Hunting and Property in Northern Siberia: An Enduring Anthropological Issue in a Novel Context

A matter of significance for sociocultural anthropologists, as well as archaeologists and physical anthropologists, has been the relationship between big-game hunting by humans and developments in human social organization, particularly parental investment and social complexity. Recent research on indigenous big-game hunters in Siberia provides an opportunity to explore a wide range of theoretically relevant hypotheses and to deal with related questions associated with land and resource use, distribution of food and other goods, and social entitlements.

Indigenous Arctic communities in Siberia have gone through rapid social and economic changes associated with the collapse of the Soviet Union. For native Siberians, these changes have meant the loss of employment in a planned economy and development of a mixed subsistence economy with elements of a nascent market economy and dwindling government subsidies and supports. The economic isolation of native communities after the implementation of democratic and free market reforms in Russia provides an extreme example of unintended socioeconomic and geographic differentiation of the country’s population.

Property, and the access to resources property facilitates, has gone through a series of transformations in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe in the last decade. In many cases, the introduction of private property—arguably the fundamental elements for a free market society—has brought on unintended results and increased hardship for people living in the region. For example, the privatization of domestic reindeer and pasture in southwest Taimyr Region, facilitated the loss of reindeer, since young people were no longer certain of earning a salary from former State Enterprises. In addition, some people bartered their deer in exchange for alcohol, and while these people can still hunt and fish, they now depend to a greater degree on their relatives or state institutions for assistance.

A team of anthropologists at the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology has dealt with the issue of property in contemporary Eurasia. The interim results of this comparative research are published in a recent volume titled *The Postsocialist Agrarian Question* (Lit Verlag 2003), which focuses on property relations and the rural condition. The fifteen chapters of the book provide case studies on the results of privatization of property, going far beyond changes in legal form. Dr. John Ziker, who was part of this team, conducted research with indigenous big-game hunters in Siberia. Dr. Ziker’s contribution to the volume focuses on the development of the non-market subsistence economy in terms of the entitlements of different interest groups to resources and the sustainability of traditional moralities of access to resources.

Research on food sharing by big-game hunters in Siberia provides an opportunity to test a range of hypotheses and contribute to cutting edge research in human behavioral ecology. The questions being addressed have a wide range of applications and call to question dominant views on how human nature is shaped by selfish inclinations.
Department Welcomes Dr. John Ziker

Dr. John P. Ziker, who specializes in sociocultural anthropology and human behavioral ecology and conducts fieldwork in northern Siberia, has joined the department faculty. He received a bachelor’s from Arizona State University’s Honors College, and a masters and doctorate from the University of California at Santa Barbara. For the last two years, Dr. Ziker has been a post-doctoral fellow at the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology in Halle/Saale, Germany. The institute’s location in the former East Germany positioned many of the anthropologists there to study social changes occurring in post-socialist countries. Dr. Ziker’s project at the institute focused on hunting and property in Siberia. His earlier doctoral research, funded by the National Science Foundation, IREX, and ACTR, was on kinship, exchange, and ethnicity among the Dolgan and Nganasan, two of Siberia’s indigenous minority populations. More recently, Dr. Ziker was funded by the Wenner Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research to complete his monograph titled Peoples of the Tundra: Northern Siberians in the Post-communist Transition (2002). He also received a L.B.S. Leakey Foundation grant to study the behavioral ecology of food sharing among Siberian foragers. Dr. Ziker is also author of a number of articles in peer-reviewed journals and book chapters dealing with changing local economies, forms of property and their sustainability, and kinship and friendship in Siberia.

Faculty Research and Scholarly Activities

Dr. Hill has authored four articles and received a grant from the Kokopelli Research Fund. The focus of his published research was on the Pleistocene geoarchaeology of the Northwestern Plains/Rocky Mountains and the Quaternary archaeological geology of Egypt. Hill presented two papers with peer reviewed abstracts at the XVI International Quaternary Association Congress and a third paper at the Third International Mammoth Conference in Dawson City, Yukon Territory. He served as organizer and chair for the Fryxell Symposium at the 2003 Society for American Archaeology meeting and presented a paper. Last spring Hill participated in a conference at the National Research Center in Cairo, Egypt. Three abstracts were published as part of the proceedings. In 2003 Hill has served on the management board of the Archaeological Geology Division of the Geological Society of America (GSA), and as a Joint Technical Program Representative for GSA. He is also a member of the scholarship committee and co-organizer for the Geoarchaeology Interest Group of the Society for American Archaeology.

Dr. McCarl continued research on Shoshone-Paiute ranching in Duck Valley. He completed a CD Rom and media project entitled, Pakkiata: Shoshone-Paiute Buckaroos and Ranchers, and with Lindsey Manning presented the project at the First Nations Conference, March 2002. Dr. McCarl’s book, Latinos in Idaho also became available in early 2003 from the Idaho Humanities Commission. Dr. McCarl received a CSSPA Research Award to support travel to Duck Valley Reservation for consultation on archival materials. Dr. McCarl produced a video on women smokejumpers and contributed online with David Taylor to the “American Memory Project."

Dr. Plew continued his research in Idaho and in Guyana, South America where he conducted thirteen archaeological projects during 2002. Dr. Plew authored two articles, six monographs, six technical reports, and one book review. He gave a number of scholarly presentations and was a research consultant for 16 different organizations. He has had accepted for publication an article on the archaeology of the Iwokrama rain forest reserve in a major volume being published by the Philadelphia Academy of Natural Sciences.

2003-2004 Departmental Lecture Series

- Katharine Seibold, Associate Professor, Albertson College of Idaho, “Cusco Pilgrimages to Qollur Riti and El Senor de Huanca,” October 27 at 2:30 PM, Hatch D Student Union Building.
2003 Archaeological Field School held at Celebration Park

The department conducted its second season of the archaeological field school at Celebration Park near Melba, Idaho. Excavations focused on Middle and Late Archaic deposits at site 10-CN-6. Many things were discovered at the site — artifacts made out of obsidian, as well as mammal bone, fish bone, and shells were found. Investigations indicate tool manufacturing and animal processing.

The field school was a six week season. Participants camped out at the site. Two undergraduates, Chris Willson and Tedd Jacobs, supervised the excavations. The other field school participants were Erin Boss, Pete Carlson, Katy Coddington, Mike Grill, Nikki McDonald, Naomi Ollie, Elizabeth Snow, and Mary Wallace. Mark Plew served as head chef, and fed everyone very well.

Additional Activities and Developments

Monographs in Archaeology

The department issued the first number in its new Monographs in Archaeology series, publishing Archaeology of the Rock Springs Site: A Multi-Component Bison Kill and Processing Camp in Curlew Valley, Southeastern Idaho by Brooke Arkush, Weber State University.

2002-03 Grants and Contracts

The Department was awarded grants and contracts totaling $87,000. Projects were funded by a number of organizations including the Bureau of Land Management, the Idaho Army National Guard, the Kokopelli Research Fund, the European Union, and the Iwokrama International Rainforest Conservation and Development.

Vale District Bureau of Land Management, Oregon Program

The Department initiated a cooperative program with the Vale District BLM in Oregon. The program will provide fieldwork and research opportunities for faculty and students, and internship opportunities for archaeology students. Under the new program faculty and students conducted archaeological test excavations at Little Owl Cave.

Friends of Anthropology

The department initiated a new speakers series to facilitate communication and links between the department and other academic departments and programs that share basic and applied research interests. The department hosted Dr. Don Winiecki, Department of Performance Technology, who spoke on “Post-Structural Ethnography of Call Centers.” This year Dr. David Wilkins, Department of Geosciences, will speak on “Late Holocene Environmental Change,” and Dr. Heidi Reeder from the Department of Communication will speak on “On Being Intersexed: A Case Study.”

Shared Use of Laboratory with Biology

The Department of Anthropology has arranged to use laboratory space in the Department of Biology for the purpose of offering laboratory sections in physical anthropology. A special topics course entitled “Physical Anthropology” (4 credit) is being offered Fall 2003, and includes a formal laboratory. The Departments of Biology and Anthropology have agreed to share laboratory materials and to cooperate in the purchase of fossil casts.

Schaertl Scholarship Endowed

The department received notification of the formal endowment of the Schaertl Archaeological Scholarship. The $105,000 endowment will support a number of scholarships for archaeology students. By agreement, the monies may be used for graduate assistantships when the department offers a graduate program.
Dean's List Spring 2004

**Highest Honors:** Luke Bishop, Shelby Day, Paige Diamant, Sean Gould, Kersti Harter, Shannon Hicks, Jessica Hood, Naomi Ollie. **Honors:** Elisa Carlsen. 

**2004-2005 Scholarship Recipients**

Elisa Carlsen, Shelby Day, Kersti Harter, Brett Ritz and Lesley Spencer received Anthropology Department scholarships. Naomi received the Roderick Sprague Archaeology Book Award. Shannon Hicks received the Liljeblad Cultural Anthropology Book Award. Victor Buckingham received the Native American Student Scholarship.

**Alumni News**

Marc Munch (BA) was recently hired as an archaeologist by the Idaho Department of Transportation. 

Toni Lawson (BA) became Health Policy Advisor to U.S. Senator Larry Craig, U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging. 

Susan Osgood (BA) was recently named Boise National Forest Archaeologist. 

Jake Fruhlinger (BA) completed his M.A. at the University of Idaho and has been hired as the first Cultural Resources Specialist for the Idaho Army National Guard. 

Nicole McDonald (BA 04) was named a Boise State University Alumni Association Top 10 Scholar. 

Lisa Jean Hughes (BA) received her Juris Doctor degree from the University of Oklahoma College of Law. 

Erin Boss (BA 04) is employed by Ameri-Corps in Bellingham, MT. 

Recent Graduates Chris Willson, and Naomi Ollie are attending Graduate School in anthropology at the University of Idaho and Colorado State University, respectively. 

Jennifer Bedford (BA) is a research assistant in the Graduate Program at the University of North Texas.