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Author(s): Ana María Alonso

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THE POLITICS OF SPACE, TIME AND SUBSTANCE: State Formation, Nationalism, and Ethnicity

Ana María Alonso

Department of Anthropology, University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona 85721

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We have come to take the state for granted as an object of political practice and political analysis while remaining quite spectacularly unclear as to what the state is.

P Abrams (2:59)

Nation, nationality, nationalism—all have proved notoriously difficult to define, let alone to analyse.

B Anderson (7:3)

Ethnicity is like family or marriage: everybody knows what it means but nobody can define it.

RT Smith (118:1)

What is the relationship between common sense categories of experience and analytical concepts developed in order to understand the processes that produce such categories and effect their taken-for-grantedness? This question is crucial for those working on nationalism, ethnicity, and state formation. Much of the misplaced concreteness that bedevils this scholarship results from an uncritical reproduction of common sense that poses intellectual as well as political problems.

MISPLACED CONCRETENESS AND THE STATE

Abrams long ago pointed out that by positing a mystifying separation of the political and the social, scholars have objectified and personified the state (2). A product of practices of politically organized subjection in capitalist societies, this misplaced concreteness resonates with and is reinforced by everyday experience and becomes “commonsensical” (56). As an alternative, Abrams proposes that we study the state-system, which is “a palpable nexus of practice and institutional structure centred in government and more or less extensive, unified and dominant in any given society” (2:82), as well as the state-idea, which is a “message of domination—an ideological artefact attributing unity, morality and independence to the disunited, amoral and dependent workings of the practice of government” (2:81). Understanding the state as a mask entails grasping its importance as a historically constructed and contested “exercise in legitimation, in moral regulation” (2:77).

Corrigan & Sayer’s work (35) on English state formation demonstrates that modern relations of rule and forms of discipline construct and are constructed in everyday practices. Corrigan & Sayer argue that state formation is cultural revolution, highlighting in their analysis the ways in which everyday state routines, rituals, activities, and policies, which are themselves material cultural forms, constitute and regulate the social making of meaning and of subjects. Anchored in relations of inequality, cultural revolution is not “merely an ideational matter, and cannot be considered independently of the materiality of state formation—what state agencies are, how they act, and on whom” (p. 191). Their work “draws attention to the totalizing dimension of state formation,...to its constructions of ‘national character’ and ‘national identity’...and the individualizing dimension of state formation, which is organized through impositional claims embodied in distinctive categories...that are structured along the axes of class, occupation, gender, age, ethnicity and locality” (75:20; see 35:4–5). These totalizing and individualizing processes generate “a common discursive framework” (102:361), articulated by nonlinguistic as well as linguistic signifiers, which forms and is formed by the lived experience of state subjects (75:20). “Making this conscience genuinely collective is always an accomplishment, a struggle against other ways of seeing, other moralities, which express the historical experiences of the dominated” (35:6). Thus, an anthropology of state formation needs to consider what states are formed against: “Neither the shape of the state, nor oppositional cultures, can be properly understood outwith the context of the mutually formative (and continuing) struggle between them: in other words, historically” (p. 7; see also 75:21–22).

There are some obvious parallels between Corrigan & Sayer’s theorizing of state formation on the one hand, and Gramsci’s (56) on the other, but there are

also key differences. Gramsci's double definition of the state has both a narrow and an expanded sense (56). In the narrow sense, the state, equated with government, functions by command and coercion (see also 23). In the expanded sense, the state, equated with political society and civil society, is defined as "hegemony protected by the armour of coercion" (p. 263). Both formulations privilege civil society as the site of production of hegemony; hence, there is no way to theorize either "the process of penetration of civil society by agencies of government" or "what is special about non-governmental forms of control" (23:101, 40:112–113). For Corrigan & Sayer, the power of the state "rests not so much on the consent of its subjects but with the state's regulative and coercive forms and agencies, which define and create certain kinds of subjects and identities while denying" others through everyday routines and rituals of ruling (102:357).¹

Having said all this, I still find much of value in Gramsci's notion of hegemony, provided the role of the state in hegemonic processes is recognized. In addition, it is worth recalling that hegemony "was a more material and political concept in Gramsci's usage than it has since become" (102:358; cf 56, 79) and that for Gramsci, hegemony was not "a finished and monolithic ideological formation" (cf 6) but "a problematic, contested political process of domination and struggle" (102:358). Precisely because hegemony is fragile, it must be constantly "renewed, recreated, defended and modified" (141:112) as the "relations of forces" (56:180–185) in society shift. Cultural inscription is key for transforming the fragile into the monumental, limiting polysemy by removing hegemonic meanings from the immediate circumstances of their creation and endowing them with a misplaced concreteness. At the same time, cultural inscription connects hegemonic meanings with the experience and understanding of social actors (101).

The cultural inscription of the idea of the state has in part been secured through the spatialization of time, the transformation of becoming into Being (65:273), and through the symbolic and material organization of social space (65, 80, 147). The widely held notion of the state as the representative of the public will, a neutral arbiter above the conflicts and interests of society, is an effect of a topography of hierarchized binaries whose terms are constructed as autonomous spaces (85). This topography conceals the workings of relations of rule and forms of discipline in day to day life. Although binaries such as state/civil society and public/private have been critiqued frequently in recent scholarship, analysis of how they are constructed through representations of space and place has been less common (but see 49, 60, 61, 65, 80, 147). And if this topography of modern state formation has been linked by feminists to the

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Because Gramsci does not theorize the coercion implicit in state forms of moral regulation, his vision of the state in a communist, regulated society is naïve.

consolidation of gender inequalities, it has less frequently been seen as crucial to the imagining of national and sub-national communities and identities and, hence, to the production of status hierarchies of ethnic inequality.

Anderson's argument that nations are "imagined political communities" (7:6) has done much to expose the misplaced concreteness in nationalist common sense and scholarly literature (cf 52, 71, 112). But Anderson does not go far enough in identifying the strategies through which "the imagined" becomes "second nature," a "structure of feeling" (141:132) embodied in material practice and lived experience. For example, tropes of space and place are integral to Mexican nationalist discourses; the nation is rendered real through a "vast iconic structuring of 'public' social space" that "transforms what was once the terrain of local and regional autonomies into a homogenized and nationalized domain, where an objectified official history makes the presence of the state palpable in everyday life" (4:41). Hegemonic strategies, at once material and symbolic, produce the idea of the state while concretizing the imagined community of the nation by articulating spatial, bodily and temporal matrixes through the everyday routines, rituals, and policies of the state system.

Spatialization and Territorialization

Modern forms of state surveillance and control of populations as well as of capitalist organization and work discipline have depended on the homogenizing, rationalizing, and partitioning of space (65:213, 49, 95:99–107). Moreover, the transformation of space into territory that has been central to nationalism has relied on the conceptualization of people as living within a single, shared spatial frame (7, 65). Harvey argues that "time-space compression" (65:240–241) has enabled nationalism's tendency to universality, while simultaneously undermining its tendency to particularism, creating a tension between space and place (p. 257). Nationalism attempts to reconcile the absolute "perspective of place with the shifting perspectives of relative space" engendered by the globalization of capitalism (65:262, 270). The role of the state in the organization and representation of space is key for this reconciliation.

How does the identity of place and people get reaffirmed in the midst of the growing homogeneity and fragmentation of space? How is the misplaced concreteness of states and nations secured through tropes given material form in ordinary language and everyday life as well as in scholarship? Malkki shows how an identity between people and territory (and, I would add, the state) is created and naturalized through the visual device of the map, which represents the world of nations "as a discrete spatial partitioning of territory" with no "bleeding boundaries": Each nation is sovereign and limited in its membership (83:26; cf 7, 52, 71). The enclosure, measurement, and commodification of space have been key for the production of the modern notion of a national territory bounded by frontiers that sharply distinguish inside from

outside: Baptized with a proper name, space becomes national property, a sovereign patrimony fusing place, property, and heritage, whose perpetuation is secured by the state (cf 95:104).

This identity between people, heritage, territory, and state is also brought about by the use of botanical metaphors that “suggest that each nation is a grand genealogical tree, rooted in the soil that nourishes it” (83:28). Like the map, these metaphors configure the nation as limited in its membership, sovereign, and continuous in time. And they are critical for conceptualizing the state as “a compulsory organization with a territorial basis” (135:56), as “the stable centre...of [national] societies and spaces” (65:273).

Malkki's examples are drawn from English, Quebecois, and Basque nationalisms. United States nationalism privileges the symbol of the Sierra redwood, named *Sequoia gigantea* after the Indian chief Sequoyah. This symbol roots the distinctiveness of the United States in a “New World wonder” while identifying indigenous people with nature (104:27; D Nugent reminds me that the symbol of the National Park Service is an Indian arrowhead). Yet arborescent metaphors are not confined to the West. They occur in discourse about Maori ethnicity and the New Zealand nation (137) and about Sinhala ethnicity and the Sri Lankan nation (21, 77a, 119a). A state-organized exhibit about difference and unity in the Mexican nation, which I viewed in Tijuana in 1988, represented the Constitution through the medium of a tree of life, a popular craft item that usually draws on Catholic symbols. I can attest to the importance of arborescent imagery in Cuban nationalism: As a child living outside of my homeland, I would wonderingly contemplate a photograph of the Cuban royal palm tree, while struggling for rootedness in my displacement (M Alvarez reminds me that the royal palm tree is one of the signifiers displayed on the Cuban national shield).

Other images from nature are also used widely. Comparative investigations of how nationalisms construe nature and make it available for public consumption, and studies of the register of nature tropes drawn on by particular forms of imagining peoplehood, are needed. United States nationalism's pathetic fallacy, according to Runte, is confined to wild nature: The natural wonders of the West became construed as national “earth monuments,” key signifiers of the grandeur and distinctiveness of the United States and its contribution to world culture (104:22). But examples of nationalist pastorals also abound. Sweedenburg documents the centrality of the signifier of the peasant in contemporary Palestinian nationalism (123) as does Verdery for Romanian nationalism (133). Brow points out that the Sinhalese nation is “most typically represented as a nation of villages” (21:13; see 77a, 119a). Boyarin notes the agriculturalist emphasis of early Zionism and the importance of the pastoral in French nationalism (19:2). Manthei argues that Brazil's military regime fostered a nationalism that promoted capitalist development and urbanization as

progress and modernity while mitigating the effects of time-space compression through a nostalgia for the rural (84).

Does the prevalence of arborescent and other nature imagery suggest the existence of a transnational culture of nationalism (83; cf 7:135, 27:5–6)? Such a culture could be viewed as a “common material and meaningful framework...that sets out the central terms” (102:361), deployed and, hence, transformed in historically and socially specific, contested processes of nation making and state formation, a repertoire of signifiers with multiple and heterogeneous significations, rather than a unified system of beliefs. Can the genealogy of such a transnational culture of nationalism be traced to a transcolonial culture of colonialism, which shaped nationalism and state formation in the metropole as well as provided the terms against which anti-colonial nationalism in the periphery was formed (32, 109; cf 7, 26)? To what extent are particular nationalisms not simply the product of such a transnational culture but also of local cultures (77a)? Are arborescent tropes rooted in religious symbolism? If so, is this another instance in which “pastoral power” (48) laid the foundations for technologies of ruling in at least some modern nation-states?

Substantialization

The spatial matrix materialized in the operation of the state system shapes the imagining of personhood as well as place. The bounding of the nation as a collective subject, as a superorganism with a unique biological-cultural essence (63), replicates the enclosure of national territory. Tropes of territorialized space are articulated with tropes of substance in the imagining of collective and individual national bodies (cf 95).

As Malkki points out, tropes of arborescent roots configure a genealogical form of imagining nations. Botanical metaphors and tropes of shared bodily substance (e.g. blood, genes) are combined in the “family tree” (83:38, note 7). The Constitutional tree of life I mentioned earlier is also an icon of the relations among the founding fathers of the Mexican “Revolutionary Family” as configured in official discourse. Widespread use of terms such as motherland or fatherland indicates the articulation of these two registers of tropes in national imaginings. Yet the substantialization of nations and states through tropes of blood and kinship, although noted frequently, is rarely analyzed fully (e.g. 7:143–144).

The idiom of kinship, Brow comments, has a “special potency as a basis of community” because “it can draw upon the past not simply to posit a common origin but also to claim substantial identity in the present” (20:3). More than twenty years ago, Schneider pointed to the links between the symbolism of kinship and nationality: “In American culture, one is ‘An American’ either by birth or through a process which is called...‘naturalization.’ In precisely the

same terms as kinship, there are the same two ‘kinds of citizens,’ those by birth and those by law” (105:120). The solidarity that is supposed to exist among nationals rests on tropes of kinship, reproduction, “shared substance” (biogenetic and psychic), and “codes for conduct” (105). So too does the substantialization of the state as a supersubject, as *paterfamilias*, an effect of power that Trouillot argues is key for moral regulation (128:20). He notes that not only is this the dominant model of the state in Haiti, but it “is preferred by elites the world over because it gives them a choice role” (p. 20). Representation of states and nations that draw on kinship tropes are polysemous. For example, in Mexico, government officials are simultaneously the sons of the nation, conceived as the place that is the mother of all Mexicans, and the fathers of the nation, conceived as the collective patrimony or as the political community (90:235).

Kinship tropes substantialize hierarchical social relations and imbue them with sentiment and morality. Kinship tropes can also sacralize the state and the imagined relations among state, nation, and people: The father-son-mother relations in Mexican nationalist discourse recall the relations among God, Jesus, and Mary; or priests, the Church, and the religious community, in Catholic discourse. P Corrigan notes that “recent historiography accents the continuity between forms of Christian surveillance and state forms that are ostensibly rational and secular” (personal communication).

Significantly, the symbol selected by *Time* magazine to represent “the future, multiethnic face of America” is a “beguiling if mysterious” woman, “our new Eve,” the “offspring” of “morphing,” a computer process that images the products of “racial and ethnic miscegenation” (127:2). The substantialization of sociocultural forms of peoplehood enables their embodiment and rests on the naturalization and objectification of constructions and relations of gender and sexuality.

Though scant, some of the best literature on nationalism, ethnicity, and the state has been produced by scholars for whom gender and sexuality are central analytical concerns: The denaturalizing of gender and sexuality leads to the dismantling of ethnicity and nationalism as primordial essences (e.g. 27, 36c, 37, 42, 78, 86, 87, 92, 93, 146). Yuval-Davis & Anthias summarize the themes in this literature by identifying five major ways in which women have been viewed in relation to ethnic and national processes and practices of state formation: 1. as biological reproducers of members of ethnic collectivities; 2. as reproducers of the boundaries of ethnic/national groups; 3. as participating centrally in the ideological reproduction of the collectivity and as transmitters of its culture; 4. as signifiers of ethnic/national differences—as a focus and symbol in ideological discourses used in the construction, reproduction, and transformation of ethnic/national categories; and 5. as participants in national, economic, political and military struggles (8:7).

Because constructions of gender and sexuality have been key for the formation of ethnic and national subjectivities and collectivities, the technologies of bio-power wielded by the state have had differential consequences for men and women, for heterosexuals and homosexuals, for ethnic minorities and majorities. Likewise, men and women have been positioned in different ways by discourses of inter-ethnic and inter-national conflict: The rape and murder of women become key signifiers of victory and defeat in conflicts that are imagined to be agons of heroic masculinity; or conversely, the rescue of “other men’s women” has been used to legitimate state deployments of force (36c, 42). Similarly, at least in Latin America, the state’s torture of its subjects, including members of ethnically subordinated groups, has been gendered and sexualized (5). My only criticism of this literature is that it focuses, almost exclusively, on femininities and women. More research is needed on the reciprocal relations between the construction of masculinities and of collective subjectivity and community.

The persuasiveness of nationalism as a structure of feeling (141; see 60) that transforms space into homeplace and interpolates individual and collective subjects as embodiments of national character (viewed as shared bio-genetic and psychic substance) hinges on tropes of kinship, gender, and sexuality. Not surprisingly, gendered alimentary tropes (e.g. cooking, food, digestion) are also salient in nationalist discourses. Feminist critiques of the rhetoric, sentiments, and practice of kinship provide valuable points of entry into a critique of nationalism.

Although tropes of nationalism exhibit the properties that Turner identified as characterizing ritual symbols—condensation, unification of disparate significata, and polarization of meaning (130:27–30)—this point is rarely explored in the literature and deserves more attention. Many scholars of nationalism ask, “Why have so many people been willing to kill and die in the name of the nation?” A partial answer is found in the fusion of the ideological and the sensory, the bodily and the normative, the emotional and the instrumental, the organic and the social, accomplished by these tropes and particularly evident in strategies of substantialization by which the obligatory is converted into the desirable. As Daniel argues, Peircean semeiotics can illuminate how this is accomplished, enabling an analysis of how nationalism becomes a structure of feeling through the articulation of different modes of signification (36a).

As Anderson notes, nations inspire a self-sacrificing love, which is thought to be primordial rather than socially created (p. 143). For Anderson, this love is a product of the “deep horizontal comradeship” of nationalist fraternity (p. 7). Not only does he ignore the filial dimension of nationalist love, but he does not explore the “commerce between eros and nation” and the gender and sexual politics entailed in love of country (94:1–2). Feminist scholarship has

long questioned the common sense notion that power and hierarchy are exiled from the realm of kinship and love (see 29). Many nationalisms use tropes of kinship that naturalize age and gender hierarchies. Moreover, through metaphor and metonymy, the meanings of kinship terms are extended and are used to construct vertical relations of class and ethnicity, of state and people, of heterosexuals and homosexuals. Nationalist forms of community may possess both horizontal and vertical dimensions (20:2). Even when the idiom of kinship is used to express a sense of equality as sameness, as in Guyana, the notion of nationals as belonging to one family is not incompatible with hierarchy. Rather, egalitarianism and hierarchy are complexly concatenated in this notion of “moral equality among all socially unequal persons” (140:99). Looking at nationalism as a structure of feeling is key for the denaturalizing of hierarchy as well as to an understanding of how effects of power are simultaneously effects of pleasure, and of how love, sexuality, and dominance are interconnected in lived experience.

Temporalization and Memory

Temporalizing and memory-making mediate the identity of people and heritage in space just as the representation and organization of space mediates the identity of people and heritage through time. Indeed, as Boyarin points out, memory is associated with both time and space, and in France and Israel, for example, this link is “connected to the reinforcement of national identity, a process in which the ideological constructions of uniquely shared land, language, and memory become props for the threatened integrity of the nation-state” (19:1). In a similar vein, Harvey comments on the importance of time and space to remembering: “Immemorial spatial memory” is so critical to the stable realization of myths of community that the “spatial image...asserts an important power over history” (65:218). The spatial, temporal, and bodily matrices are conjoined in nationalism. As the state marks out frontiers, “it constitutes what is within (the people-nation) by homogenizing the before and after of the content of this enclosure” (95:114).

Anderson argues that a conception of “‘homogeneous, empty time’ in which simultaneity is...traverse, cross-time, marked not by prefiguring and fulfillment but by temporal coincidence, and measured by clock and calendar” (7:24) is critical for the birth of the nation since it is conceived as a “solid community moving steadily down (or up) history” (p. 26). The novel, in this account, is a key genre for the presentation of this notion of time (p. 25 ff). Yet Anderson’s dismissal of the importance of prefiguring and fulfillment in nationalist temporalizing seems hasty (and overly dependent on an opposition between religion and nationalism). Nations, after all, are commonly imagined as having a destiny and a heritage rooted in an immemorial past (7, 52, 71, 112). Moreover, the “selective tradition” (141:115) through which this past is

constructed frequently is sacralized (13:3–40, 20:3, 135:215). Pace Anderson, not only Christian imaginings but also nationalist ones—whether overtly secular (and implicitly sacralized) or openly religious—are omnitemporal. Societies, as Harvey points out, are characterized by multiple and heterogenous senses of time (65).

The rationalization of time has been integral to nationalism's universalist tendency, enabling the location of the members of a nation in the same temporal frame, one marked by progress (15:283), as well as to capitalist development and modern state formation. But nationalism also has a tendency to particularism: "It cultivates the symbols, the fetishes of an autochthonous national character, which must be preserved against dissipation" (p. 283). Particularism, what makes a nation distinct, is undermined by the time-space compression produced by modernization, which relativizes and accelerates time, fragments continuity, and generates a global temporal frame in which simultaneity is universalized and decentered, no longer confined to fellow nationals (65:201–307). This is the time of many modernist novels (13, 65:260–283), a time centered on a present moving into a future, a time of incompleteness and inconclusiveness "where there is no first word...and the final word has not yet been spoken" (13:30), a time of diversity of speech and voice. According to Harvey, the aestheticization of politics is one nationalist response to the dissipation of essence produced by a decentered temporality (65:207–209). But particularism is secured not just through the spatialization of time, as Harvey argues, but also through the deployment of another temporal modality, epic time, an absolute time of Being, of first and last words, of prefiguring and fulfillment, of tradition and destiny.

Bakhtin characterizes the epic as a nationalist genre that has three constitutive features: 1. a national epic past, as the subject, 2. national tradition, as the source, and 3. an absolute epic distance, separating the epic world from contemporary reality (13:13). Temporal categories are valorized creating a hierarchy among past, present, and future in which the past becomes "the single source and beginning of everything good for all later times" (p. 13); the distance between past and present is mediated by national tradition (p. 14). Bakhtin's reflections provide a suggestive point of departure for analyses of nationalist constructions of memory and time and the effects of power they produce—even when the genre of the epic, narrowly construed, is not their vehicle. For it is through epic discourses, broadly conceived, that the nation is particularized and centered, imagined as eternal and primordial, and that nationalist love becomes a sacralized and sublime sentiment, indeed, a form of piety (p. 16). And the sacralization of the nation is simultaneously the sacralization of the state.

Postcolonial Sinhalese nationalism provides a good example of epic nationalist discourse (21, 77a, 119a, 142, 143; cf 76, 106). A valorized, epic past is

configured by idealized images of a harmonious, precolonial social order of beneficent kings and flourishing village communities. The distance of this absolute past from the present is marked by the rupture of colonialism; but simultaneously, this past is represented as a latent presence (and promise) in contemporary reality, one that can be made manifest “if political leaders follow the example of the ancient kings by governing righteously and pursuing policies of development that promote both the moral and material welfare of the people” (21:9). By configuring the past-present relationship as entailing both rupture and continuity, distance and proximity, nostalgia and plenitude, official Sinhalese nationalism modernizes the traditional and traditionalizes the modern (21:9), turning continuity into fatality (cf 7:11).

The authority of Sinhalese nationalist rhetoric is partly secured by the temporal hierarchy that renders absolute an official version of the past produced by a number of agents and institutions of the state system, a version whose selectivity demonstrates that remembering is also forgetting (19:1–8; 113). The absoluteness of this past and, hence, the primordial character of Sinhalese community are constructed through the articulation of tropes of space, substance and time.

The rhetorical strategies used in the construction of authoritative memories merit more attention than they have received. In my own investigation of the re-presentation of the past in scholarly texts and Mexican popular and official discourses, I argue for the importance of analyzing manipulations of framing, voice, and narrative structure for understanding how histories produce effects of power/knowledge (4). I examine how nationalist re-presentations of the past, produced by those in control of the state system, appropriate and transform local and regional histories and the memories of subordinated groups through the strategies of naturalization, idealization, and de-particularization. Pasts that cannot be incorporated are privatized and particularized, consigned to the margins of the national and denied a fully public voice (4; see 17:266–267). Through these strategies, a selective tradition of nationalism, which is key for the consolidation of the idea of the state, is produced by the institutions and personnel of the state system. This tradition is critical to the construction of hegemony by agents and institutions of the state system.

The production of a selective tradition by the state system is a powerful and vulnerable hegemonic process (141:116–117). A hegemonic selective tradition is always challenged by alternative and oppositional traditions that dispute dominant articulations of space, time, and substance and can even question the identity between nation and state (4, 17, 20–22, 36, 39, 68, 82, 90, 96, 117, 123, 133, 133a, 142).

The degree of persuasiveness of the selective traditions of official nationalisms hinges on state systems’ control over the means of distribution of social meanings (4; see 64) and on the relations of forces in society (56:180–185).

Sinhalese nationalism once again provides an example. To gain the support of subordinated groups, rulers make rhetorical concessions that place the peasantry at “the moral core of the nation” (21:9). This rhetoric of inclusion is disseminated by “virtually all the apparatuses of the state” (p. 13) and is accompanied by the distribution of material benefits. However, these concessions and benefits never jeopardize the reproduction of the hegemonic bloc or undermine the fundamental exclusions on which Sinhalese nationalism is predicated. If the use of tropes from a pastoral register celebrates peasants’ contributions to the nation, it also creates an identification between state, nation, and territory that empowers state personnel to oversee rural development and, hence, to create new relations of ruling in the countryside (21, 119a, 142, 143). Moreover, rulers’ definition of the nation as Sinhalese relies on the epic past to exclude Tamils from the imagined community, as well as to represent the struggles between Sinhalese and Tamils as the result of primordial animosities (36b, 77a, 119a, 125). The genealogy of this form of exclusion lies in the colonial conflation of cultural and biological differences (21:11).

Pace Anderson (7:141–154), nationalism and ethnicity are constructed reciprocally. Patriotism is not simply about loving one’s fellow nationals. It is also about hating or, at best, condescending to tolerate others without and within national space. In contrast to Anderson, Balibar argues that nationalisms have been imagined as communities of shared blood and heritage as well as language, and that fraternity has been predicated on “an excess of ‘purism’” (15:284). The self-identity of nations has been secured partly through the construction of internal Others, whose markedness assures the existence of a national identity that, remaining invisible or unmarked, is successfully inscribed as the norm (15:284–286, 140:20). In numerous nationalisms, the ethnic identity of the dominant group is privileged as the core of imagined community (18, 27, 36, 36b, 50, 53, 77a, 88, 119a, 144). Not surprisingly, European nationalisms formed in relation to colonialism and colonial technologies of rule (15:286–287; 109; 140:xvi). More research is needed on this point. Likewise, the ethnic hierarchies of the colonial past have had significant impact on the formation of nationalisms in postcolonial states (18, 26, 27, 36, 50, 88, 122, 140, 144, 145).

NATIONALISM AND ETHNICITY

Defining Ethnicity

Because of the fuzziness of the term ethnicity, the frequent conflation of nationality, ethnicity, and race in the literature and in common sense, and the problematic politics of ethnicity as evinced in its intellectual genealogies,

some scholars have suggested replacing the term as an analytical category with peoplehood (39:11), race (118), or nationalist ideology (47:3). Although I agree with these critiques of ethnicity, I remain convinced that drawing analytical distinctions between different forms of imagining peoplehood is methodologically useful.

Nationalism is partly an effect of the totalizing and homogenizing projects of state formation (35). These projects produce an imagined sense of political community that conflates peoplehood, territory, and state. But state formation also generates categories of Self and Other within a polity. In contrast to nationalism, ethnicity is partly an effect of the particularizing projects of state formation, projects that produce hierarchized forms of imagining peoplehood that are assigned varying degrees of social esteem and differential privileges and prerogatives within a political community (38, 89, 118, 124, 135, 140; see also 3, 16, 25, 31, 97). Anthropologists rarely have examined the reciprocal relations between processes of state formation and ethnogenesis (but see 38, 88, 118, 140; S Rivera Cusicanqui, unpublished observations); more research is needed along these lines.

Along with class, gender, age, and sexual orientation, ethnicity is one of the dimensions of identity key for the construction and negotiation of status (135:305) and, hence, of power in state societies (34, 89:427, 118, 139:70–71). More specifically, ethnicity entails “a subjective belief in...common descent because of [subjectively perceived] similarities of physical type or of customs or both, or because of memories of colonization and migration” (135:389). Ethnic affiliation is calculated contextually, through the concatenation of ethnic boundary markers (16)—culturally constructed indexes of categorical identities endowed with differential worth and purpose.

What is called race in much of the literature is the variant of ethnicity that privileges somatic indexes of status distinctions such as skin color, hair quality, shape of features, or height. What is called ethnicity is the variant that privileges style-of-life indexes of status distinctions such as dress, language, religion, food, music, or occupation. As Szwed points out, somatic and style-of-life indexes are used simultaneously as signifiers of hierarchized categorical identities (124:20–21); hence, there is no sharp distinction between these two variants of ethnicity.

Despite its lack of scientific validity and the widespread rumors of its demise, the belief in biological races, what Appiah calls racialism (10:5), is widespread in media discourse (e.g. 127) and is by no means dead in scholarship (110:16ff). Cohen claims that the “notorious aggressiveness and drive for localized political autonomy of celtic fringe groups” may be either “a form of learning passed from one generation to the next” or “a genetic proclivity based on favoured breeding for these traits” (28:257, note 3). Even more disturbing

is Guidieri & Pellizzi's representation of *métissage*, which they see as a form of genetic and cultural mixing, as a pathological process (58:33).

The false precept that underlies such observations is that ethnic groups are genetically pure breeding populations with distinct, homogeneous, and bounded cultures. Ethnicity is thus rendered primordial and ethnic groups become viewed as superorganisms characterized by unique repertoires of cultural traits that can be transmitted, borrowed, or lost (for critiques of primordialism see 41a, 63, 108, 109, 118, 119, 137, 140). As Barth argued more than twenty years ago, this notion of ethnicity "begs all the critical questions" (16:11).

Weber, sometimes cited as one of the ancestors of primordialism (e.g. 31), recognized that "ethnic fictions" were the product of the diverse economic and political conditions of social groups and that phenotypic or cultural differences did not lead to the production of these fictions or to group formation (135:389–395; see 118). Indeed, as RT Smith's reading of Weber stresses, even when categorical identities become one of the bases for status group formation, group boundaries are not fixed but shift in relation to struggles for power, prestige, and privilege (118). Moreover, group boundaries do not enclose unique cultural essences. Instead, differences in style of life are the historical product of groups' distinct social and economic locations, everyday practices, and differential interpretations of a shared idiom of distinction (118).

Ethnic constructionists are the most visible critics of primordialists. Yet, some of their work is overly focused on discourse and fails to recognize fully that ethnicity is invented in the course of cultural, political, and economic struggles (e.g. 119, 120). The point "is not to declare ethnicity invented and stop there, but to show in historical perspective how it was invented and with what consequences" (100:27). The repeated insistence in the constructionist literature on the fluidity of ethnicity illustrates the limitations of a narrow, discursive focus. Ethnicity is constructed; hence, it follows in principle that ethnicity is fluid, but this fluidity is limited by hegemonic processes of inscription and by the relations of forces in society. That this obvious point is widely ignored only attests to the relative privilege of many of those writing on ethnicity. Fanon illustrates that from a position of ethnic subordination, the possibility of counter-inventing ethnicity is not always already there and the struggle against the weight of a history that produces "a definitive structuring of the self and of the world" is one in which even laughter becomes impossible (43, 45:109–110). Likewise, Anzaldúa (9) and Gómez-Peña (55) question the dominant topography of discrete and homogeneous nations, cultures, and identities, while highlighting the difficulties faced by those whom the state categorizes as Hispanic in negotiating alternative senses of individual and collective personhood.

Nationalism, Ethnicity and Hegemony: Exclusions and Inclusions

Some of the best approaches in the field are based on Gramsci's work or on Marxist cultural studies. These approaches examine the role of the state in the dialectic of nationalism and ethnicism, while recognizing the mutually formative struggles between the state and subordinated ethnic subjects (e.g. 36, 53, 62, 88, 91, 140). Hall identifies some of the features of a Gramscian perspective that are useful for an analysis of ethnicity, including (a) the emphasis on historical specificity; (b) the nonreductive approach to class and ethnicity; (c) the lack of assumed correspondence between the economic, political, and ideological dimensions of society; (d) the notion of hegemony; and (e) the importance accorded to the state (62:5–27). West's neo-Gramscian methodology for analyzing African-American oppression relies on the articulation of three "moments": modes of domination, forms of subjugation, and types of exploitation (136:21–25). West's methodology is applicable to other cases, though the role of the state in ethnic domination, subjugation, and exploitation needs to be integrated into his scheme.

B Williams's reformulation of hegemony is particularly useful for an analysis of how paradoxes of homogeneity and heterogeneity are negotiated by the state through "different modes of political incorporation" of ethnicized subjects (139:408) and diverse forms of representation and appropriation of their cultural products and practices (140:31). She uses Gramsci's concept of transformism to analyze how official nationalism and state routines simultaneously homogenize community while creating heterogeneity (140). Indeed, union is shaped through an "incorporation of difference [along lines of ethnicity, class, gender, locality, age, and sexual orientation, which] hierarchically organizes subject positions for diverse groups of citizens" (60:72). State strategies of spatialization, substantialization, aestheticization, commodification, and temporalization are key for the construction of transformist forms of hegemony.

Spatialization

As Corrigan demonstrates (33), ethnicity is "used to name and mark off culturally and racially varied 'places'" that are space and time locations (111:35). Despite Barth's proposal that anthropologists examine ethnic formation by focusing on the creation of social boundaries, which may have territorial counterparts, rather than on the unique "cultural stuff" that these boundaries are alleged to enclose, anthropological research on the role of space and place in boundary creation is scarce (16:15). I think anthropologists must examine how the organization and representation of space is implicated in ethnic formation and inequality, in state strategies of asymmetric incorporation and appropriation, and in the complex dialectic between hierarchy and egal-

tarianism, heterogeneity and homogeneity, in the imagining of nations. How is the partitioning of space connected to ethnic inequality? How are dominant and subordinated ethnic subjects differentially situated in relation to spaces of production, distribution, and consumption, and what state policies and practices are implicated in the politics of ethnic location? How are categorical identities unequally positioned in relation to public and private spaces, sacred spaces, work spaces, carceral spaces, and home spaces? How does the contemporary, international, and national politics of space and place result in environmental racism both globally and locally? How do spatial practices become a focus of intense social struggles?

The centrality of space to the hegemonic strategy of transformism is well illustrated by “the model village program” in Guatemala, linchpin of the military’s counter-insurgency campaign (98). According to Richards, the ideology of ethnicity deployed by the Guatemalan state and the military is predicated on a hierarchized urban and rural dichotomy that equates the urban with the “civilized” Ladino Self, the Subject of nationalism, and the rural with the “backwards” Indian Other, defined as the source of national distinctiveness and the obstacle to national development. Indian “backwardness,” attributed to a historical legacy of Indian regional autonomy, is held to explain resistance to the state. Hence, the model villages, “urban microcosms” that are simultaneously spaces of discipline and of civilization, have become the “nuclei into which the dispersed population of a war-torn region can be gathered and controlled” as well as “developed” in the name of the nation (p. 8). Mayas’ establishment of Communities of Population in Resistance is one response to current social struggles over ethnic formation and spatial location.

The equation of the dominant ethnic identity with the core of the nation, and the location of subordinated ethnic identities at its peripheries, is secured partly through differential power over private and public spaces. For example, Eidheim demonstrates how the identification of Norway with Norwegians is a product of unequal control of public spaces and, hence, of the differential possibilities of signifying marked and unmarked identities in these locations (41). In public spaces, where Sami and Norwegians interact, the dominant code for conduct is Norwegian. The marginalization and stigmatization of Sami identity is secured by its privatization (p. 46). By contrast, hooks examines the ethnic and gender politics of private spaces by focusing on the difficulties faced by African-American women, many of them domestic workers in the employ of whites, in constructing their own “homeplaces.” She shows how the hierarchical opposition between private and public spaces is put into question by these women who redefine home as a healing refuge and site for collective and personal resistance (72:33–49).

Anthropological research on the relationship between representations of space and place and identity formation is somewhat more developed than that

on the politics of spatial organization. Subnational confluences of race, culture, and social group presuppose a notion of boundaries that differentiate inside from outside in absolute terms. These boundaries are often imagined through tropes of differential origin according to place. For example, representations of the Trinidadian nation as “populated by a set of codified and reified, collective characters” differentiate these “raced-classes” according to their origin in distinct ancestral lands—Africa, Europe, and India (108:14). Likewise, ethnic differentiation can be construed according to location within national territory: “The Indian national anthem...sequentially names the different regions (hence, languages, cultures, religions, histories) that are all distinctive parts of the united Indian nation,” simultaneously proclaiming homogeneity while accenting difference (60:72). Calagione shows how a vision that locates ethnic boundaries in different ancestral homelands has shaped urban planning in New York City, fomenting a “naturalized version of ethnic identity as spatially bounded enclave” (24:2), and spatializing a hierarchy of civility.

How do nationalisms construct the displaced, those whose mobility denaturalizes identifications of state, nation, and territory? The “senderist metaphysic” of nationalism “enables a vision of territorial displacement as pathological,” as a “loss of moral bearings” that makes the uprooted the antithesis of “honest citizens” (83:31–32). How does the state manage the “pathology” of the displaced (36b, 43, 53)? Daniel (368) argues that as the national past became increasingly unavailable (in the Heideggerian sense) to Sri Lankan Tamil immigrants to the United Kingdom, who had fled ethnicism at home only to encounter it abroad, they became cynical about the nation and about the state. This break with territorialized community and with the law had wide-reaching consequences for their everyday practices, including the creation of home places. Moreover, as the links between people and place became denaturalized for these immigrants, their sense of national and ethnic identity shifted. Not only did they begin to view Tamils as a deterritorialized community of people, but they also began to form alliances with other ethnically oppressed groups. Anthropological perspectives on immigrants’ and states’ politics of displacement are needed particularly today as peoples from the periphery move to the metropole.

Calagione has remarked that United States government functionaries frequently use water imagery to represent Third World immigrants (personal communication). This imagery is prevalent in the media. Whereas the central place of the descendants of immigrants of European ancestry in the imagined community is signified through the adjective mainstream, the marginality of recent Third World immigrants is signified through the visual trope “waves of newcomers” (127:20), which represents the marginal as a threat to the “water-tightness” of national borders. Not surprisingly, Mexican illegal aliens are called “wetbacks.” The passage of the North American Free Trade Agreement

coincides with the United States government's increasing militarization of its border with Mexico and the expenditure of tax dollars in attempts to "stem the tide" by constructing giant steel walls.

Another topic that merits more research is the politics of representation of heterogeneity and homogeneity in public spaces. Friedlander has analyzed how the Mexican state's ideology of *mestizo* nationalism is objectified in space through monuments such as those found in Mexico City's Plaza of the Three Cultures²: "an Aztec pyramid, a sixteenth-century Catholic church, and a recently constructed government building" (50:xiii). The Spanish conquest of the Aztecs is memorialized as "the painful birth of the Mestizo people," Mexico's national race, embodied and represented by the state as signified by the government building (p. xiv). The exclusiveness of this apparent form of inclusion is effected through the internal hierarchy articulated in the category of *mestizo*. The European and Indian racial and cultural components of the *mestizo* (note the erasure of African-Mexicans' contributions) are rendered distinct and ranked in relation to each other: The former is identified with progress; the latter with tradition. This transformist strategy is used all over Latin America (18, 36, 88, 122; S Rivera Cusicanqui, unpublished observations); moreover, internal hierarchy characterizes the category of *mulato* as well as that of *mestizo* (145).

Substantialization, Aestheticization, and Commodification

The above example illustrates the inequality that subsists even in polygenetic and multicultural representations of national origins in states characterized by transformist hegemonies: Race and culture are conflated, and the state as hybrid *paterfamilias* accords itself a privileged role in building community out of difference. The tropes of kinship and descent used to substantialize the nation are also invoked to substantialize the categorical identities of ethnicity. Semanticized by a tropology of blood, color, and descent, the "cultural stuff" held to characterize low-status identities is represented as inert, homogeneous tradition—something akin to *Time*'s "psychic genes" (127). Through an analogy with folk notions of biological reproduction, the transmission of this cultural heritage becomes envisioned as an endless, static process of mimesis, denying ethnically subordinated subjects any agency or creativity (126). Once endowed with misplaced concreteness, the ethnic heritage of low status subjects is then aestheticized and commodified by the state.

Anthropologists have produced some excellent accounts of this process of aestheticization and commodification of the ethnic heritage of subordinated groups (e.g. 12, 137). A substantial body of work deals with folklorization and

²

This plaza was the site of the massacre of hundreds of people by state forces in 1968.

Indian-State relations in Latin America (e.g. 50, 51, 67, 68, 84a, 96, 129). Friedlander's work shows how the Mexican state's selective glorification of elements of Indian culture has simultaneously enabled the incorporation of Indians into the nation while maintaining their low-status identity and class position (50:129). Ironically, an image of Indian authenticity as eternal mimesis is produced through this ethnicized form of commodity fetishism.

Once commodified, the charisma of "Indianess" can be appropriated by the non-Indian elite: Conspicuous consumption of these signifiers of alterity by the "national race" legitimates relations of ruling vis-a-vis national and international audiences by objectifying claims to autochthony and populist pretensions (50). Hendrickson's analysis of the all *Ladino* Miss Guatemala contest, whose winner wears indigenous *traje* when representing her country in the world competition, illustrates this point (67). McAllister demonstrates that the parallel, state organized *Rabín Ahau* beauty pageant, in which only indigenous women participate, is not about beauty but about an aestheticized Indian authenticity (84a). Hill's work on "junk Spanish" (69, 70) shows how, under the guise of aesthetic openness, elite "Anglos," including government personnel, simultaneously construct themselves as good citizens and "Hispanics" as inferior alters through the pejorative borrowing of Spanish morphological material and the conspicuous consumption of "Hispanic" commodities (70:12). Vélez-Ibáñez analyzes the negative consequences that the creation of such a commodity identity has had for United States Mexicans (132).

The subordinated also engage in the mimesis of alterity through ethnic commodity fetishism,³ but it has very different consequences for ethnically dominant versus subordinated subjects. For the Indians of Hueyapan, Hispanicization is achieved through participation in nationalist rituals and consumption of commodities that are indexes of a *mestizo* style of life (50:71); hence, *mestizo* nationalism also promotes the development of an internal market. However, the exploited class position of most Indians ensures that many of these commodities will be out of their reach. In addition, as the non-Indian "elite redefines its own identity, it demotes characteristics previously associated with its prestigious high status to the low level...of Indianess" (p. 71). In this case, the privileging of style of life over somatic indexes of ethnicity does not promote a greater status mobility or ethnic fluidity. Moreover, subordinated alters who engage in conspicuous consumption "may (and most often do) stand to be accused of riding to the pinnacle of civilization on the coattails of its real producers" (140:30) or of losing their authenticity (96:169). This points to another paradox of the politics of ethnicity substantialized as descent.

3

For a discussion of ethnic commodity fetishism, gender regionalism, and nationalism in rural northern Mexico, see reference 5a. The role of the market in commodifying ethnicity in the southwest is analyzed in reference 138.

On the one hand, tradition is held to be transmitted in the blood or handed down from one generation to the next; on the other hand, when defined as patrimony, tradition can be lost. This is because the essence of the ethnically subordinated is fixed through spatial and temporal distancing: Any departure from a mimetic performance of an invented past can be construed as loss of original substance.

Temporalization

Transformist strategies of temporalization particularize ethnic identities and differentiate their contributions and places in the nation. State constructed past-present relations distinguish subjects according to location vis-a-vis the time of national origin versus the time of the national future. Ecuadorian (36, 88, 122), Mexican (4, 50, 51, 90), and Trinidadian (108) nationalisms are good illustrations of the political character of strategies of temporalization. In Ecuador, state strategies of temporalization fossilize indigenous peoples, identifying them with an epic past rather than a national future, as well as reducing their contributions to the nation to folklore while erasing contemporary realities of exploitation and domination (36, 88). One of the effects of the Ecuadorian national pastoral is to turn land—a key means of production—into heritage, into a national patrimony whose privileged custodian, the state, secures proprietorship of the past by erasing the genealogy of property (36:54; see 17).

Yet indigenous cultural production and collective action in Ecuador is exceeding the frame implied by folklore and is challenging the state (36, 88). Hegemony is the result of a dialectic of struggle, and relations of forces in society shape the policies, routines, and practices of states (53, 56, 62, 91, 139). However, within a transformist hegemony, resistance takes place under conditions of inequality that limit the power of subordinated subjects to redefine their status and their place in and contributions to the imagined national community. This point is made painfully clear by Menchú's reflections on indigenous resistance in Guatemala (22). Research on resistance that focuses on oppositional culture without considering the political and economic power available to subordinated subjects and the possibilities for institutionalizing and inscribing popular alternatives risks becoming a form of wishful thinking.

Indigenous Resistance in Latin America

To what extent do indigenous people accept, reformulate or reject hegemonic cultures of ethnic domination? This question has received a lot of attention in the literature (e.g. 22, 50, 77, 96, 115, 121, 125, 131, 133a). According to Friedlander, the people of Hueyapan have "internalized the Hispanic elite's view of their own Indianess" (50:72), although they use everyday strategies to protect themselves from discrimination and exploitation. By contrast, Warren's study of Mayas' views of ethnic domination in Guatemala demonstrates

the heterogeneity of cultures of resistance while highlighting “striking attempts by Indians to reformulate their ethnic identity and the symbolism of subordination” through counter-hegemonic mythology (133a:ix). Similarly, Menchú’s analysis of the dialectic between Mayas’ struggles and state repression stresses the importance of an oppositional selective tradition, expressed in ritual and narrative, in collective resistance (22). Rappaport’s research in Colombia highlights the centrality of oppositional strategies of spatialization and temporalization in the reframing of dominant legal discourse by indigenous militants (96). Other work focuses on paradoxes of simultaneous contestation and reproduction of cultures of domination, arguing nonetheless that the selective incorporation by indigenous people of dominant forms also entails their reinterpretation (e.g. 1, 11, 66, 68). Overall, recent research emphasizes the importance of understanding indigenous perspectives and responses historically in terms of the conjunctural and organic dimensions of an internal dialectic and a dialectic of articulation (30) between indigenous communities, nation-states, and the international order (e.g. 3, 73, 114, 116, 134).

Harvey argues that in the current conjuncture of time-space compression, globalization of capitalism, and resurgence of aestheticized nationalism, social movements “are relatively empowered to organize in place but disempowered when it comes to organizing over space” (65:303). Privileging place-identities, social movements are highly localized and regionalized; hence, they are limited in their abilities to form broader coalitions. In this regard, the anthropology of transnational subaltern groups, diasporas, and border peoples might offer more cause for optimism (e.g. 60, 61, 82, 83). For example, Kearney concludes that “transnational communities...escape the power of the nation-state to inform their sense of collective identity” and represent a potent challenge to the spatial-temporal matrix of nationalism (77:59). Mixtec ethnicity has emerged as an alternative to nationalist consciousness and has resulted in the formation of grass-roots organizations in both the United States and Mexico “that seek to defend their members as workers, migrants, and ‘aliens’” (77:63). Another topic that merits more attention is the emergence of broad, heterogeneous coalitions in the Americas in the wake of the Quincentenary, in which indigenous people play an important role. Ruiz, for example, highlights the transformative potential of the coalition that organized the Third Continental Encounter of Indigenous, Black, and Popular Resistance Movements, an event that took place in Managua in October 1992, bringing together people from “26 countries without distinction of race, language or culture” to “‘generate a broad, pluralistic, multi-ethnic and democratic movement’ to work for a new international economic, social, political and environmental order” (103:7). Likewise, Stavenhagen writes that a Pan-Indian consciousness has emerged in the New World since the 1970s, leading to the formation of organizations, such as the World Council of Indigenous Peoples, which act at

regional, national, and international levels, calling for self-determination, autonomy, and ethnodevelopment (121). The study of such non-national movements can provide anthropologists a critical vantage point from which “the ‘naturalness’ of the nation can be radically called into question” (60:64)

CONCLUSION

Calling the naturalness of nationalism and the primordialness of ethnicity into question involves a critique of the impact of the precepts of nationalism and colonialism on the concept of culture (140), focusing on how anthropologists have reproduced dominant strategies of spatialization, substantialization, aestheticization, and temporalization in their work (44, 61, 64, 83, 99, 118). Such a critique is one point of departure for a renewed concept of culture that “refers less to a unified entity...than to the mundane practices of everyday life” and that focuses on the border zones within and between putatively homogeneous communities (99:217). Such a concept of culture puts into question the radical separation between Us and Them, which has underpinned much anthropology and, hence, enables an exploration of “the processes of production of difference in a world of culturally, socially, and economically interconnected and interdependent spaces” traversed by relations of inequality (61:14). Though the relatively recent inclusion of the state as an analytical category and ethnographic focus in mainstream sociocultural anthropology is a welcome move, a critical perspective also entails going beyond the nation-state, developing a global vision even as we continue to focus on the micropractices of everyday life.

If, as Harvey argues, the postmodern condition contains both liberatory and reactionary possibilities (65), further reflection on the political role of anthropologists in the contemporary world is needed. Although the critique of anthropological complicity with colonialism has been a necessary step, we should not let this blind us to the discipline’s “continuing dependence on state power” (57:9) nor should we let “our discipline’s flawed history” (p. 10) prevent us from acknowledging the emancipatory possibilities of critical anthropological projects (57, 77). Such a task, Scott reminds us, entails “a continuous internal labour of criticism” as well as a “continuous unlearning of...privilege” (107:388).

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