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*Indian Reservation Economic Development: Some Preliminary Hypotheses*

by

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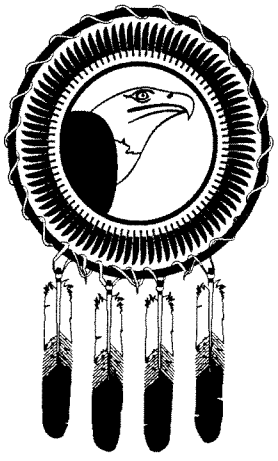

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# INDIAN RESERVATION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

# SOME PRELIMINARY HYPOTHESES

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# INDIAN RESERVATION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: SOME PRELIMINARY HYPOTHESES

This paper outlines some preliminary working hypotheses on Indian reservation economic development. These hypotheses are based on start-up research conducted as Phase One of the American Indian Economic Development Project at Harvard University, being carried out by Professors Stephen Cornell (Sociology) and Joseph Kalt (Kennedy School of Government) under the sponsorship of the Ford Foundation. First phase research involved extensive reading in the literature on reservation economic development, interviews with Indians and non-Indians involved in development issues, and preliminary field investigations on seven reservations.

One of the primary objectives of Phase One was to develop an analytical framework which could guide the bulk of the research. That framework has two parts. The first is the paper Professor Kalt wrote last spring: "The Redefinition of Property Rights in American Indian Reservations: A Comparative Analysis of Native American Economic Development" (Kalt 1987). That paper presented the political, legal, and economic context of contemporary reservation development, and outlined the overall orientation of our research. The present paper, which is a first stab at the second part of the analytical framework we are trying to develop, lays out a set of assumptions and related hypotheses intended to serve as research guidelines, and indicates the specific empirical directions the research is taking as a result of our work so far.

The overall objective of the enterprise is to account for differential outcomes in Indian reservation economic development, and to do so in ways which not only will be of interest to the academic community but, in particular, will be useful to tribal leaders, economic planners, and policy-makers. The research

is occasioned by substantive changes in Indian policy and tribal circumstances: since the mid-1970s tribal communities have been able to exercise an unprecedented degree of control over development agendas and programs. This control is tenuous and some tribes have been unable to take advantage of it, but the situation itself is genuinely new. Our focus is on two distinct issues: strategic choice and program performance. The questions might be put thus: How do we account for the often very different development strategies tribes choose to follow in these altered circumstances? How do we account for differential success and failure in subsequent development efforts?

## DEFINITIONS OF SUCCESS

A word is in order about the latter question. Success and failure are deceptively simple terms. When economists talk about development success they usually think in terms of per capita incomes, employment, financially successful development enterprises, and the like. Such criteria, obviously, are of critical importance to American Indian tribes, faced with some of the worst and most persistent poverty in the United States. But we have long believed -- and our research experience so far emphasizes -- that most tribes measure success in other ways as well. Many tribes will readily sacrifice an economic good for a political or cultural one. The Warm Springs Indians in Oregon, for example, rejected a proposal from non-Indian developers to build a ski resort on Mt. Jefferson, a magnificent volcanic mountain on the southwestern boundary of the reservation, despite the fact that the developers virtually promised the tribes millions of dollars in yearly profits. Mt. Jefferson is important to the tribe in a number of non-economic ways; it is an element in their cosmology and in their sense of themselves. Somewhat startled by the developers' offer, the tribe decided instead to designate tribal land on Mt. Jefferson as wilderness so as to forestall future development proposals. Tribal consensus on the issue was substantial, and represented a clear choice on the part of a tribe which is no slouch when it comes to development: the tribe already runs a hotel and resort elsewhere on the reservation and a first-class timber mill.

Other tribes have been concerned that certain kinds of development may reduce political autonomy or otherwise affect community survival, and have evaluated development strategies accordingly. Many tribal leaders are quite explicit about such criteria.

It must be realized, then, that tribal development success typically has not only economic but political and cultural dimensions (for some relevant

materials see Cornell 1983; Fixico 1985; Sootkis and Straus 1981; Vinje 1985). It also often has an ecological dimension, insofar as many tribes are dealing with natural resources which are potentially exhaustible. Development success, for most tribes, means development sustainable over the long run, that is, over generations. Again, many tribal leaders speak explicitly in such terms when discussing development. While tribal politics seems to operate on very short-term criteria, major development decisions seem to introduce (although they do not always reflect) much longer-term considerations.

In evaluating development outcomes, therefore, it is necessary to understand what it is each tribe wants and how each measures success. For the moment we simply make the assumption -- we believe a fair one -- that success is multi-dimensional for all the tribes we are dealing with.

Given the above, for the purposes of this framework the dependent variable is development outcomes. Our emphasis in what follows is largely on performance as opposed to strategy, although we are convinced that a number of the factors discussed below have impacts on both. It has simply not been possible in the time we have had so far to consider the strategic question separately.

## FACTORS SHAPING DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES

Development outcomes seem to us to be shaped by three sets of factors or variables: contextual, relational, and internal. While the contextual variables are largely -- though not entirely -- the same across tribes, and there is some critical variation in the relational variables, we are increasingly of the view that, given important contextual and relational factors, it is in the internal variables that many of the most interesting

questions -- and much of the explanatory leverage -- actually lie. We do not mean by this to assert the primacy of internal variables in explaining, for example, Indian poverty, and thereby to blame Indians for their problems. Contextual and relational factors remain, in our view, critical. But we do believe that to a significant degree the choices Indian tribes make and the ways they pursue those choices reflect internal aspects of their societies.[1] Few of these internal variables are economic.

These three sets of variables are summarized, with related hypotheses, below. Products of the preliminary work we have done to date, they necessarily remain tentative, incomplete, and merely suggestive. We hope that they at least point in directions that will prove fruitful.

## CONTEXTUAL VARIABLES

By contextual variables we refer to the national context within which Indian economic development takes place. Two things are particularly important: the overall orientation of federal Indian policy, and the national economy. The first of these, taken in isolation from other variables, is essentially indiscriminate in its impact on tribes; we can account for little -- if any -- variation among tribal experiences or performance in terms of federal policy orientations. The important point is variation across time: the self-determination policy seems to us far more likely to lead to effective tribal economic development than any policy approach that has preceded it. This issue, however, is peripheral to our research since our concern is specifically with economic development during the current self-determination period.

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1. The salience of internal factors is in part a consequence of the relative constancy of contextual and some relational factors, at least in the contemporary period. Given such constancy, the importance of internal variables rises.

Nonetheless, it may be useful to state a hypothesis, essentially untestable without data across major policy regimes.

**Hypothesis 1**: A federal policy of self-determination -- that is, of allowing tribes a substantial degree of control over their communities and their futures -- is more likely to lead to successful economic development than a policy which substitutes non-Indian agendas for Indian ones, as all previous federal Indian policy regimes have done.

The state of the national economy is likewise a crucial contextual aspect of reservation economic development, and one which is likely to have more variable effects on tribes. The recent decline in energy prices, for example, had a devastating impact on energy-resource-dependent tribes such as the Navajos and the Jicarilla Apaches, but left many tribes little affected. On the other hand, it is important to note that the state of the national economy probably has far less direct effect on tribal development outcomes than do many of the other variables we discuss below; we are skeptical, for example, that "trickle-down" economics will have major effects in the Indian arena.

**Hypothesis 2**: (a) A generally robust national economy will have generally favorable but seldom decisive effects on tribal economic development. (b) However, reservations which are highly dependent on one or two products or markets will be unusually vulnerable to sectoral variation in national economic conditions (on reservation dependency generally, see Jorgensen 1972).

## RELATIONAL VARIABLES

Tribes act within an environment of political, economic, and social relationships which function variously as constraints on or facilitators of tribal action. These relationships make available or enhance certain opportunities and close off others, encouraging certain decisions and discouraging others, enlarging or lessening the impact of those decisions and their consequences.

ECONOMIC

In the economic arena the primary relational variable is the market situation of the tribe. Does the tribe have resources for which there are significant off-reservation markets? How accessible are those markets? What additional economic resources (e.g., capital) would be necessary in order to effectively serve those markets with reservation commodities? Can such additional resources be provided by the tribe, or must they be procured elsewhere? If elsewhere, how available are they to the tribe? Hypotheses 3 and 4 are obvious, but critical.

**Hypothesis 3:** Those tribes with good market position (i.e., possessing resources for which there are accessible markets) will be more successful developers than those without.

**Hypothesis 4:** Those tribes with access to substantial external capital resources, as through the BIA or other federal agencies, the American Indian Development Bank, or private financial markets, will be more successful developers than those without.

It is worth adding here that diversity is valuable: tribes with narrow resource or financial bases will be more restricted in their development options. This is not simply a restatement of Hypothesis 2b regarding vulnerability to national economic conditions. The lack of a portfolio of opportunities means that such tribes will have more difficulty making decisions according to their own development agendas and will sacrifice some of the autonomy which, for many, is a definitional element of success.

**Hypothesis 5:** Those tribes with narrow economic bases (dependent on single-commodity markets) and with narrow financial bases (dependent on one or two sources of capital) will be less successful developers than those with diverse economies and diverse capital resources.

POLITICAL

In the political arena the important relational variables include the following. First is the de facto sovereignty of the tribe (essentially property rights: what is the specific nature and degree of tribal control over its internal affairs and resources and over relationships with non-Indian actors?). Within the framework of self-determination, for example, a number of tribes (among them the White Mountain Apaches, Mescalero Apaches, and Warm Springs Indians) have been quick to claim considerable control over reservation affairs, including development processes and the management of their resources. In a few cases they have gone to court to win such control. Other tribes have been more reluctant, for a variety of reasons, to assert themselves in the development process. It seems clear, however, that the mobilization of community resources behind any given development goal will vary directly with the degree of control the group exercises over the selection of the goal and the degree of guidance it exercises over the development process. Furthermore, tribal control over development puts tribes in the position of paying the costs of unsuccessful development, and therefore helps to construct incentives for responsible management.

**Hypothesis 6**: Those tribes that claim and exercise control over their internal affairs and resources and over relationships with non-Indians will be more successful developers than those who don't. Put somewhat differently: tribal control over the development process is a precondition for successful development.

The second variable is substantive relations with the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the primary federal agent involved in development. Are those relations cooperative? conflictual? inconsequential? Again, some tribes have moved the BIA from a directive to a supportive role in development; some have tended to ignore the BIA altogether. It is critical to note, of course, that the BIA

seldom pays the costs of inefficient or unsuccessful development, regardless of its own degree of control; indeed, unsuccessful development may lead to enlarged BIA budgets. In any case, there are few incentives for good management performance on the part of the BIA.

**Hypothesis 7**: (a) To the extent that the BIA sees itself and plays a role as manager of Indian resources and enterprises, those resources are likely to be inefficiently used and those enterprises are likely to be unsuccessful. (b) To the extent that the BIA sees itself and plays a role as a resource or consultant to tribal management of resources and enterprises, those resources will be more efficiently used and those enterprises will be more successful.

The third variable is political relations with local non-Indian actors, in particular state and county governments and local publics. Again, are these cooperative, conflictual, inconsequential? A few tribes (Warm Springs is an example) have worked hard to develop and maintain close relations with local governments and organizations, helping develop regional approaches to development issues and thereby maximizing resources such as information and political clout.

**Hypothesis 8**: Those tribes with independent but cooperative relations with local publics and power structures will tend to be more successful developers than those without.

SOCIAL

In the social arena the primary factor is the pattern of organizational linkages between the tribe and non-tribal society. Are such linkages dense and strong or sparse and relatively weak? Warm Springs, for example, appears to have substantial links to the surrounding non-Indian community, while the San Carlos Apaches have few such links. However, the nature of the relationships is as important as their number, and their overall effect is difficult to determine. A highly speculative hypothesis might be:

**Hypothesis 9**: (a) Social relationships between tribes and non-tribal society will tend to enhance development potential to the extent that they serve as channels for resources of various kinds useful in development (partnership, political alliance, access to markets, information, skills, capital, etc.). (b) Such relationships will tend to inhibit development to the extent that they represent alternative sources of allegiance for tribal members, that is, to the extent that they invite tribal members to act on the basis of interests and relationships which are fundamentally non-tribal.

## INTERNAL VARIABLES

Contextual and relational variables shape the opportunity structure for development that tribal actors face. Using such variables we should be able to specify the nature and attractiveness of the development opportunities a given tribe has. But tribes in turn bring to that structure a particular set of characteristics that function also as constraints or resources in tribal decision-making and action. These are factors internal to the tribe and its physical, social organizational, and cultural endowments, whether indigenously given, derivative of particular histories, or products of recent experience. These factors are of various kinds: economic, political, social organizational, cultural.

### ECONOMIC

In the economic arena three things are critical: natural resource endowments, human capital endowments, and financial capital. Natural resource endowments refer simply to the natural resources upon which the tribe has to draw: minerals, timber, wildlife, landscape, water, and so forth. Human capital endowments refer to the reservation labor force and its characteristics, such as education and skills. Financial capital refers fundamentally to money the tribe can invest directly or indirectly in development.

**Hypothesis 10**: Other things being equal, tribes that have significant natural resource, human capital, and/or financial endowments will be more successful developers than those that don't.

While its effects are not only economic, another internal variable with important economic impact is demographics, size in particular. Larger tribes provide a larger labor force, are more likely to include skilled workers and individuals with management qualifications and experience (in other words, tend to have larger human capital endowments), and offer a more substantial internal market.

**Hypothesis 11**: Larger tribes will tend to have greater human capital endowments and more substantial internal markets than smaller tribes, and therefore, other things being equal, are more likely to be successful developers.

SOCIO-POLITICAL

The relationship between tribal politics and tribal social organization is an intimate -- though often conflictual -- one. It is difficult to disentangle what are essentially political influences on development processes from essentially social organizational ones; the two are too closely linked. Consequently we treat them together here.

The most purely political variable is property rights. The relevant question is: who can do what within the tribal estate? Is it essentially an Athenian democracy in which all citizens are members of the tribal council (Crow and Yakima are examples of something approaching this form)? Is it a representative democracy (most tribal councils)? Who rules, and what claims do individual tribal members have on the tribal estate? Generally speaking, where every decision must be checked with the tribe as a whole, efficient management suffers.

**Hypothesis 12:** Tribes that grant substantial autonomy to their governing institutions will tend to be more effective developers than those that don't.

There are numerous sociopolitical factors that we are coming to believe have a significant impact on development. Our list is preliminary, but includes the following issues.

To what degree is tribal polity embedded in kinship relations? In most tribes, tribal politics is, at one and the same time, an interfamily politics. Duane Champagne (1985) has argued persuasively that tribes in which politics are organized along kinship lines will tend to find institutional innovation and new patterns of development behavior problematic because they threaten existing -- and quite fundamental -- social arrangments. Tribes in which politics are not embedded in kinship relations will find such innovation and behavior less problematic because they interfere less with the fundamental social arrangements of tribalism.

**Hypothesis 13:** Tribes with high levels of structural differentiation (polity vs. kinship organization) will be more effective developers than those with low levels of structural differentiation.

What degree of fit is there between contemporary and traditional patterns of tribal governance? For example, if tribal government today is highly centralized, with a concentration of effective decision-making power in central institutions, is this a departure from past patterns of governance or a replication of them? The Navajos illustrate the point: Navajo tribal government encounters significant difficulty in mobilizing allegiance and support from subtribal communities because it has no roots in traditional Navajo social organization, which included no central "tribal" political institution.

A related question: does the allegiance of the community appear to be to the institutions of tribal government or to the incumbents of those

institutions? The Fort Hall Shoshones frequently replace their leaders, but appear to give consistently strong support to the institutions of tribal government. This provides stability in tribal enterprise despite turnover in personnel. In other cases (Hualapai may be one) allegiance appears to be primarily to incumbents, making it difficult to sustain particular tribal activities across administrations.

**Hypothesis 14:** Where tribal governments most closely follow the institutional patterns of the past, those governments will do a better job of mobilizing community support for development programs.

**Hypothesis 15:** Where the allegiance of tribal members is primarily to the incumbents of governmental positions and only secondarily to the institutions of government, development will be more difficult to sustain than in tribes in which the institutions are supported regardless of the occupants of the positions.

It should be noted that the history of tribal government, combined with the intrinsic nature of tribes, vastly complicates the issue embedded in Hypothesis 15. This is not a question simply of factional politics or nepotism or faith in democratic institutions. Many tribal governments have few roots in tribal traditions, being artifacts of federal policies derivative of non-Indian agendas. Some have never won widespread community support. An additional factor is the underlying social organization of most tribes, rooted in kinship relations, and the common, culturally-derived obligation to be responsible first to one's kinspeople. Given these conditions, allegiance to persons as opposed to institutions is probably both culturally more valued and politically and economically more dependable. Certainly, as we know from our research to date and as the Fort Hall, Hualapai, and Warm Springs cases indicate, there is substantial variation in the nature and extent of allegiance to both institutions and persons (which may in turn have a good deal to do with the issue of differentiation in Hypothesis 13). We are simply stating, in

Hypothesis 15, what we think is probably true: other things being equal, allegiance to institutions provides a more supportive environment for development.

But the issue is even more complex. In a variety of development situations (immigration being an obvious one) kinship links have provided important vehicles for capital accumulation, credit, and other forms of assistance (see Hareven 1982; Light 1972). It is entirely possible that elaborate networks of kinship combined with substantive patterns of kinship obligation, both typical of many Indian communities, can provide a significant advantage in certain development situations or in support of some development strategies. Obviously the varying role kinship might play requires much more thought than we have been able to give it thus far.

Also related: effective development depends in part on organizational infrastructures and shared world views that can command the allegiance of tribal members and can serve as bases of collective action. This places a premium on the survival of traditional patterns of organization and culture. This in turn has less to do with the intrinsic value of tradition than with the survival of social relationships and cultural paradigms which can serve as the foundations of social cooperation and community cohesion in development and as sources of self-respect, all of which, we believe, are crucial elements in the selection and pursuit of tribal goals, including development goals. The San Carlos Apaches, for example, are a melting pot of different Apache bands. Band structures and indigenous government were intentionally suppressed during years of severe, tutelary controls exercised by both the BIA and churches. Today relatively little indigenous social organization remains on which to build new structures of community leadership, making community mobilization problematic. At White Mountain, on the other hand, indigenous Apache social organization,

while not necessarily conflict-free, survived to a significantly greater degree, yielding a foundation for the organization of community action and support that a determined and assertive tribal leadership can exploit.

**Hypothesis 16**: Where the "stomping index" is high (i.e., where tribes were relatively more stomped upon: indigenous institutions, social organization, and cultural practice were repressed, undermined, or simply destroyed) development will be more problematic than where the "stomping index" is low.

Of course there are Indian nations that are composites of tribes and bands which had minimal relations with each other prior to treaty-making and reservation confinement (e.g., the Yakimas, who are a composite of fourteen distinct tribes and bands who were joined together by the 1855 treaty with the United States). Consequently, contemporary governmental organization may be unable to draw very directly on tradition, yet it may turn out to be highly effective (the Yakima polity has been highly successful in many ways). In such situations tribes may have been forced early on to innovate, constructing new patterns of organization capable of embracing diverse peoples. This is a very different experience from situations in which indigenous organization was systematically suppressed, and demonstrates the importance of organizational infrastructures which command allegiance, regardless of their origins. Our point is that, other things being equal, such structures probably gain legitimacy and mobilizational capacity to the extent that they have roots in established patterns of organization and behavior.

Another sociopolitical factor affecting development is the tribe's ability to develop a long-term vision of what kind of community and socioeconomic situation it wishes to have, and to sustain community support for that vision. Such a vision provides criteria for making development choices and evaluating the impacts -- economic, political, social, cultural -- of specific development enterprises. It also provides an antidote to preoccupation with

short-term results or promises. Such a vision, however, is useless unless it can command community respect and mobilize community resources. This requires both community cohesion and effective tribal leadership. Both are critical factors in channeling the energies of community members into productive activities as opposed to rent-seeking, and in allowing management to respond to the demands of efficiency instead of politics.

**Hypothesis 17**: Those tribes that both articulate a strategic vision and gain substantial community consensus on behalf of that vision will tend to be more successful developers than those that don't.

Establishing a strategic vision and daily management, however, are not the same thing. For a number of reasons, these two activities may need to be separated. First, few tribes have the managerial expertise to effectively operate complex development enterprises. Yet non-Indian managers may be perceived as threatening to the extent that they have control or influence over long-term agendas. Separation of these two activities allows tribes to keep strategic, long-term planning -- what is it we want in the long run? -- in tribal hands, while finding the best managers -- Indian or non-Indian -- to run day-to-day business. Second, this tends to some degree to insulate daily management decisions from intragroup politics, establishing performance criteria for tribal leadership which have more to do with disinterested long-term goals than with the immediate and often highly fractious effects of those decisions.

**Hypothesis 18**: Those tribes that manage to separate strategic planning from daily management of development enterprises will be more effective managers than those who don't.

Strategic visions need to be shared to be effective, which leads into the topic of community solidarity. The elements of solidarity are too complex to go into here, although, given the variation in community solidarity found in Native

American societies today, the issue is critical. For the moment the primary point is that the mobilization of community commitment and action on behalf of development goals will be easier in more solidary communities than in less solidary ones.

**Hypothesis 19**: More solidary communities will be better developers than less solidary ones.

From a development point of view the role of leadership is twofold. First, it enforces property rights and governmental and non-governmental codes of conduct. In other words, it enforces rules which prevent rent-seeking. Second, it articulates and distributes strategic vision: it is the organizational centerpiece of group mobilization. The effective servicing of these two roles seems to require a leadership that is visionary (in the sense that it can express the long-term aspirations of its people), perceived to be disinterested (that is, to place the collective interest above its own), and perceived as true to indigenous culture (that is, in action and in words it expresses the people's sense of who they are).

**Hypothesis 20**: Tribal leadership that is visionary, disinterested, and expressive of indigenous tradition will tend to produce more effective development than leadership that is not.

Last but not least, there is the matter of stability. Development prospects depend substantially on stability; otherwise, investors will withdraw, partners will retreat, buyers will look elsewhere. One of the persistent problems in Indian economic development has been the often rapid changes in tribal governments and development-related decisions, leading to uncertainty regarding tribal commitments, political non-interference, and the tribal regulatory environment. We see stability as involving three things, in descending order of importance: strategic vision, political and economic

institutions, leadership. Stability in long-term strategic orientations is most important because it provides the overall orientation of the development effort and a set of usable criteria by which to evaluate development. Stability in political and economic institutions is next in importance; it assures partners or investors of a more or less consistent set of rules governing development; stability in leadership, while helpful, seems to us relatively less important: stability in who you deal with matters less than stability in the environment in which you work.

**Hypothesis 21**: Tribes with more or less stable strategic orientations and more or less stable institutional environments will be more effective developers than tribes without.

It is worth pointing out here that stability in vision and institutions is probably more important than the specific nature of either. Institutions rooted in indigneous sociocultural practice may be easy to work with as long as they are dependable; similarly a strategic vision at odds with the interests of the larger society is not necessarily an obstacle to development, as long as it is relatively stable.

CULTURE

Finally, in the cultural arena the major issues have to do with values and with collective identity or self-concept. Are indigenous values convergent with or divergent from the values of the larger society, in particular as those values impinge on development? For example, Champagne (n.d.) has argued that traditional Crow culture, with its emphasis on individual achievement, fits relatively easily with the values and development patterns of the larger society, while traditional Northern Cheyenne culture, with its emphasis on collective achievement and survival, fits less well, and that this helps to

explain the more aggressive approach to development taken by the Crows. Both tribes may be making culturally informed decisions, but the information drawn from culture is different in each case.

**Hypothesis 22:** (a) Tribes whose traditional value systems are more convergent with those of the larger society will tend to choose different (not necessarily better or worse) development strategies from those chosen by tribes whose systems are less convergent. (b) The former may be more successful at "mainstream" economic development than the latter.

Another issue is homogeneity. The degree of homogeneity of culture may be more important to development than any particular set of cultural values. Thus both "traditional" and "non-traditional" groups may be better developers than those with substantial factions of each, because they are able to come to a consensus around long-term goals and they share cultural bonds which can function as bases of community solidarity and commitment. Essentially this is a more specific version of Hypothesis 19. The argument is that cultural homogeneity -- whether the culture is "traditional" or not is irrelevant -- promotes solidarity, which improves the chances of development success.

**Hypothesis 23:** Tribes which are culturally more homogeneous will be better developers than tribes which are culturally more heterogeneous.

The content of that culture is also important. Culture, as a system of meanings, provides paradigms of groupness and of collective action: conceptions of what it means to be a member of the group and of what kinds of action are appropriate, normal, indigenous, "real." While groups may or may not act within these paradigmatic conceptions, the existence of such paradigms offers an opportunity. To act within accepted cultural paradigms is to enhance the meaning and legitimacy of the act (thus, for example, Apaches pay attention to the degree of dignity, statesmanship, and rhetorical skill with the Apache language displayed by contemporary leaders). Actions, in other words, may be

blessed by their association with fundamental aspects of group identity. We are not certain yet of exactly how this factor works in the development area, but we suspect that a major element in the strategic choices tribes make is these "root paradigms" (Turner 1974) which make one or another course of action appear more compatible with the group's conception of "who we are and how we act" (see Blu 1980; the Crow/Northern Cheyenne comparison is also probably relevant here). The following extremely modest hypothesis seems worth examining in more depth.

**Hypothesis 24**: Tribes which share relatively elaborate paradigms of appropriate styles and patterns of action will make strategic development choices in terms of those paradigms.

Finally, at the heart of such paradigms often lie powerful unifying symbols which may be important in the mobilization of group energies and support. Yakima collective identity, for example, rooted in the iconic status of the 1855 Yakima Treaty, appears to have overcome the potential for crippling factionalism inherent in the original imposed composition of the tribe.

**Hypothesis 25**: The existence of powerful shared symbols -- the 1855 Yakima Treaty, Crazy Horse, the flight of Chief Joseph, Sweet Medicine, etc. -- can enhance community cohesion and community mobilization in support of development goals.

Hypotheses 24 and 25 suggest a further idea of interest. Cultural paradigms must be reproduced over time. This often is the task of particular groups within the society -- elders, priesthoods, medicine people, etc. -- who are formally or informally charged with the preservation of core culture (understood here not as material culture or even necessarily ceremonial culture but as meaning, identity, belief). Where such groups survive they thereby acquire considerable legitimating power. We suspect that the existence of such groups offers the potential for a very high degree of community support for

development goals and enterprise, and provides unusually solid underpinnings for tribal consensus around long-term plans. A speculation:

**Hypothesis 26:** Those tribes in which indigenous groups of intellectuals -- guardians of the the deeper meanings of group membership, whose task in part is to think about and exemplify what it means, culturally, to be a member of the group -- have survived and continue to play a major role in tribal affairs will have the potential for more powerful community mobilization and, therefore, for more effective development than those where such groups no longer significantly function.

## DISCUSSION

Obviously a number of these variables are interrelated and some of them overlap. Part of the research task will be to sort through these in light of the empirical evidence we gather, deciding which ones are related and how, and which ones should be given greater weight in our analysis of development problems and success. We suspect some will fall by the wayside, while some will be replaced by others which have not yet occurred to us. What the above list constitutes, for the moment, is a frame of reference, a summary statement of relationships we believe play some significant role in reservation economic development and, we suspect, in more general development processes. Just what the role of each relationship is -- and some may be minor roles indeed -- has yet to be determined. One can look at the research effort as involving, among other things, (first) a process of "filling in the blanks," if you will -- creating a profile of each tribe in our sample in terms of these variables -- and (second) trying to tease out the relationships between these particular variables and particular patterns of strategic choice and program performance.

That the second of these is a complex task is amply clear (even the first will not be simple). Furthermore, the number of variables is high and the number of cases low, which in itself presents a host of methodological

difficulties. Our objective, however, is not to provide a systematic test of each of our hypotheses but to construct a set of plausible, supportable arguments about the necessary and sufficient conditions -- internal and external -- for successful economic development, bearing in mind the meanings of success in the universe of groups we are looking at. Our belief is that in the process of examining each case in terms of the variables outlined here we will be able to attribute greater and lesser weights to each variable, and will eventually reach sustainable and usable conclusions regarding the dynamics of the development process.

Certainly no group is likely to fulfill each of the ideal conditions which our hypotheses suggest or describe, nor should it. What we expect to find is that, given some threshold of favorable conditions, development success can be achieved in a number of ways. Limited resource endowments, for example, may be compensated for by high levels of community solidarity, human capital, and the confidence to accept non-Indian managers and non-Indian partners in development. Alternatively, a group determined to develop through tribal enterprise with strictly limited operating relations with outsiders may well be able to do so, provided it has adequate resource endowments, a high degree of tribal support for such a long-term vision, and effective leadership. And so on. The point will be to determine which variables are critical, which significant, and which relatively unimportant.

We have said nothing so far about the relative advantages and disadvantages of specific development strategies. While we have some emerging opinions (for example, we increasingly believe that the privatization strategy recommended by recent federal reports is among the least promising, sacrificing precisely those advantages that tribes actually command and insisting on a narrow defintion of success), until we have seen more of what is and is not

working under various development conditions, it seems premature to hypothesize. One thing does seem clear: there is no development policy that will work in all tribal situations.[7] The Native American population is anything but monolithic; policy should be anything but monolithic as well.

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