On ‘Constructing an Indian ethnosociology’

McKim Marriott

New paradigms need critical discussion, and six scholars have helpfully stepped forward (in Contributions 24, 2, 1990) to comment on ‘Toward an ethnosociology of India’ (Contributions 23, 1, 1989).1 Two of these discussants, L.A. Babb and Gerald James Larson, enter deeply into the details of my own proposals, and I here respond mainly to their valuable remarks. Two others, R.S. Khare and Michael Moffatt, situate my work within their histories of Indian cultural sociology, while K.N. Sharma contributes Indological corrections. I am grateful to all these for showing where my exposition has been insufficient or unclear, and I look forward to further multilateral discussion.

Levels of ethnosocial science

I have defined ‘ethnosociology’ broadly as the study of a society in terms of its own realities, but L.A. Babb observes that ‘Constructing an Indian ethnosociology’ (Marriott 1989a) proposes something more—an Indian theoretical social science. Babb calls this ‘tertiary theory’, extrapolating from Robin Horton’s (1982) classification of sciences. Horton posits a ‘primary’ level of human experience where ‘the thoughtways of different human cultures rest on common ground’. Theory at the primary level deals with ‘middle-sized objects, push-pull causation, up and down, fore and aft, and so on’ (Babb 1990: 207). Thus, India’s cultural ancestors would have had primary, practical ideas about phenomena such as fire, water, earth, sun, etc. Apostrophising and apotheosising these as elements, deities, seasons, etc., they developed Horton’s ‘secondary theories’, which Parsons and Shils (1952: 50–51) describe as the ‘categorial level of systematization’. Secondary theories are exemplified by the Indian systems of humours, gunas, rutas, etc., and by the quite different categorisations of nature that were developed in Greek, Chinese, Native American and other cultures.

At the ‘tertiary’ (Babb), or truly ‘theoretical’ (Parsons and Shils) level of systematisation, thinkers collate and interrelate the secondary categories of a given culture to form comprehensive natural and social ontologies and epistemologies. Such tertiary cultural formulations may be quite abstract, since each originates as a ‘theory of secondary theories’.

But as a tertiary theory of aquatic life is unneeded by the fish who live it, so the tertiary social theory of a particular culture may not be needed by the people who implicitly share it. It may remain comfortably unstated because it can be assumed, its ideas being embodied in names, customs and rules for handling everyday objects—the culture’s secondary theories. Thus Kerala’s old houses themselves, along with their residents’ ways of living in them, silently and by small verbal cues teach Melinda Moore (1989) much of what the proposed Indian ethnosociology postulates more formally as a tertiary-theoretical ‘Hindu property-space’.

Although useless to most people and unarticulated by them, an explicit tertiary science such as an Indian ethnosociology can be a powerful exploratory tool for an analyst of things Indian, Babb believes. For him it generates hypotheses that are cogent and worth testing. I agree, and would extend Babb’s claim to other well-designed tertiary systems, such as Parsons and Shils’ ‘general theory of action’: the highly abstract, essentialised forms of that culturally specific sociology strike me as very American; they are also analytically productive for making inferences within American society (Marriott 1992). Neither of these two ethnosociologies makes sense of the other’s society, but together both may contribute to a quaternary level of theory that does not yet exist—a systematic repertoire and synthesis of alternative, possible human social sciences.2

Logics of relations

What mathematicians call ‘fundamental relational properties’ are potentially relevant to all levels of theory from primary to quaternary, and to all humans, since they are inherent in the numbers one, two, and three. A relation of one term to itself is said to have the property ‘reflexivity’; of two

1 The ethnomethodological articles of the Special Issue are now also available as a book entitled India through Hindu categories, published by Sage in 1990. The book (Marriott 1990a) adds a historical introduction and an index.

2 Having hypothesised the formal logic of relations that may underlie the plan and activities occurring in Kerala houses, for example, as Moore did after leaving the field, one might wish to go back, as she tells me she plans to do, to gather more evidence on the residents’ subjective awareness of the issues hypothetically raised.

3 Quaternary syntheses have often been attempted. A recent example is Fiske’s (1991), which depends on a tertiary theory that he constructed for a West African society. Fiske’s ‘elementary forms’ overlap no more than 50 per cent with the postulates of the Indian ethnosociology here discussed. Much more knowledge of alternative tertiary systems appears necessary before such a Universal Man can be satisfactorily synthesised.

McKim Marriott is Professor of Anthropology at the University of Chicago, 1126 East 59th Street, Chicago, III 60637, USA

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terms with each other, ‘symmetry’; and of three terms in a chain, ‘transitivity’ (Langer 1967: 246–51). When all pairs of terms in a relation show all these properties, that relation is called ‘equivalent’; when only some pairs do, it is called ‘anteriori equivalent’ (nonreflexive, nonsymmetrical, nontransitive); and when no pair shows them, ‘nonequivalent’ (irreflexive, asymmetrical, intransitive) (Carnap 1958: 119–20, 136). During the past century, many systems of pure mathematics—set theory, symbolic logic, topology, graph theory, etc.—have recognised such relational properties as their axioms.*

Although relations are universal to human thought, their logics have not been uniformly perceived and developed. Indians have regularly theorised about relations in grammar, music, law and business, describing such phenomena easily with permutations of the verbal or algebraic symbols that have long been the Indian analytic terms of choice (De Morgan 1882: 268; Staal 1965). But Indian thinkers have generally not formulated context-free relational systems. Perhaps they should not have been expected to do so, if what everyone assumes need not be proven. They would seem, however, to have been culturally well prepared for doing so.

A logic of relations is not so easily stated through the propositional forms of geometric argument that were favoured for centuries in the West.1 Western philosophers took up algebra in earnest a full millennium later than their Eastern colleagues and began to produce logics of relations only in the later 19th century, after intensified contacts with Indian thought. Then what seemed to the West novel systems of relational logic were published almost simultaneously by Augustus De Morgan, a Briton who was born in Madurai, and by Charles S. Peirce, who came to intellectual maturity as a British contemporary. Inge Boole, a British contemporary, invented his similar set theory algebra at about this time. The recency and possible Indian stimulation of these efforts, as well as the underlying differences of cultural predisposition, suggest that the logic of relations is not an autochthonous Western cultural growth, nor is it so alien to India as Larson (1990) and Sharma (1990) suspect.*

Whatever the origins of relational theory, can and should one uniform relational theory be used in constructing sociologies everywhere? I think not. There is no one theory of relations in sociological practice,* and different cultures surely require different axioms and postulates.

Thus, in India, Sāṃkhya, Ayurveda and many related popular theories have for long held that the world and its people are importantly constituted by the elements fire, water and air. Such elements seem to me (1989a: 17–21) to imply ‘anteriori equivalent’ (nonreflexive, nonsymmetrical, nontransitive) relations. They rationalise an essentially mobile world inhabited by mutually unequal, influential and vulnerable persons (Babb’s ‘porous containers’). Some India-related cultures of Southeast Asia—Central Java (Keeler 1987) and Luwu (Errington 1989)—think with similarly igneous, liquid and windy theories of ‘power’ and people; and there may be other such social systems.

On the other hand, the modern West emphasises the contrary ‘equivalence’ set of relations. Equivalence axioms (reflexivity, symmetry, transitivity) promise generally equal, consistent relations among solid, invulnerable units. Sharing at least one of these axioms (reflexivity), the secondary theories of Muslim Morocco, possibly along with those of other Arab cultures, describe hard but composite and mobile units related by what might be understood as a geometry of variable light (Geertz et al. 1979; Marriott 1992). Morocco seems to differ significantly from the modern West by emphasising divine and political nonsymmetry (Combs-Schilling 1989).

Still other societies think of themselves in categories from which neither the Indian nor the modern Western sets of favoured relational axioms may readily be abstracted. Japan’s implicitly pneumatic theories, for example, suggest the need for a different analytic system. They assume a kind of energy, often imaged as air pressure, that is compressible and expansible as it moves among defined, bounded units of variable spatial extent. Some readymade axioms of Boolean set theory or topology may fit some of the Japanese notions of interpersonal space. But they and no other analytic system I know will suit the acrobatic energy and defenceless units of Ilngot culture (Rosaldo 1980), or the alimentary tensions that are social realities for the people of Ifaluk (Lutz 1988). No uniformity of analytic

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* Two errors appear in Larson’s comparisons between relational logics and set theory (1990: 239). The first sentence of the third paragraph might correctly read: ‘Set operations resemble the three conditions as follows: “intersection” = irreflexivity, “inclusion” = asymmetry, and “union” = transitivity.’

1 My choice of Western-style, geometric metaphors (cubes) to represent the combinatorial features of modal Indian relations may be judged both inappropriate and ironic, but also ‘inevitable’, as Babb remarks. Others find geometric diagrams hard to read and hard to draw. Would readers prefer the kinds of numerical or algebraic representations suggested in note 2 below? They have been tried before in many sciences.*

* I am indebted to Milton Singer for supplying these clues to the cultural interactions which seem to underlie the development of logics of relations.

1 Larson (1990: 248) misconstrues my interest in preserving what is ‘widespread’ and ‘generalisable’ (1989a: 13 fn. 10) as referring to a particular relational theory. My intended reference in this passage is rather to the linkages or alignments of the Indian variables and spheres that are widely asserted or implied in other texts and ethnography (Marriott 1989a: 12–16).

* A recent text on ethnographic method employs twelve different combinations of relational axioms (which are only a few of the possible combinations) to model its examples of different social institutions from different cultural settings. It finds no human example requiring a nontransitive axiom, but does not examine Indian materials (Hage and Harary 1983: 72, 176–82).
categories is therefore anticipated in my own programme for ethnosociological exploration, which includes efforts to construct tertiary theories for these and another dozen different cultures.

The incompleteness of cubes

All these movements toward tertiary sciences are incomplete, most conspicuously the Indian one. I join the critics in recognising this. Gerald Larson (1990) cautions that my triads are not sufficient, that at least pentads are needed to deal with perception and motivation. R.S. Khare (1990) worries that the cube makes no explicit provision for adhāśa, mokṣa, and other such psychic realities. K.N. Sharma (1990) similarly feels that puruṣa and many other such important Indian mental constructs have been neglected.

I must plead guilty to oversimplification. Reduction of secondary theories to the smallest possible set of assumptions—initially perhaps only one—followed by empirical testing of hypotheses generated from those assumptions, is my strategy for gradually developing any tertiary, culturally based (1991) followed by empirical testing of hypotheses generated from those assumptions. Of course, improvements are needed now and will always be needed, but until the present postulates arc needed now and will always be needed, but until the present postulates for an Indian ethnosociology are fully explored and are found to be insufficient in their collective generative capacity, I would argue that additions to this tertiary theory should be deferred.

I must also plead with critics of this particular essay that I am focusing

A project as vast as the design or a new conceptualisation is modelled in part on a pairing of the two container-like elements, 'earth' and 'ether'. The table's and the essay's exposition of postulates opens the next issue of Contributions (Marriott 1989b).

The table lists and the essay discusses five postulates. The first three postulates are conceived as independent variables, called 'UNMARKING-marking', 'MIXING-unmixing', and 'UNMATCHING-matching'. These three are modelled on the Indian triads of motile elements, humours, strands and aims. The table further lists and the essay briefly (too briefly, no doubt) discusses a dependent variable called GROSENING-subtilising, which is modelled in part on a pairing of the two container-like elements, 'earth' and 'ether'. The table's and the essay's exposition of postulates conclude with mention of a fifth postulate—an ever-present constant called CONSCIOUSNESS (after Larson's gloss) that is meant to subsume the zero-like notions of puruṣa, atman, brahman, and mokṣa.

Pentads are also presented graphically. Figure 1 (1990a: 10) pictures analogues of the first four (condensing five of the Sāṃkhya) postulates as they emerge in different physical, biological and moral spheres (lokas). Middle-sized cubes show the first three of these postulates at right angles to each other in order to indicate their mutually independent variabilities. Each of these middle-sized cubes is then repainted as a whole by a miniature cube drawn at its own left. These miniature cubes represent collocations of all the members of their respective triads. 'Earth' includes and locates the three motile physical elements; 'body' joins the three humours; 'stranded' (saguṇa) nature aggregates nature's three strands, the gunas; and the 'world' (samsāra) is the stage for playing out the three worldly aims. Above each of these miniature collocations there appears a pentad named, but subtle, and therefore hardly picturable here not on Indian theories of the cosmos or person, but on a social property-space. Working with limited wordage, I say here only enough to provide a grounding for the other papers of the volume. I have myself much more to say on social and political action within the highly variegated and essential space that I have proposed. I am also engaged in an attempt to formulate a related Indian ethnopsychology. I would be glad to see others more competent than myself go on to formulate the Indian 'ethnophilosophy' that Larson suggests, also the possibly congruent Indian ethnometaphysics that Sharma and Khare seem to desire.

However, incomplete my own efforts, I must correct Larson's impression that pentads are not employed in what I have written, also Sharma's and Khare's feeling that there is no provision for mokṣa and puruṣa in the present essay. I have included all of these because I think them as necessary to Indian ethnosociology as they are to Indian ethnopsychology. Although separated from the essay by its odd orientation and confounded by the printer's misplacement of several words, Table 2 does present five (one could perhaps say six of the Sāṃkhya) postulates. Please refer to the corrected version of this same table which was published in the book (Marriott 1990a: 14-15) and also in reduced form with the Errata that opens the next issue of Contributions (Marriott 1989b).

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category—ether above earth; 'spaces' (i.e., bodily cavities) above body; strandless' above stranded nature; and 'release' (thought of as heaven, a place of recycling, as in Gold [1988: Ch. 4]) above the world. These complementary pairs might all be characterised as kinds of gross-subtle differentiation. Thus, to picture this tertiary postulate, I might have added a miniature cube and the paired labels, 'grossening' and 'subtilising' at the left of the upper, large cube which summarises all the spheres of constituents.

Representation of consciousness is then left to the viewer of the figure, who is at liberty to locate this fifth postulate both within and beyond any of these three-dimensional figures.

While constructing a system of coordinates by which cubic addresses (locations signifying different combinations of the first three postulates) can be precisely specified, I wished also to signal the inadequacy of the cubes, taken by themselves, as total cosmic representations. I had therefore been writing numbers from just one to nine along each dimension. I was interested to discover a few years later that in the Kerala manuals cited by Moore (1989: 180-81), astral diagrams and house plots are drawn with the same sub-decimal numbers of columns and rows. Like the Kerala manuals and unlike any standard Cartesian sort of graphing, I had also been systematically omitting any zero points of origin for the coordinates. The cubes are thus rightly seen as 'offset from zero and totality, as Babb correctly infers from the nonpolar descriptions of the variables.

Assuming the numerical base of ten that Indian mathematics uses, such doubly truncated strings of numbers along the cubes' margins should in future picturings help to assert the reality of the incompleteness that both Khare and I seek to convey. Indeed, incompleteness might well be added as a further postulate of this distinctively non-wholistic ethnoscience.

**Dyads and variables**

That any Indian cubes necessarily fill only part of the total metaphysical property-space means that any dimensions, diagonals, or diameters of cubes are likewise to be conceived as incomplete. Each 'variable' is meant to vary only between 'more and less', and not between poles of zero and completeness (Marriott 1989a: 8-9, 11, 18). Thus, I cannot confirm Larson's suspicion (1990: 241-42) that I am inserting Indian phenomena into Western cubes. Also, I do not follow Larson's suggestion that the 'purity' of this Indian ethnoscience attains the absolute and context-free perfection of Kant's a priori. The property-spaces of India and the West may both be graphed as cubes, and may overlap in part, but will have different conceptual extents (incomplete, complete) and differently numbered coordinates.

Comparing my declared intention to avoid 'dichotomous' conceptions with the large number of 'dyads' which he finds throughout Sāṁkhya literature, Larson cautions (1990: 244-45) that I seem to be rejecting an essential technique of Indian analytic thought. He notes that in practice too, make extensive use of contrasts, such as 'matching-unmatching', 'hot-cold', etc. Perhaps my allergy to dichotomising is too strongly expressed, but perhaps there is also some verbal mismatching here between Larson's usages and mine: my much-used term 'variable' does much of the same analytic duty that is done by Larson's 'dyad'.

The 'dichotomies' of whose frequent occurrence in Indian social thought I am sceptical are oppositions in which there is assumed to be a 'cut', as between the positive and negative zones marked by zero on a thermometer, or between the opposite banks of a river (Ogden 1967: 58-59). In Western structuralist analyses of myth, for example, oppositions are frequently interpreted as such dichotomies. There heaven and earth may be seen as constituting a dichotomy; and further, as having a gap between them that must be filled or crossed over—'mediated' by air, sky, trees, or birds. Such dichotomous interpretations are sometimes culturally accurate; primordial puruṣa and prākṛti are no doubt a dichotomous pair in Sāṁkhya. But I notice that this (in Sāṁkhya) uncontested pair merges without a mediator, and therefore suppose that their previous oppositional relation is conceived as closer—as being more like positive and negative degrees, or the directions up and down, rather than like the remoteness of heaven from earth.

I do not see other examples of absolute, uncontested dichotomies in Sāṁkhya thought. Larson agrees with this perception to the extent of

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and of Kerala housewives’ carrying the pure shrine lamp into the impure
circle, the postulated property-space does not promise a perfectly
purity (Marriott 1989a: 25). Such dialectics are more like tides
ever to the dialectics of research. Thus Babb is not mistaken, but is
evil, one soils oneself and bathes, one sins and does penance, and so on
consistent in the way their activities in the different domains or spheres
than like tidal waves, yet one critic (Moffatt 1990: 232-34) boggles at
omies. But pulsation, respiration, and other manifestations of prāna provide
experience, formal logic/material logic, divine/human, birth/rebirth. I
would add that in Indian discourse the separation of cause from effect is
deated, ‘manifest’ and ‘unmanifest’ are hard to judge, and one man’s
‘nonviolence’ may be another man’s ‘violence’. Since among Indian ethno-
graphic materials I do see a great many dualities that are in practice treated
as continuous and unseparated, even if arguable and reversible, I propose
continuity rather than separation as the general expectation. Differentiations
within the world may then be said to be as incomplete and uncertain as is
the world itself.

The prevalence of continuous variables changes the context for using
Western concepts like ‘dialectics’, which assume clear and sharp dichoto-
tries. But pulsation, respiration, and other manifestations of prāna provide
Indians with experience-near models of continual counteraction. In the
unmatching Indian world one loses and gains, one incurs and disposes of
evil, one soils oneself and bathes, one sins and does penance, and so on
(see also Marriott 1989a: 27). Such diurnal dialectics are more like tides
than like tidal waves, yet one critic (Moffatt 1990: 232-34) boggles at
Moore’s interpretations of the vāstu puruṣa’s turning back toward heaven,
and of Kerala housewives’ carrying the pure shrine lamp into the impure
kitchen (Moore 1989: 182, 197-99). Dialectic interpretations like these
would alienate him from the whole ethnosiological enterprise.

Doubts about dialectics suggest a static, structuralist misunderstanding
of the postulated property-space. Structural moments are essential, how-
ever, to the dialectics of research. Thus Babb is not mistaken, but is
incomplete when he writes (1990: 210) that ‘groups will be generally
consistent in the way their activities in the different domains or spheres
map into the constituent cube’. An expectation of congruence among all
the Indian spheres functions for the analyst as a null hypothesis functions
against which he can observe and test. But real actors’ changing bodily and social states, their manner of acting,
the aims and media of their actions have all to be separately evaluated
for their mixing unmarking and mismatching qualities. One does not real-
istically expect the qualities of all these to coincide, for while the spheres
are to some extent mixed, they are also to some extent unmatched with
each other. The postulated property-space does not promise a perfectly
integrated world.

It does, however, promise a world of action. But does the ethnosiology

list (1990: 249) five ‘absences of separations’ in Indian thought at points

Larson seems uncertain whether Sāmkhya ideas (particularly the three
gunas) describe the world as (using our geometric metaphor) one-dimen-
sional or three-dimensional. He cites Manu’s linear listing of guṇas as
proof of one-dimensionality and warns that Manu must be followed if one
is to be authentically Indian about one’s theory. But he also cites Sāmkhya
cārikā as proof that the guṇas have intercommunicating realms in which
each guṇa may be more or less predominant (like the humours of Ayurveda).
Babb, too, wants to credit both unilineal and three-dimensional descriptions,
and so do I. But how is one to reconcile these clashing geometric descrip-
tions with each other?

My solution to this apparent contradiction is the notion of perspective
darāṇa). While holding that at the tertiary level the property-space has
three dimensions, I do not reject Manu’s secondary level, one-dimensional
view of that space (Marriott 1989a: 13, fn. 10). Rather, I interpret Manu
as presenting a Brahmanic and pedantic view of that property-space. His view
be replicated by anyone located, as he is, on the top-front edge of the
cube near the three-dimensionally ‘pure’ corner (as in ibid.: 25, figure 2).
There the aim of dharma—what Manu teaches—is directly adjacent to the
guṇa sattva, and Manu accordingly pairs those concepts. Close by, and
surely deserving his next attention, is the royal corner, where advantage
(artha) is sought with the adjacent quality of passion (rajas). Last is the
guṇa of darkness (tamas) that is furthest from Manu’s enlightened locus,
and last also is the left-over aim of desire (kāma) just around the corner,
which troubles his students’ concentration and must be combated with the
antidote of austerity (tapas), a concept at the opposite face of the cube.

The cube differs from, yet also allows for Manu’s unilinear view, just as
it can allow for a multiplicity of other tertiary-theoretical aggregates of
many perspectives. The cube’s three-dimensionality is what I think is most
worth exploring, because only the diverse qualities of its spaces, generated
through permutations of its variables, seem able to accommodate the
actual diversities of Indian life. Postulating that the property-space of India
is three-dimensional of course imposes upon any analyst the duty of stating

Manu’s different way of aligning the spheres of guṇas and aims (argued just below) is a
case in point. A ‘play factor’ of about 25 per cent (90 degrees on the circle of 360 degrees)
might be estimated from Manu’s opinions, and also from common variations in the usage of
diametric expressions like ‘purity’ (Marriott 1989a: 25, 30), ‘subtle’, ‘bright’, ‘great’, and

Manu’s estimated point of view could be more clearly stated using the proposed
numerical coordinates (see note 12 above) as (3,1,1)
the qualitatively different points of view that constrain, and thus bias all
descriptions, whatever the describers’ claims to authority or omniscience.

Against my scepticism about the appropriateness for the proposed
ethnosociology of binary theory’s frequent resort to ‘mediation’, Larson
cites the ubiquity in Śāṃkhyā thought of formulas that list rajas medially,
after sattva and before tamas. Another kind of betweenness occurs through-
out Ayurveda, where channels (made of Sāṃkhyā’s inert ‘earth’ and ‘ether’—not of its motile elements) connect the humoral reservoirs with
distant areas of the body; such inert networks of communication are
essential also to the proposed ethnosociological scheme. But meetings
among the guna-like social processes themselves—mixings, markings and
unmatchings—seem better understood as dynamic, as working like the
humburs of Ayurveda to ‘excite’, ‘calm’, or ‘disrupt’ each other. Such
processes will not remain distinct, like items in a list, or like mediators, but
will mutually react to generate various new compounds. New formulations
are needed regarding this complex ethnochemistry.

Time perspectives

If they are to be developed at ethnosociology’s proposed tertiary level of
theory, India’s older secondary theories must be abstracted not only from
pristine texts, but also from present practice. In support of his dharma the
ethnosociologist must participate in India’s primary realities as well as in its
secondary theories. He must think, speak and act with whatever of these
categories are current, extending and testing their logics until he finds their
limits, their systematicity. By formulating these findings more abstractly
and generally (= unmarking them), he would go beyond secondary theories.

I am not sure whether any of these processes is what Sharma (1990)
would call ‘tinkering’. Assuming that traditional learning and philosophic
practice required similarly intensive and recursive uses of existing ideas,
ethnosociological practice may differ mainly in its further, more abstract,
more explicit aims. What the ethnosociologist offers to the social scientist
for use in the 21st century will in any case not be identical with its own
ancient sources, but analytically its ideas should be more comprehensive,
more powerful.

I appreciate Sharma’s corrections of my Sanskrit words. ‘Coherence’,
however, seems to mean close enough to other current social meanings for
dharma, and I believe most respondents would agree that dharma-adharma
inheres very much in the material world and its people. With or without
eytymological justification, asserting the connection of ‘coherence’ with
’substance’ does not seem to me amiss.

Khare (1990) offers his global evaluations of Indian cultural sociology in
a commentary that seems to have been largely written before the ethnosociologi-
cal papers of 1989 appeared. I hope that he will take a closer look

at the rather different ‘cultural others’ who are involved in this new work,
and write again.

The histories offered by Khare (1990) and Moffatt (1990) invent theo-
retical dialogues between Dumont and Marriott, but do not show that either
has actually influenced the other. They understate the fieldwork, laboratory
and analytic findings that, rather than doctrines, polemics, or personalities
have been major determinants in Indian ethnosociology’s development. A
serious historian would need to collect letters, seminar papers, manuscripts,
and publications—many more than have been cited so far—before estimating
influences among students, teachers and colleagues. Real fieldwork with
real life histories could also help to get beyond external impressions and
outdated cliches. But little truth or understanding of the ethnosociological
āśram is to be had through occasional raids or readings of scraps from its
wastebaskets (Moffatt 1990).

In my ‘Introduction’ (1990a) to India through Hindu categories I begin to
construct an institutional genealogy for Indian ethnosociology at Chicago.
In footnote* above I sketch a chronology and list some of the many
researchers which have moved me toward stating the present five postulates.
Full and detailed historical accounts of these matters would be long, since
Indian ethnosociology has not been a solo effort, but a broad and deep
movement involving dozens of scholars. I hope that it will enlist the
cooperation of many more toward its improvement.

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