

COMPUTING

Microsoft Puts Down Roots in Cambridge

LONDON—Cambridge University and the software giant Microsoft hastily convened a news conference this week to confirm mounting rumors that they had struck a deal to site Microsoft's first foreign research center at the university. Over the next 5 years, Microsoft will spend \$80 million on the new center, which will employ about 40 leading researchers and accommodate other short-term academic staff and graduate students. The researchers will be employees of Microsoft, but will be encouraged to give lectures at the university and interact with academic staff. The university is helping to provide land and buildings for the center.

"It's a big step to go beyond the United States, but our view was that there were greater opportunities for us if we did that," says Nathan Myhrvold, Microsoft's chief technology officer. Following the success of its first research center at Redmond, Washington, founded 6 years ago, Microsoft de-

cided last year to triple its research effort. "We really wanted to broaden our perspective, and Europe was a high priority," says Myhrvold. Microsoft considered several other European sites, but "we chose Cambridge because of its track record on computing research, the existence of many local technology companies, and personal relationships between Microsoft and university staff," Myhrvold says. Myhrvold was a postdoc of Cambridge cosmologist Stephen Hawking before moving to industry.

Alec Broers, the university's vice chancellor, who helped broker the deal, welcomed Microsoft's decision. He said it would also boost the research efforts of the university's computing department. Roger Needham, former head of the computing department, will head the new center, and other staff will be recruited from across Europe and beyond. Needham said the goal of the center is to develop the next generation of computing

technologies that will enable machines to interact with their users in a more intelligent way. "We have no detailed research agenda on how to achieve this and just want to recruit the very best people," says Needham. The company has set up a technology advisory board of top European researchers to help it recruit key staff and highlight research areas, Needham said.

Margaret Beckett, head of the U.K. government's trade and industry department, who was at the press conference, welcomed the initiative. "The decision to locate in Britain is a vote of confidence in the country as a good place for research and business in Europe," she said.

Microsoft also unveiled plans to invest \$16 million in venture capital for local high-technology industries in Cambridge. "Interactions with industry have been an enormous help for academics, and the whole process has been positive," says Needham. "We hope this initiative will help Cambridge become a multimedia communications research center to rival the best in the world," says Broers.

—Nigel Williams

ANTHROPOLOGY

Cultural Divide at Stanford

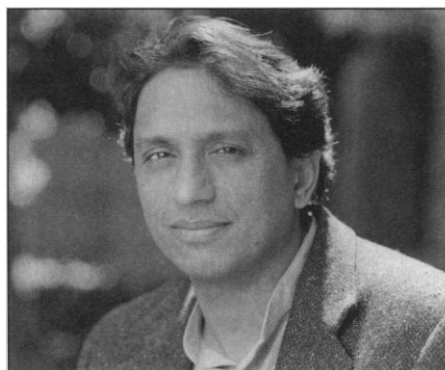
Anthropologists go to great lengths to understand the people whose diverse cultures they study. But sometimes they have trouble understanding their colleagues down the hall. Nowhere is this more apparent than at Stanford University's anthropology department, where a high-profile tenure case has widened the rift between cultural and biological anthropologists, and exposed a deep schism in their methodology and values.

Tensions erupted last month, when a Stanford dean overruled the anthropology faculty's offer of tenure to Akhil Gupta, a cultural anthropologist who uses so-called "postmodern" or deconstructionist methods to study the impact of development on farmers in India. Students protested, cultural anthropologists worldwide mounted a letter-writing campaign, and faculty charged that the administration was biased against this sort of "politically correct" work. And although both sides officially voted for Gupta, physical and cultural faculty members are said to be barely on speaking terms and continue to fight over new hires and the department's future.

Anthropologists say Stanford's troubles are an extreme case of the ideological differences tearing apart many departments around the country, some of which have given up the idea of unity altogether (*Science*, 24 September 1993, p. 1798). Stanford's current department chair, biological anthropologist William Durham, says Gupta's case is a symptom of the larger problem of what kind

of scholarship anthropology should include. "The issues and the debate in this department are national issues and debates about the nature of anthropology," he says.

But at Stanford, the joining of biological and cultural anthropology in 1993 was "a shotgun marriage," admits cultural anthro-



Postmodern man. Akhil Gupta's tenure was denied by a Stanford dean.

pologist George Collier, department chair from 1990 to 1994. In the 1980s, the small department was almost completely socio-cultural, with a core of a dozen or more researchers studying gender, race, and power relations in different cultures, and often using descriptive methods from the humanities rather than scientific hypothesis testing. For years, the department had only two biological anthropologists, including Durham, and

two biocultural anthropologists.

Then in the mid-1980s, senior members of the department say, then-dean of arts and sciences Norman Wessells heard a lecture by renowned paleoanthropologist Donald Johanson and proposed that the department hire several more biological anthropologists. That directive met with hostility, especially because the faculty was then being cut from 21 to 13 positions. "We were struck by the strong and widespread opposition," recalls one member of a 1986 visiting faculty committee, National Science Foundation archaeologist John Yellen.

The first of what was intended to be several new hires in biological anthropology was finally made in 1993: Richard Klein, a leading expert on early human tools and behavior. But Klein's efforts to hire a tenure-track paleoanthropologist failed after two searches, though he did manage to hire one non-tenure-track lecturer. Klein declined to comment, but several senior faculty told *Science* that these hires were stymied in part because the cultural faculty objected to Klein's recruitment procedures and to the shortage of women and minority finalists.

In the midst of this turmoil, Gupta came up for tenure. At 38, he's an associate editor at *American Ethnologist*, and other cultural anthropologists say that his work, applying mainly descriptive rather than quantitative methods to such questions as how technology affects poor farmers, is "groundbreaking." The faculty—including the biological anthropologists—unanimously approved his tenure in December, but it was overruled in January by

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economist John Shoven, dean of humanities and sciences. Gupta appealed, and Shoven reaffirmed his decision in May. Although the entire department voted for him, Gupta says the infighting hurt his case. "I've been caught in the middle of the conflict between one group that wants to push the department in a biological direction and another group that wants to retain its cultural emphasis. The dean decided to take the biological side."

The tenure denial angered faculty such as Collier, who says letters from sociocultural anthropologists were "some of the strongest letters I have ever seen." But the dean's office also solicited letters from anthropologists outside Gupta's field. According to Gupta, these

letters criticized his methods—which he says are accepted in his field—and charged that "much is asserted, little is tested."

Meanwhile, the biological anthropology camp is still trying to plan new hires. Yet another visiting committee of anthropologists, brought in by Associate Dean Stephen Haber to evaluate the troubled department and headed by archaeologist Patrick Kirch of the University of California, Berkeley, last year advised that new hires should "build bridges" between the biological and cultural groups. Their report recommended a hunter-gatherer ethnographer and a medical anthropologist, for example, rather than paleoanthropologists who study "remote time periods of human evo-

lution." Despite the report, Haber authorized the biological anthropologists to search for an evolutionary geneticist. And there's still talk of hiring another paleoanthropologist.

As for Gupta, he's hoping that the provost will reverse the dean's ruling in his case; that decision is expected this week. But for the department, the solution seems to be to stand divided: The biological and cultural sides each now have a co-chair, and each side plans to conduct faculty searches independently. It may be for the best, says one department member. Merging the two groups, he says, is like "taking biology and merging it with English literature. See how that works."

—Ann Gibbons

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

DOE Struggles With Lab Management

The dozens of aging nuclear facilities and untold tons of chemical and radioactive wastes within the confines of the Department of Energy's (DOE's) network of laboratories have posed a management nightmare for health and safety officials for years. But recent environmental troubles at Brookhaven National Laboratory and a new study of DOE's defense labs are turning the perennial issue into the first test of how Energy Secretary Federico Peña plans to manage an \$8 billion, 26-lab system that employs more than 50,000 people.

A DOE study of Brookhaven released on 10 June would tighten headquarters' control over the Upton, New York, lab for at least a year while reducing the role of the field office responsible for overseeing it. The report comes in the wake of a tritium leak that prompted Peña to fire the lab's contractor (*Science*, 9 May, p. 890). But Peña seems to be taking a different tack for the defense labs that DOE oversees: In response to a recent report that harshly criticizes DOE's management of the defense labs, Peña promised Congress on 4 June that he would streamline headquarters' oversight of the labs and shift power to the field.

These divergent approaches have left some observers scratching their heads. "It's unclear which direction he's headed, because these are mixed signals," says one congressional aide. "They're inconsistent," adds another. But DOE officials insist that the two policies address different situations and that the Brookhaven case involves temporary measures in response to a crisis.

The Brookhaven report, done in 30 days by energy research chief Martha Krebs, concludes that DOE headquarters failed to adequately

track environment, health, and safety matters at the Long Island lab. It recommends adding a senior manager in Washington to ensure compliance with regulations and a council that would bring together senior officials in different DOE offices who are responsible for overseeing Brookhaven. DOE's managers at the lab would report directly to Krebs rather than through the department's Chicago field office. "I'm trying to get rid of what we call [administrative] spaghetti," says Krebs.

But Krebs's new menu isn't to everyone's



Talent search? DOE's Peña (right) visits with Argonne's David Moncton, who may be headed for Brookhaven.

taste. "This is a reversal of DOE efforts to streamline," complains Lyle Schwartz, president of Associated Universities Inc. (AUI), which runs the lab, and the acting Brookhaven director. "This tends more to centralize, to give the department more responsibility for actual management. That's bad in my view," says Schwartz. At the same time, he expects that the more direct lines of authority to Krebs's office will reduce red tape.

Schwartz hopes to turn over the director's job to David Moncton, associate director at Argonne National Laboratory outside Chicago, for the few remaining months of AUI's

contract. However, Moncton told *Science* this week that he had not decided whether to take the job given its likely short tenure.

While Brookhaven's environmental troubles caused Krebs to recommend tighter control, similar problems at other DOE labs—confusing lines of authority, a lack of leadership, and a reliance on ad hoc procedures—have spawned the opposite suggestion. The DOE-funded report by the Institute for Defense Analyses concludes that "the largest single problem uncovered in this study is that defense programs"—and, more generally, DOE's—practices for managing environmental, safety, and health concerns are constipating the system." It adds, "There are also too many people in headquarters, too far removed from the 'real' work." Peña appears to agree. In a letter to Congress, he says DOE will shift responsibility to the lab sites for those areas "with limited oversight by headquarters." A core group will be managed by DOE's operations office in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Krebs admits that it's not easy finding a consistent answer to the complicated problem. "We've tried various approaches ... and we still haven't gotten it right," she says.

With definitive answers on how to run the lab system elusive, more advice is on the way. Representative James Sensenbrenner (R-WI), who chairs the House Science Committee, has asked the General Accounting Office to study the Brookhaven situation. Also, the Senate Armed Services Committee expects DOE's defense programs to save \$35 million next year by Peña's proposed streamlining of headquarters.

These moves may signal a renewed interest in Congress over DOE's management of its labs, an issue that has lain dormant since a blue-ribbon commission led by Motorola Chair Bob Galvin offered a sheaf of recommendations for reform 2 years ago. "Some of our members are getting frustrated with the slow pace of reform," warns one House aide.

—Andrew Lawler