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The Idea of a COCTA-Glossary: the Pilot Project on 'Ethnicity'

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In order to overcome the difficulties of social science terminology and to create a tool for conceptual and terminological cooperation in this field, a new methodology for the introduction and identification of social science concepts has been introduced, called the "ana-semantic" approach. A COCTA-glossary is one that uses this approach. Its name is derived from the COCTA Committee (the Committee on Conceptual and Terminological Analysis in the Social Sciences) which recommends this approach. The present article outlines in short its main features and explains how to establish such a COCTA-glossary using examples from the field of 'ethnicity'. (LC.)

1. Conceptual and Terminological Innovation

Creative writers frequently encounter obstacles generated by resistance to innovation. The need for innovation arises from discovery - it may be that new phenomena are encountered as a result of invention or exploration, or new concepts are created in order to handle original theoretical constructs. The obstacles confronted by innovators have two aspects: first, the newness of an allegedly "new" concept may be challenged, and second, the need for a new term to designate such concepts may be rejected. As research proceeds in such essentially innovative fields of study as "ethnicity" the need for instrument designed to facilitate recognition of the newness of concepts and the need for new terms increases. It might be added that a special case of terminological innovation arises when unequivocal terms for an established concept are need - this situation is frequently encountered in translation when terms are lacking in the target language for concepts already well expressed in a source language.

la. The lack of instruments to facilitate conceptual and terminological innovation perpetuates a situation in which the meanings assigned to familiar words increase in number. A basic reason for this phenomenon lies in the reluctance of scholars — especially in the social sciences and humanities — to accept newly coined words (neologisms) as appropriate designators of new concepts. By contrast scholars working in the natural sciences and technological fields seem to be far more receptive to newly coined technical terms. As a result, social scientists and humanists prefer to use well established words as terms for new concepts, thereby assigning them a growing burden of new senses. Although it is not difficult to sort out a variety of meanings for a single word,

especially when their fields of application are clearly different from each other, the tendency of scholars to use words for meanings that are only marginally distinguished from each other contributes to growing ambiguity. Sometimes words acquire new meanings for other reasons: they may be used as euphemisms, for example, to avoid the negative connotations of other words that could, in principle, be used with less ambiguity for the same concept. Authors sometimes seek to clarify the meaning of a word with many overlapping senses by giving it a new definition — but in the process simply add another meaning to those the word already has.

1b. As a result of term overloading, the usual method adopted for trying to reduce ambiguity involves a lexicographic or semantic method, namely the attempt to spell out definitions for each of the different senses of over-used words. This is the method found in most ordinary glossaries of specialized subject fields, where a set of entry words is presented, each followed by one or more definitions for the different senses in which the word has been used. If, as may well be the case, several meanings of a given word are important for use in a subject field, authors still face the problem of how to signify each of these meanings when only a single term-form is available for use as the name of each concept. Clearly it would be easier to distinguish between the different useful meanings of a given word if new terms (perhaps compounds formed by the simple expedient of adding modifiers to an overused key word) could be adopted for use whenever they were needed to avoid ambiguity.

1c. In order to accelerate the process of reaching consensus on new terms, we need a specialized instrument that will facilitate this process. Such an instrument can easily be designed if we agree to give up the usual wordto-definitions format of ordinary glossaries and, instead, adopt one that goes from defined concepts to their terms. Since the usual dictionary order of words-todefinitions is based on the semantic paradigm (the study of language by reference to its meanings) we may refer to the reverse paradigm as *ana-semantic*. An alternative term that might be used here is "onomasiological". However, this term may well be equivocal and, in its proper sense, has a broader meaning than what is here called "ana-semantic". We might, indeed, speak of anasemantic analysis as a branch of onomasiology. The term "onomastic", by contrast, has a narrower sense, referring primarily to the naming of individual objects – persons, places, organizations — i.e. the assigning of proper names. Note that double asterisks were used the first time 'ana-semantic' was presented, illustrating a procedure to be followed in this memo - and in all COCTAglossaries — whenever a neologism is proposed as a term for a new concept, or even for a familiar concept that requires a new name, for whatever reason.

2. Systematic Ordering of Records

If concept definitions are not arranged alphabetically according to entry terms, then how can they be ordered? The answer will be found if we think about the classification schemes that are used in libraries to bring together sets of books that deal with closely related subjects. In a similar way, concepts can be collocated so that related concepts are grouped together. They often have a

genus-species relationships so that narrower concepts are subsumed under broader ones, but they may also be arranged according to other relationships, for example between parts and the wholes in which they are found, between structures and the functions they perform, or in accordance with various facets or aspects of a single concept.

2a. When a set of concepts are classified, and when one has learned the essential features of whatever classification scheme may be used, then it is usually easy enough to determine where, in the scheme, any particular concept fits. If one finds a concept defined in any document, one can look it up by its properties to determine whether or not it is already in the classified glossary. If it is there, one can also find out what other terms have been used for it already, and one may propose the addition of new terms. If the concept is not already in the glossary, then it may be added as a new record.

2b. In order for new items to be added, it is of course necessary to have an instrument that is subject to *continuous revision*. Ordinary glossaries have a static quality, one that characterizes all published dictionaries. But in a machine-readable data base, we may add new entries and read the text on-line whenever necessary.

All participants in the development of a COCTA-glossary have the right to introduce new concepts and terms. No doubt editorial precautions are needed to make sure that the proposed new concepts and terms are, indeed, new to the glossary — but it is unnecessary to determine whether they are new to the subject field itself. Whenever a specialist in a given field finds that a given concept is useful in that field, this provides adequate grounds for adding to the COCTA-glossary a record that contains: (1) a definition of the concept, (2) the term or terms used to designate it, and (3) a citation to the source of the information — see the discussion below at #3.

2c. No doubt the first step taken by users of the published COCTA-glossary will involve hunting up words in its alphabetical index. This indirect procedure is already familiar to anyone who has used Roget's Thesaurus of synonyms. However, one may well find that the various definitions given for a particular term do not include any definition of the concept currently under investigation—that it is probably a new concept for the glossary. This impression can be confirmed by a direct search via the classification scheme—something that cannot be done in conventional glossaries and dictionaries. A recommendation to add a new concept to a COCTA-glossary should always include a proposed class number so as to suggest where it best fits into the existing framework.

2d. The maintenance of a COCTA-glossary requires an editor with access to a computer or word-processing system. It is the editor's duty to verify the fact that any proposed addition to the data base is, indeed, new — but the basic responsibility for selecting new concepts rests on the subject matter specialists who participate in developing a COCTA-glossary, not on the editor. The fact that one specialist thinks that a given concept is useful should be accepted as adequate evidence for the inclusion of a concept in the system.

2e. Any term used by a subject field specialist for a

given concept should also be added, with a correct attribution to its source in a paper or document written by that authority — or one mentioned by the contributor.

2f. Users of a COCTA-glossary need not accept any concept they consider unnecessary, nor are they obliged to use any term they consider unacceptable. What the glosary does is simply to let specialists know that certain concepts have been used, as defined, and that the terms given for each concept have also been used by someone to designate it.

3. The Contents of a Record

Each record in a COCTA-glossary contains three main parts: (a) a defining text that identifies the recorded concept; (b) a set of terms that can be or have been used to designate the concept; and (c) a set of citations giving the necessary evidence to support a claim that the concept in question has been used by a specialist of the subject field (in this case, "ethnicity" or "ethnic studies") and that each of the terms listed has also been used to designate this concept. A few comments may now be added about each of these three components.

3a. The defining text identifies a concept precisely as a dictionary definition does. However, in dictionaries each definition asserts that an entry word is used for the concept that it identifies. In a COCTA-glossary, by contrast, one could have a defining text that identifies a concept even though it lacks any term. Here it is the notion, the idea, the concept, that is defined — not the word. We need not debate here the philosophical issue about whether concepts exist prior to their definition (the so-called "realist" vs. "nominalist" controversy) in order to agree that, as soon as a defining text is written, it identifies a concept, whether or not the concept is thought to have existed prior to the writing of the definition.

A more practical issue arises when several different defining texts are thought to identify the same concept. If several sources seem to have the same concept in mind although their defining texts differ, then it may be useful to consolidate the different texts into a single revised definition. Such revisions also permit the interlinking of sets of definitions since a term defined in one record can be used as part of the defining text given in another record. (For example, in the sample shown in Annex A, the term "ethnic community" - defined at [F3] - is used in defining concepts [F3.1] and [F3.2]) Of course, participants may also agree that the different definitions found in the citations identify more than one concept, in which case more than one record will be required. Careful analysis and judgment is required to make such decisions.

3b. The terms used to designate a concept can be listed in alphabetical order so as to avoid any inference that one should be used in preference to another. In this respect the model of a COCTA-glossary record differs from that of an ordinary glossary entry. The word "entry" is used to indicate something that permits one to "enter" a given file. In alphabetized glossaries, each entry starts with an entry word, followed by one or more definitions. Synonymous terms are often omitted, but they may also be inserted after the entry word — possibly with cross-references from a separate entry for each of the synonyms.

To say that all the terms for a concept are listed alphabetically in its record does not mean that they can be used indiscriminately as substitutes for each other. In fact, it is essential to the purposes of a COCTA-glossary that the different terms for each concept be marked in such a way as to facilitate the selection of the most appropriate term for any given context of use. For example, some terms are unequivocal, having only one meaning within their subject field, whereas others are equivocal, and therefore they are likely to be misunderstood. At least one of the terms offered in every record should be unequivocal. However, equivocal terms can also be used provided care is taken to avoid ambiguity. To warn users about the need for such care, equivocal terms in a COCTA-glossary are set in double quotation marks.

Some terms are more unwieldy or more difficult to remember than others. Users may well be left to their own good sense when making such distinctions, so no special markings are called for.

Frequently different terms are favored in different contexts: thus the British may favor one term, the Americans another, for precisely the same concept. A concept used in sociology might be designated by one term while the same concept would be signified in political science by a different term. Marxists may use one term for a given concept that is referred to by non-Marxists in another way. Sometimes followers of one scholar prefer a term that is rejected by disciples of a rival leader or authority. Appropriate markings are needed to guide users to select the terms that best communicate their meanings to their intended audiences – but no standardized conventions seem to be available for this purpose. Idiosyncratic marking codes may, therefore, be devised to meet the needs of specialists engaged in the preparation of any given COCTA-glossary.

As may frequently be the case, none of the available terms for a concept will be fully satisfactory — they may be equivocal, unwieldy, or hard to remember. When this is true, a need arises for a new term. During its drafting stage, proposals may be made for temporary use, simply to facilitate discussion of the problem. We refer to such temporary or expedient terms as *heurisms* or *scaffs*. They should always be marked with double asterisks – as noted above. Heurisms should not, as such, be included in the text of a published COCTA-glossary. However, if a participant chooses to use a term-form in a paper or publication of his/her own, then that document can be cited in the published text of the glossary, where it looses the status of a heurism. Of course scaffs may also be discarded by participants when they think of a preferable term for the same concept.

3c. Citations are an essential part of each record in a COCTA-glossary. They guide users to the literature in which the defined concept has been explained and used. Thus a COCTA-glossary serves bibliographic as well as terminological purposes. Whether or not a given concept has theoretical significance, and whether or not it is operational, may be learned by an examination of texts in which it has been used. Users of a COCTA-glossary will be enabled, by means of the citations, to find the relevant literature with the least possible effort.

It is important to stress that no concept or term should be included in the published text of a COCTA-glossary that is not substantiated by a citation to some paper or publication written by a specialists in the glossary's subject field. This rule safeguards the editors of a glossary from unwanted pressure to include capricious and whimsical definitions of terms.

By contrast, be it noted, new concepts and heurisms may be freely added to the preliminary drafts of a COCTA-glossary — and many will be found in the text of the draft for "ethnicity." They often arise from the sheer logic of collocated concepts which give rise to interesting and even important conceptual possibilities. If the participants in a COCTA-glossary project find any of these novel concepts and terms to be interesting and useful, they are free to use them — though without attribution! — in their own work. That is, they may use them provided they send a marked copy of the text to the editor so that it may be used as a citation. The availability of such a citation transforms the status of a heurism into a new term that may, of course, be included in the published text of the glossary.

4. An Example

To illustrate the foregoing discussion, a couple of pages from the draft of the COCTA-glossary on "ethnicity" are appended as Annex A. All of these records fall, in the classification scheme, under the broad heading, "ethnic collectivity," and identify the distinguishing properties of various types of such collectivities. The data on which these definitions are based consists of only three sources: a paper by Robert H. Jackson, a political scientist at the University of British Columbia; a paper by Academician Yulian Bromley, head of the Institute of Ethnography of the Soviet Academy of Sciences; and a glossary compiled by the faculty of Ethnic Studies at the University of Hawaii. These sources are marked in the draft by the code letters: "J", "B", and "H" respectively. Participants in the project will, of course, add new sources from which additional concepts and terms will be taken. As the number of such sources grows, the richness and utility of the pilot project glossary will surely be enhanced. A few explanations follow:

- 4a. Alphanumeric symbols in brakets are the *notations* for individual records, and they enable users to find a given term and defining text. Any terms used in a definition that are defined elsewhere in the glossary are *underlined* and followed by the notation symbol for the record in which they are defined.
- 4b. This excerpt illustrates the problem caused by equivocal terms. In the index, for example, one will find that 'nation' has three meanings in the draft glossary. Of course, 'nation' also has other meanings outside the scope of this glossary. According to our rule, we cannot publish a record for any of the meanings of "nation" unless it contains at least one unequivocal term for each of them. In our example, the term "ethnic community" is used for the sense of "nation" defined in [F3]. The term, "ethnonation" (although it is not widely known, it is justified by reference to Jackson's paper) is given as an unequivocal term for concept [F6]. The use of "nation" to mean the concept defined in [F3.3] appears to be common in Soviet usage, according to Bromley. Since we have no accepted unequivocal term for this concept, a heurism is suggested: *bounded community*. Some-

thing better may well be proposed. Meanwhile participants in the project can discuss the problem of finding a suitable term for the notion of "bounded community" without having to speak of it in some more roundabout way.

Another example of the same problem can be found in the material on "ethnic group," which appears as a term for concepts [F3] and [F5]. In this case it may be that we can use "ethnic community" unequivocally for [F3] and "ethnic organization" for [F5]. Anyone wishing to use "ethnic group" may specify which of its two possible senses is intended — or note that the distinction between organized and unorganized ethnic communities is not significant for the analysis under way.

- 4c. More importantly, the material in Annex A illustrates another essential feature of the COCTA-glossary, namely the linkages offered between key concepts used in a subject field. It will be seen that the concepts clustered under the broad heading, "ethnic collectivities," facilitate the making of distinctions according to such criteria as the presence or absence of an "ethnonym," whether or not the community is formally organized, and its political status. On the assumption that writers on ethnicity will need to make such distinctions and explain the processes that generate different types of ethnic collectivities or account for their behaviors, it will serve their purposes to have readily available not only a set of definitions for the distinctions they want to make, but also information about the terms that different writers or schools of thought have used to designate diverse though interlinked concepts. Moreover, whenever an author wants to introduce a new concept and assign a term to it, availability of this glossographic material will provide evidence for the novelty of the proposed innovation and also a means to place it before the wider public of specialists in that field.
- 4d. The extract from the index of the draft glossary for ethnicity given in Annex A illustrates the degree to which useful concepts of a given subject field may not already have convenient unequivocal terms. Each index entry followed by an asterisk is a heurism, presented for temporary convenience as explained above in #3b. Two kinds of equivocal terms may also be identified in the index. Some, like "nation" and "ethnos," have several meanings as defined in two or more record. Others, marked with a quotation mark (for example, "imperialism," "minority group," and "racism") are considered to be equivocal even though only one of their possible meanings is given in the draft. The reasons for treating these terms as equivocal will be fully explained in a follow-up paper for participants in the pilot project.
- 4e. To summarize, and to get away from the more technical points presented here, please remember that the main purpose of a COCTA-glossary is to call attention to key concepts or distinctions used in the literature of ethnic studies, to help writers refer as simply and unambiguously as possible to these concepts, and to facilitate (above all) the identification and naming of new concepts that may prove useful in the future development of the field of ethnic studies.

References:

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- ing the terminology problems in the Social Sciences. Paris: UNESCO 1981.
- (2) Riggs, F.W.: COCTA-glossaries: the *ana-semantic* perspective. In: The CONTA Conference. Proc. Conf. on Conceptual and Terminological Analysis in the Social Sciences, May 24-27, 1981. Frankfurt: INDEKS Verl. 1982. p. 234-276.
- (3) Riggs, F.W.: Establishment of glossaries: their basic functions. In: Int. Classif. 9 (1982) No. 2, p. 77-86.

Annex A

F. ETHNIC COLLECTIVITIES

[F1] any set of persons sharing an ethnic marker [B1] T: ETHNIC COLLECTIVITY

- J3: ... an ethnic collectivity is persons who share one or more such distinctions [ethnic markers] and can be said to occupy a common ethnic base (or platform).
- J16: Under political leadership the *ethnic collectivity* can become a movement . . .
- J23: Table I, headed *Ethnic Collectivities*, identifies three species of this genus: "ethnic category," "ethnic group," and "ethnonation". [This is a paraphrase, not a quotation, from the original source]

[F2] an ethnic collectivity [F1] that lacks an ethnonym

T: ETHNIC CATEGORY

- J33: Ethnic category signifies persons who have inherited the same perceptible social distinction (or stigma)
 a marker that identifies them as members of a recognizable social category.
- J23: Table I identifies an ethnic category as a type of ethnic collectivity that is marked by ascription and plurality, but not by identity, organization, or public authority. See also Table 2, p. 27. [This is a paraphrase]
- J3: Members of an *ethnic category* are related not by blood ties but by common distinctions that can be concealed only with difficulty.
- J4: ... the process by which members of dormant *ethnic categories* become conscious of their ethnic identities and begin to act accordingly.
- J5: ... everyone can be assigned to an ethnic category of some kind.
- [F3] an ethnic collectivity that has an ethnonym [B5]
- T: ETHNIC COMMUNITY; "NATION"; "ETHNIC GROUP"; "COMMUNITY"
- B82: "nation" [in a second sense] is understood as an aggregate of persons of the same ethnic appurtenance [marker] who have a common name an ethnonym.
- J9: ... those collective or general conditions that are essential to the life of the *ethnic community* as a whole and the common identity of members.
- J11: ... the creation of cohesive nation-states at the expense of the survival of sub-national communities, including ethnic communities.
- J15: . . . certain ethnic communities have been suspected of anti-government activities.
- H: ETHNIC GROUP a group of people sharing certain common cultural traits; language, religion, customs, kinship, etc.
- [F3.1] an ethnic community [F3] that is subordinated in a larger society
- T: "MINORITY GROUP"; "MINORITY COMMUNI-TY"; MARGINALIZED COMMUNITY*
- H: MINORITY GROUP an ethnic group which is numerically and culturally subordinate to a dominant group in a society. The *minority group* is often held

in low esteem and is subjected to discrimination. A "minority" status also implies a certain lack of real power in society.

[F3.3] an ethnic community [F3] all of whose members habitually live within the boundaries of a single "state"T: "NATION"; BOUNDED COMMUNITY*

B89: ... Soviet studies usually treat *nations* as ethnicsocial formations which have not only ethnic but also territorial-economic unity ... It is understood that *nations* are social formations characteristic only of capitalism and socialism.

[F3.5] an ethnic community [F3] that is unorganized T: UNORGANIZED COMMUNITY

[F4] MAJORITY COMMUNITY, DOMINANT COM-MUNITY (compare [F3.1] & [G5.1])

[F5] an ethnic community [F3] that is organized

T: "ETHNIC GROUP"; "COMMUNAL GROUP"; "MINORITY GROUP"; ETHNIC ORGANIZATION*

J5: an *ethnic group* therefore is a collection of persons who occupy an ethnic platform [markers] recognize and value their common occupancy — share an identity, and are organized and therefore have a common interest in maintaining their association.

J4.: ... self-conscious and actively organized *ethnic* groups.

J33: Ethnic group signifies an ethnic category that has acquired the additional characteristics of identity and organization.

J26: communal group and minority group are synonymous with ethnic group.

H: (see F3)

[F5.1] an ethnic organization [F5] that lacks official status from the government under whose jurisdiction its members live

T: ETHNIC ASSOCIATION*

[F5.3] an ethnic association [F5.1] whose activities enjoy the protection of the government by virtue of constitutional or legal rights extended to all citizens

T: LEGAL ETHNIC ASSOCIATION*; CIVIL ETHNIC ASSOCIATION*

[F5.4] an ethnic association [F5.1] whose activities are carried out in violation of governmental regulations

T: ILLEGAL ETHNIC ASSOCIATION*; RENITENT ETHNIC ASSOCIATION*

[F6] an ethnic organization [F5] that has been granted official status by the government under whose jurisdiction its members live

T: ETHNONATION; "ETHNOS"; "NATION"; ETHNOSOCIAL COMMUNITY

J33: Ethnonation denotes an ethnic group with an interest in possessing public authority in a country, but not outright sovereignty.

J10: ... groups — henceforth termed ethnonations — which, along with others, constitute a state, such as the French-Canadians who possess their own provincial government . . . (See also F7)

J23: Table I defines *ethnonation* as an "ethnic group" with "public authority" [paraphrase of original text]

B82: We use the word ethnos in the broad sense, or ethnosocial (political) community (organism), to denote that part of an ethnicose which inhabits a compact territory within one political formation and constitutes a definite social and economic entity. (Compare [H1])

B81: [ethnos may denote] large communities of many millions (such as, for instance, the Russian, Ukrainian and Uzbek peoples).

Annex B

(The following index covers not only the concepts of Section F in Annex A but also the concepts of other sections in order to demonstrate the range of the concept field in question.)

ethno-civ* J5 ethno-domination* C6.4 ethno-ideological viewpoints* C6 etlino-ideology* C5.2 ethno-imperialism* C10.3 ethno-liberation movement* H3.3 ethno-liberation nationalitv* H3.3 ethno-norms* B7 ethno-political practices* ethno-role* D5 ethno-role epithet* D11 ethno-syndrome* D11.5 ethnocentrism" B4.1d ethnoclass* G5 ethnographic entity* J2 ethnography J1 ethnonation F6 ethnonational liberation movement* H3.4 ethnonational TEC* H2.2 ethnonational transnational ethnic community* H2.2 ethnonationalism C6.2 ethnonationalist D5.5 ethnonym B5 ethnophobia: ethnic auto-phobia* B4.1e ethnic exo-phobia* B4.3a ethnosocial community F6 ethnostate* F7 ethnos: ethno-civ* J5 ethnonation F6 exclusive policy* C9.3e exo-epithet* D11.3 an exo-ethnic* D9 exo-ethnic policy* C9 exo-ethnic role D10 exo-nym B5.2 free ethnostate* G1.2 genocide C10.2 glottal exo-phobia* B4.3g hegemonic ethnostate* G4.1heterogeneous ethnostate* G8.2 hierarchic ethnic identities* D3.1 homogeneous ethnostate* G2.1 illegal ethnic association* F5.4 imperialism" C6.4 independent ethnostate* G1.1 integrationist policy C9.1

language prejudice" B4.3g legal ethnic association* F5.3 marginalized community* F3.1 melting pot policy C9.1 minority community" minority group" F3.1 mobilized ethnicity C3.6 mono-ethnic state G2.1 mono-national state G2.1 multi-ethnic class* G6 multi-ethnic state G8.2 multi-national state G8.2 multiple ethnic identity* D3 nation": bounded community* F3.3 ethnic community F3 ethnonation F6 nation state": independent ethnostate* G1.1 homogeneous ethnostate* G2.1 nation-ethnos H1 nationalism C6.3 national liberation movement" H3.3 nationalist D5.6 nationality" H1 nesting ethnic identities* D3.1 a non-ethnic" D9 non-state nation* H3.3 organized ethnicity* D2.2 overlapping ethnic identities* D3.2 paternalistic policy* C9.3a plural ethnostate* G3.2 pluralist policy C9.2 pluralistic ethnostate* G4.2 pogrom" C10.1 pogrom-mania* C10.1 politicized ethnicity C5 poly-ethnic state G8.2 prejudice" B4.3a racial exo-phobia* B4.3c racial prejudice B4.3c racism" B4.3c religious prejudice" B4.3e renitent ethnic association* F5.4 reservation policy* C9.3c ruling ethnoclass* G5.1 ruling multi-ethnic class* G6.1 salience of ethnicity C2 sectarian exo-phobia* B4.3e social distance" B7 social stratification": ethnic configuration B8 ethnic social status B6 state-linked TEC* H2 state-linked transnational ethnic community* H2

H3.1

irredentist community*

irredentist TEC* H3.1

irredentist transnational

jim crow policy* C9.3a

ethnic community* H3.1