

Chapter 10

**FROM MOUNTAIN ANTHROPOLOGY TO
MONTOLGY? AN OVERVIEW OF THE
ANTHROPOLOGICAL APPROACH TO MOUNTAIN
STUDIES**

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ABSTRACT

Human impact is arguably the most important issue confronting mountain ecosystems across the world today and mountain cultures have attracted anthropological study throughout the history of the discipline. This article outlines the trajectory of mountain studies in anthropology, from early studies to the peak of mountain anthropology in the 1980s, highlighting major theoretical and research foci. Recent work in mountain anthropology and among mountain scholars in general has called for the formation of the interdisciplinary mountain science of montology. The potential for present day anthropologists and other scientists, subdisciplines, and area studies to work under the rubric of montology will be explored. Southern Appalachia and the Ozarks, the two prominent non-alpine mountain ranges in the southeastern United States, will be given as in-depth comparative examples of geographically isolated mountain areas with a high degree of commonality in their complex histories of human-environment interactions.

INTRODUCTION

Mountain areas of the world have been of special interest to a diversity of interdisciplinary researchers since at least the 19th century seminal work of Alexander von Humboldt (1814). Since the 1970s there has been an explosion in the study of mountains across all disciplines, and has resulted in the increased involvement of the human and social sciences in a field of study that has been traditionally dominated by natural sciences (Rhoades

2007a). The need to understand the impact of humans on mountain ecosystems has become a prominent research theme in the sustainable development paradigm that has taken root in international development circles since the 1990s. Today researchers grapple with what sustainability means and how it can be achieved in fragile mountain environments.

The recognition that the human dimension of mountain studies needed more focused scholarly attention was not unfounded. Approximately 12% (750 million people) of the human population lives in the high mountain, highlands, and middle mountain areas of the world. In addition, an estimated 26% of the global population (1.48 billion people) lives in areas adjacent to mountains, depending on critical natural resources that mountain areas provide. These statistics are rough estimates and do not include other populations who spend significant periods of time in mountains such as seasonal migrant workers, tourists, and religious pilgrims (Gardener et al. forthcoming, Grotzbach and Stadel 1997, Price 1981). Among people who live in or near mountains is an unusually high concentration of cultural, biological, and linguistic diversity. This is thought to be in large part due to isolated mountain geographies that include various microclimates, environmental niches, and altitudinal zones; in combination with economic and cultural isolation which promotes diversification in livelihood strategies and cultural traditions (e.g. Veteto 2008). GIS mapping has empirically shown that mountain areas throughout the world contain strong linkages between biological, cultural, and linguistic diversity, or *biocultural* diversity (Stepp et al. 2005). Of particular and immediate importance to human survival is the high correlation between mountain ecosystems and agricultural biodiversity:

Mountains provide the life support systems that contain virtually all of the wild species and ancestral landraces of the major crops (potatoes, maize, rice, barley, and wheat) providing over 80 percent of the human calorie intake and nutrition. (Rhoades 2007a:60).

Mountains also provide the upper watersheds for many of the world's other important biomes, producing clean water for much of the world's population.

The correlation between mountains and biocultural diversity has major implications for conservation of highland areas. Social scientists and conservation biologists have come to the somewhat revolutionary realization that it is often the case that the longer and more stable a human community has lived in an area; the better it can buffer and promote biodiversity (Nabhan 1997, Fairhead and Leach 1996). This is in opposition to a conservation ethic that has traditionally pitted humans against the natural world in a biological end game toward extinction. Stable human mountain communities seem to fly in the face of such conventional wisdom, providing a living example of how human and biological diversity might be able to co-exist in a sustainable future. The more important question, rather than how to keep humans out of natural and wilderness areas, might be: "What kind of human community is contextually appropriate for living in mountain areas?" In my own research in southern Appalachia, Cherokee and Euro-American mountain communities have long stewarded one of the most biodiverse areas in all of North America (Veteto 2008). Noted exceptions to this rule of high biocultural diversity have occurred at the turn of the 20th century, when northern capitalist timber and mineral barons bought up much of the Appalachian landscape for clearcutting and strip mining, and in the present day when second-home development in gated communities associated with vacation opportunities for economically privileged lowlanders is

providing a new and tangible threat to Appalachian landscapes and biodiversity. Again the question should not be “if” humans should live in or near mountain areas of high biodiversity, but rather “how” they should live there. It is perhaps the most fundamental question confronting promoters of sustainable mountain development.

Anthropology, as the holistic study of humans in all of their cultural, biological, linguistic, and archaeological complexity, has been a discipline uniquely situated to study human-environment interactions in mountain ecosystems. It has traditionally formed alliances with mountain scientists in the biological and natural sciences as well as with humanities scholars in fields such as history and literature. This chapter will trace the historical development of the anthropological approach to mountain studies, from mountain anthropology to montology, present examples from the literature of high mountain areas such as the Alps and Himalayas, and give an in-depth introduction to the mountain anthropology of the Appalachians and Ozarks. The chapter concludes by asking questions related to the potential of the integrated mountain science of *montology* and how mountain anthropology, Appalachian studies, and Ozark studies might be able to participate and contribute.

BACKGROUND: FROM MOUNTAIN ANTHROPOLOGY TO MONTOLOGY?

The Early Comparative Cultural Ecology Approach

The Anthropology of Mountains has been a research interest since at least the 1970s. A seminal article by Rhoades and Thompson (1975), following on the heels of a symposium held at the 1973 meetings of the American Anthropological Association entitled “Cultural Adaptations to Mountain Ecosystems” (Brush 1976), hailed the beginning of a comparative approach to the anthropological study of the high mountain areas of the world and inspired a flood of articles and research interest in anthropology of the Andes, Alps, and Himalayas (Orlove and Guillet 1985). Most early mountain anthropology studies proceeded from the framework of Julian Steward’s cultural ecology (Steward 1959). This materialist approach focused on specific adaptations to mountain environments, the technologies whereby mountain peoples made their living, and the resulting patterns of social and cultural organization that were observed. Several early conclusions were reached. Comparative research revealed that high elevation mountain peoples across the world adapted to the different altitudinal-vegetation zones that were characteristic of their environments (Rhoades and Thompson 1975, Brush 1976). In all three major high-elevation areas of the world, mixed cropping strategies with varieties specifically adapted to different zones and transhumance patterns of herding revealed that mountain strategies of adaptation were largely determined by the zonation variable. However, it was also noted early on that vertical zonation and biotic distribution was not “arranged in a neat layer-cake fashion.” (Rhoades and Thompson:543). Instead, zonation was conceptualized as a general pattern that is punctuated by some degree of human and biotic patchiness, a phenomena that has been focused on more prominently in recent years by second-generation mountain anthropologists and geographers (e.g. Zimmerer 1999). Adaptation to mountain zones was thought to occur in two recognized patterns,

generalized versus specialized mountain procurement systems (Rhoades and Thompson 1975):

In general terms, two major adaptive strategies may be identified in alpine areas. One involves a single population, which through agro-pastoral transhumance, directly exploits a series of microniches or ecozones at several altitudinal levels; in the second, a population locks into a single zone and specializes in the agricultural or pastoral activities suitable to that altitude, developing elaborate trade relationships with populations in other zones which are also involved in specialized production. In some cases, this specialized strategy involves the exploitation of several niches in the same mountainous area by two or more distinct groups (e.g., agriculturalists, pastoralists, traders) which are in symbiosis (p. 547).

General and specific adaptation to high elevation zonation led to two sociocultural/economic forms that could be observed to different degrees in diverse high mountain environments. The first is the mountain tendency toward communal land rights in higher elevation grazing and planting areas complimented by private holdings in lower elevations where villages are typically situated. The second are the looser forms of political and familial organization typical of highlanders:

The underlying principle of alpine village government, whether Swiss or Sherpa, is that local authority is vested in the entire population, which, during an annual assembly, lays down village regulations. The populace also selects from its own ranks village guardians who serve for one year and execute the legislation set forth by their fellows. Selected on a rotating basis, the guardians are specifically concerned with protecting the crops, pastures, and forests, although they may also be involved with the maintenance of community harmony through conflict resolution...In short, the controls are necessarily as demanding and restrictive as the harsh mountain environment itself (Rhoades and Thompson 1975:541).

To summarize, from its inception, mountain anthropology was dominated by Steward's cultural ecology approach. Analysis proceeded from the effect of environment dominated by the concept of zonation and from there identified the effect of zonation on technological adaptation (e.g., 'mixed mountain agropastoralism' and mixed cropping strategies) and social/political organization (e.g. private-communal landholding and de-centralized political decision making). Toward the end of this "first wave" of mountain anthropology, researchers began to identify areas of inquiry that were needed to expand the cultural ecology of mountains into a broader framework. One was the need for regional, not just village level, analysis. A second, and perhaps more fundamental, was the need to incorporate the study of history and political economy into mountain anthropology. Orlove and Guillet (1985) identified this need clearly:

...it is important to add a historical perspective which includes an examination of processes of change and a study of the links of local populations to wider economic and political systems...Rather than thinking of adaptations as outcomes, they can be viewed as processes of accommodation of previous forms of activity to external constraints. Such a processual view facilitates the linking of ecological anthropology with history (p. 4;16).

Once the link between cultural ecology, political economy, and history had been made (or at least strengthened), mountain anthropology was then able to extend outward toward the broader themes of sustainable development and policy science, which are important trends to be analyzed in the next section.

Toward Montology?

The important concept of the “Himalayan Dilemma” is a useful springboard for discussing the expansion of mountain anthropology. More formally known as the “Theory of Himalayan Degradation,” which was coined and popularized by Ives and Messerli (1989), the “dilemma” departs from the insight that the Himalayas are caught between the extremes of conservation and development. Erick Eckholm (1975, 1976) had previously presented the deforestation of Nepal as a ‘classic example’ of the mismanagement of natural resources by mountain smallholders. With their re-examination of historical factors and empirical data in the Himalayan case, Ives and Messerli brought into question the assumption that mountain smallholders were the ultimate cause of environmental degradation in the Himalayan region, much as Harold Conklin had cast doubt on the ingrained assumption that slash-and-burn agriculture was inherently a destructive practice two decades before in the Philippine highlands (Conklin 1961). Their contribution served to bring to light the multifaceted nature of environmental change in mountainous areas, shifting focus away from a Himalayan “blame game” directed at mountain smallholders that focused on unequally on human agency with regard to environmental degradation (Funnell and Parish 2001).

The fundamental addition of politics and history into mountain anthropology from the mid-1980s onward preceded what can only be regarded as a watershed decade for mountain studies: the 1990s. In 1992 the Earth Summit in Rio formally recognized mountain ecosystems and their peoples through the adoption of Chapter 13 of Agenda 21 entitled, “Managing Fragile Ecosystems—Sustainable Mountain Development.” This event hailed a rapid advancement in public and policy awareness of mountain issues that culminated in the 2002 U.N. declaration of the “International Year of Mountains” (Rhoades 2007b). Another significant event that followed the Earth Summit in Rio was the formation of the Mountain Forum, an interdisciplinary and intersectoral network that was conceptualized as follows:

The Mountain Forum is an innovative and integrative bridge between diverse nongovernmental, governmental, intergovernmental, scientific, and private sector organizations and individuals. The purpose of the Mountain Forum is to provide a forum for mutual support and for the exchange of ideas and experiences. This will empower participants to raise mountain issues on local, national, regional, and international agendas and to promote policies and actions for equitable and ecologically sustainable mountain development. The basic operational values of the Mountain Forum are to be open, democratic, decentralized, accessible, transparent, accountable, and flexible (Mountain Forum 2007).

Whereas mountain scholars had previously founded their own journal *Mountain Research and Development* in the 1980s (Ives 1981), with the formation of the Mountain Forum they

had a more direct form of communication and debate. They also had a fundamental issue at large: should mountain studies remain a fragmented disciplinary, specialized field; or should a unified interdisciplinary field all its own be forged out of diverse perspectives? The debate has raged since the very inception of the online Mountain Forum. Proponents of the unified approach have proposed a new academic field “montology” and have even managed to get it included as a sanctioned part of the English language with its 2002 inclusion in the Oxford English Dictionary—*montology, n. the study of mountains* (Rhoades 2007b). Opponents, however, did not see the need for a unified ‘montology’ and based their critique on three main points:

- (1) the term is unnecessary jargon
- (2) appropriate terms already exist; and
- (3) montology is academically based and has little practical value to mountain people (Rhoades 2007b:176).

Defenders of montology have replied to these criticisms in three ways: (1) the term ‘montology’ will reduce jargon by replacing hyphenated terms for each discipline such as “mountain anthropology,” “mountain geography,” etc. (2) an appropriate term for the proposed transdisciplinary nature of ‘montology’ doesn’t exist; and (3) from the outset montology needs to be focused on creating appropriate language and research endeavors that will involve mountain peoples, voices, and perspectives (Rhoades 2007b).

The jury is still out on academic and popular acceptance of the field of montology. Recent trends have shown that use of the term is still limited but increasing and that montology has been the focus of several publications and conferences (Rhoades 2007b). Whether or not anthropologists who work in mountain areas will choose to integrate their perspectives into the larger framework of montology, or are destined to remain committed to working under the auspices of area studies and other subdisciplinary frameworks, it remains clear that the importance of the anthropological approach to mountain studies that was fully realized in the 1980s and continued right through to the U.N. declaration of the “International Year of Mountains” in 2002 has not lessened. This is despite the waning of the formal subdiscipline of mountain anthropology. In fact, with the issues of climate change, sustainable development, and human rights that continue to be at the forefront of the agenda of the world’s mountains, anthropological contributions are needed now more than ever before.

MOUNTAIN ANTHROPOLOGY OF THE SOUTHERN APPALACHIAN AND OZARK HIGHLANDS

As noted above, mountain anthropology studies have been traditionally been focused on the major high-elevation alpine ranges of the world. Subsequently, the world’s lower elevation sub-alpine mountain ranges have been understudied by cultural ecologists. One notable exception to this trend is an edited volume by Beaver and Purrington (1984) that focuses on the comparative cultural ecology of southern Appalachia entitled *Cultural Adaptations to Mountain Environments*. Although the differences between alpine and non-

alpine mountain ranges and cultures are tangible, Purrington (1984) also makes the case that the similarities are perhaps even more important:

First, they both have mosaic environments with a wide diversity of biotic communities and individual species within relatively short distances of each other. Second, their rugged terrains present barriers to communication, travel, and exchange both within the region and from the outside...Third, their narrow ridges and valleys and steep slopes limit the amount and availability of living space and high-quality agricultural soil. In such settings social groups will generally be small, potential agricultural productivity limited, and large-scale, intensive agriculture a very risky undertaking. Fourth, both regions experience generally low natural productivity (in comparison with the lowlands), which will tend to limit the size of social units and population density and encourage extensive, broad-spectrum subsistence systems. Fifth, alpine and non-alpine regions have a high susceptibility to environmental deterioration following land disturbance.

In addition, there are numerous apparent, though as yet unexplored, parallels between alpine and non-alpine societies in adaptive strategies, social and political organization, and perhaps even ideology. Many mountain regions, both alpine and non-alpine, are experiencing pressures due to over-population and the intrusion of market and industrial systems. It is evident that there are many bases for comparison between alpine and non-alpine societies and further study of their general relationships is warranted (p. 7-8).

Though this section is not a comparison of alpine and non-alpine regions, I included the above lengthy quotation to illustrate that many of the same issues that interest researchers of alpine regions can be applied to non-alpine mountains. The lower mountain regions of the world invite analysis from mountain anthropologists, and the comparative perspective is useful when applied to non-alpine regions. What follows is an introduction to the comparative mountain anthropology of the Southern Appalachian Mountains of Western North Carolina and the Arkansas Ozark Highlands, the most rugged areas of the two prominent mountain regions located in the southern United States.

The Southern Appalachian Mountains of Western North Carolina

The western North Carolina mountains are part of the Blue Ridge Mountain Belt that extends from the New River Divide in southern Virginia to the mountains of north Georgia (Gragson and Bolstad 2006). The portion of the Blue Ridge in western North Carolina is the most rugged in the belt, with an altitude that ranges between two and six thousand feet, culminating in the highest peak in the eastern North America—Mt. Mitchell at around 6,700 feet in Yancey County (Beaver 1984). Present day topography and climate in the southern Appalachian Blue Ridge are thought to be relicts of the Tertiary and Pleistocene. Because of the climate and bedrock, chemical weathering has produced mostly acidic soils on dominantly steep slopes that support acid-loving vegetation. However, zonation, aspect, and erosional and soil-forming processes have created diverse environmental conditions that allow for a high variety of plant types and soil properties (Pittillo et al. 1998). The dominant vegetation type in southern Appalachia are temperate deciduous forests, which are an intermixing of northern

and southern forest types, a phenomena that makes the region one of the most biodiverse in North America (Gragson et al. 2008, Braun 2001, Cozzo 2004). Rainfall is variable throughout the region, but is generally abundant, averaging about 1600 mm. per year. Average summer temperatures in the higher summer peaks of summer Appalachia are more similar to central New England than they are to the lower Piedmont only 150 km away (Gragson et al. 2008).

The Cherokee and other Native American mountain dwellers were descended from earlier indigenous inhabitants of the region of the Mississippian and Woodland periods. The Cherokee have a cultural history in the region that may be as much as 4000 years old (Neely 1991), but they most likely emerged as a distinctly organized political tribe after the collapse of the mound building and large-scale corn growing Mississippian culture in the 1500s (Davis 2000). Early historical Cherokee were organized into seven matrilineal clans, lived in sedentary villages, and relied upon a corn-beans-squash agricultural complex supplemented by wild plants and animals (Mooney 1992). Cherokee culture was severely impacted by waves of European migration, diseases, and frontier warfare, and began a process of assimilation into the larger, white, mountain society. Traditional Cherokee culture was often blended in different degrees with the American ideal of the “Jeffersonian yeoman farmer” (Neely 1991). On the eve of the forced removal of most of the Cherokee Nation on the “Trail of Tears” from southern Appalachia in 1838-9, Cherokee people were living materially to a large extent like their white neighbors, albeit with different cultural traditions and values. After European contact in the Pioneer and Antebellum periods, Southern Appalachia was largely peopled by immigrants of Scots-Irish, English, and German origin. Small-scale farmers in the region practiced a largely self-sufficient agriculture, relying on corn as the staple crop along with a large diversity of other food crops, and the free-range herding of cattle and hogs (Davis 2000). However, Southern Appalachia has also been historically characterized by large land holdings by absentee land owners, resulting in high rates of tenancy and an extractive economy based on timber and mineral resources (Dunaway 1996). The mountain people of southern Appalachia have maintained a higher degree of geographical, commercial, and cultural autonomy—relative to most Americans—that has persisted into the present day. Despite this tendency toward semi-autonomy, throughout the 20th century southern Appalachia has suffered from periods of out-migration to northern and mid-western cities in order to seek jobs due to a history of poverty in the region (Williams 2002). In recent years, in-migration of more affluent lowlanders from cities such as Atlanta, Charleston, and Miami and the second-home development associated with them (Gragson and Bolstad 2006) has increased land prices and taxes and made it very difficult for natives of the region to practice agriculture and other more traditional lifeways.

The Historical Connection between Southern Appalachia and the Ozarks

The migratory history of the Ozarks and its relationship to southern and central Appalachia has been a topic of interest to scholars across several disciplines. Although the details of their explanations differ, there is a general consensus that southern Appalachian migration and folk culture have had a dominating influence on the history of the Ozarks since the initial post-French and Spanish, Euro-American settlement of the region (Jordan-Bychkov 2003, Blevins 2002, Rafferty 2001, McNeil 1995, Gerlach 1976). This is not to say, however,

that the Ozarks can simply be understood as being “Appalachia West,” a little brother to its Appalachian hearth (Blevins 2002, McNeil 1995). Despite similarities in the settlement patterns and folk culture of both southern Appalachia and the Ozarks, the history of Ozark settlement is complex.

Pioneers in the Arkansas Ozarks during the first phase of Ozark settlement were primarily from states with significant Appalachian areas. Census records from 1850 for Newton County, Arkansas, the most mountainous of Ozark counties in the state, show that settlers were predominately from Tennessee (126), North Carolina (48), Kentucky (21), South Carolina (13), Alabama (9), Virginia (9), and Missouri (8) (Rafferty 2001). Settlers in the Missouri Ozark counties also showed a predominately southern and central Appalachian settlement influence, but were also heavily populated by immigrants from the lower Midwest (Gerlach 1976). Although early Ozark settlement did contain a moderate amount of ethnic diversity, it was dominated by Old-Stock American settlers of Scots-Irish ancestry (Jordan-Bychkov 2003, Rafferty 2001). In the second and third phases of Ozark settlement, ethnic diversity in the Ozarks has gradually increased. Jewish, Amish, Mennonite, and more recently Mexican, Vietnamese, and Chinese immigrants have joined the small pockets of longstanding African-American and Cherokee populations living in the Arkansas Ozarks today (Rafferty 2001).

Geographer Terry G. Jordan-Bychkov, in his detailed study *The Upland South* (2003), has developed a theory whereby an Upland South culture reached its full development in middle Tennessee around 1810. In his view it was the result of the blending of colonial Pennsylvanian, Virginian, and Carolinian subcultures that had initially developed into four Mountain South “cultural hearths”: the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia, the Piedmont of northern North Carolina, the South Carolina Up Country, and the Watauga country of the North Carolina-Tennessee border mountain area. Though Americans of Scots-Irish ancestry were heavily represented and exerted a strong cultural influence, Jordan-Bychkov (2003:9) asserts that the period of “final fermentation and coalescence of upland southern culture” that occurred in Middle Tennessee was the result of a complex blending of many ethnic European heritages. From Middle Tennessee, the resulting Upland South cultural pattern was then exported in waves of migration to the Arkansas Ozarks and beyond.

Historian John Otto takes a more essentialist view of a Celtic Mountain South culture, but nonetheless has made a thorough study of southern Appalachian agriculture and migration, tracing its origins back to northern Europe (Otto 1985, Otto 1989, Otto and Anderson 1982). He describes a predominately Celtic “cultural preadaptation” to mountain environments that developed in the uplands of Germany, Wales, Britain, Ireland, and Scotland and was imported first to Pennsylvania and then to the highlands of the American South, mixing with indigenous American Indian agricultural practices as it developed. Otto calls this preadaptation as “the upland south stockman-farmer-hunter complex” (1985:186).

However, other scholars have pointed out that much of Appalachia’s European ancestry originates in the lowland areas of Scotland and Ireland, not in the highlands (Fischer 1989, Cunningham 1987). Even so, it is still the case that some of the Scots-Irish and other regional ethnic groups who migrated to Appalachia were of highland origin. As has been shown of Scandinavian cabin building techniques (Jordan-Bychkov 2003), there was a lot of cultural borrowing that took place during the Pioneer period. It is not hard to conceptualize a knowledge bottleneck at work whereby those settlers who did have experience with skills that were adaptable to highland environments, mixed with techniques learned from the Cherokee

and other indigenous Appalachians, spread rapidly to other groups of Appalachian pioneers. This interpretation would put Otto's theory of Mountain South cultural origins more in line with Jordan-Bychkov's.

The upland agrarian complex that Otto (1989) describes was extensive, requiring hundreds of acres of farmland and commons to maintain grazing and shifting cultivation of crops. As population levels increased and more outsiders moved into the Southern uplands, Appalachian farmers found themselves looking westward for new land in which to practice their extensive agricultural livelihoods. As they moved laterally across the Southern frontier, these Appalachian settlers sought out familiar mountain environments for the practice of their agricultural techniques. This led to a situation where, on the eve of the Civil War, the upland forested areas of the American South were inhabited by a preadapted grazing and farm economy that was characterized largely by a diversified, self-sufficient type of agriculture that relied on family labor, very few slaves, and had moved from Northern Europe to Pennsylvania to Southern Appalachia, combining with Native American practices at each step in its trajectory, from where it was exported in waves of migration westward as far as Texas and Mexico (Otto 1985).

Several case studies have noted that southern Appalachian ethnobotanical knowledge, uses, and materials were transported from Appalachia to the Arkansas Ozark Highlands during the main migration period from about 1800-1860 (Campbell 2005, Otto and Burns 1981). This is in addition to cultural practices such as mountain music and storytelling that are known to have strong parallels in both mountain regions. It has also been shown that in many cases the Appalachian immigrants were seeking an ecological landscape that they were familiar with so that they could re-create the agrarian landscapes of their Appalachian homes (Campbell 2005), a characteristic that has been present in the study of other immigrant gardening populations (Vogl et al. 2002). The contemporary populations of southern Appalachia and the Ozark Highlands offer an excellent comparative opportunity to study a historic migration that has resulted in two relatively marginalized and geographically isolated American highland groups that, for the most part, originate from a common historical population.

The Arkansas Ozark Highlands

The Ozarks are a region of low "mountains" and hills ranging from 250 to 2400 feet that were formed during the early Paleozoic (Nolan 1998). However, the Ozarks are not true mountains, instead being the result of the continued erosion and dissection of a "highland dome" throughout millions of years (Blevins 2002, Rafferty 2001). In Arkansas, the Ozarks are located in parts of fourteen counties in the northern part of the state above the Arkansas River Valley (Blevins 2002) and are part of the Interior Highlands Province, which includes the tightly folded and faulted Ouachita mountains immediately to the south (Rafferty 2001). The Boston Mountains in Arkansas contain the highest peaks in the Ozarks, including several over 2500 feet in western Newton County. Like southern Appalachia (though lesser in scale), the various elevations, aspects, soil types, and precipitation types in the Ozarks results in variable environmental conditions. Again, like Appalachia, the dominant vegetation type is temperate deciduous forest, with annual precipitation in some areas reaching as much as 1270 mm (Rafferty 2001), and the region has significantly high levels of biodiversity.

The Arkansas Ozark Highlands were originally inhabited by several Native American tribes including the Quapaw, Caddo, Osage, and Illinois. Cherokee people also migrated into the region from their ancestral home in southern Appalachia from approximately 1795-1828 (Rafferty 2001). After the Treaty of 1828 the Cherokee and other indigenous Arkansans were legally restricted to the Ozarks of what is today western Oklahoma, but small numbers of Cherokee and other native people managed to persist and their descendants still live in the Arkansas Highlands today. The cultural landscape of descendants of the original Arkansas Highland Euro-American settlers is largely continuous, consisting of rural ways of life and the retention of some traditional Upper South customs and folkways (Nolan 1998). Most natives of the Ozark highlands self-identify as white Protestants of Scots-Irish, German, English, and Native American descent and have been characterized as having a strong sense of history, place and identity. The Arkansas Ozark Highlands were largely peopled by immigrant farmers from southern Appalachia in the 19th century, and therefore share many cultural practices and traditions with their Appalachian forbearers. It has been noted that the contemporary residents of the Ozark highlands maintain a degree of economic and cultural isolation from mainstream American influences (Rafferty 2001, Nolan and Robins 1999, Nolan 1998, Otto and Burns 1981), another characteristic they have in common with southern Appalachia. However, due to post-WWII modernization forces and the increasing difficulty of small-scale farming, the Ozarks suffered a massive population out-migration from 1940-60 that mirrored similar trends in Appalachia. In-migration from retirees and affluent second home owners, again drawing parallels to Appalachia, has seen a considerable increase in the past fifty years (Blevins 2000).

Appalachian Studies

Appalachian Studies is the interdisciplinary field of study that has traditionally united scholarly approaches to the region. Anthropologists and other social scientists working in Appalachia have been primary in helping establish the discipline. However, natural scientists have been more infrequent contributors. Historians, literary scholars, philosophers, and cultural studies scholars have provided the basis for an Appalachian Studies that is more heavily dominated by the humanities than it is by sciences other than anthropology and sociology. Hay and Reichel (1997) have proposed a model for analyzing the history of the bibliography of discipline of Appalachian Studies based on Michael Keresztesi's model of the evolution of academic disciplines (Keresztesi 1982). They divide this model into four stages: (1) *The Pioneering Stage* (1900-1930)—a group of great thinkers emerged (exemplified by John C. Campbell primarily and also Horace Kephart) and struggled for attention and recognition through publishing works on the region, lecturing, and corresponding with other scholars; (2) *The Elaboration and Proliferation Stage* (1930-1980s)—The central figure during this stage was Cratis D. Williams. According to Hay and Reichel, Williams was the, "...primary force behind the establishment of Appalachian Studies as a legitimate academic enterprise" (1997:217). He was central in establishing the Center for Appalachian Studies at Appalachian State University, the *Appalachian Journal*, and a symposium organized to honor his retirement has resulted in an annual Appalachian Studies conference with its own sponsoring organization, the interdisciplinary Appalachian Studies Association. Also of note during this second stage was the publication of two significant surveys of the region, the

founding of several scholarly journals, the establishment of numerous education and research centers, libraries, archives; and the publication of many foundational readers, textbooks, and bibliographies. (3) The Establishment Stage (1990s-present)—this stage brings a new discipline into full academic respectability and has not yet been completed for Appalachian Studies. The discipline has yet to establish autonomous departments within most universities. No doctoral programs exist, although one highly acclaimed masters program has been established and several other masters concentrations are available. In 1995 the bi-annual *Journal of Appalachian Studies* was launched and serves as the premier peer-reviewed journal of the discipline (Hay and Reichel 1997). Only time will tell whether or not Appalachian Studies will remain a highly relevant but mostly regional discipline, or whether it will achieve a more national audience as have other comparable disciplines such as African-American Studies, Native American Studies, and Women's Studies.

Theoretical Developments within the Discipline of Appalachian Studies

Modern Appalachian Studies, it has been argued, was born out of the critique of the "melting pot theory" theory of American culture and history that took place in the 1960s and 70s. Following on insights and gains that were achieved by the Civil Rights Movement, Appalachian Studies in the seventies embraced the idea of a pluralistic American society and focused on the characteristics of an Appalachian culture that was viewed as unique from mainstream America (Shackelford and Weinberg 1977). This led to a burgeoning number of regional studies that focused on the documentation and celebration of southern Appalachian culture such as *Our Appalachia* (Shackelford and Weinberg 1977) and exemplified by the famous *Foxfire* books (Wiggington 1972). However, this celebration of the regional and particular was not to last. With the publication *Appalachia on Our Mind: The Southern Mountains and Mountaineers in the American Consciousness, 1870-1920*, Henry Shapiro made the strong claim that the book was "not a history of Appalachia" but "a history of the idea of Appalachia, and hence of the invention of Appalachia" (1978:ix). This publication is widely regarded as ushering in the era of postmodernism and poststructuralism in Appalachian Studies, which mirrored larger developments in anthropology and other social sciences and the humanities. The critique of essentialism and the deconstruction of regional essences and "realities" existing "out there" in southern Appalachia became increasingly prevalent. It was the heyday of the ideas of the "white male metropolitan gurus of poststructuralism" (Cunningham 2003:380), ideas that came from outside of Appalachia and came to increasingly dominate regional and native-born scholars.

Eventually, however the limitations of this poststructural epistemology have become apparent as scholars such as Chad Berry pointed out that "...it is time to begin examining what Appalachia is and move beyond the focus of what it is not" (Berry 2000:126). Cunningham has argued, when referring to postcolonial studies of Appalachia (but his insights could be applied to other theoretical frameworks as well):

...on the broadly theoretical question of what Appalachia "is." They (postcolonial approaches) open a way toward a concept of "distinctiveness" that avoids, on the one hand, simplistic dismissive notions of "otherness" and "exceptionalism," and on the other hand the supposition that Appalachia is exactly like every other place because

it can't be shown to possess some unique form of "traits" that are its and its alone—an impossible criteria for anything in the world, let alone a human region or culture. I, at any rate, am sure, from my experience and that of others, that Appalachian difference wasn't invented a hundred years ago by literary tourists and W.G. Frost, but rather is evident to any native of the region who has lived somewhere else" (Cunningham 2003:383).

Though Appalachian Studies is firmly situated in what many have called "the present postmodern moment," the study of Appalachia as *a unique American subregion with a distinct set of diverse cultural values and practices* is again becoming increasingly important.

Ozark Studies?

Sadly, academic development within the Ozark region has not paralleled the explosive development that has occurred within Appalachian Studies. No journal exists, there are no programs in Ozark Studies, and no centers exist at the university level. Studies in the Ozarks remain largely particularistic and have no larger framework within which to unify scholarship and conversation. This reality may have something to do with the much smaller geographic area that the Ozarks cover. Southern Appalachia dominates the highland regions of nine southern states (North and South Carolina, Tennessee, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Kentucky, West Virginia, and Virginia) and is connected to a mountain range that extends across the entire eastern United States, thereby having a longer historical relationship with Euro-American society. The Ozarks cover only a small portion of three states (Arkansas, Missouri, and Oklahoma) and have a shorter history of colonization. The lack of scholarship in a codified field of Ozark studies may be on the cusp of changing, as Missouri State University-West Plains has an Ozarks Studies committee that hosted the 3rd Annual Ozarks Studies Symposium in the Fall of 2009.

CONCLUSION

Studies in mountain anthropology have evolved from the early studies in cultural ecology to more recent attempts to participate in the transdisciplinary framework of montology (Rhoades 2007a). Since the 1970s mountain anthropology has been largely comparative in its approach. Though mountain anthropology is not a thriving research focus as it was in the 1970s and 1980s, mountains as a subject of interdisciplinary scholarship and popular imagination have never been more important. Based on my research, I have come to the conclusion that montology will continue to grow as a discipline and that mountain anthropologists will be essential contributors. However, mountain anthropology as a subdiscipline seems to have peaked in the late 1980s and is unlikely to be revived. Cultural geographers have picked up on themes that were prominent in mountain anthropology in its heyday and are producing excellent scholarship. Other frameworks such as environmental anthropology and sustainable development have become more prominent within anthropology and mountain anthropologists have gone on to work on highly effective and important

interdisciplinary projects (e.g. Rhoades 2006, Rhoades 2001). Perhaps mountain anthropology will ultimately merge into montology for the betterment of both.

Appalachian Studies, on the other hand, is in a different situation. Unlike mountain anthropology, Appalachian Studies has several academic and research centers, a handful of major journals, undergraduate and masters level programs, and a strong professional association that hosts a yearly conference. The theoretical approach of much of the field is another factor that does not lend itself toward adopting the larger framework of montology. Since its inception Appalachian Studies has been heavily influenced by non-scientific fields such as literature, folklore, and music. Beginning in the 1980s theoretical positions such as postmodernism, poststructuralism, and the field of cultural studies began to take root and wield a dominating influence. Although I am sure that a handful of Appalachian Studies scholars would be interested in working under the montology framework, it is at present a foregone conclusion that the field as a whole will not seek incorporation into the framework of montology. The historical battle that scholars in Appalachian Studies have fought to establish their own discipline will not be thrown aside to be subsumed into another field of study. Much as mountain anthropology failed to have much of an influence on the discipline of Appalachian Studies outside of one excellent conference and edited volume (Beaver and Purrington 1984), it appears that at present montology will have to interact with Appalachian Studies from a distance. However, I am confident that a small core of Appalachian scholars will be able to take theoretical insights and empirical studies from Appalachia into the wider perspective of montology and also transmit and infuse montological insights into Appalachian Studies.

I agree with Rhoades (2007a) that scholars working within marginal disciplinary specialties such as mountain geography, mountain ecology, mountain geology, mountain anthropology, etc. could benefit greatly from the transdisciplinary framework of montology. Inherent in his call for the establishment of montology, Rhoades notes that scholars will not have to leave their disciplinary perspectives behind, but rather that they will have a forum to interact with other scholars from diverse disciplines that will strengthen research on mountains as a whole (Rhoades 2007a). For mountain regions such as Appalachia that already have a interdisciplinary forum of their own that has been hard fought in being established, it is unlikely that they will seek incorporation into montology. The establishment of the strong new interdisciplinary forum montology does not, of course, preclude active and lively exchanges with others. Hopefully that will be the case between montology and Appalachian Studies. Scholars who work in the Ozark region, however, have at present no longstanding general framework in which to place their theoretical or empirical studies. Perhaps montology will provide a new direction for them to pursue and link up with scholars from other non-alpine highland regions of the world.

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