

# Ethnography and Contiguous Disciplines

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The paper deals with the problem of establishing ethnography as a scientific discipline with an adequate position within the overall system of scientific knowledge. In Soviet academic practice, ethnography is understood as a branch of social science, having for its principal object ethnoses of peoples, as they vary in time, with their resemblances and specific traits. Though the core zone to be studied by ethnography is the traditional, everyday-life culture, a complex, interdisciplinary approach is invariably required in ethnographic research. Thus, the greater part of the paper analyses the correlation to and possible ways of cooperation with other sciences, natural and social, and the humanities (psychology, sociology, geography, demography, folklore and popular art studies etc.), including the rapidly developing intermediary subdisciplines such as ethnopsychology, ethnosociology, ethnodemography, etc., which have sprung up along the interdisciplinary "frontier".

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The contemporary development of science is characterized, as is universally known, by two opposite and dialectically related tendencies: The growing specialization of individual scholarly disciplines, and their increasing integration. Under such circumstances the principle of "self-determination", as exercised by every separate scholarly discipline, acquires particular importance for determining the optimal prospects for its development. Disregard for such a methodologically significant aspect inevitably leads, as experience shows, to serious discrepancies in research planning, hinders cooperation and the division of labour, causes unnecessary duplication of effort, and is conducive to the development of research gaps in some important problems and issues.

All of the above is true of every branch of scientific and scholarly knowledge. However, the determination of the place a scientific discipline occupies among other sciences becomes particularly urgent when noticeable changes take place in the notions about the field of its subject matter. In the USSR the place of ethnography among the humanities is particularly illuminating in this respect. Differences

in the description of its profile became very distinct in the early formative stages of the Soviet ethnographical school. There was then a tendency, on the one hand, to limit ethnography's tasks exclusively to the study of archaic phenomena that are characteristic of the early developmental stages of human society, and, on the other, to treat ethnography or, more exactly, ethnology as a superdiscipline that claimed to embrace all research in every component of societal activities. By now these extremes have been largely overcome with us, though some discrepancies in the definitions of the subject-matter of ethnography linger still to some extent even today.

The contradictions present in the views on the subject-matter of ethnography are not quite accidental, as for a long time they were caused, above all, by differences in the opinions concerning the object field of ethnography.

Thus, for example, according to evolutionists its object was man, in the case of diffusionists it was culture, while representatives of Durkheim's sociological school held it to be society. Moreover, it was a widely shared opinion that the object of ethnography is constituted by peo-

ples, the latter being mostly taken to be those with no literary language, and at the early stages of their socio-economic development. That this opinion is widely popular is largely due to the fact that ethnography was taking its shape as a science during the period of colonial expansion of the countries of bourgeois Europe and was aimed initially and mainly at the study of non-European peoples, the majority of which was lagging behind in development. Moreover, ethnography was clearly set against history, which was understood as a science based on written sources and the study of "historical" peoples. Ethnography was seen as a science whose role was to investigate "non-historical" peoples.

Today, however, the understanding of ethnography as a science studying peoples at every stage of their development has won wide recognition among specialists both in this country and abroad. This means that while embracing all of the inhabited territory of the globe, ethnography also involves all chronological periods from the earliest times till today, and keeps within its field of vision existing peoples as well as those of the past.

On the basis of this new approach, ethnography must redefine its primary task and deepen and specify the notion of "peoples", which is an extremely complex and multifaceted concept. In Russian, as in other languages, the word "narod" (a people) is polysemantic and is used to denote working masses of people, national groups, or just a multitude of individuals. Lately, therefore, Soviet ethnographical science has come to make use of a generalizing concept of "ethnos", instead of using the word "narod" (people) in the meaning of such historical communities as a tribe, "narodnost" (people) or a nation. Within the framework of the ethnos theory it investigates such important aspects as the place of ethnos among other human communities, the narrow and broad interpretation of ethnic communities, their typology, ethnically specific features of culture and psychology, varieties of ethnic processes, etc.

Elaboration of the theory of ethnos has made it possible to provide a more detailed specification of the subject-matter of ethnog-

raphy, and this is of cardinal importance for drawing demarcation lines with the contiguous disciplines.

What are the criteria for such demarcation? Obviously, they must be capable of distinguishing ethnos from among other human communities. One function is the uniting of all the members of an ethnos (i.e. intraethnic consolidation), and the other is of differentiating them from the representatives of other similar communities (inter-ethnic differentiation). An analysis of ethnic communities shows that the performance of such functions, apart from the question of language, relates mainly to the traditional components of everyday culture (customs, ritual, ceremonies, folk art, oral traditions, etc.) whose specific features differentiate one ethnos from another.<sup>1</sup>

Accordingly, the subject field of ethnography can be delimited, in our opinion, on the basis of consideration of ethnos components in the light of the performance of ethnic functions by them. Since they stand out more than others the ethno-differentiating traits (i.e. ethnic specificity) serve as the basic reference points that mark out the subject field of ethnographical studies.

But ethnography of course, is called upon to describe ethnos as complete entities, involving not only their specific traits but also those they share with others. Description of the common and of the particular being always a single process, comparative studies in the components of an ethnos determine its specific traits inevitably involve determination of the traits it shares with other ethnos. Some such may prove to be characteristic of all ethnos, present or past, i.e. they may be universal in nature, while others may belong to a more limited group of ethnos and, consequently, can be specific in their own ways.

The approach to ethnos in the light of ethnic functions performed by their components allows the main zone of ethnographical studies to be delimited. From such a viewpoint the subject field of ethnography appears to be primarily the layer of culture, in the broad meaning of the word, which performs ethnic functions, i.e. traditional everyday culture.

Ethnography studies therefore, before all,

the similarities and differences between people-ethnoses as well as changes in their characteristic traits over time, i.e. ethnic processes. It should be kept in mind that the subject field of ethnography does not remain unchanged through all the stages of human ethnohistory. As is known, in the case of people-ethnoses at the early stages of their socio-economic development when they have no written languages, their societal life is considerably permeated with ethnic specificity. Ethnography, therefore, studies all aspects of the life of such peoples. However, with the transition to class societies, which are characterised, in particular, by the process of formation of the professional culture, ethnic specificity tends to be concentrated mostly within the relatively diminishing sphere of traditional everyday life, and the research zone of ethnography changes accordingly. This development is particularly clear among the peoples of industrially developed countries. Today, under the conditions of the scientific and technological revolution, large scale industrial production makes the ethnic specificity of these people shift increasingly from the sphere of their material culture to that of their intellectual life.

In practice the subject field of ethnographical research, i.e. "its depth" seems to fluctuate between the particular and the common properties of the ethnos. The range of these fluctuations in concrete research zones depends in its turn and to a large measure on the extent to which the study of an appropriate component of the ethnos has been "ensured" by a contiguous social discipline. In this lies the special significance of its traditional relations and ties with other disciplines for the formation of the subject field of ethnography. However, it would be wrong to ignore or to canonize these traditions, for their emergence and development were mainly spontaneous and, most significantly, the subject fields of the contiguous disciplines were taking shape, as a rule, independently of the ethnographical science. Therefore, its traditional interdisciplinary relations required some adjustment; the main reference point for this end, must, in our opinion, be the above-mentioned specificity of ethnographical approach to the object of study.

As the core of the subject field of ethnographical research is the traditional everyday culture, the question of the relationship between ethnography and culturological disciplines, primarily between ethnography and those which study separate spheres of culture, acquires special importance for our aims.

Two diametrically opposite tendencies are traditionally manifest here. One of these involves material culture. In many countries, the Soviet Union included, ethnographical science actually performs (on a par with archeology) the function of providing a history of material culture. Such a situation has evolved historically but here we cannot consider all the factors that were conducive to it in any detail. However, it is important to stress that while performing the function of a material culture historian, an ethnographer should not forget that his task can ultimately be achieved only when he is able to identify the ethnic specificity of a phenomenon he studies. The other tendency involves language. Though a most important and nearly a main ethnic factor, language is nevertheless a relatively rare subject for special ethnographic studies. An exception to the rule is provided to some extent, by the languages of non-literate peoples, while written languages are an almost exclusive domain of linguistics. Such a situation arises from a number of factors, the most important of which is the fact that in spite of the special importance of the ethnic properties of the language, its main function of being a principal means of communication among peoples requires special and comprehensive study.

No matter how this situation has developed historically in the field of ethno-linguistic research, it seems indisputable that ethnographers must pay much closer attention to it. Without their active participation it is hardly possible to disclose in any considerable measure the interconnection between language and other components of the ethnos, and the ethnic consciousness, in the first place.

Artistic folk creativity is one of the subsystems of operating within the ethnos and as such it has been attracting the attention of ethnographers for a long time. The common basis for determining the relationships be-

tween ethnography and other art-studying disciplines within the field of research in artistic folk creativity is provided, in our opinion, by the fact that each of them performs both aesthetic and ethnic functions.

Ethnographic research in different kinds of artistic folk creativity is affected to some extent by the nature of the latter's relationship with material culture. It seems noteworthy that the sphere of such research embraces, mostly, those kinds of artistic creativity whose material results have both an aesthetic and utilitarian value, such as, in the first place, the products of various artistic crafts such as pottery, the artistic processing and treatment of metals and wood, weaving, embroidery, etc. The close attention ethnographers pay to artistic crafts is undoubtedly linked with their stable originality due to which many of them carry a considerable ethnic load (particularly prominent in this respect is ornamentation). In our scholarly literature an opinion has grown that historico-ethnographical research in artistic folk crafts should involve studies in arts only to the degree necessary to identify their ethnographic specificity and regionalization. Even if such an opinion seems to be quite justified, it should not be overlooked that in view of the utilitarian function of this category of folk artistic creativity, an ethnographer studying it often performs the role of a mere historian of material culture.

To our mind, it is a somewhat different situation with the question of the relationships between ethnography and special art-studying disciplines in the field of research in "non-material" types of folk arts such as folk dances, music and theatre. In this connection it should be noted, above all, that the performance of aesthetic functions by them is of singular importance for the very existence of such types of arts, hence the special emphasis on them in the programmes of studies by relevant historico-art-studying disciplines (history of dances, music and theatre). At the same time the ethnic specificity of folk dances, music and theatres also demands attention by ethnographers, who must not limit themselves to the collection of appropriate field materials, or, even, to the occasional use of these materials, in solving their

specific problems. It seems, particularly important to develop, together with students of the arts, broad comparative-typological and area-type studies in the field of folk dances, music and theatre.

The same applies almost equally to oral folk tradition, in the study of which ethnographers collaborate closely with folklorists, the relationship having developed historically from the fact among non-literate peoples, folklore is a most important component of their social consciousness. As a matter of fact, it is only under certain conditions that folklore can be singled out from the spiritual culture of peoples at early stages in their social development, for in their case spiritual culture exists as an organically blended syncretic complex. An ethnographer who studies all aspects of the life of scriptless peoples cannot therefore, ignore their oral tradition, since oral tradition also serves as one of the main sources of information on the history and culture of such peoples.

The interpenetration of folkloristics and ethnography also seems to be largely due to the inseparable connection between oral folk tradition and other aspects of traditional everyday culture. It is the oral mode of transmission that is one of the most essential properties of traditional everyday culture. It would be a simplification, however, to reduce and limit (though it frequently happens) the ethnographical approach to oral folk traditions to the study of their utilitarian, everyday-culture functions only, for such an approach is not sufficient for solving ethnographical tasks proper. One of the necessary preconditions for that is the creation of a historico-social and ethno-regional typology of different folklore genres.

At the level of everyday life, a significant ethnic load is carried, in parallel with the artistic forms of creativity, by the ethic, legal and religious forms of social consciousness as well as by the appropriate value orientations and behavioural stereotypes. It is not accidental that many of these forms of peoples' social consciousness have been long considered worthy of special attention by ethnographers. In this connection the interests of ethnography intersect with such disciplines as ethics, law and religion, hence the urgent necessity for both co-

operation between them, and differentiation, while the "selectivity" of ethnographical studies in corresponding forms of social consciousness is again dependent directly on the ethnic functions they perform.

From the point of view of ethnography behavioural stereotypes stand out as extremely indicative components of common consciousness and, correspondingly, of the everyday form of culture. It is for this reason that one of their most stereotyped varieties, ritual ceremonies, often draws the attention of ethnographers.

Among the behavioural stereotypes not only rituals, of course, are characterized by ethnic specificity. Such specifics can be found in various other patterns of behaviour, from labour techniques to the rules of etiquette. Those that possess a considerable degree of stability and originality have for long attracted from time to time the attention of ethnographers. These studies should be more systematic, and must include not only "internal" patterns of behaviour but also its "open" forms (i.e. behaviour proper), including those which express popular habits. Studies in "open" behaviour seems to be even more necessary as behavioural stereotypes and behaviour itself are known not to be always coincident. This is, by the way, the reason why it is necessary to study the characteristic of each ethnos correlation between the "open" (external) and "closed" (internal) aspects of separate stereotyped components of spiritual culture.

In studying stereotypes of behaviour, ethnographers have plentiful possibilities for coordinating their efforts with psychologists. In other words, in studying, say, the moral and religious ideas of an ethnos, an ethnographer actually performs the functions of an ethnopsychologist.

It should be kept in mind at the same time that ethnopsychology has a subject field of its own, i.e. the ethnic (national) character or, to put it in broader terms, psychological make-up of an ethnic (national) community. It is no accident that many researchers tend to see this psychological syndrome as the object of ethnopsychology. One may, of course, disagree with such a narrow interpretation of the

boundaries of ethnopsychology as a whole, but it seems indisputable nevertheless that one of its main tasks consists in studying ethnic (national) character constituting a specific nucleus of a people's make-up.

Unfortunately, our ethnopsychological studies remain in an embryonic state as yet. It is true that our recent literature rather frequently and directly acknowledges the legitimacy of studies in the psychological traits and character of peoples. The fact that no sufficient changes have taken place in this direction as yet is explained to a considerable degree by the specific difficulties standing in the way of ethnopsychological studies. One of the circumstances, in particular, is that psychological differences between peoples consist not in their having or lacking some psychic components but in the nuances, shades and stylistic manifestations of such components, and this is what leads to the considerable differences encountered by researchers trying to register the psychic specificity of ethnic communities. Perhaps even greater difficulties are due to the fact that in the developed class societies many of the psychological traits of an individual are affected more by his socio-class than ethnic belonging. Consequently, the point in question is frequently not so much the psychological traits common to an entire ethnos as ethnic variations and ethnic specificity in the psychology of separate socio-class groups.

Ethnoses are dynamic systems that change in time and their study therefore presupposes combination of the synchronous-structural with the diachronic, i.e. historico-genetic approach. This, in turn, puts forward the problem of correlation between ethnographical and historical sciences. In solving this problem we run at once into considerable difficulties as both sciences lay claims to a wide range of societal development issues. Moreover, these sciences are actually separate systems of scholarly disciplines and each of them can also be seen as a relatively independent branch of knowledge. Much confusion in the interpretation of the question of the relationship between ethnography and history arises from the fact that due to their similarity, the same author very often crosses over the boundaries that divide them



conventionally, and writes as a historian and an ethnographer at the same time.

An analysis of interrelationships between ethnography and history reveals many common features in their vision of society. It is, in the first place, their common object of study, i.e. human society at all the stages of its development. Soviet ethnography is, moreover, a profoundly historical discipline with reference both to its methods and, in a great measure, to its subject field. There are also research zones that belong equally and simultaneously to the subject field of both sciences. For instance, a most important component of ethnographical science is historical ethnography which includes ethnic history, above all. This section is at the same time an essential component of historical knowledge. It is very illuminating that works on ethnic history belong both to ethnographers and to historians, archeologists included. Historians and ethnographers are united in their phasic approach to studying the dynamics of ethnic processes, while in many other cases historical studies apply another variant of the historical method, i.e. chronologico-descriptive (e.g., in political history). Their source basis is to a considerable degree common, too. However, even in this respect ethnography has its specificity in that it employs materials obtained from field observations over contemporary peoples and uses them for the retrospective investigation of their ethnic histories. It is true though, that in this case these materials serve rather as a complimentary than as a main source. The testimonials of written monuments are much more important, and in the absence of such they are replaced by the evidence from archeological sources, the latter often playing a principal role for studies in the early stages of ethnogenesis in the narrow meaning of the word, i.e. for studies in the process of formation of ethnic system.

An important linking area between ethnography and other historical disciplines, archeology, in the first place, is represented by the history of primeval societies. In studying such societies an ethnographer treats them in their entirety, and his approach does not actually differ from that of a historian, in the narrow

sense of the word. The difference in this case is in the source base employed by the two. In studying ethnic history, for instance, an ethnographer, as has been noted, draws on field materials only as an addition, while in the case of primeval history the same ethnographer mostly bases his thinking on the materials collected, in the course of direct field observations, on archaic phenomena and, more often, on their survival forms while the evidence provided by written sources and archeological data are used by him usually only as an addition.

Though principally a historical discipline, ethnography has some research areas that extend beyond the boundaries of historical science proper. Historical science in its narrow sense interprets the data from the past history of human society although it brings its investigation up to the present. Ethnography on the other hand, does not limit itself to the reconstruction of the past but also treats modern peoples as an actually existing reality, and acts as a concrete science investigating the ethnic specifics of their life. Furthermore, one of its aims is to determine tendencies in the development of contemporary ethnic communities and make forecasts in the field of ethnic relations. On the other hand, history as a science deals with particular instances to reconstruct a real course of events while ethnography takes no interest in the particular in this respect. The historicism of ethnography consists in its stadial (phasic) approach to the dynamic development of the objects it studies and no chronologico-descriptive approach is characteristic of it.

Due to the old traditional contacts between historians and ethnographers the issue about the relationships between these two fields of knowledge does not cause any serious doubts or uncertainties. But in the case of the relationship between ethnography and sociology the situation is different.

It seems important to note their differences above all. Unlike ethnographers, sociologists draw their conclusions usually by abstracting themselves not only from particular instances in general but also from any ethnic specificity, and try to disclose the universal values, i.e. the

common laws of relationship between different aspects of social life.

Let us consider the example of a Russian village, Viryatino (Tambovskaya Oblast), to which Soviet ethnographers have devoted special monographs. The village as such is a unique phenomenon; but when considered as a type of the Russian village it stands out as a carrier of ethnic specificity, for all that it incorporates is general to and typical of a socialist village. Obviously an ethnographer will abstract himself from everything characteristic of the given village, such as the acts of its individual villagers, concrete events, etc. although all of these are important for a historico-monographic study of the same village. He will give his primary attention to the ethnically specific traits typical of the Viryatino villagers, though these traits may at the same time be characteristic either of the entire Russian people or of its individual ethnic groups. In a sociological monograph by Soviet sociologists of a Moldavian village "Kopanki", the authors were interested, above all, in the village as it carried information on the general traits common to all the peasantry of the Soviet Union.

It is true that the above description is only an idealised reflection of ethnographical and sociological studies. In practice, however, we are faced with overlapping studies where the same student (or a group of students) simultaneously performs the functions of representatives of different disciplines.

The study of the general and the particular is a dialectically single process. Hence, any comparative research in the traits of ethnoses is linked inseparably with the investigation of the general in the development of mankind. This fact, in combination with the practice of abstracting in the process of cognition from the particular, brings ethnography and sociology close together at every level.

The subjects are particularly close methodologically, in the first instance, in the concrete sociological and ethnographical field studies in contemporary phenomena (their approach to the living realities of the day coincides in many aspects). As ethnic specificity displays itself most vividly in the sphere of culture and everyday life and is reproduced above all through

the family, it is in these spheres that ethnographical and concrete-sociological studies interact most actively.

We should comment specifically on the presence of a research area often shared by ethnography and sociology: it is known as ethnic sociology, and may be considered as a subdivision of ethnography on the one hand, and of sociology on the other. This area is formed at the point of intersection of ethnic and socio-class studies which provide the basis of ethnosociology. As the intersection of ethnic and socio-class phenomena is found at every stage of social development, ethnosociology should not be limited exclusively in our view., to such a traditional task of ethnography as the investigation of archaic social phenomena. On the contrary, one of the spheres of ethnosociology most urgently requiring attention consists of investigations into the relationship between ethnic and social phenomena in modern developed societies. These general theoretical considerations have recently served, by the way, as the basis for the development here of ethnosociological studies in the contemporary world.

The interests of ethnography intersect also with those of demography. Descriptions of ethnic communities depend in great measure on the studies of their demographic indices which include all the factors that affect the population dynamics of ethnoses, starting from such basic demographical indices as birth-and death-rates and sex and age composition of a population, and going on to the data of medical geography, the latter studying regional distribution of diseases. Such studies constitute the subject field of ethnic demography, a scholarly discipline emerging on the border area of ethnography and decography. One of the special tasks of this discipline consists in determining the relationship of population dynamics with ethnic factors. To understand birth rate differences among the peoples of the world it is important to consider the traditions which characterize each ethnic community in relation to the customary marriage age, the attitude to having few or many children in a family, and the like. The numerical sizes of people are directly affected by ethnic processes (in the narrow meaning of the word) and by those of as-

simulation and consolidation, above all. Migrational processes also have an influence on the sizes of ethnic communities and on the ethnosocial organisms in particular. Consideration of all these factors is extremely important for any prognostication in the field of ethnodemography.

The link between ethnic communities and human populations has predetermined contacts of long standing between ethnography and such a biological discipline as physical anthropology. The most intimate ties between ethnography and demography have developed in the sphere of studies of ancient ethnogenetic processes. The reason for this is that at the early stages of their social development ethnic communities, i.e. tribes, were not only endogamous but comparatively small in numerical size too, as a result of which the time needed for the reproduction of anthropological homogeneity within the populations connected with them was comparatively short. We should not fail to take into account the tendency for human populations never to be absolutely isolated and always to be accompanied by some degree of intermixture of populations. Thus, the anthropological data may only approximately reflect the area of settlement of this or that tribe. Such data are particularly illuminating in the cases when, as a result of migration, a tribe (or a group of kindred tribes) found itself within an area populated by tribes that belonged to another (big or, even, small) race.

As we come closer to the present time, the importance of anthropological materials for the studies of ethnic processes within class socio-economic formations gradually diminishes. The point is that in the case of macropopulations linked with large ethnos (especially with multi-million nations) the tendency toward the formation of internal anthropological homogeneity usually remains largely unrealized, with the result that neighbour nations do not often differ anthropologically. Only in some instances when the process of formation of a nation is accompanied by the intermixture of representatives of big races (e.g., in the countries of Latin America) and when the development of anthropological homogeneity acquires a cer-

tain ethnic importance, anthropological materials may be useful for the understanding of the course of the process.

Studies in the history of the anthropological composition of ethnos and of ethnic processes as based on this foundation are usually referred to as "ethnic anthropology". However, the ties of ethnography with anthropology are not exhausted by this "border" discipline. An extremely important zone of interaction is the history of primeval society, not only in relation to anthropogenesis but also to many of the problems of sociogenesis. The investigation of such matters as the role of labour in human development, the emergence of speech and thinking, racial genesis, etc., is based on the data of anthropology to a considerable degree. Anthropological materials have played a major role in the radical reevaluation of our notions about the duration of the life-time of mankind.

The relationship of ethnos to human populations opens for ethnography wide possibilities for contacts with such a biological discipline as genetics. There is also another common research area shared by ethnography and medicine. It is represented by what is called folk medicine, which is an invariable component of the traditional everyday-life culture of every ethnos, which explains the significance of the ethnographical investigation of folk medicine for the description of the peoples of the world. Ethnography also has contacts with botany and zoology, for example in connection with issues concerning the spatial distribution of certain species of domesticated plants or animals typical of this or that ethnos. In this relation two specialized border disciplines have evolved, ethnobotanics and ethnozoology.

Of much importance for the description of ethnic communities are indices related to their spatial parameters and to their interaction with the environment. These have led to contacts of long standing between ethnography and geography, traceable to an early period when the descriptions of the specific traits of life of the peoples and of the elements of nature were inseparably linked. Such an integrity of ethnographical and geographical knowledge was largely due to a common source for factual materials on the peoples and countries, i.e., the



notes of travellers. It was in the mid-19th century that ethnography claimed independence for the first time but even long afterwards in the majority of countries it remained a subdiscipline of geography. In our country a noticeable change in the fixing of boundaries between ethnography and geography did not take place before the late 1920s and early 30s.

A new "synthetic" discipline, i.e. ethnogeography, began to take shape at the junction point of these sciences. One of its divisions is the cartography of the spatial location of ethnic communities, now known as ethnic cartography. While having the same subject field as ethnography, ethnic cartography makes at the same time a wide use of methods and techniques elaborated by geographers. With the help of ethnic maps it can graphically depict spatial relations between different ethnic communities which reflect their history. Closely connected with ethnic cartography is analysis of the spatial distribution of separate components of ethnoes, i.e. the compilation of historico-ethnographical atlases.

An important task of ethnic geography is to study the effect environment has on ethnoes and their component parts. Environment not only leave its imprint on the culture of people and on the patterns of their settlement, but also, by having a certain influence on the development of their production and economy, it affects indirectly the course of ethnic processes. We should also mention a subdivision of ethnic geography which deals with the influence ethnic factors have on nature, i.e. with the ethnic aspects of human ecology. It is well known that skills, habits, and traditions of production and economic life, having been historically formed within the framework of a particular ethnos, leave their imprint on the cultural landscapes of relevant regions. The specific character of the influences that ethnoes have on nature depends also on the mode of their settlement, their absolute size and, even, on some features of their social and spiritual life.

In describing the place ethnography occupies within the system of sciences we inevitably had to limit ourselves to the consideration of only some and, in our view, most essential, spheres of its interaction with adjacent sciences, especially those with which it shares the "synthetic fields" of knowledge. It cannot, of course, be excluded that in the course of further and more detailed studies into ethnic phenomena there will appear new disciplines adjacent to ethnography which will facilitate comprehensive investigation of its extremely complex object. The development of new contacts of this kind is already making headway in very different zones of cognition (e.g., in the border areas with economics, oceanology, gerontology, etc.).

In short, although the kernel of the subject-field of ethnography is represented by traditional everyday culture, the cognitive tasks of this discipline necessitate the study of all the spheres of a people's life that are coloured with ethnic specifics. Hence, ethnography is characterized by a complex approach to the object of its study, which entails its close intertwining with many contiguous branches of knowledge. Moreover, when the study of this or that sphere of life of peoples is not ensured by a specialized scholarly discipline, ethnography is obliged to take on the performance of functions of such a discipline itself.

All of this urgently requires the close cooperation of ethnography not only with social but also with natural sciences, but for such a cooperation to be really firm it is necessary to develop in the border areas between ethnography and other sciences such disciplines as ethno-linguistics, ethnosociology, ethnopsychology, ethnodemography, ethnic anthropology, ethno-geography, etc. Studies in the relevant border areas should, of course, be carried on "from both sides". And furthermore it should not be forgotten that a full description of ethnoes is above all in the interests of ethnographers themselves.

#### *Notes*

1. For more details see: Bromlej Yu. V. *Ethnos und Ethnographie*. Berlin 1977, S.

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