an ethnic community in ways that are often oversimplified and that view ethnicity as a static cultural group. Some scholars claim that the external ethnic boundaries [i.e. the boundaries that are defined from the outside] are the source of racial distinctions and of race as a group phenomenon. That means, race is a response to external categorization and exclusion and whatever internal dynamics race generates, it is always a response to external exclusion rather than to internal identity generating forces.

6. Theories Ethnicity and Ethnic Identity

Perspective	Description
Primordialist approach	<i>Ethnicity is fixed at birth. Ethnic identification is based on deep, 'primordial' attachments to a group or culture.</i>
Instrumentalist approach	<i>Ethnicity, based on people's "historical" and "symbolic" memory, is something created and used and exploited by leaders and others in the pragmatic pursuit of their own interests.</i>
Constructivist approach	<i>Ethnic identity is not something people "possess" but something they "construct" in specific social and historical contexts to further their own interests. It is therefore fluid and subjective.</i>

As a product of the enlightenment movement that emphasis on rationalism and universalism, both liberalism and Marxism used to anticipate the end of ethnicity in the face of modernization. It was assumed that ethnic and racial distinctions are features of pre-modern society and would have no place in a rational modern society. This classic assimilation paradigm was based on the idea that ethnic-cultural differences are only temporary and that after some time these differences will disappear, as in the melting pot. The forces of modernity (industrialization, bureaucratization, urbanization, and democracy) that emphasize status by achievement, rationality and impersonality were expected to eliminate the need for ethnic and racial categories. In reality, however, ethnic-cultural differences turned out to be more enduring than was thought, not only in the USA but also in other countries.

The persistence, and in some cases resurgence, of ethnicity was puzzling in the sense that ethnic identification and differentiation seem to surge at the same rate that seemingly objective indicators of ethnic difference (e.g. language & religion) appear to diminish or decline. It was this phenomenon of ethnic survival and revival that demanded an explanation. To fill this intellectual vacuum, a growing body of scholarship on ethnic identity, ethnic relations, and ethnic conflict has emerged since the 1960s and 1970s. As a reaction to the assimilationist views, the theories of primordialism, instrumentalism, and constructivism emerged with their own set of assumptions about the nature of ethnicity, ethnic identity and ethnic mobilization.

6.1. The Primordialist Perspective on Ethnicity & Ethnic Identity

In the extreme case, ethnicity is treated as an extension of a pre modern social bond, an innate aspect of human identity, something that people are born with where attachment among ethnic members and its persistence is attributed to the ties of blood.

Another version of the primordial perspective primarily equates ethnicity with culture. An enduring character of ethnicity is viewed as the outcome of cultural and linguistic features. Ethnicity is treated as something we are socialized into through which the cultural meanings related to ethnicity (e.g. language, history, and values) develops into durable tendencies and become self-evident frame of reference. This latter version of primordialism views cultural ties as ineffable with a deeper psychological effect on members of the group. In general, the primordial theory argues that there is something fundamental about the nature of ethnicity that ties individuals together and provides a sense of communal anchorage and protection lacking in other forms of organization.

Clifford Geertz (1973): who systematized the primordial model articulated ethnicity as a natural phenomenon with its foundations in primordial ties - deriving mainly from kinship, locality and culture. He recognizes the role of culture in defining the primordial '*givens*' that strength of such primordial bonds, and the types of them [i.e. primordial bonds] that are important differ from person to person, from society to society, and from time to time. What matters analytically is that ties of blood, language and culture are *seen* by actors to be ineffable and obligatory; that they are *seen* as natural. Geertz argues that in some respects

these putative 'primordial attachments' are actually likely to be stimulated and quickened by the political modernization of nation-building. In its general sense then, it can be said that ethnicity is something given, ascribed at birth, deriving from the kin-and-clan-structure of human society, and hence something more or less fixed and permanent (Geertz, 1963; Isaacs, 1975; Stack, 1986).

Anthony D. Smith (1986) also theorized the defining elements of ethnic identification as psychological and emotional, emerging from a person's historical and cultural backgrounds. He illustrated that the 'core' of ethnicity resides in the myths, memories, values, symbols and the characteristic styles of particular historic configurations, i.e., what he calls '*a myth-symbol complex*'. The durability of the *ethnie* (ethnic group) resides in the forms and content of the myth-symbol complex. Of pivotal importance for the survival of the *ethnie* is the diffusion and transmission of the myth-symbol complex to its unit of population and its future generations. He emphasizes the "extraordinary persistence and resilience of ethnic ties and sentiments, once formed" and argues that they [ethnic ties and sentiments] are essentially primordial since they are received through ethnic socialization into one's *ethnie* and are more or less fixed. Smith (1986) regards primordial ties as the basic organizing principles and bonds of human association throughout history. He concluded that, 'primordialism' makes *two distinct claims*: firstly, ethnicity and ethnic attachment is "*natural and innate*", which would never change over time, and secondly, it is "*ancient and perennial*". By this, ethnicity is an ascribed status and ethnic membership is fixed, permanent and primarily ascribed through birth.

The primordialist theory has been criticized for presenting a view of ethnicity and ethnic identity alternatively characterized as static, fixed, involuntary, compelling, essentialized and naturalistic. Although cultural traditions are shared, transmitted and internalized by people and are sources of internal cohesion and belongingness; they are not like "natural species" but dynamic and changing. The primordialist perspective is also inadequate to explain observed geographical variations in the expression of cultural identity by sub groups of people from the same ethnic origin. The primordial view is unable to adequately account for the observed flux in ethnic solidarity. It cannot account for ethnic change and dissolution, and the dynamics of ethno-genesis. The theory of primordialism also misses the

fact that individuals' attachments vary across situations, and identity shifts do occur. It is observed that in several cases where no "primordial ties" can be shown to have existed historically, ethnic mobilization has actually taken place as a result of socioeconomic and political factors.

6.2. The Instrumentalist Theory of Ethnicity & Ethnic Identity

The instrumentalist theory views ethnicity as an intentional or conscious strategy, an adaptive response to the conditions governing the contest for acquisition of desired resources and a strategy to defend or seize resources. The reasons for a group asserting and maintaining an ethnic identity are said to be economic and political rather than psychological. Ethnic identification is encouraged by the pursuit of collective interests. The persistence of ethnicity is attributed to the functions it fulfills in terms of interest aggregation and group mobilization in pursuit of economic or political gain. When people can see no net usefulness in such group memberships, they will tend to attempt to disassociate themselves from it. The change in ethnic identity is explained in line with the cost-benefit calculations of individuals.

Banks (1996) explained the instrumentalist understandings of ethnicity as *an instrument of group mobilization for political and economic ends*. Ethnicity is something that can be changed, constructed or even manipulated to gain specific political and/or economic ends. Proponents of instrumentalism (e.g., Abner Cohen, Paul Brass and Ted Gurr) advocate that in the contexts of modern states, leaders (political elites) use and manipulate perceptions of ethnic identity to further their own ends and stay in power. Ethnicity is created in the dynamics of elite competition within the boundaries determined by political and economic realities" and ethnic groups are seen as a product of political myths, created and manipulated by culture elites in their pursuit of advantages and power.

Abner Cohen (1974), one of the leading advocator of this perspective, in contrast to Barth: emphasizes on the ethnic group as a collectively organized strategy for the protection of economic and political interests. Ethnic groups share common interests, and in pursuit of these interests they develop "*basic organizational functions such as: distinctiveness or*

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boundaries (ethnic identity); communication; authority structure; decision making procedure; ideology; and socialization” (Cohen 1974).

Abner Cohen’s perspective on ethnicity defines ethnic organization essentially as a kind of political organization. Ethnic ideology offers answers to the questions of origins, destiny and, ultimately, the meaning of life. However, Cohen argues that ethnicity must also have a practical function in order to be viable. He argued that ethnicity is an instrument for competition over scarce resources, which is nevertheless circumscribed by ideologies of shared culture, shared origins and metaphoric kinship. This may or may not be acknowledged by the agents themselves. Only by focusing on this aspect is it possible to explain why some ethnic groups thrive while others vanishes, and why only some ethnic identification assumes great social importance.

Daniel Bell (1975) and Jeffrey Ross (1982) also emphasize the political advantage of ethnic membership choice. Ethnicity is "*a group option in which resources are mobilized for the purpose of pressuring the political system to allocate public goods for the benefit of the members of a self-differentiating collectivity*" (Ross, 1982).

Rational choice and elite theories are examples of the instrumental perspective. Predicated on the ‘theoretical primacy’ of the individual, not the group, rational choice theory holds that individual actors act rationally and in their own best interests. It sees any action as determined by a rational motive and as the basis for the pursuit of scarce resources.

For elite theorists ethnicity and ethnic identity is generally viewed as a political resource, an ideological mask used by leaders or ethnic elites for their own political ends. The cultural elements, values and practices of ethnic groups are considered as resources for elites in competition for political power and economic advantage. Ethnic elites intentionally promote feelings of cultural and economic inequality for political gain in the hope of establishing a unified base for action. Ethnicity is therefore considered as malleable to elite manipulation and instrumental utilization for the elite’s own pursuit of class and political interests. The instrumentalist theory also illustrates on how the political realm particularly the state play critical roles in shaping and defining ethnicity.

The instrumentalist theory underplays the emotional power and affective dimension of ethnic bonds. In its tendency to reduce ethnic phenomena to purely material motives the instrumentalist approach lack an adequate account of the emotive strength, and often apparently irrational power or pull associated with ethnic identities. The subjective import of ethnic group membership does not lie just simply in one's pursuit of practical interest, but also in one's feelings and a complex conception of identity. It has been shown that a number of ethnic categories reproduce their identity even if it actually reduces their chances of attaining prosperity and political power. Besides its ignorance on mass passions evoked by ethnic ties and cultural symbols, the instrumentalist views are unable to cope with the persistence of ethnicity and ethnic identity. It has difficulty in explaining why some ethnic identities have endured for long periods of time without any instrumental agenda. Elite theory has also weakness of in its underestimation of mass action: while elites are portrayed as strong willed and creative, the population at large is depicted as submissive, completely dependent and incapable of meaningful action.

Although both the primordialist and the instrumentalist theories have their own importance that needs to be recognized, neither seem to be able to fully account to the nature of ethnicity and ethnic identity. The primordialists' emphasis on the permanency of ethnic identities is highly exaggerated and the instrumentalists' assumption of fluidity of ethnic identities is equally overstated. To reduce, complex human behavior to mere biology, on the one hand, or mere pragmatism, at the other extreme, appears to ignore human capacity to operate at the level of the symbolic.

6.3. The Constructivist Theory of Ethnicity and Ethnic Identity

The constructivist theory is an intermediate perspective. It recognizes that ethnicity cannot be simply taken as a given or conceptualized as an independent variable without also acknowledging its dependent status. Constructivism holds that ethnicity is constructed and that ethnic identities are not singular, nor are they fixed; they may change over time and differ in their relative significance. Ethnicity is subject to fluctuation depending upon a group's solidarity and position in society. It is the circumstances that locate groups in particular situations and encourages them to define themselves in such a way that their

interests are met. Therefore, ethnic identity has to be conceived of as a process, affected by history as well as contemporary circumstances, and by local as well as global dynamics. Ethnic identities are (re)constructed as narratives from the political–economic–cultural facts and fictions of history told in contemporary settings.

Because the emphasis is on construction, this theory borrows a great deal from the instrumentalists' focus on specific contexts and circumstances whether they are economic or political, immediate, or structural. It explains ethnic group solidarity and the maintenance of ethnic group bonds underlining historical, structural and cultural contingencies and circumstantial aspects in ethnic relations. Ethnicity is viewed not as something that people possess as a property of a group but as aspects of relationships between groups and is constructed in certain situations.

The content and meaning of identities shift across time and place, for individuals, groups, and whole societies. Ethnic identities are fluid across time and social contexts, sometimes even to the point of “ethnic switching”. Ethnic formations and dynamics in ethnicity must be understood in close association with changing socio-political and power constellations.

6.3.1. The Dynamics of Ethnic Identity

Historical incidents are among the major contributing factor to the dynamics of ethnic identities. For example, Stavenhagen (1990) mentioned that “when an ethnic group has a history of persecution and discrimination, identities may become positively reinforcing or negatively stigmatizing”. Another factor contributing to the dynamics of ethnic identity is the pattern of interethnic relationships. Prejudice and discrimination that a person or a group experience impact one's sense of ethnic identity. It tends to generate a defensive reaction; it may encourage ‘reactive ethnic solidarity’ and strengthened ethnic boundaries and identity’ (Matsuo 1992).

Political and economic incidents are also other major contributing factors to the vibrant of ethnic identity. For instance, Nagel (1994) mentioned that as the State has become the dominant institution in society, political policies regulating ethnicity increasingly shape ethnic boundaries and influence patterns of ethnic identifications. On the other side, Barth

(1969) explained that “where separate niches are exploited by separate ethnic groups, ethnic tranquility prevails; however, niche competition (e.g., for land or water) results in ethnic boundary instability due to conflict or displacement”. Moreover, the family and religious institutions also play a crucial role in the dynamics or changing of ethnic identity. The family exerts strong influence on the identities that children adopt. Familial ethnic socialization and experiences within the family are of primary importance in shaping ethnic identifications.

6.3.2. Changing and Shifting Ethnic Boundary

Being a social product, boundary may have variable importance and may change through time. How one identifies oneself and how one is identified by others may vary from context to context. The construction of otherness and we-ness proceeds in different contexts and time situations. The compass of the ‘we’ category may expand and contract according to situations. For example, changing political situations and historical processes could affect the construction of otherness and we-ness. Ethnic identities tend to attain their special importance in situations of flux, change, resource competition and threats against boundaries (Eriksen 1993). Therefore, boundary lines could be drawn, redrawn, interpreted and misinterpreted, and struggled over in the process of encounters with others (Benjamin 2002).

Ethnicity is not necessarily bipolar (Derks 2009), oppositional (Verkuyten 1997) or mutually exclusive (Derks and Nico 2009). Ethnic boundaries do not isolate groups entirely from each other as there is a continuous flow of information, interaction, exchange and sometimes-even people across the boundary (Eriksen 1993). Ethnic categories produce a hierarchy of nested segments whereby depending on contexts the same people may be variously classified as alike or different as people manage multiple identities (Howard 2007). Ethnicity, therefore, is “a *series* of nesting dichotomizations of inclusiveness and exclusiveness” [emphasis in original] (Cohen 1978). It could be expanded (beyond one’s local region) to include non-local social groupings, depending on the awareness of additional possible ethnic identities (Benjamin 2002). Sometimes external boundaries are an important source of political mobilization and unity (e.g. pan-ethnicity).

Because ethnic identities are not necessarily exclusive of one another, internal boundaries also could include multiple ethnicities, as for example, deriving from ethnically mixed parentage (Isajiw 1992). There are sometimes liminal categories whereby groups or individuals are 'betwixt and between', who are neither X nor Y and yet a bit of both (Eriksen 1993). In such cases, there is some fluidity and uncertainty about precise group boundaries. Therefore, actual group membership may be open to situational negotiation, it may be ascribed by a dominant group, or the group may form a separate ethnic category.

Generally, ethnicity and ethnic identity exhibits both constancy and flux side by side (Smith 1991). Sometimes ethnic identities are deconstructed, reconstructed and shifted according to local understandings but there are also attempts to maintain historical constructions of ethnic identity, sense of stability and rootedness in the face of changing social conditions (Benjamin 2002). For instance, in cases where a heritage language is dying out through language shift, revitalization efforts may be undertaken to prevent this loss (Fought 2006). Ethnicity has not only proved resilient in situations of change; it has also emerged in forceful ways during the very processes of change (Eriksen 1993). It involves change and continuity, time and space, the individual and the collective and so on. Therefore, any realistic account of ethnicity and ethnic identity must eschew polar extremes of theoretical debates.

6.4. Modalities of Group Solidarity: *We-hood* vs. *Us-hood*

Here we can distinguish between two modalities of group solidarity, which we may call *we-hood* and *us-hood*. Being *us*, people are loyal and socially integrated chiefly in relation to *the other*; through competition, enmity, symbiosis or the contrastive use of stereotypes and boundary symbols. Being *we*, on the other hand, entails being integrated because of shared activities within the collectivity. Although ethnicity, being relational, is by definition a phenomenon of *us-hood*, the ethnic category or group must additionally have an element of *we-hood* in order to be viable- a shared language or religion, a division of labour which creates interdependence, or a notion of shared origins.

6.5. The Emergence of Ethnic Identities

Epstein (1978) notes that many of the societies traditionally studied by anthropologists are undergoing rapid processes of social and cultural change, yet, ethnicity- contrary to many expectations- does not vanish as a result, but instead emerges in a new, often more powerful and more clearly articulated form. Ethnicity arises so often in circumstances of social upheaval and transformation, which are frequently accompanied by severe cultural erosion and the disappearance of many customs that might serve as marks of distinctiveness.

Ethnic symbolism referring to the ancient language, religion, kinship system or way of life is crucial for the maintenance of ethnic identity through periods of change. Generally speaking, ethnic identity becomes most important the moment it seems threatened. Ethnic identities tend to attain their greatest importance in situations of flux, change, resource competition and threats against boundaries. Since ethnicity is an aspect of relationship, the importance of boundaries may thus be said to be conditional on the pressure exerted on them. Several factors may constitute such a perceived threat, but they are always related to some kind of change- migration, change in the demographic situation, industrialization or other economic change, or integration into or encapsulation by a larger political system. On the other hand, expressions of ethnic identity may also be regarded, rather than as psychological responses to threats from the outside or attempts to create order in the social universe, as symbolic tools in political struggles.

Ethnic movements could have different bases and characteristic features. It could be religious, political, identity based or any other in its character. Ethnic identities can be seen as expressions of metaphoric kinship. Some notions of shared descent may be a universal element in ethnic ideologies. Sometimes ethnic ideologies, like kin genealogies, trace common descent back to a known ancestor, although the actual linkages are unknown.

Ethnogenesis

Ethno-genesis refers to the historical emergence/formation of a particular ethnic configuration. In order to understand ethno-genesis, it would be misleading to start from an assumption of primordial characteristics of groups or categories.

The formation of new ethnic categories, which presupposes the formation of new identities, generally follows one of two possible paths. First, it may come about through an extension of existing identifications; by an expansion of system boundaries bringing hitherto discrete groups into contact with each other. The second possibility is the reverse: it consists in reducing the size of the group with presumed shared ancestry. That means, through a process of social differentiation within a population, which eventually leads to the division of that population into two distinctive groups. A common sociological term for this kind of process is 'fission'. Both of these possibilities for the delineation of ethnic identities require reinterpretations of the past. In order to create collective identity and political cohesion ethnic leaders/entrepreneurs may reinterpret their past history.

7. Nationalism: Definitions and Features

Nationalism is a new topic for Anthropology. The study of nationalism was for many years left to political scientists, macro-sociologists and historians. The study of Nationalism has truly become a topic within anthropology only during the 1980s and 1990s. Ethnicity and nationalism; ethnic group and Nation are closely related. The difference between the two is vague. Both of them use the same kind of criteria such as cultural and historical factors such as language, religion, customs and collective memories in their claims. Fervent nationalists see no difference between nation and ethnic group (Markakis, 1999). However, in its popular definition, unlike ethnicity, nationalism is related to the state; the distinguishing mark of nationalism is its relationship to the state. In the classic terminology of social anthropology, the term 'nation' was used in an inaccurate way to designate large categories of people or societies with more or less uniform culture.

The subject of nationalism is very complex because of the many different sources and manifestations of the phenomenon. Because nationalism comes in various forms and types, a unified definition of nationalism is most likely unachievable. It is difficult to come up with a uniform definition of nationalism. According to Eriksen (2005), nationalist ideology is an ethnic ideology which demands a state on behalf of the ethnic group.

In its historical context Smith (1991) defined nationalism as an ideological movement aimed at attaining and maintaining the identity, unity (through social cohesion) and autonomy

(through national self-determination) of a "nation" (Smith, 1991). That means, the defining ideology of political movements seeking some form of autonomy or independent statehood. It is the most potent ideology in nation-state building and consolidation. Nationalism in the contemporary era is a vehicle for disaffected ethnic or cultural communities to voice their dissatisfaction with the status quo. Sources of discontent may include denial of cultural identity, political discrimination, repression, or economic deprivation. In these cases, it is a movement of minority groups which springs up in reaction to the policies or performance of the central state. It has enabled dissatisfied minority or ethnic groups within the nation-states to challenge state authority by questioning its claim to legitimacy

Nationalism also refers to the core ideology employed by the state to galvanize public support for its policies or to reaffirm its legitimacy. It provides states an ideological justification for holding "the nation" together. In general, nationalism has contributed to the **formation** and **survival** as well as to the **dismemberment** of nation-states.

Nationalism as it is used by **Ernest Gellner** and other contemporary social scientists refer to a peculiar link between ethnicity and the state. Nationalisms are, in this view, ethnic ideologies which hold that their group should dominate a state. A nation-state, therefore, is a state dominated by an ethnic group, whose markers of identity (such as language or religion) are frequently embedded in its official symbolism and legislation. **Benedict Anderson** defines the nation as an **imagined political community**. By imagined he mean that people who define themselves as members of a nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives **the image of their communion**. Both definitions stress that nations are ideological constructions seeking to forge a link between (self-defined) cultural group and state, and that they create abstract communities of a different order from those kinship-based communities which pre-dated them.

A nation is an ethnic group whose leaders have either achieved, or aspire to achieve, a state where its cultural group is hegemonic. According to nationalism, the political organization should be ethnic in character in that it represents the interests of a particular ethnic group. Like ethnic ideologies, nationalism stresses the cultural similarity of its adherents and, by implication; it draws boundaries vis-a-vis others, who thereby become outsiders. The

distinguishing mark of nationalism is by definition its relationship to the state. A nationalist holds that political boundaries should be coterminous with cultural boundaries, whereas many ethnic groups do not demand command over a state. When the political leaders of an ethnic movement make demands to this effect, the ethnic movement therefore by definition becomes a nationalist movement.

However, there is some confusion concerning the nature of relationship between nation and state because different scholars use it in different context:

- ✓ Nation as synonymous with state;
- ✓ Nation as representing a people (not a population) belonging to the same ethno-linguistic group;
- ✓ Nation as representing a culturally homogenized population living in an existing state;
- ✓ Nation as a community of peoples composed of one or more nationalities and possessing a defined territory and government (i.e. multi-national nation)

Anderson argues that nationalism derives its force from its combination of political legitimation and emotional power. Politics cannot be purely instrumental, but must always involve symbols which have the power of creating loyalty and a feeling of belongingness. Although nations tend to imagine themselves as old, they are modern. Nationalist ideology was first developed in Europe and in European Diaspora in the period around the French Revolution.

Nationalism stresses solidarity between the poor and the rich, the rural and the urban, between the propertyless and the capitalists. According to nationalist ideology, the sole principle of political exclusion and inclusion follows the boundaries of the nation- that category of people defined as members of the same culture. According to Gellner this characteristic feature of nationalism is a political innovation. Vernacularization is an important aspect of many nationalist movements, since a shared language can be a powerful symbol of cultural unity as well as a convenient tool in the administration of a nation-state.

The selection of symbols to be used in the nation's representation of itself was highly politically motivated.

The use of presumably typical ethnic symbols of nationalism is intended to stimulate reflection on one's own cultural distinctiveness and thereby to create a feeling of nationhood. Nationalism reifies culture in the sense that it enables people to talk about their culture as though it were a constant.

7.1. Emergence of Nationalism

Different scholars have different views about the emergence of nationalism. But the main ones are summarized below:

According to **Anthony Smith** and the Ethno-Historical (Ethno-symbolic approach) nations have their origins in pre-modern forms of “Socio-cultural organizations” called *ethnies* (French term for ethnic group). All nations have dominant ethnic core and nationalism has its roots in the past. Nationalism is (mainly) based on earlier ethnic identities, and symbols associated with that ethnic identity. It is reflected by the extensive use of kin terms to refer to the nation. On the other hand, the Modernist approach (**Gellner, 1980**) viewed nationalist ideology emerged as reaction to industrialization and the uprooting of people from their local communities. Industrialization entailed geographic mobility, and a vast number of people became participants in the same economic system; kinship ideology and religion were no longer capable of organizing people efficiently. In this historical context, a need arises for a new kind of ideology capable of creating cohesion and loyalty among individuals participating in social systems on a huge scale. Nationalism was able to satisfy these requirements: It postulated the existence of an imagined community based on shared culture and embedded in the state; people's loyalty and attachment directed towards the state and the legislative system. In this way, nationalist ideology is functional for the state.

Gellner, Ralph Grillo (1980) and others have argued that nationalist ideology emerged as reaction to industrialization and the uprooting of people from their local communities. Industrialization entailed great geographic mobility, and a vast number of people became participants in the same economic (and later the same political) system. Kinship ideology,

feudalism and religion were no longer capable of organizing people efficiently. In this historical context, a need arises for a new kind of ideology capable of creating cohesion and loyalty among individuals participating in social systems on a huge scale. Nationalism was able to satisfy these requirements. It postulated the existence of an imagined community based on shared culture and embedded in the state, where people's loyalty and attachment should be directed towards the state and the legislative system rather than towards members of their kin group or village. In this way, nationalist ideology is functional for the state.

Its political effectiveness is one condition for nationalist ideology to be viable or practical. An additional condition is popular support. Nationalism offers security and perceived stability at a time when life-worlds are fragmented and people are being uprooted. An important aim of nationalist ideology is thus to recreate a sentiment of wholeness and continuity with the past; to transcend that alienation or rupture between individual and society that modernity has brought about.

One important difference between nations and other kinds of community, including many ethnic communities, concerns scale. With a few exceptions of mini-states, nation-states are social systems operating on a vast scale. To great extent local communities rely on kinship networks and face-to-face interactions for their maintenance as systems and for the loyalty of their members. Socialization and social control are largely handled locally. Nations, on the other side, are communities where the citizens are expected to be integrated in respect to culture and self identity in an abstract, anonymous manner.

Communication Technology and Nationhood:

Brainstorming:

What do you think of the role of the mass media in nationalism?

Communication technology is another prerequisite for nationalism. It facilitates the standardization of knowledge or representations. For example, through the printed words a potentially unlimited number of persons may have access to identical information without direct contact with the originator. Newspapers, television and radio have played- and still

play- a crucial part in standardizing representations and language. These media also play an important part in the reproduction and strengthening nationalist sentiments.

Modern transportation technology also greatly facilitates the integration of people into larger social systems, increasing the flow of people and goods indefinitely. It creates conditions for the integration of people into nation-states, and in this way it may have important indirect effects at the level of consciousness in making people feel that they are members of a nation.

7.2. Nationalism and Symbolism

Like ethnic ideologies, nationalism lays claim to symbols which have great importance for people and argues that these symbols represent the nation-state. **Death** is often important in nationalist symbolism: individuals who have died in war are depicted as martyrs who died in defense of their nation. In its ability to depict the nation as a sacred community, nationalism has a religious aspect.

Nationalism can instill passions and profound emotions in its followers. It frequently draws on religion and myth for its symbolism. For example, during the period leading up to the Islamic revolution in Iran in 1979, the US was depicted as an adulterous infidel who raped and mistreated Iran, which was depicted as a woman- as a mother-country (Thaiss, 1978). This kind of symbolism can be extremely powerful in mass politics. Similarly, one needs to think of **military parades** which are common in the celebration of independence days in many countries. Maps are also used as a metaphor for the political and cultural developments leading to nationalism. So, maps can be a concise and potent symbol of a nation.

Nationalism serves as a **metaphoric kinship ideology**. Kinship terms are frequently used in nationalist discourse (e.g. mother country, father of the nation, brothers and sisters, and so on), and the abstract community postulated by nationalists may be linked to the kin group.

Brainstorming:

What kind of kinship terminologies are used in Ethiopian nationalism?

7.3. Nationalism and the Other

Like other ethnic identities, national identities are constituted in relation to others; the very idea of the nation presupposes that there are other nations, or at least other peoples, who are not members of the nation. Nations are territorial and political units which identifies between insiders and outsiders on the basis of citizenship. Nationalist dichotomization and boundary maintenance may take many forms such as competition between nation-states on the world market; war between nation-states, international sports as a form of metaphoric war between nation-states and the like. Nationalist ideologies tend to be more concerned with clear-cut, unambiguous boundaries than other ethnic ideologies. Nations are territorial and political units with an inherent need to divide others into insiders and outsiders on the basis of citizenship. Cultural similarity among citizens becomes a political programme vested in the state. In this way, national identities may be more comprehensive and may place greater demands on the individual than ethnic identities in a polyethnic society.

7.4. Forms of Nationalism (typology):

There are different forms of nationalism which include ethno-nationalism, civic nationalism, state nationalism, religious nationalism, ideological nationalism, and hetero-nationalism. Each one of them is briefly discussed below.

a) Ethno-nationalism, Cultural nationalism (ethno-cultural):

- ✓ defines the nation in terms of ethnicity
- ✓ functions on the principle that a nation can only be defined by its ethnic connection which encompasses shared language, culture, heritage and ancestry
- ✓ National identity is about ancestry and cannot be acquired
- ✓ intolerant and feature of authoritarian regimes
- ✓ leads to conflict, especially in ethnic diverse locations
- ✓ Related to anti-immigrant sentiment and hostility to ethnic minorities
- ✓ Ethnic nationalism is a form of nationalism when ethnicity assumes a political (and often territorial) dimension that challenges the status quo
- ✓ the political organization should be ethnic in character in that it represents the interests of a particular ethnic group

- ✓ When the political leaders of an ethnic movement make demands command over a state, the ethnic movement becomes a nationalist movement.

b) Civic Nationalism/State Nationalism

- ✓ also referred to as progressive nationalism
- ✓ transcends ethnic distinctions
- ✓ expressed in **supra-ethnic ideology**
- ✓ Membership of the civic nation is considered voluntary
- ✓ the state derives political legitimacy from the active participation of its citizenry
- ✓ National identity is about citizenship and is acquired;
- ✓ advocates for social unity, individual rights and freedoms;
- ✓ centered on the idea of a non-xenophobic society, which shows tolerance for all its individuals and strives to provide equality and social justice (Hall, 1998)
- ✓ It is the driving force of globalization; it also leads to a dilution of intrinsic values in highly traditional societies.

c) State Nationalism is a variant of civic nationalism:

- ✓ It is the creation of mass public sentiment in favor of the state and
- ✓ is used by the state to mobilize popular support for its policies or to reaffirm its legitimacy
- ✓ to promote unity against external opposition

d) Hetero-nationalism (Comaroff)

- ✓ A synthesis that seeks to establish ethno-national identity politics within a civic nationalism conception of political community;
- ✓ It is embedded in the language of pluralism;
- ✓ Its objective is to accommodate cultural diversity within a civil society composed of autonomous citizens.

e) Religious Nationalism

- ✓ denotes a form of nationalism which relies upon a central religion or dogma that has implications in politics and state affairs (Omer and Springs, 2013);

Ethnicity, Identity & Nationalism (SoAn 2072)

- ✓ examples include non-secular states, such as Iran, Saudi Arabia or Afghanistan, where the religious law (Sharia Law or the Islamic Law) is the ultimate law of the state;
 - ✓ Like ethnic nationalism, religious nationalism shows little or no tolerance for other religious beliefs; however it does not focus on ethnic unity, but rather on religious unity by repelling any opposing views.
- f) Ideological Nationalism**
- ✓ is a form of political nationalism which argues for the capacity of nations to self-govern i.e. idea of self-determination

Home stay assignment for Students on:

COVID-19 vs. Nationalism in Ethiopia

This task is based on personal observation & reflection of students on the various kinds of responses against COVID-19 in Ethiopia.

The spread of the Corona virus clearly represents a massive challenge for different countries, companies and people of the world. Countries across the globe are declaring the situation a national emergency. The situation has also been involving political speeches from different directions. For example, the German Interior Minister (Horst Seehofer) rightly mentioned the corona virus is no longer merely a health crisis, but “a question of national security.” It is a war against the virus. Some others mentioned that “The pandemic will strengthen the state and reinforce nationalism....”

Having these points as a mere background, you are required to write-down a maximum of ten pages on the sense of nationalism and its manifestations in Ethiopia in relation to COVID-19 pandemic. Your observation may be based on from what you read, see or hear. It will account for 15% of your total evaluation.

7.5. Nationalism and Ethnicity Reconsidered

Nationalism and ethnicity are kindred concepts, and the majority of nationalisms are ethnic character. A nationalist ideology is an ethnic ideology which demands a state on behalf of the ethnic group. However, in practice the distinction can be highly problematic. First, nationalism may sometimes express a polyethnic or supraethnic ideology which stresses shared civil rights rather than shared cultural roots. A distinction between ethnic nationalisms and polyethnic or supra-ethnic nationalism could be relevant here.

In societies where nationalism above all is presented as an impartial and universalistic ideology based on bureaucratic principles of justice, ethnicity and ethnic organizations may appear as threats against national cohesion, justice and the state (e.g. during the pre 1991 period of Ethiopia ethnic distinction were basically considered as a threat to the unity and integrity of the country). This tension may appear as a conflict between *particularist* and *universalist* moralities. In these polyethnic societies, nationalism is frequently presented as a supra-ethnic ideology guaranteeing formal justice and equal rights for everybody.

A different kind of conflict between ethnicity and nationalism can be described as a conflict between a dominating and a dominated ethnic group within the framework of a modern nation-state. In such contexts, the nationalist ideology of the hegemonic group will be perceived as a *particularist* ideology rather than a *universalist* one. This kind of situation is characteristics of the contemporary world, where states tend to be dominated politically by one of the constituent ethnic groups or, more accurately, by its elites.

Task for Students:

Students are required to do an assignment on the 'Discourse of Ethnicity and Nationalism in Ethiopia' with particular reference to the political situation of the pre- and post-1991 ethnic federal Ethiopia.

7.6. Ethnic Minorities and Majorities

An ethnic minority can be defined as a group which is numerically inferior to the rest of the population in a society, which is (most of the time) politically non-dominant and which is being reproduced as an ethnic category (cf. Minority Rights Group, 1990).

Like other concepts used in the analysis of ethnicity, the twin concepts minority and majority are *relative* and *relational*. A minority exists only in relation to a majority and vice versa, and their relationship is contingent on the relevant system boundaries. In the contemporary world, these system boundaries are nearly always state boundaries. The majority-minority relationship therefore changes if state boundaries are redrawn. Groups which constitute majorities in one area or country may be minorities elsewhere. For example, immigrant groups may belong to a majority in their country of origin, but to a minority in the host country. A majority group can also become a minority through the inclusion of its territory in a larger system. There are possibilities for situational switching, as well as historical change, between minority and majority status for a particular group or category.

7.7. Ethnic Minorities and the State

Since some forms of cultural and ethnic variation must be 'matter out of place' to nationalists, ethnic variation is frequently defined by dominant groups as a problem, as something one has to 'cope with'. Downright genocide and enforced displacement are the most brutal methods employed by states in their dealings with minorities. These methods have become less common since the Second World War. Today, states generally use one or several of three main strategies in their dealings with minorities.

a) Assimilation:

The state may insist on assimilation strategies. It may insist that minorities shed their languages and boundary markers and gradually come to identify themselves to the majority group. Although such policies of assimilation are often believed to help their target groups to achieve equal rights and to improve their social standing, they often inflict suffering and loss of dignity on the parts of the minorities. Successful policies of assimilation ultimately lead to the disappearance of the minority.

b) Segregation

The state may opt for domination, which frequently implies segregation on ethnic grounds. This entails the minority being physically removed from the majority, and this is frequently justified by referring to the presumed cultural inferiority of the former. Ideologies of segregation often hold that it is harmful to 'mix cultures' or races, and are concerned with boundary maintenance. South African apartheid was a very clear case of ethnic segregation, and many North American cities are also segregated along ethnic lines. In the latter case, segregation is not necessarily the result of state policies but is caused by a combination of class differences following ethnic lines, ethnic dichotomization and minority stigma.

c) Multiculturalism:

The third main option for the state consists in transcending ethnic nationalist ideology and adopting an ideology of multiculturalism, where citizenship and full civil rights need not imply a particular cultural identity, or a decentralized federal model providing a high degree of local autonomy.

Minorities may respond to state domination in three principal ways. Alfred Hirschmann (1970) described the three options as: exit, voice or loyalty. The first option is to assimilate. However, in some cases it is impossible for an ethnic minority to choose assimilation (e.g. if skin color is an important marker of ethnicity). The second option for minorities consists in acquiescing in their subordination, or in other ways trying to coexist peacefully within the nation-state. They may sometimes negotiate for limited autonomy in religious, linguistic or local political matters. In other cases, such groups may reproduce their boundaries and identities informally. That means, they may resist assimilation and react through ethnic incorporation. The third principal option for minorities, exit or secession, is always incompatible with state policies. All these strategies are ideal types. In practice, both state tactics and minority responses will usually combine strategies of assimilation and segregation (or ethnic incorporation), and minorities may be divided over issues of independence. A term commonly used to describe combinations between assimilation and segregation/incorporation, is 'integration'. This implies the minority's simultaneous participation in the shared institutions of society and its reproduction of group identity and ethnic boundaries.

Two general points should be clear:

First, there is no necessary contradiction between modernisation and retention of ethnic identity-on the contrary; it can be argued that in many cases certain aspects of modernisation are required for identity maintenance to be successful. It is not cultural change in itself that determines the chances for survival for ethnic minorities. Rather, it is the relative ability of specific minorities to master the changes and utilize new technologies and political possibilities for their own ends.

Modernization may be said to reduce the scope of cultural variation in the world. However, the emerging cultural self consciousness or reflexivity brought about through these very processes has also inspired the formation of ethnic identities stressing cultural uniqueness. Simplistically: while one's grandparents may have lived as traditional inuits or Sami without giving it any thought, and one's parents took great pains to escape from their stigmatised and shameful minority positions and to become assimilated and modern, today's generation does everything in its power to revive the customs and traditions that their grandparents followed without knowing it, and which their parents tried so hard to forget (cf.Giddens, 1990, 1991, on reflexivity and modernity). Identity processes/issue become especially acute and politically important during the rapid social changes brought about through modernisation.

The second point is that a minority-majority relationship may involve other agents as well as the two groups. In many conflictual cases third parties may play an important part. The transnational and international network is important. So is the role of cultural brokers or entrepreneurs: those individuals and agencies which mediate between indigenous/minority group, the state and international society. Such actors may be educated members of the indigenous group, foreign anthropologists, missionaries, or NGOs such as Amnesty, Survival international and the like.

7.8. Beyond Ethnicity

Studies of ethnicity have tended to accentuate the enactment of boundary mechanisms and the use of overt markers of distinctiveness in the reproduction of ethnic identities. However, the social world can rarely be neatly divided into fixed groups with clear boundaries, unambiguous criteria for membership and an all-encompassing social relevance. Therefore, a one-sided focus on ethnicity may prevent a researcher from seeing social systems in other ways which may also be other ways which may also be relevant. The existence of ethnic

anomalies or liminal categories should serve as a reminder that group boundaries are not unproblematic.

There are groups or individuals who are 'betwixt and between', who are neither X nor Y and yet a bit of both. Their actual group membership may be open to situational negotiation, it may be ascribed by a dominant group, or the group may form a separate ethnic category. In addition, non-ethnic criteria for group membership are situationally relevant in every society, and in complex modern societies they proliferate and can be identified as multiple identities. Different forms of group loyalty and membership may be largely congruent with ethnic membership, or they may cut across it. Therefore, we may not assume a priori that ethnic alignments are more important than others. Since, many other statuses are relevant, the mutually exclusive or digital (e.g. either one is a member of X or one is not) way of thinking about group is problematic. It may be more appropriate to think of identity in general as an *analogic* (or gradualist) phenomenon than as a *digital* one. Conceptualized in this way, degrees of sameness and differences, of inclusion and exclusion, may be identified. People may be a bit of this and a bit of that. A concern with non-ethnic dimensions of polyethnic societies can be a corrective and supplement to analysis of ethnicity. Research in ethnicity has opened up exciting new fields in social Anthropology. Nonetheless we ought to be critical enough to abandon the concept of ethnicity the moment it becomes a straitjacket rather than a tool for generating new understanding.

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