

1086-01-1149 **Bruce J. Petrie*** (b.petrie@utoronto.ca). *Mathematical Notations as Identifiers of Epistemic Cultures*. Preliminary report.

Michael Mahoney (1993) observed that “The symbols and terms of modern mathematics are the bearers of its concepts and methods. Their application to historical material always involves the risk of imposing on that material a content it does not in fact possess.” In making this observation Mahoney was influenced by Thomas Kuhn’s writings on scientific change. *Revolutions in Mathematics* (Gillies, 1992) is a book dedicated to the integration of Kuhnian historiography and the history of mathematics. While Kuhn is well known, many historians of mathematics have yet to be introduced to the ideas of Karin Knorr Cetina, as presented in her *Epistemic Cultures: How the Sciences Make Knowledge* (1999). Knorr Cetina suggests that Kuhnian historiography is too narrow and proposes an alternative to the paradigm concept, that of epistemic culture. The paper documents the relevance of Knorr Centina’s conceptions to the history of mathematics and argues that there is an important reason to respect the distinctive notation and terminology of past mathematics: they are identifiers of epistemic cultures. (Received September 19, 2012)