

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Chapter Introduction

The chapter begins by imparting preliminary knowledge about what anthropology as a science means, the subject matter of anthropology in general and social anthropology in particular. This chapter also devotes itself to the discussion of the branches of anthropology, guiding principles in anthropology and nature of research in the discipline. Finally, it concludes by defining political anthropology as sub field of political anthropology.

1.2 Anthropology: A general Introduction

I. Anthropology Defined

Anthropology is the holistic and scientific study of humankind. As such, it is a very broad field that includes human biology, genetics and evolution; the study of human history, prehistory, and archaeology; human culture, cultural patterns, and cultural diversity; social structure, kinship, economics, religion, politics, art, and linguistics (the scientific study of language).

What Does THAT Mean?

- Anthropology has four main parts
 - Physical or biological anthropology
 - Archaeology
 - Cultural (and social) anthropology
 - Linguistics
- VERY BROAD FIELD
 - Runs the scope from medicine and genetics (pure or hard sciences) to art, religion, drama, and poetry (humanities)
 - Something for everyone

II. The Subfields of Anthropology in More Detail

A. Physical Anthropology

- Physical anthropology (also known as biological anthropology) is the study of human biological diversity and evolution.
- Includes:
 - Medical anthropology
 - Paleo-anthropology (including some paleontology)
 - Human genetics and evolution
 - Primatology

B. Archaeology

- The study of human prehistory and cultural evolution (no dinosaurs)
- Archaeologists study ancient society and culture through material remains
 - Like artifacts and human remains
- Bioarchaeology = study of ancient human remains
 - Paleopathology – study of ancient disease through materials remains

C. Cultural Anthropology

Sometimes known as ethnology, cultural anthropology examines *contemporary* societies and cultures throughout the world

- Cultural anthropologists study modern, existing human cultures
- Comparative and holistic
- Ethnology is the study of particular cultures
- Ethnography is *writing* about a culture.
- Social anthropology (which is part of cultural anthropology) focuses more on social structure

D. Linguistics

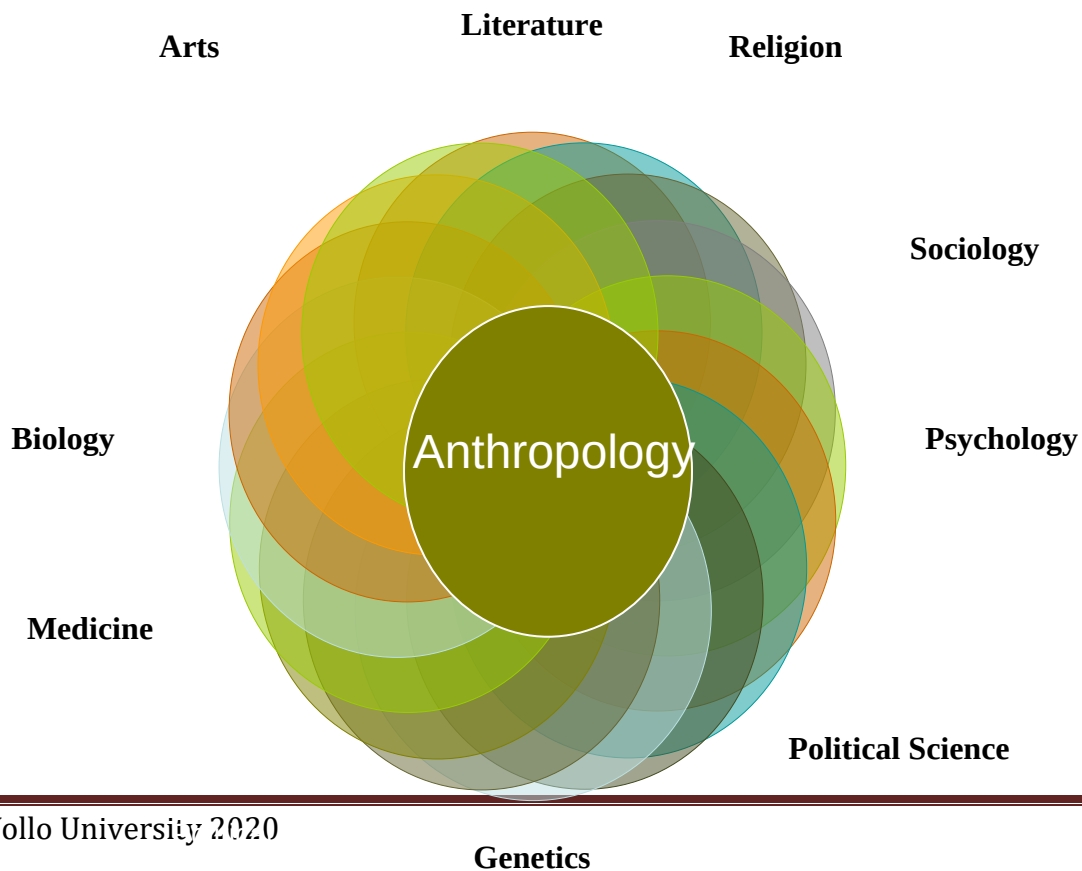
- Scientific study of human language
- Language is the basis of culture
- Includes historical linguistics, sociolinguistics, morphology, syntax, etc.

III. Anthropology and Closely related fields

- Social sciences:

- Economics
- Psychology
- Sociology
- Political science
- Sciences:
 - Medicine, Genetics, Human biology
 - Physics and chemistry
- Humanities:
 - Arts
 - Literature
 - Ethnomusicology
 - Religion
 - Ritual

Figure 1.1 Venn diagram: Anthropology and other related fields



IV. Ethnocentrism and Cultural Relativism

Ethnocentrism

- ✦ *Ethnocentrism* is the practice of judging another society by the values and standards of one's own society.

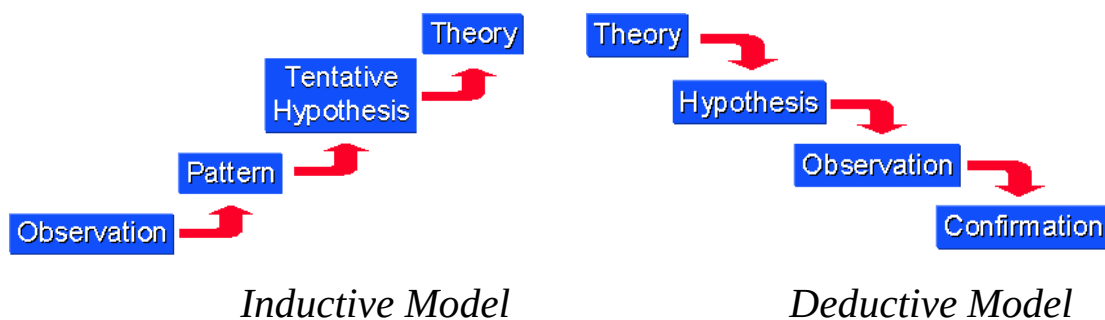
Cultural Relativism

- ✦ *Cultural relativism* is the view that cultural traditions must be understood within the context of a particular society's responses to problems and opportunities.
- ✦ Cultural relativism pointed out that the differences in peoples were the results of historical, social and geographic conditions and all populations had complete and equally developed culture.
- ✦ In this sense, no one culture would be "better" or "more developed" than any other culture.

V. The Scientific Method

- ✦ A logical system used to evaluate data derived from systematic observation In Anthropology includes the following .
 - ✦ Inductive – first data, then theory
 - ✦ Deductive – first theory, then evaluation

Figure 1.2 The Scientific Method



1.3 Political Anthropology: A sub field in socio/cultural anthropology

I. Political Anthropology Defined

Political anthropology concerns the structure of **political systems**, looked at from the basis of the structure of societies.

II. Political Anthropology and political science

Anthropologist and political scientists share an interest in political organization, but the anthropological approach is global and comparative. Anthropological data reveal substantial variations in power, authority, and legal systems in different cultures. Political science is deeply involved with the study of power. But political anthropologist studies symbolism of power relation. Political Anthropology makes political interpretation of non political institutions. Generally, we can say that political science is *unidimensional* while political anthropology is *multidimensional*.

III. The scope of political Anthropology

The main theme of political anthropology is the study of power relationship. Power is eminence in human life and by definition human beings are political Animals. Political Anthropologists says that human beings are political animals because whatever power they have, human beings still aspire for more power. Political Anthropologists study power in a socio-cultural context.

1.4 Summary

In this chapter, an attempt was made to define anthropology as a holistic study of human society. The chapter also examined the branches/sub fields of anthropology- Physical Anthropology, Archaeology, Cultural Anthropology, and Linguistics. A brief discussion has also been made on the relationship between Anthropology and Closely related fields such as Social sciences (Economics, Psychology, Sociology, Political science); Sciences (Medicine, Genetics, Human biology, and Physics and chemistry); Humanities (Arts, Literature, Ethnomusicology, Religion , Ritual)

The Scientific Method in anthropology, the scope of political Anthropology, and the relationship between Political Anthropology and political science are also topics covered in this chapter.

CHAPTER TWO: THE DEVELOPMENT OF POLITICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

2.1 Chapter introduction

Political anthropology was developed as a recognizable and well-defined branch of anthropology only in the 1940s and 1950s, as it became a main focus of the British functionalist schools, heavily inspired by Radcliff-Brown, and openly reacting against evolutionism and historicism. The approach was empirical, with the main bulk of work carried out in colonial Africa. The British structural-functionalist school was institutionalized with *African Political Systems*, edited by Fortes and Evans Pritchard (1940). A similar degree of institutionalization of a distinctive political anthropology never took place in post-war America, partly due to the Parsonian view of the sciences which artificially relegated anthropology to the sphere of culture and symbolism.

The very strong stress on social equilibrium, which was so evident in Evans-Pritchard's approach, was quickly questioned in a series of works that focused more on conflict and change (Leach 1954). These works attempted to show how individuals acted within political structures, and that changes took place both due to internal and external pressures. Contradictions and conflict came to the fore. A special version of conflict oriented political anthropology was developed in the so-called 'Manchester school', started by [Max Gluckman]. Gluckman focused on social process and an analysis of structures and systems based on their relative stability. In his view, conflict maintained the stability of political systems through the establishment and re-establishment of crosscutting ties among social actors.

Gluckman even suggested that a certain degree of conflict was necessary to uphold society, and that conflict was constitutive of social and political order.

In a 1959 review article, political scientist David Easton charged that political anthropology did not really exist because the practitioners of this non discipline had utterly failed to mark off the political system from other subsystems of society. The judgment was then generally accepted with the humble mortification proper to a young science being criticized by one much older and wiser. It was not until almost ten years later that anthropologists had gained sufficient confidence to protest that Easton had completely misunderstood the nature of political anthropology and had construed its greatest virtue into a vice (Bailey 1968; A. P. Cohen 1969; Southall 1974). In the

societies in which anthropologists have traditionally worked, politics cannot be analytically isolated from kin-ship, religion, age-grade associations, secret societies, and so forth, because these are precisely the institutions manifesting power and authority. In many societies government simply does not exist. This recognition, and the specification of the manner in which the idiom of politics is expressed through the medium of apparently nonpolitical institutions, may be the primary contributions of anthropology to the study of comparative politics. Recently, political anthropologists have carried this idea into the sacred domain of the political scientist by demonstrating that informal organizations and relationships may be more important than formal institutions even in such modern governments as those of the United States and Israel.

Two decades ago, Ronald Cohen (1970: 484) could still agree with Easton to the extent that "there are, as yet, no well-established conventions as to what [political anthropology] includes or excludes or what should be the basic methodological attack on the subject." This is less true today. Joan Vincent *Anthropology and Politics: Visions, Traditions and Trends* (1990) offers a minutely detailed history, and an annual series, edited by Myron Aronoff, with the general title *Political Anthropology*, further helps provide an ongoing clarification of the subject. However, political anthropology, like anthropology as a whole, remains immune to precise definition. Cross-cultural studies of law and warfare may or may not be included (they are not included in this book). Numerous theoretical approaches compete with one another--cultural materialism, structuralism, various Marxisms, neo-evolutionism, feminist revision-ism, symbolic anthropology. . . . There are world-system perspectives and perspectives that examine the actions of individuals. Cross-cultural statistical analyses vie with historical studies.

Indeed, one problem with a book such as this is that it might give the reader the impression that the field is more coherent than is actually the case. Though a handful of researchers--notably Ronald Cohen, Abner Cohen, F. G. Bailey, Joan Vincent, Myron Aronoff, and Peter Skalník--are self-consciously political anthropologists, most articles in the field are by cultural anthropologists writing about politics. The result is that political anthropology exists largely through a potpourri of studies that can be classified within a few broad themes only with some effort and not a little artifice.

This said, a number of major thrusts of political anthropology can be legitimately delineated. First, in the past the classification of political systems was an important area of research. These studies, some of which are now under attack, provided political anthropology with a basic vocabulary and no few insights into the ways that systems work at different levels of complexity. Second, the evolution of political systems is a continuing fascination in the United States, though British and French anthropologists often like to pretend that evolutionary theory died with Lewis Henry Morgan. Third is the study of the structure and functions of political systems in pre-industrial societies. This point of view was vehemently repudiated on both sides of the Atlantic because of its static and ideal nature. After the initial burst of revolutionary rhetoric, there emerged a general recognition that even the most dynamic of political processes may take place within relatively stable structural boundaries. In any case, political anthropology had its beginnings in this paradigm, and many of its enduring works are structural-functionalist. Fourth, for the last several decades the theoretical focus has been on the processes of politics in pre-industrial or developing societies. Perhaps the most assertive trend of the 1970s was action theory, an outgrowth of the process approach with an emphasis not on changing institutions but on the manipulative strategies of individuals. Fifth, there is a wide and growing literature on the political response of formerly tribal societies to modernization. Sixth, world-system theory has given rise to a number of studies that interpret politics in the light of the spread of capitalism out of Europe beginning in the sixteenth century. Seventh, one dominant current theme is how subcultures embedded in state societies nonviolently and often quite subtly manipulate power to their own advantage. Finally, the feminist movement in academic scholarship as a whole has introduced a new and important voice into political anthropology, questioning basic assumptions about power and offering new data and interpretations. Beyond these minimal themes, political anthropology shares a set of common values and assumptions rooted in the nature of anthropology itself.

The anthropological perspective

In their introduction to *African Political Systems* (1940), generally considered the foundation work in political anthropology, Meyer Fortes and E. E. Evans-Pritchard stated flatly, "We have not found that the theories of political philosophers have helped us to understand the societies we have studied and we consider them of little scientific value". This sentiment might well have

been the slogan of political anthropology in its developmental period. Until the mid-1960s, the theoretical framework of political anthropology, its methodology, its vocabulary, and its focus of interest owed little to political science, political sociology, or political psychology. In articles written before 1960, one might encounter an occasional reference to Friederick Hegel, Karl Marx, Talcott Parsons, or David Easton. By and large, however, anthropologists remained blissfully untrained in political science; their point of view was resolutely anthropological. This has changed as anthropologists turn increasingly to the study of modern nation-states and begin to assimilate systems theory and decision-models brought in from other disciplines. In many ways, however, political anthropology continues to be as much anthropology as political.

Above all, anthropology is based on field experience. Researchers working in intense interaction with individuals in their day-to-day setting seek to find, in the words of Ralph Nicholas (1966: 49), "order in the chaos of many people doing many things with many meanings." This disarmingly simple goal turns out to be tremendously complex. The closer one is to real people in natural settings, the harder it is to make generalizations about their behavior. This has led to a form of argument called Bongo-Bongoism: No matter what generalization is made, someone is always able to protest, "Ah, but in the Bongo Bongo tribe they do it differently." It is probably safe to say that there is always a Bongo Bongo tribe threateningly positioned at the periphery of every theorist's consciousness.

The result is that anthropology has been decidedly inductive and comparative. Ideally, general theory should evolve from field data and should be so stated that it can be cross culturally compared and analyzed. The founders of political anthropology believed that concepts emerging from studies of the United States or Western Europe had little application to hunting-gathering bands or horticultural tribes. More recently, however, it has become almost universally recognized that virtually all groups, no matter how remote, have been influenced by Western expansion, so that concepts drawn from history and economics are increasingly becoming part of the normal vocabulary of anthropology.

Culture remains a key concept of political anthropology. Though neither the British nor the French are particularly concerned with this rather ambiguous notion, and many American materialist and ecology- oriented theorists ignore it as much as possible, the concept is implicit

in most political studies. Basically, the two broad ways of conceiving culture are to think of it as an adaptive system--that is, the ways that groups of people respond technologically and ideationally to the challenges of their environments--or to think of it as a system of subjective but socially shared symbols and meanings, including language, myths, rituals, political concepts of legitimization, and the like.

So far, this latter definition has been most employed in political anthropology, because it provides the mental and social context within which political processes take place (Aronoff 1983). Another important concept, deriving from early studies of peoples who had little specialization of labor or of institutions, is that societies are comprised of interwoven networks of relations, so that a change in one element affects the others. Although we no longer interpret this as rigidly as we did--the relative autonomy of some subgroups is well documented--the idea of society as an integrated system remains fundamental to the anthropological perspective. Because the experimental sciences have been using two-part causal models for so long, one sometimes gets the impression that the concept of system is a recent discovery. Yet since the mid-nineteenth century, anthropologists have consistently and unself-consciously studied societies as systems. It is true that the cross-cultural testing of hypotheses requires isolating discrete units from their cultural context, but in its statistical form this is a fairly late development, and it is generally used in a systemic framework. All the major paradigms in anthropology--evolutionary theory, the various functionalisms, French structuralism, process theory, decision theory, dependency theory, and so forth are basically systems theories.

Finally, the theme of evolution, while periodically banished from social anthropology with great fanfare, remains an implicit assumption underlying even timeless structural interpretations. The reason is that anthropology deals with societies representing a wide spectrum in technological and social development, and it is virtually impossible to view these except along some scale of cultural complexity. More recently, anthropologists have recognized the crucial role of the influence of Western capitalism on even the most preindustrial societies, so that history can no longer be ignored.

Induction, cross-cultural comparison, culture, system, and evolution are not really defining qualities of anthropology so much as various aspects of the anthropological way of looking at the

world. Although these provide a unified point of view, it is at the same time replete with contradictions. Anthropologists seek no less than an understanding of the nature of humankind, yet they are suspicious of any generalization at all. They idealize a holistic view; yet, by the very complexity of the systems they confront, they are forced to isolate small subsystems. They demand precise classification, yet may argue that typologies distort more than they clarify. In sum, anthropologists are torn between diametrically opposed demands: to be true to the intense particularity of their field experience, and to give meaning to that experience by generalizing it to the world at large. This antithesis is a theme that runs through all of political anthropology.

Generally this chapter includes an exhaustive discussion on the development of political anthropology.

2.3 The Development of Political Anthropology

Though political anthropology as a specialization within social anthropology did not appear until as late as 1940, and did not really kick in until after World War II, this is also true for most anthropological subject specializations. From its beginnings as a scientific discipline in the latter half of the nineteenth century to the middle of the twentieth, anthropology was relatively unified. The early evolutionists admitted no boundaries to their comparative method and blithely roamed through the world and through the farther reaches of history examining any subject that met their eye. Franz Boas, the father of American anthropology, was equally ready to analyze Eskimo art, Kwakiutl economics, or immigrant craniums. Whatever lines were drawn was theoretical: one was either an evolutionist, or a historical particularist, or a structural-functionalist, and so forth, but there was little sense that one might be a political anthropologist, an ethnolinguist, or an ecological anthropologist. The ideal of a holistic anthropology only began to break down through the 1940s as increasing data and increasing numbers of professional anthropologists forced specialization. The development of political anthropology was part of this general process, which continues today, with ever smaller subspecialties being delineated. Yet the comparative study of politics in preindustrial societies dates to the very beginnings of anthropology.

I. The nineteenth-century evolutionists

Charles Darwin's influence dominated the development of cultural anthropology in the second half of the nineteenth century just as it dominated biology. Much of the evolutionary theory

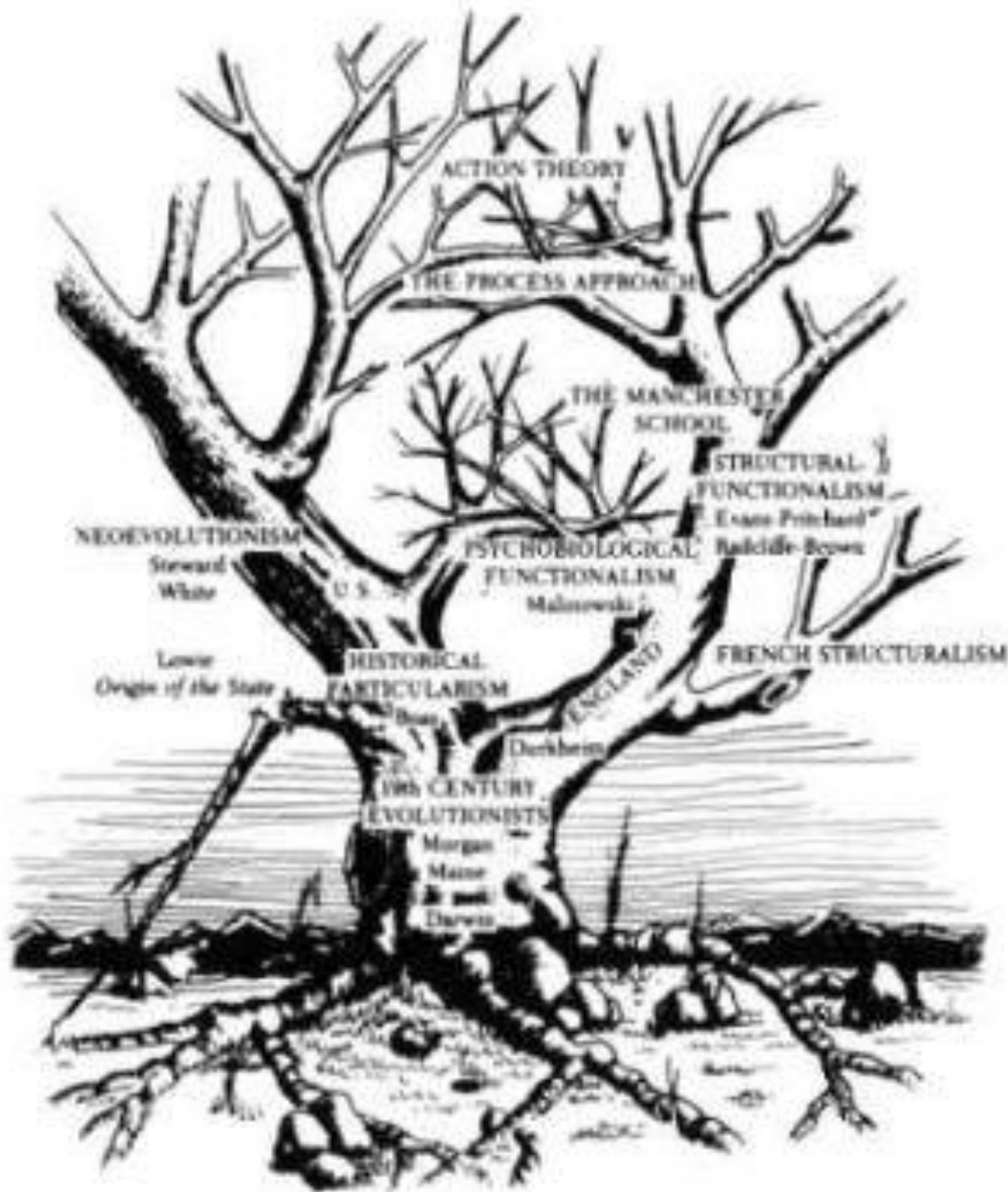
emerging from this period was as rudimentary as the societies it sought to make sense of: evolutionary schemas were rigid and simplistic; there were endless arguments over whether the earliest societies were matriarchal or patriarchal; ethnocentrism ran rampant as Christianity and the Aryan "race" were seen as the ultimate developments of human progress; customs were torn out of their cultural context and compared indiscriminately by armchair anthropologists who had never seen the "savages" that were their subjects. Yet it is easy to forget how perceptive many of these studies were. Whatever their faults, the evolutionists laid the foundation for modern scientific anthropology.

Prior to this period, the tradition that reached back to Plato and ran through Aristotle, Thomas Hobbes, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and most philosophers of politics until (but not including) Karl Marx described government and politics as products of civilization; lower stages were characterized by anarchy. One of the earliest to challenge this view with hard evidence was Sir Henry Maine, who, in *Ancient Law* (1861), postulated that primitive society was organized along the lines of kinship, was patriarchal, and was ordered by sacred proscriptions. Evolution was in the direction of secularization and organization based not on kinship but on territory--"local contiguity" formed the basis for political action.

Maine's important insight that kinship could be a primary sociopolitical structure was developed by Lewis Henry Morgan in *Ancient Society* (1877). Morgan had studied the Iroquois Indians of New York State first hand and had been fascinated by their kinship terminology, which was very different from that used in Western European countries but similar to that employed in other parts of the world. His description and categorization of kinship systems was itself a lasting contribution, but before these could gain recognition, they had to be couched in the theoretical framework popular at the time. Morgan developed an evolutionary sequence based on the mode of subsistence, the stages of which he termed *savagery*, *barbarism*, and *civilization*. These grossly connotative terms actually translate rather well into their modern equivalents, societies based on hunting-gathering, horticulture, and developed agriculture. Morgan, like others of his time, began with the "postulate of the psychic unity of mankind"--belief in a common origin and parallel development all over the world--though he was unable to follow the idea to its inherently antiracist conclusions and assumed that the Aryans were naturally "in the central stream of human progress" (Morgan 1877: 533).

Figure:1

Political Anthropology Family Tree



With his considerable sophistication in the analysis of kinship, Morgan was able to elaborate Maine's inchoate ideas. Social organization began with the "promiscuous horde" that developed into kin-based units, organized along sexual lines--namely, intermarrying sets of male siblings and female siblings (this was an early insight into what is now called cross-cousin marriage). In

emphasizing the role of exogamy (marriage outside the social group), he touched on the conception of inter-group bonds formed through marriage that would become the "alliance theory" of French structuralists three-quarters of a century later. Progressive restriction of marriage partners led to the development of gens (i.e., clans) which joined to create increasingly larger units up to a confederacy of tribes. Sociopolitical structure at this level is egalitarian and is based on sets of interpersonal relations. (With the exception of the promiscuous horde, this is not a bad description of the Iroquois confederacy, though there is little reason to generalize to a universal evolutionary process.) The specialization of the political sphere does not appear until the full domestication of plants and animals creates sufficient surplus to lead to urbanization and private property. True government, then, is based on territory and property.

Morgan is subject to most of the criticisms directed by later generations at the evolutionists (except, of course, that he was no armchair anthropologist, having studied the Iroquois first hand). Yet much of his thinking has been absorbed into modern anthropology. This is especially true in relation to politics.

Though anthropologists no longer distinguish kin- based from territory-based groups (all people recognize territorial boundaries), Morgan's emphasis on kinship as a primary medium of political articulation at the subsistence levels of hunting-gathering and horticulture was justified. Equally important was Morgan's discovery of the gens as a corporate lineage in which decision making was confined within a group tracing common ancestry through either the male or the female line. Another lasting insight was his recognition of the egalitarianism of primitive society and the lack of a concept of private property. These latter ideas contributed to Morgan's most effective influence: They formed the basis for Frederick Engels' *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* (1891), the Marxian view of the evolution of capitalism.

II. The Reaction

Early- twentieth-century anthropology was characterized by two fundamental changes: the rejection of evolutionary theory and methodology, and a widening hiatus between the anthropologies of the United States and of England and France. In the latter countries, the immediate repudiation of evolutionism was relatively mild, but there was a significant shift in

new directions. This shift was based on the work of Emile Durkheim- in France leading to an increasing cognitive structuralism that would culminate with the works of Clude Levi Strauss, in England leading to an emphasis on social facts (and a corresponding disregard for the psychological aspect of culture) and theoretical point of view dominated by the ideas of function and structure. Durkheim had little influence on U.S cultural anthropology, where Franz Boas' historical particularism" dominated. Boas was absolute, and often vehement, and his repudiation of the comparative method and of the vast generalizations that had emerged from it. He emphasized minute descriptive studies of particular cultures. Theory did not disappear altogether, but such orientation as diffusionism took on very particularistic turn, with field anthropologist spending years collecting the most minuscule facts of daily life and charting them on enormous trait lists (one suspect this type of inquiry declined through sheer boredom). Though English anthropologists were turning increasingly to the study of kinship, not much was accomplished in the political and organic solidarity in the United State, little in the way of theory separated out the political for analysis.

A major exception was Robert Lowie's the Origin of the state (1927). To find a framework to deal with the political, Lowie reached back to outmoded evolutionary theory. Fittingly enough, he started by rejecting the unilineal evolution of his predecessors; there was no evidence that all societies pass through similar stages of development. Maine's and Morgan's contention that primitive political order was maintained solely through personal relations was also rejected. Rather, the territorial bond, which Morgan saw as a characteristic of civilization, was universal and thus formed a bridge between primitive political organization, and the state. In an earlier book, primitive society (1920), Lowie had recognized the political importance of associations in uniting otherwise disparate groups, and he saw these as forming the basis of the state because they weakened the blood ties of kin group. Now he modified this view, showing how associations can also be as "separatistic "as kin relations. Thus associations, which are of their nature neither centralizing nor disruptive, require a supra- ordinate authority to achieve higher level integration.

Georges Balandier's (1970) contention that specific, explicit political anthropology developed during the 1920s is true only to a point. Here we find certain lasting ideas: that all societies recognize territory that increases in population and in conflict lead to states, that class

stratification is key element in movement up the evolutionary ladder toward the state, and that the central element of these state is a monopoly of coercive power. Though these concepts were not developed in a systematic causal model, Lowie clarified a number of issues, asked a number of crucial questions, and presented anthropology with a fascinating challenge. Unfortunately, the challenge was not taken up. The evolutionary phrasing of Lowie's book despite his denials of unilineal development must have seemed sadly anachronistic to his peers who had thought themselves done with this evolutionary nonsense once and for all. The beginning of political anthropology was also its end-until 1940.

III. The British Functionalists

In England during the 1930s two brands of functionalism vied for dominance, the psychobiological functionalism of Bronislaw Malinowski and the structural-functionalism of A.R. Radcliff Brown. Often considered the founder of modern fieldwork techniques for his extensive research in the Trobriand Islands, Malinowski sought to interpret cultural institutions as derived from certain psychological and biological needs. Though he contributed little to political anthropology per se his studies of law, economics, and religion-as observed in ongoing, rather than historical, society-cleared the way for the type of specialization that would later become commonplace. Malinowski's participant observation method became the model for an entire generation of British field-workers whose intense analyses of African societies would establish political anthropology as a legitimate sub-discipline. However, Radcliff-Brown's structural brand of functionalism ultimately came to predominate in England, where academic chairmanships at Oxford, London or Manchester were close to the equivalent of theoretical fiefdoms. For Radcliff Brown a society was an equilibrium system in which each part functioned to the maintenance of the whole (the obvious organic analogy was not avoided). Thus there was a sense that societies were to be described from high above, to be mapped to show how their various elements intermeshed. As we shall see, this approach is more atemporal than static; that is it does not really postulate an unchanging society or a society without conflict, but rather its focus is on those norms, values, and ideal structures that form framework within which activity takes place.

Feeding this theoretical orientation and feeding on it was the concentration of British research in colonial Africa. Much of the purpose of such research was to instruct colonial authorities on the social systems under their control, and this affected both the emphasis and the image of social anthropology. On the one hand, there was little recognition that the societies anthropologist were studying severely change by colonialism. Also there was a tendency to study chiefdom and state systems, some of which, like the Zulu, had been integrated partially as a reaction to the British threat.

These two trends, structural- functionalism and the African experience came together in 1940 in a work which, at a single blow, established modern political anthropology: ***African political systems***, edited by Meyer Fortes and E.E. Evans-Pritchard. In their introduction, the editors distinguish two types of African political system; those with centralized authority and institutions (primitive states), and those without such authority and institutions (stateless societies). A major difference between these types is the role of kinship. Integration and decision making in stateless societies is based on bilateral family-band groups at the lowest level, and on corporate unilineal descent group at a higher level. State societies are that in which an administrative organization overrides or unites such group as the permanent basis of political structure. Even though this typology was later criticized as much too simplistic, the detailed description of how lineages functioned politically in several specific societies, were lasting contributions. Social equilibrium was assumed, so that the major problem was to show how the various conflict and interest groups maintained a balance of forces of religion and symbols were also noted structure. The integrating power of religion and symbol were noted, especially the role of ritual in confirming and consolidating group values.

African political systems' introduction and eight ethnographic articles established the problems' the theoretical foundation, the methodology, and the controversy for more than a decade of research in to the politics of preindustrial societies. The original typology was increasingly refined. For example, A. W. Southall in *Alur society* (1953) challenged the assumption that segmentary systems- those in which authority was dispersed among a number of groups- were always uncentralized; he provided an example of a society in which segmentary lineage organization existed side-by side with a centralized state. Others questioned segmentation as a factor for typing at all, since even centralized governments are segmented. Nor could lineages be

the basis for all stateless societies, because age grades, secret associations, and ritual group could cross-cut lineage divisions for purposes of political action. Jumping off from Fortes's and Evans-Prichard's bare suggestion of types (the two editors did not seem to think their typology universal, or even very important), Classifications were increasingly refined until political taxonomy became virtually an autonomous field of research. The static structural-functional paradigm maintained itself through a number of studies as the old guard- Evans-Prichard, Raymond Firth, Daryll Forde, and Meyer Fortes- held, contemporaneously or successively the princely academic chairs of British anthropology. This is not to say that the situation itself was static; there was constant ferment, as conflict and change increasingly imposed themselves with the rapid demise of African colonialism.

IV. The Transition

By the 190s, after a decade of gradual chipping away, the edifice of structural-functionalism was showing cracks in its very foundation. There was little sense yet of a complete repudiation of this paradigm, but there was a quite self-conscious sense that fundamental modification were being made.

A major contribution in this direction was Edmund Leach's political systems of highland Burma (1954), which signaled the shift to a more process-oriented, more dynamic form of analysis. In the Kachin Hills area of Burma Leach found not one but three different political systems; a virtually anarchic traditional system, an unstable and intermediate system, and a small-scale centralized state. The traditional system and the state were more or less distinct communities made up of many linguistic, cultural, and political subgroups, all somehow forming an interrelated whole. This whole could not be supposed to be in equilibrium, there was constant tension and change with and between the various sub-systems. To make sense out of all this Leach felt it necessary "to force these facts within the constraining mold of an *as is if* system of ideas, composed of concepts which are treated *as if* they are part of an equilibrium system" (Leach 1954: ix). This was no more than the people themselves did for they also had an ideal cognitive pattern for their society, expressed in ritual and symbolism. In reality, however, the people were hardly constrained to follow their own, and certainly not the anthropologist's, *as if* conception of their behavior.

The ideas are similar to the mentalistic structuralism of Claude Levi- Strauss (whom Leach would later help introduce into English-language anthropology), and there are suggestion of the cognitive mapping later to become central to American psychology anthropology. The immediate importance for the study of politics, however, was in the clear differentiation of abstract political structure from the on-the-ground political reality. Almost as crucial, Leach finally got political anthropology out of Africa and broke it free from relatively cohesive, single-language societies to which it had been confined.

Meanwhile, Max Gluckman was also breaking new ground. In his chapter on the *Zulu in African Political Systems, in Custom and Conflict in Africa* (1960), Gluckman developed the theme that equilibrium is neither static nor stable, but grows out from an on going dialectical process in which conflicts within one set of relations are absorbed and integrated within another set of relations: Cross-cutting loyalties tend to unite the wider society in settling a feud between local groups; witchcraft accusations displace hostilities within a group in a way... that does not threaten the system; apartheid in South Africa, while radically dividing white from black, ultimately unites both groups within themselves. The Roman maxim 'divide and conquer' is cleverly restated as 'divide and cohere.' Politically this is especially evident in African rituals of rebellion in which, periodically, the king must dress as a pauper or act the clown, is symbolically killed, or is subjected to open hatred and obscenities from his people. For Gluckman, such rituals are not merely catharsis; they are the symbolic reassertion of the priority of the system over the individual, of kingship over any particular king.

At this stage, both Leach and Gluckman are transitional figures, still rooted in the structural-functionalism of the 1930's and 1940's developing ever more clever arguments in defense of equilibrium theory; yet at the same time they are taking a giant step toward a new paradigm. Gluckman as founder and chairman of the anthropology department at Manchester University, was to see his ideas extensively elaborated by his students, known collectively as the Manchester School, a phrase that came to represent a new orientations to society based not on structure and function but on process and conflict.

V. The Neo-Evolutionists

Without a doubt, England dominated political anthropology during its first two decades. Meanwhile, in the United States, an incipient and quite different political anthropology was fermenting. Evolutionism, long banned by Boasian edict from the proper study of humankind, began a slow and not entirely respectable resurgence through the writings of Leslie White and Julian Steward. White (1943, 1959) developed a complex sequence leading through agricultural intensification to private ownership, specialization, class stratification, political centralization, and so forth. Much of this was elucidated at such a high level of generality that it left White open to the charge of merely resuscitating nineteenth-century unilineal theory. Steward's (1955) use of the term *multilineal* evolution for his own theory

only served to validate an unnecessary dichotomy. Actually, no serious evolutionists has ever held a truly unilineal theory (Harris 1968: 171-73). But the situation was not clarified until the unilineal/multilineal dichotomy was replaced with the complementary concepts of *general evolution* and *specific evolution*, the higher level referring to evolutionary processes such as increased specialization or intensification of production, the lower to the historic sequence of forms (Sahlins and Service 1960). This clarified, evolutionary anthropology was free to move, unfettered by a heavy load of semantic, rather than substantive, difficulties. Thus, in contrast to their English colleagues, American political anthropologists started with the idea of change on a panoramic scale in a context that was fundamentally ecological and materialist.

White measures evolution in energy efficiency and sees technology as a prime mover. Steward's cultural ecology focused on the 'cultural core'- mainly the subsistence and economic arrangements that largely determine social structure and ideology. The differences between British and American anthropology were vast but can be overemphasized. For example, one of the earliest American political ethnographies, E. Adamson Hoebel's 1940 study of the Comanche Indians, was neither evolutionary nor materialist. Throughout the 1940s and 1950s and into the 1960s, there was a strong current of structural-functionalism in the United States. But that which was particularly American was vastly different from that which was particularly British, to the extent that there was often little communication between the two.

Political evolution quickly became almost synonymous with political classification. The two major evolutionary works of the period, Elman Service's *Primitive Social Organization* (1962) and Morton Fried's *The Evolution of Political Society* (1967), were more taxonomic and

descriptive than causal; the emphasis was on the characteristics of different levels of socio-cultural integration, rather than on the factors that caused evolution from one level to another. Causal theories were hardly lacking, but these derived from archeology rather than cultural anthropology. Many notable archeologists devoted their careers to the processes involved in the evolution of state societies. These two trends, the archeological and the cultural, which originally ran parallel, came together in Service's *Origins of the State and Civilization* (1975). Political evolution remains an ongoing field of study, but it can no longer claim to be the major focus of American political anthropology-process and decision-making orientations have crossed the Atlantic from England.

VI. Process and decision making

Max Gluckman had tentatively experimented with the analysis of situations involving individuals, in contrast to the usual ethnographic focus on group norms and social structures. Elaborating on this experiment, Victor Turner, in *Schism and Continuity in an African Society* (1957), followed a single individual through a series of 'social dramas' in which personal and community manipulations of norms and values were laid bare. To Gluckman and Leach's emphasis on process and conflict was added a new element-individual decision making observed in crisis situations.

The belated discovery that the world is in motion stimulated an enthusiastic disavowal of structural-functionalism, almost equal to that which had temporarily obliterated evolutionism at the turn of the century. *Structure* and *function* became unfashionable terms, to be replaced by process, *conflict*, *faction*, *struggle*, *manipulative strategy*, and the like. As Janet Bujra (1973: 43) succinctly expressed it,

For the early functionalist, the assumption was that social unity was the normal state of affairs, whereas conflict was a problematic situation which could not easily be incorporated into their theoretical framework. More recent studies of political behavior, however, seem to indicate that it is conflict which is the norm, and it is the existence of social unity which is more difficult to explain.

That conflict and accord, unity and disunity, might be two sides of the same coin; as Gluckman emphasized, was temporarily forgotten.

The change from structural theory to process theory had its correlate in the dissolution of the false stability imposed by colonialism in Africa. With the rise of postcolonial nation-state, and the incorporation of tribal societies within larger political organizations, new problems presented themselves. No longer could primitive politics be treated as though it existed in a closed system; the wider sociopolitical field replaced the more restricted concept of political system. On the other hand, the intensive study of particular situations gave rise to the restricted concept of political arena, wherein individuals and political teams vie for power and leadership.

Though many of these ideas come together in such works as Balandier's *political Anthropology* (1970) and Swartz, Turner, and Tuden's 'Introduction' to their edited volume of the same title (1966), it would be a mistake to consider the process approach as a coherent theory. Much ethnography that emphasizes process continues to focus on the level of norms and institutions. The individual-focused, decision-making approach-often referred to as action theory-is a somewhat separate subdivision of the less cohesive process orientation.

Process theory opened the way for a cross-Atlantic dialogue that was muted, at best, during the heyday of structural-functionalism. Such American leaders of political anthropology as Marc Swartz and Ronald Cohen, who had shown only passing interest in evolution or evolutionary typology, joined the British in what constituted a truly international trend.

VII. Women, World Systems, and Weapons of the Weak

While earlier perspectives and theoretical approaches continued throughout the 1980s and into 1990s, three strong new trends were evident. Perhaps the most important development was the emergence of a distinctly feminist anthropology. Though not specifically political, virtually all of the writers in the field were examining the relative power of women. Not only has the assumption of universal male domination been challenged (and defeated) but also other anthropological myths, such as the model of Man the Hunter as the focus of physical evolution. In addition to the expected cross-cultural statistical comparison, two important theoretical schools have developed within feminist anthropology, one analyzing the cultural construction of gender and the other, based on Marxist theory, examining the historical development of gender stratification.

Eric Wolf's *Europe and the People without History* (1982) brought the world-system perspective and so-called dependency theory into the mainstream of anthropology. Wolf contends that all, or virtually all, cultures today can only be understood in relation to the expansion of European capitalism over the last centuries.

In a closely related development, many researchers are countering the native-as-victims approach, which focused on the destruction of tribal cultures by the spread of Western civilization, with a new emphasis on the ways that indigenous peoples fight back, often quite subtly, against the dominant state, either to maintain their group identity or to create for themselves niches of independence and pride. Political scientist James Scott's *Weapons of the Weak* (1985) demonstrates how peasants resist-through gossip, slander, petty arson, and thievery-the marginalization that comes with large-scale capitalist agriculture. Political anthropology may be as amorphous as ever, but from its rude beginnings it has become a firmly established sub-discipline of cultural anthropology.

2.4 Summary

In this chapter we have learned that Political anthropology was developed as a recognizable and well-defined branch of anthropology only in the 1940s and 1950s. In addition to this the nineteenth-century evolutionists which is mainly traced its origin from the works of Charles Darwin's influence which dominated the development of cultural anthropology in the second half of the nineteenth century was also discussed thoroughly and examined how it contributed to the development of Political sociology.

Moreover, the Early- twentieth-century anthropology which was characterized by two fundamental changes: the rejection of evolutionary theory and methodology, and a widening hiatus between the anthropologies of the United States and of England and France was also examined to understand the course of development of political anthropology.

Other points like the rise of The Neo-Evolutionists, Process and decision making approaches and the emergence of a distinctly feminist anthropology are also considered as the major factors which led to the development of political anthropology.

CHAPTER THREE: POLITICAL ORGANIZATIONS

3.1 Chapter introduction

This chapter mainly focuses on the four types, or levels, of social and political organization: band, tribe, chiefdom, and state. **Bands** are small kin-based groups found among foragers. **Tribes**, which are associated with non-intensive food production (horticulture and pastoralism), have villages and/or descent groups but lack a government (centralized rule) and social classes (socioeconomic stratification). In a tribe, there is no reliable means of enforcing political decisions. The **chiefdom**, a form of sociopolitical organization that is intermediate between the tribe and the state, is kin-based, but it has differential access to resources and a permanent political structure. The **state** is a form of sociopolitical organization based on central government and socioeconomic stratification.

On top of that Series of discussion also runs on the social, economic and mainly political features of the societies under each of these four types or levels of social or political organization.

3.3 Political Organizations

All societies- if they are to remain viable over time- must maintain social order every society must develop a set of customs and procedures for making and enforcing decision resolving disputes, and regulating the behavior of its members. Every society must make collective decision about its environment and its relation with other societies and about the eventuality of disruptive or destructive behavior on the part of its members. These topics generally are discussed under such heading as political organization law, power authority war, social control, and conflict resolution. While exploring all of these subjects, this chapter deals with societies maintain social order minimize the chance of disruption and cope with whatever disruption do occur (Mc Glynn and Tuden 1991; Vincent 1990).

For example When most North Americans think of politics or political structure, a number of familiar images come to mind, such as the following:

1. Political leaders such as presidents, governors, mayors, or commissioners.
2. Complex bureaucracies employing thousands of civil servants.
3. Legislative bodies ranging from the smallest town council to the U.S congress.
4. Formal judicial institution that comprise municipal state and federal court.
5. Such law enforcement bodies as police departments, national guard units, and the armed forces
6. political parties, nominating conventions, secret ballot voting and the conveying of the electoral college

All of these are mechanisms that the American society uses for making and enforcing political decision as well as coordinating and regulating people's behavior. Many societies in the world have none of these things, any elected officials, legislatures' formal elections, armies, or bureaucracies. We should not conclude from this however, that such societies do not have some form of political organization, if by "political organization" we mean a set of customary procedures that accomplish decision making, conflict resolution and social control.

3.4 Types of political organization

Several years ago anthropologist Elman Service (1962) listed four types, or levels, of social and political organization: band, tribe, chiefdom, and state. **Bands** are small kin-based groups found among foragers. **Tribes**, which are associated with non-intensive food production (horticulture and pastoralism), have villages and/or descent groups but lack a government (centralized rule) and social classes (socioeconomic stratification). In a tribe, there is no reliable means of enforcing political decisions. The **chiefdom**, a form of sociopolitical organization that is intermediate between the tribe and the state, is kin-based, but it has differential access to resources and a permanent political structure. The **state** is a form of sociopolitical organization based on central government and socioeconomic stratification.

Many anthropologists have criticized Service's typology as being too simple. However, it does offer a handy set of labels for highlighting cross-cultural similarities and differences

in social and political organization. Accordingly, most anthropologists use the classification occasionally. Service's four types reflect the general evolutionary trends discussed in the last chapter. To restate those trends, as we move from band to tribe to chiefdom to state:

1. Parts and subparts increase.
2. Parts and subparts become more functionally specialized.
3. More effective coordinating mechanisms (means of regulation and integration) appear.
4. Population size increases, along with the range or scale of the sociopolitical system (from local to regional to national).

Part and subparts proliferate as village and descent groups are added to families and kin-based bands. Functional specialization increases as political, economic, and religious figures and institutions appear. Regulatory systems expand from local (band or village) to regional to national (the state) levels as the population grows and political control strengthens.

While political organization can be found in all societies, the degree of specialized and formal mechanisms varies considerably from one society to another. Societies differ in their political organization based on three important dimensions:

1. the extent to which political institution are distinct from other aspects of the social structure ; that is in some societies, political structure are barely distinguishable from economic, kinship, or religious structure.
2. The extent to which authority is concentrated into specific political roles.
3. The level of political integration (i.e. the size of the territorial group that comes under the control of the political structure).

The three dimensions are the basis for the classification of societies into our fundamentally different types of political structure; band societies, tribal societies, chiefdoms and state societies although societies do not all fit neatly into one or another of these categories, this fourfold scheme is useful to help us understand how different societies and minister themselves and maintain social order.

3.4.1 Band societies

The least complex form of political arrangement is the band, characterized by small and usually nomadic populations of hunters and gathers. Although the size of a band can range anywhere from twenty to several hundred individuals, most bands number between thirty and fifty people. The actual size of particular bands is directly related to food-gathering methods; that is, the more food a band has at its disposal, the larger the number of people it can support. While bands may be loosely associated with a specific territory, they have little or no concept of individual property ownership and place a high value on sharing, cooperation and reciprocity.

Band societies have very little role specialization and are highly egalitarian in that few differences in status and wealth can be observed. Since this form of political organization is so closely associated with hunting-and gathering technology, it is generally thought to oldest form of political organization.

Band societies have number of traits in common with each other. First, band societies have the least amount of political integration; that is the various bands (each comprising fifty or so people) are independent of one another and are not part of a large political structure. The integration that does exist is largely based on ties of kinship and marriage. All of the bands found in any particular culture are bound together by common language and cultural features. They do not however all pay political allegiance to any overall authority.

Second, in band societies political decisions are frequently embedded in the wider social structure. Since bands are composed of kin, it is difficult to distinguish between purely political decisions and those that we would recognize as family, economic, or religious decision. Political life in other words, is simply one part of social life.

Third leadership role in band societies tend to be very informal. In band societies, there is no specialized political role or leaders with designed authority. Instead, leader in foregoing societies are frequently, but not always, older men respected for their experience, wisdom, good judgment and knowledge of hunting. Most decisions are made through discussion by the adult men. The headman can persuade and give advice but has no power to impose his will on the group. The headman frequently gives advice on such matters as migratory movement, but he possesses no permanent authority. If his advice proves to be wrong or unpopular the group members will look to another person to be headman. Band leadership, then stem not so much from power but rather from the recognized personal traits admired by the others in the group.

The Kung of the Kalahari exemplifies a band society with a headman. Although the position of headman is hereditary; the actual authority of the headman is quite limited. The headman coordinates the movement of his people and usually walks at the head of the group. He chooses the sites of new encampments and has first pick of location for his own house site. But beyond these limited perks of office the! Kung headman receives no other rewards. He is in no way responsible for organizing hunting parties, making artifacts, or negotiating marriage arrangements. These activities fall to the individual members of the band. The headman is not expected to be a judge of his people. Moreover his material possessions are no greater than any other person's as Marshall so aptly put it when referring to the! Kung headman "carries his own load and is as thin as the rest" (1965; 267).

◆ Foraging bands

The groups that are significant in a given society tend to reflect that society's sociopolitical type and adaptive strategy. For example, in most foraging societies only two kinds of groups are significant: the nuclear family and the band. Unlike sedentary villages (which appear in tribal societies), bands are impermanent. They form seasonally as component nuclear families assemble. The particular combination of families in a band may vary from year to year. In such settings the main social building blocks (linking principles) are the personal relationships of individuals. For example, marriage and kinship create ties between members of different bands. Because one's parents and grandparents come from different bands, a person has relatives in several of these groups. Trade and visiting also link local groups, as does fictive kinship, such as the San namesake system described in the last chapter. Similarly, Eskimo men traditionally had trade partners, whom they treated almost like brothers, in different bands. The natives of Australia had an institution known as the "section system" that had similar linking functions.

In a foraging band, there is very little differential authority and no differential power, although particular talents lead to special respect. For example, someone can sing or dance well, is an especially good storyteller, or can go into a trance and communicate with spirits. Band leaders are leaders in name only. They are first among equals. Sometimes they give advice or make decisions, but they have no means of enforcing their decisions.

Although foragers lack formal **law** in the sense of a legal code that includes trial and enforcement, they do have methods of social control and dispute settlement. The absence of law does not mean total anarchy. The aboriginal Eskimos (Hoebel 1954, 1968), or Inuit, as they are called in Canada, provide a good example of methods of settling disputes in stateless societies. As described by E. A. Hoebel (1954) in a study of Eskimo conflict resolution, a sparse population of some 20,000 Eskimos spanned 9,500 kilometers (6,000 miles) of the Arctic region. The most significant Eskimo social groups were the nuclear family and the band. Personal relationships linked the families and bands. Some bands had headmen. There were also shamans (part-time religious specialists). However, these positions conferred little power on those who occupied them.

Unlike tropical foraging societies, in which gathering-usually a female task-is more important, hunting and fishing by men were the primary Eskimo subsistence activities. The diverse and abundant plant foods available in warmer areas were absent in the Arctic. Traveling on land and sea in a bitter environment, Eskimo men faced more dangers than women did. The traditional male role took its toll in lives. Adult women would have outnumbered men substantially without occasional female **infanticide** (killing of a baby), which Eskimo culture permitted.

Despite this crude (and to us unthinkable) means of population regulation, there were still more adult women than men. This permitted some men to have two or three wives. The ability to support more than one wife conferred a certain amount of prestige, but it also encouraged envy. (Prestige is esteem, respect, or approval for culturally valued acts or qualities.) If a man seemed to be taking additional wives just to enhance his reputation, a rival was likely to steal one of them. Most disputes were between men and originated over women, caused by wife stealing or adultery. If a man discovered that his wife had been having sexual relations without his permission, he considered himself wronged.

Although public opinion would not let the husband ignore the matter, he had several options. He could try to kill the wife stealer. However, if he succeeded, one of his rival's kinsmen would surely try to kill him in retaliation. One dispute could escalate into several deaths as relatives avenged a succession of murders. No government existed to intervene and stop such a **blood feud** (a feud between families). However, one could also challenge a rival to a song battle. In a public setting, contestants made up insulting songs about each other. At the end of the match, the

audience judged one of them the winner. However, if a man whose wife had been stolen won, there was no guarantee she would return. Often she would decide to stay with her abductor.

Several acts of killing that are crimes in contemporary North America were not considered criminal by the Eskimos. Infanticide has already been mentioned. Furthermore, people who felt that, because of age or infirmity, they were no longer useful might kill themselves or ask others to kill them. Old people or invalids who wished to die would ask a close relative, such as a son, to end their lives. It was necessary to ask a close relative in order to ensure that the kin of the deceased did not take revenge on the killer.

Thefts are common in state-organized societies which have marked property differentials. However, thefts were not a problem for the Eskimos or for most foragers. Each Eskimo had access to resources needed to sustain life. Every man could hunt, fish, and make the tools necessary for subsistence. Every woman could obtain the implement and materials needed to make clothing, prepare food, and do domestic work. Eskimos could even hunt and fish in territories of other local groups. There was no notion of private ownership of territory or animals.

To describe certain property notions of people who live in societies without state organization, E. M. Service (1966) coined the term **personality** (note the spelling). Personality refers to items other than strategic resources that are indelibly associated with a specific person. These items include things such as arrows, a tobacco pouch, clothing, and personal ornaments. The term points to the personal relationship between such items and their owner. Personality is so tied to specific people that theft is inconceivable (think of your toothbrush). The "grave goods" that are often found in archeological sites dating to the period before food production probably represent personality. These items were not passed on to heirs. Their association with the deceased was too definite.

One of the most basic Eskimo beliefs was that "all natural resources are free or common goods" (Hoebel 1968). Band-organized societies usually lack differential access to strategic resources. The only private property is personality. If people want something from someone else, they ask for it, and it is usually given.

3.4.2 Tribal societies

Whereas band societies are usually associated with hunting and gathering, tribal societies are found most often among food producers (horticulturalists and pastoralist). Since plant and animal domestication is far more productive than foraging, tribal societies tend to have populations that are larger, denser, and somewhat more sedentary in nature. Tribal societies are similar to band societies in several important respects. They are both egalitarian to the extent that there are no marked difference in status, rank, power, and wealth. In addition, tribal societies, like bands, have local leaders but do not have centralized leadership.

The major difference between tribes and bands is that the tribal societies have certain pan-tribal mechanisms that cut across and integrate the entire local segment of the tribe into a larger whole. These mechanisms include such tribal association as clans, age grades, or secret societies. Pan-tribal associations function to unit the tribe against external threats. These integrating forces are not permanent political fixtures, however. Most often the local units of a tribe operate autonomously, for the integrating mechanisms come in to play only when an external treaties arises. When the treat is eliminated, the local units return to their autonomous state. Even though these pan-tribal mechanisms may be transitory, they nevertheless provide wider political integration in certain situation than would ever be possible in band societies.

In many tribal societies, the kinship unit known as the clan serves as a pan-tribal mechanisms of political integration. The clan is defined as group of kin who consider them to be descended from a common ancestor, even though individual clan members cannot trace step-by-step their connection to the clan founder. Clan elders, while not holding formal political offices, usually manage the affairs of their clans (e.g., settle disputes between clan members) and represent their clans in dealing with other clans.

Another form of pan tribal association based on kinship that is found in tribal societies is the segmentary lineage system. While less common than tribal societies based on clans; those based on segmentary lineage systems are instructive because they demonstrate the shifting or ephemeral nature of the political structure in tribal societies. In a segmentary system individuals belong to a serious of different descent units (corresponding to different genealogical levels) that function in different social contexts.

The most basic or local unit is the minimal lineage, comprising three or five generations. Members of a minimal lineage usually live together, consider themselves to be the closest of kin,

and generally engage in everyday activities together. Minimal lineage which tend to be politically independent, form a hierarchy of genealogical units. For example, minimal lineages make up minor lineages; minor lineages coalesce in to major lineages; and major lineages form maximal lineages. When a dispute occurs between individuals of different segments, people are expected to side with the disputant to whom they are most closely related. Thus, people who act as a unit in one context merge in to larger aggregate in other social situations. This process of lineage segmentation means that segments will unite when confronted by a wider group. In the words of Middleton and Tait:

... a segment that in one situation is independent finds that it and its former competitors are merged together as subordinate segments in the internal administrative organization of a wider over all segments that includes them both. This wider segment is intern in external competitive relations with other similar segments, and there may be an entire series of such segments.

It is important to keep in mind that this various segments minimal, minor, major, and maximal lineages are not groups but rather alliance networks that are activated only under certain circumstances. This process tends to deflect hostilities away from competing kin s' and toward an out side or more distinctive enemy. Such a level of political organization is effective for the mobilization of a military force either to defend the entire tribe from outside forces or for expanding in to the territories of weaker societies.

The Pastoral Nuer of Southern Sudan serves as a good example of a tribal form of political organization. The Nuer who number approximately 300,000 people, have no centralized government and no governmental functionaries with coercive authority. There are, of course, influential men but their influence stems more from their personal traits than from the force of elected or inherited office. The numbers, who are highly egalitarian, do not readily accept authority beyond the elders of the family. Social control among the number is maintained by segment lineages in that close kin are expected to come to the assistance of one another against more distantly related people.

◆ Tribal cultivators

Tribes usually have a horticultural or pastoral economy and are organized by village life and/or descent-group membership. Socioeconomic stratification (i.e., a class structure) and centralized rule are absent. Many tribes have small-scale warfare, often in the form of inter-village raiding.

Tribes have more effective regulatory mechanisms than do foragers, but tribalists have no sure means of enforcing political decisions. The main regulatory officials are village heads, "big men," descent-group leaders, village councils, and leaders of pan-tribal associations. All these figures and groups have limited authority.

Like foragers, horticulturalists tend to be egalitarian, although some have marked gender stratification—an unequal distribution of resources, power, prestige, and personal freedom between men and women. Horticultural villages are usually small, with low population density and open access to strategic resources. Age, gender, and personal traits determine how much respect people receive and how much support they get from others. Egalitarianism diminishes, however, as village size and a population density increase. Horticultural village usually have headmen—rarely, if ever, headwomen.

◆ Descent-Group Organization

Kin-based bands are basic social units among foragers. An analogous group among food producers is the descent group. A descent group is a permanent social unit whose members claim common ancestry. The group endures even though its membership changes as members are born and die, move in and move out. Often, descent-group membership is determined at birth and is life long.

Descent groups frequently are exogamous (members must seek their mates from other descent groups). Two common rules serve to admit certain people as descent-group members while excluding others. With a rule of matrilineal descent, people join the mother's group automatically at birth and stay members throughout life. Matrilineal descent groups therefore include only the children of the group's women. With **patrilineal** descent, people automatically have lifetime membership in the father's group. The children of all the men join the group, but the children of the women are excluded. Matrilineal and patrilineal descent are types of **unilineal** descent. This means that the descent rule uses one line only, either the male or the female (Figures 12.1 and 12.2). **Patrilineal** descent is much more common than is matrilineal descent. In a sample of 564 societies (Murdock 1957), about three times as many were found to be patrilineal (247 to 84).

Descent groups may be lineages or clans. Common to both is the belief that members descend from the same apical ancestor. This person stands at the apex, or top, of the common genealogy. How do lineages and clans differ? A lineage uses demonstrated descent. Members can recite the names of their forebears in each generation from the apical ancestor through the present. (This

doesn't mean that their recitations are accurate, only that lineage member thinks they are.) Clans use stipulated descent. Clan members merely say they descend 'from the apical ancestor. They don't try to trace the actual genealogical links between themselves and that ancestor.

Some societies have both lineages and clans. In this case, clans have more members and cover a larger geographical area than lineages do. Some times a clan's apical ancestor is not a human at all but an animal or plant (called a totem). Whether human or not, the ancestor symbolizes the social unity and identity of the members, distinguishing them from other groups.

A tribal society normally contains several descent groups. Anyone of them may be confined to a single village, but they usually span more than one village. Any branch of a descent group that lives in one place is a local descent group. Two or more local branches of different descent groups may live i same village. Descent groups in the same villa different villages establish alliances through quent intermarriage.

◆ The Village Headman

The Yanomami (Chagnon 1992) are Native Americans who live in southern Venezuela and adjacent Brazil. Their tribal society has about 20,000 people living in 200 to 250 widely scattered villages, with a population between 40 and 250. The Yanomami are horticulturalists who also hunt and gather. Their staple crops are bananas and plantains (a banana like crop). There are more significant groups among the Yanomami than exist in a foraging society. The Yanomami have nuclear families, villages, and descent groups. Their decent groups are patrilineal and exogamous. They span more than one village. However, local branches of two different descent groups may live in the village and intermarry.

As in many village-based tribal societies, the leadership position among the Yanomami is the village **head** (always a man). His authority, like that of the foraging band leader, is severely limited. If a headman wants something done, he must lead by example and persuasion. The headman lacks right to issue orders. He can only persuade, harangue, and try to influence public opinion. For ample, if he wants people to, clean up the central plaza in preparation for a feast, he must start sweeping it himself, hoping that his co villagers will take the hint and relieve him.

When conflict erupts, the headman may be called on as a mediator who listens to both sides. He will give an opinion and advice. If a disputant is unsatisfied, the headman can do nothing. He has no power to back his decisions and no way to impose punishments. Like the band leader, he is

first among equals.

A Yanomami village headman must also lead in generosity. Because he must be more generous than any other villager, he cultivates more land. His garden provides much of the food consumed when his village holds a feast for another village. The headman represents the village in its dealings with outsiders. Sometimes he visits other villages to invite people to a feast.

The way a person acts as headman depends on his personal traits and the number of supporters he can muster. One village headman, Kaobawa, intervened in a dispute between a husband and wife and kept him from killing her (Chagnon 1992). He also guaranteed safety to a delegation from a village with which a co villager *of his wanted to start a war*. Kaobawa was a particularly effective headman. He had demonstrated his fierceness in battle, but he knew how to use diplomacy to avoid offending other villagers. No one in the village had a better personality for the headman ship. Nor (because Kaobawa had many brothers) did anyone have more supporters. Among the Yanomami, when a group dissatisfied with a village headman, its members leave and found a new village; this is done from time to time.

◆ Village Raiding

Yanomami society, with its many villages and decent groups, is more complex than a band organized society. The Yanomami also face more regulatory problems. A headman can sometimes vent a specific violent act, but there is no government to maintain order. In fact, inter village raiding in which men are killed and women are captured been a feature of some areas of Yanomami territory, particularly those studied by Chagnon(1992).

Traditional Yanomami intra tribal warfare is similar to, but more extreme than, raiding in other tribal societies.

Chagnon describes male supremacy as a central theme in Yanomami culture. Gender stratification is so extreme that we may speak of a *male supremacist complex*, in which males are valued than females and women are deprived of prestige, power, and personal freedom. The Yanomami prefer sons to daughters, especially as firstborn children. If the firstborn is a girl, she may be killed, but boys are allowed to live. Females also die in warfare, and there are more male than female Yanomami (449 to 391 in seven villages that Chagnon studied). Furthermore, although there are too few women to provide even one wife for each man, 25 percent of the men are polygynous-they have multiple mates. The scarcity of women is one reason men go on fighting. They want to capture additional women, as wives. The following figure summarizes

the way in which the pattern of Yanomami warfare perpetuates itself.

There is very little debate among anthropologists about the nature and causes of inter village raiding among the Yanomami. However, we must also *stress that the Yanomami are not isolated from* outside events (although there are still uncontested villages). The Yanomami live in two nation-states, Venezuela and Brazil, and external warfare waged by Brazilian ranchers and miners has increasingly threatened them. During the recent Brazilian gold rush (1987-1991), one Yanomami died each day, on average, from external attacks (including biological warfare-introduced diseases to which the Indians lack resistance). By 1991 there were some 40,000 Brazilian miners in the Yanomami homeland. Some Indians were killed outright. The miners introduced new diseases, and the swollen population ensured that old diseases became epidemic. In 1991 a commission of the American Anthropological Association reported on the plight of the Yanomami (*Anthropology Newsletter*, September 1991). Brazilian Yanomami was dying at a rate of 10 percent annually, and their fertility rate had dropped to zero. Since then, both the Brazilian and the Venezuelan governments have intervened to protect the Yanomami. The former Brazilian president, Fernando Collor, declared a huge Yanomami territory offlimits to outsiders. Unfortunately, by mid-1992 local politicians, miners, and ranchers were increasingly evading the ban. These external attacks pose a much more serious threat to Yanomami survival than does traditional inter village raiding.

◆ Tribal Warfare

In a cross-cultural study of tribal warfare, Divale and Harris (1976) used the Human Relations Area Files (HRAF), a voluminous archive housed in New Haven, Connecticut, but available on microfiche in most college and university libraries. The HRAF is assembled from ethnographic reports and historical accounts of more than 300 cultures. Divale and Harris define warfare as

All organized forms of inter group homicide involving Combat teams of two or more persons, including feud and raiding. (1976, p. 521)

Divale and Harris located 112 societies with good information on warfare. In 49 percent of them, warfare was going on at the time of the report. In 30 percent, it had stopped between five and twenty five years earlier. In the remaining 21 percent, Warfare had ceased more than twenty-five years before the report.

Divale and Harris argue that warfare acts to curb population growth among tribal cultivators. This is not mainly because of combat deaths but because tribal warfare can affect reproduction indirectly, inculcating cultural values that lead to overt or covert female infanticide. In warring tribes, new born females are more likely to be killed than male babies' are. Female infanticide isn't always direct. There is also preferential treatment of boys and neglect of girls, leading to girls' deaths. In any population, the lower the proportion of females who survive to re-productive age, the lower the rate of population growth.

According to Divale and Harris, tribal warfare creates a preference for warriors, and thus for boys over girls. This preference promotes female infanticide. In the societies in their study where warfare was still going on, the ratio of males to females in the junior age group (fourteen years and under) was 127:100. In those in which warfare had stopped, junior sex ratios approached 106:100. Divale and Harris argue that in non industrial societies men do the fighting because, on the average, they are taller and heavier than women are. Size confers an advantage in combat with handheld, muscle-powered weapons. Note that the military significance of physical size and strength declines in industrial societies. A few North American women with rifles or even handguns could easily best a party of tribal raiders.

When warfare is frequent, a male supremacist complex often pervades the culture. Men control access to resources and labor. Patrilineal descent rules, residence customs, and marital privileges emphasize and maintain male solidarity. The most successful warriors have multiple wives. This polygyny intensifies any shortage of females that may already exist and stimulates additional fighting-to capture women.

Divale and Harris view the expansion of tribal warfare as one consequence of the emergence and spread of food production, which increased the rate of population growth. To understand why, we must consider the relationship between diet and fertility. Foragers tend to have a diet that is high in protein and low in fats and carbohydrates. The diet of cultivators is just the opposite. Diet affects the ratio of body fat to total weight, and foragers have less fat than food producers do. The physical results of diet affect fertility in two ways. **First**, the high-fat diets associated with food production promote earlier puberty and lengthen the childbearing period. **Second**, high-fat diets make women more likely to get pregnant, even when they are nursing.

Foragers, with their low body fat, can delay conception by nursing their babies for years. Lactation (milk production) keeps body fat down and disrupts normal ovulation, so sexual intercourse is less likely to result in a new pregnancy. However, because prolonged lactation is only partially effective as contraception, infanticide also occurs among foragers.

The high-fat and high-carbohydrate diet of cultivators reduces the effectiveness of lactation as contraception. In cultivating societies, nursing women often get pregnant, and other practices arise to limit population growth. For example, there may be a postpartum taboo: Women must avoid sexual intercourse for a culturally determined period after giving birth.

Abortion, although practiced in some cultures for example, among certain tropical forest groups in South America-is not very common because it often kills the pregnant woman along with the fetus. Divale and Harris contend that without effective contraception and abortion, the most widespread custom that serves to limit population growth among tribal cultivators is female infanticide, which intensifies with warfare and the male supremacist complex. Females are valued less than males are, and this makes it psychologically easier for members of such groups (often the mothers) to kill female babies. Reliable contraception, based on recent inventions, permits more humane population limitation.

◆ Village Councils

Whatever the reasons for increased population density and the presence of larger villages in an area, these demographic changes pose new regulatory problems. As the number of people living together increases, the potential for interpersonal conflict grows. Nigeria has villages of more than 1,000 people in areas where population densities exceed 200 people per square mile (about 75 people per square kilometer). In Amazonia, native horticulture has supported villages with 1,400 people (Carneiro 1961/1968). When village population exceeds 1,000, there may be a dozen descent groups in a village instead of just one or two .

In large villages, not only are there many interpersonal relationships requiring regulation, but there are inter group relations as well. In societies with a well-developed descent-group structure, a person's allegiance is mainly to the descent group and only secondarily to the village and tribe. People must take the side of their group in any dispute with another descent group residing in the same village.

If disorder is not to reign in such larger-scale cultivating societies, political leaders must arbitrate disputes. Large villages have more effective heads than the Yanomami have. The specific

activities and manner of selection of the head (usually a man) vary, but the task of regulator is demanding. Heads may direct military actions or hunting expeditions. They may reallocate land if, because of different rates of population increase, some descent groups have grown too big for their estates while others are still too small to make full use of their own.

In smaller-scale societies a person's position depends on age, gender, and personality traits. When societies have descent groups, however, another basis for status develops i.e., descent-group leadership. In villages with multiple descent groups, each descent group has a head. All the heads together may form a council of advisers or elders to work with the village head. In cooperation, they make up the local power structure. The council backs the village head's authority and ensures that decisions are carried out by the descent groups the members represent.

The village head must obtain council support for decisions applying to the entire village. Sometimes, however, it is difficult to reach agreement, since decisions that are good for the community at large may harm the interests of a particular descent group. Decisions usually are not enforced through physical means. If the head of one descent group refuses to cooperate, persuasion and public opinion are used. If people refuse to follow the advice of their elders, they may be asked to leave the village. However, in tribes, as in bands, community opinion and persuasion are usually sufficient.

Despite their enlarged powers, the descent-group leaders and the village head must still be generous. Their wealth and life styles are not noticeably superior to those of their fellow villagers. They are only part-time political specialists. They are also subsistence farmers. If they control more land and larger and more productive households, they must give more feasts and support more dependents.

The manner of choosing the village head varies from one tribal society to another. Sometimes the headship rotates among descent groups. In other cultures the office is confined to one descent group, perhaps the largest, but the incumbent relies on the support and approval of representatives of the others. Finally, the choice of the village head may be associated with religion. Heads may be chosen because of supernatural powers. Their abilities may be a result of training, or people may believe they are inherited or come from divine revelation.

◆ The "Big Man"

In many areas of the South Pacific, particularly the Melanesian Islands and Papua-New Guinea, native cultures have a kind of political leader that we call the big man. The big man (almost always a male) is an elaborate version of the village head, but there is one very significant difference. The village head's leadership is within one village; the big man has supporters in several villages. He is therefore a more effective (but still limited) regulator of **regional political organization**. Here we see the trend toward expansion in the scale of socio-political regulation from village to region.

The Kapauku Papu'ans live in Irian Jaya, Indonesia (which is on the island of New Guinea). Anthropologist Leopold Pospisil (1963) studied the Kapauku (45,000 people), who grow crops (with the sweet potato as their staple) and raise pigs. Their economy is too complex to be described as simple horticulture. Beyond the household, the only political figure among the Kapauku is the big man, known as a *tonowi*. A *tonowi* achieves his status through hard work, amassing wealth in the form of pigs and other native riches. Characteristics that can distinguish a big man from his fellows include wealth, generosity, eloquence, physical fitness, bravery, and supernatural powers. Notice that big men are what they are because they have certain personalities, not because they have inherited their wealth or position.

Any man who is determined enough can become a big man, because people create their own wealth through hard work and good judgment. Wealth depends on successful pig breeding and trading. As a man's pig herd and prestige grow, he attracts supporters. He sponsors ceremonial pig feasts in which pigs are slaughtered and their meat is distributed to guests.

The big man has some advantages that the Yanomami village headman lacks. His wealth exceeds that of his fellows. His primary supporters, in recognition of past favors and anticipation of future rewards, recognize him as a leader and accept his decisions as binding. He is an important regulator of regional events in Kapauku life. He helps determine the dates for feasts and markets. He persuades people to sponsor feasts, which distribute pork and wealth. He regulates inter village contacts by sponsoring dance expeditions. He initiates economic projects that require the cooperation of a regional community.

The Kapauku big man again exemplifies a generalization about leadership in tribal societies: If people achieve wealth and widespread respect and support, they must be generous. The big man works hard not to hoard wealth but to be able to *give away* the fruits of his labor, to convert wealth into prestige and gratitude. If a big man is stingy, he loses his supporters, and his reputation plummets. The Kapauku take even more extreme measures against big men who hoard. Selfish and greedy rich men may be murdered by their fellows.

Political figures such as the big man emerge as regulators both of demographic growth and of economic complexity. Kapauku cultivation uses varied techniques for specific kinds of land. Labor intensive cultivation in valleys involves mutual aid in turning the soil before planting. The digging of long drainage ditches is even more complex. kapauku plant cultivation supports a larger and denser population than does the simpler horticulture the Yanomami. Kapauku society could not survive in its present form without collective cultivation and political regulation of the more complex tasks.

◆ Segmentary Lineage Organization

The big man is a **temporary** regional regulator. Big men can mobilize supporters in several villages to pool produce and labor on specific occasions. Another temporary form of regional political organization in tribal society is segmentary lineage organization (**SLO**). This means that the descent group structure (usually patrilineal) has several levels-nested segments-that are like dolls nesting inside other dolls or boxes placed within boxes. The largest segments are maximal lineages, segments of which are known as Major lineages. Major lineages are divided up into minor lineages.

Minor lineages in turn are segmented in to minimal lineages, whose common ancestor lived fairly recently-no more than four generations a go. The larger segments have spread throughout a region, but members of the minimal lineage occupy the same village. New minimal lineages develop when people move away and establish new settlements. Over time, minimal lineages grow in to minor ones, minor into major ones, and major in to maximal ones.

Segmentary lineage organization exists in broad outline in many cultures, such as the traditional societies of North Africa and the Middle East, including pre state Arabs and

biblical Jews. However the classic examples of SLO are two African groups the Tiv of Nigeria and the Nuer of the Sudan. Segmentary lineage structure organized more than 1 million Tiv, who believe that they all share the same remote ancestor, a man named Tiv who settled in their homeland many generations ago. They trace the line of descent leading from, Tiv to present, listing his male descendants in each generation.

Although the Nuer cannot demonstrate patrilineal descent that far back, they believe that they have a common ancestry separate from that of their neighbors. One of several Nilotic populations (populations that inhabit the Upper Nile region of East Africa), the Nuer (Evans-Pritchard 1940), numbering more than 200,000 live in Sudan. Cattle pastoralism is fundamental to their mixed economy, which also includes horticulture. The Nuer has many institutions that are typical of tribal societies, including patrilineal descent groups arranged into a segmentary structure. Their political organization is based on descent rules and genealogical reckoning.

Brothers are very close in segmentary societies, especially when the father is alive. He manages their joint property and stops them from quarreling too much. He also arranges their marriages. When he dies, the brothers usually keep on living in the same village, but one may take his share of the herds and start a settlement of his own. However, his brothers are still his closest allies. He will live as close as he can to them. Even if the brothers all stay in the same village, some of the grandchildren will move away in search of new pastures. However, each will try to remain as close to the home village as possible, settling nearest his brothers and nearer to his first cousins than to more distant relatives.

With SLO, the basic principle of solidarity is that the closer the descent-group relationship, the greater the mutual support. The more distant the shared ancestor, the greater will be the potential for hostility. This extends right up the genealogy; maximal lineages are more likely to fight each other than are major lineages.

Segmentary lineage organization seems to have been advantageous for the Tiv and the Nuer, allowing them to expand at their neighbors' expense. This socio-political organization confers a feeling of tribal identity. It provides an orderly way to mobilize temporarily against other societies. When the need arises, the Nuer or the Tiv can easily present a common front against outsiders-people who claim different genealogical and ethnic identity (Sahlins 1961).

Segmentary descent also regulates disputes and their resolution. If a fight breaks out

between men who share a living patrilineal ancestor, he intervenes to settle it. As head of the minimal descent group that includes the disputants, he backs his authority with the threat of banishment. However, when there is no common living ancestor, a blood feud may develop.

Disputes among the Nuer do not arise over land, which a person acquires as a member of a lineage. As a member of a minimal descent group, one has a right to its estate. A frequent cause of quarrels is adultery, and if a person injures or kills someone, a feud may develop. Conflicts also arise over divorce.

There is an alternative to a blood feud. The disputants may consult the leopard-skin man, so called because he customarily wears a leopard skin over his shoulders. Leopard-skin men conduct rituals, but their most important role is to mediate disputes. For instance, elders may ask a leopard-skin man to persuade a murder victim's kin to accept a certain number of cattle in recompense. While the mediator attempts to arrange a peaceful settlement, the murderer may take refuge in the leopard-skin man's village, which offers sanctuary until the mediator resolves the dispute or withdraws.

The leopard-skin man relies on persuasion and avoids blaming either side. He cannot enforce his decisions, but in theory he can use the threat of supernatural punishment. If one of the disputing groups is adamant, he may, in disgust, threaten to curse it. If, after seeking mediation, the disputants refuse to agree, the leopard-skin man may withdraw.

Negotiations involve the disputants, their elders, and other close kin. There is full and free discussion before a settlement is reached. The disputants may gradually come to accept the collective opinion of the mediator and the elders. However, although the peace-making abilities of the leopard-skin man are greater than anything found among the Yanomami and Eskimos, blood feuds still exist among the stateless Nuer.

With SLO, no one has a constant group of allies. One's allies change from one dispute to the next depending on genealogical distance. Still, common descent does permit a temporary common front, as minimal lineages unite to form minor ones. Minor lineages form majors and major lineages together in a maximal lineage that, in the presence of an outside threat, unites all Nuer or Tiv through its claim of common patrilineal descent.

Similarly, Arabs claim to demonstrate their segmentary descent patrilineally from the biblical Ishmael. There is an Arab adage, "***I and my brother against my cousin (father's***

brother's son). I, my brother, and my cousin against all other Arabs. I, my brother, my cousin, and all other Arabs against all the world".

Jews believe themselves to be descended from Isaac, half-brother of Ishmael. The Jews and Arabs share a common ancestor, Abraham, the father of both Ishmael and Isaac. In the modern world, of course, political mechanisms other than SLO, including national governments and regional alliances, work to determine relations between Arabs and Jews.

◆ Pan tribal Sodalities, Associations, and Age Grades

We have seen that events initiated by big men temporarily unite people from different villages. Segmentary lineage organization permits short-term mobilization of an entire society against an outside threat. There are many other kinds of sociopolitical linkages between local groups in a region. Clans, for example, often span several villages.

Kinship and descent provide important social linkages in tribal societies. Principles other than kinship also may link local groups. In a modern nation, a labor union, national sorority or fraternity, political party, or religious denomination may provide such a non-kin-based link. In tribes, **non kin groups** called **associations** or **sodalities** may serve the same linking function. Often sodalities are based on common age or gender, with all-male sodalities more common than all-female ones.

Pan tribal sodalities (those which extend across the whole tribe, spanning several villages) tend to be found in areas where two or more different cultures come into regular contact. They are especially likely to develop when there is warfare *between tribes* (as opposed to raiding between villages of the same tribe, as practiced by the Yanomami). Sodalities help organize the warfare that men wage against neighboring cultures. Since sodalities draw their members from different villages of the same tribe, they can mobilize men in many local groups for attack or retaliation against another tribe. Like SLO, pan tribal sodalities have military value because they facilitate temporary regional mobilization. In particular, pan tribal sodalities are common among pastoralists. One culture's sodality may organize raids to steal cattle or horses from another.

In the cross-cultural study of non kin groups, we must distinguish between those which are confined to a single village and those which span several local groups. Only the latter, the *pan tribal* groups, are important in general military mobilization and regional political organization. *Localized* men's houses and clubs, limited to particular villages, are found in

many horticultural societies in tropical South America, Melanesia, and Papua-New Guinea. These groups may organize village activities and even inter village raiding, but their political role is like that of village councils, and their leaders are similar to village heads. Their political scope is mainly local. The following discussion, which continues our examination of the growth in scale of regional sociopolitical organization, concerns pan tribal groups.

The best examples of pan tribal sodalities come from the Central Plains of North America and from Tropical Africa. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, native populations of the Great Plains of the United States and Canada experienced a rapid growth of pan tribal sodalities. This development reflected an economic change that followed the spread of horses, which had been brought to the New World by the Spanish, to the states between the Rocky Mountains and the Mississippi River. Many Plains Indian societies changed their adaptive strategies because of the horse. At first they had been foragers who hunted bison (buffalo) on foot. Later they adopted a mixed economy based on hunting, gathering, and horticulture. Finally they changed to a much more specialized economy based on horseback hunting of bison (eventually with rifles).

As the Plains tribes were undergoing these changes, other Indians also adopted horseback hunting and moved into the Plains. Attempting to occupy the same ecological niche, groups came into conflict. A pattern of warfare developed in which the members of one tribe raided another, usually for horses, as was portrayed in the movie *Dances with Wolves*. The new economy demanded that people follow the movement of the bison herds. During the winter, when the bison dispersed, a tribe fragmented into small bands and families. In the summer, as huge herds assembled on the Plains, members of the tribe reunited. They camped together for social, political, and religious activities, but mainly for communal bison hunting.

Only two activities in the new adaptive strategy demanded strong leadership: **organizing and carrying out raids on enemy camps** (to capture horses) and **managing the summer bison hunt**. All the Plains cultures developed pan tribal sodalities, and leadership roles within them, to police the summer hunt. Leaders coordinated hunting efforts, making sure that people did not cause a stampede with an early shot or an ill-advised action. Leaders imposed severe penalties, including seizure of a culprit's wealth, for disobedience.

Some of the Plains sodalities were age sets of increasing rank. Each set included all the men from that tribe's component bands born during a certain time span. Each set had its distinctive dance, songs, possessions, and privileges. Members of each set had to pool their wealth to buy admission to the next higher level as they moved up the age hierarchy. Most Plains societies had pan tribal warrior associations whose rituals celebrated militarism. As noted previously, the leaders of these associations organized bison hunting and raiding. They also arbitrated disputes during the summer, when large numbers of people came together. Many of the tribes that adopted this Plains strategy of adaptation had once been foragers for whom hunting and gathering had been individual or small-group affairs. They had never come together previously as a single social unit. ***Age and gender were available as social principles that could quickly and efficiently forge unrelated people into pan tribal groups.*** Other means of creating and intensifying tribal spirit also developed, for example, the fervent Sun Dance religion, which spread rapidly among the Plains groups as a summertime ceremony. Common participation in the Sun Dance ceremonies became a powerful forger of new tribal ethnic identities.

Raiding of one tribe by another, this time for cattle rather than horses, was also common in eastern and southeastern Africa, where pan tribal sodalities, including age sets, also developed. Among the pastoral Masai of Kenya, men born during the same four-year period were circumcised together and belonged to the same named group, an age set, throughout their lives. The sets moved through grades, the most important of which was the warrior grade. Members of the set who wished to enter the warrior grade were at first discouraged by its current occupants, who eventually vacated the warrior grade and married. Members of a set felt a strong allegiance to one another and eventually had sexual rights to each other's wives. Masai women lacked comparable set organization, but they also passed through culturally recognized age grades: initiate, married woman, and postmenopausal woman.

To understand the difference between an ***age set*** and an ***age grade***, think of a college class, the Class of '96, for example, and its progress through the university. The age set would be the group of people constituting the Class of '96, while the first ("freshman"), sophomore, junior, and senior years would represent the age grades.

Not all cultures with age grades also have age sets. When there are no sets, men can enter or leave a particular grade individually or collectively, often by going through a predetermined

ritual. The grades most commonly recognized in Africa are these:

1. Recently initiated youths
2. Warriors
3. One or more grades of mature men who play important roles in pan tribal government
4. Elders, who may have special ritual responsibilities

In certain parts of West Africa and Central Africa, the pan tribal sodalities are secret societies, made up exclusively of men or women. Like that of fraternities and sororities, these associations have secret initiation ceremonies. Among the Mende of Sierra Leone, men's and women's secret societies are very influential. The men's group, the Poro, trains boys in social conduct, ethics, and religion and supervises political and economic activities. Leadership roles in the Poro often overshadow village headship and play an important part in social control, dispute management, and tribal political regulation. Like descent, then, age, gender, and ritual can link members of different local groups into a single social collectivity in tribal society and thus create a sense of ethnic identity, of belonging to the same cultural tradition.

◆ Pastoralists

Although many pastoralists live in tribes, a range of demographic and sociopolitical diversity occurs with pastoralism. A comparison of pastoralists shows that as regulatory problems increase, political hierarchies become more complex. Political organization becomes less personal, more formal, and less kinship-oriented. The pastoral strategy of adaptation does not dictate any particular political organization. A range of authority structures manage regulatory problems associated with specific environments. Many pastoralists (such as the Nuer and other East African herders) live in tribal societies. Others have powerful chiefs and live in nation-states. This reflects pastoralists' need to interact with other populations-a need that is less characteristic of the other adaptive strategies.

The scope of political authority among pastoralists expands considerably as regulatory problems increase in densely populated regions. Consider two Iranian pastoral nomadic tribes-the Basseri and the Qashqai. These groups followed a nomadic route more than 480 kilometers (300 miles) long. Starting each year from a plateau near the coast, they took their animals to grazing land 5,400 meters (17,000 feet) above sea level. These tribes shared this

route with one another and with several other ethnic groups.

Use of the same pasture land at different times was carefully scheduled. Ethnic-group movements were tightly coordinated. Expressing this schedule is *il-rah*, a concept common to all Iranian nomads. A group's *il-rah* is its customary path in time and space. It is the schedule, different for each group, of when specific areas can be used in the annual trek.

Each tribe had its own leader, known as the *khan* or *il-khan*. The Basseri *khan*, because he dealt with a smaller population, faced fewer problems in coordinating its movements than did the leaders of the Qashqai. Correspondingly, his rights, privileges, duties, and authority were weaker. Nevertheless, his authority exceeded that of any political figure we have discussed so far. However, the *khan's* authority still came from his personal traits rather than from his office. That is, the Basseri followed a particular *khan* not because of a political position he happened to fill but because of their personal allegiance and loyalty to him as a man. The *khan* relied on the support of the heads of the descent groups into which Basseri society was divided, following a rough segmentary lineage model.

In Qashqai society, however, allegiance shifts from the person to the office. The Qashqai had multiple levels of authority and more powerful *khans*. Managing 400,000 people required a complex hierarchy. Heading it was the *ii-khan*, helped by a deputy, under whom were the heads of constituent tribes, under each of whom were descent-group heads.

A case illustrates just how developed the Qashqai authority structure was. A hailstorm prevented some nomads from joining the annual migration at the appointed time. Although everyone recognized that they were not responsible for their delay, the *il-khan* assigned them less favorable grazing land, for that year only, in place of their usual pasture. The tardy herders and other Qashqai considered the judgment fair and didn't question it. Thus Qashqai authorities regulated the annual migration. They also adjudicated disputes between people, tribes, and descent groups.

These Iranian cases illustrate the fact that pastoralism is often just one among many specialized economic activities within complex nation-states and regional systems. As part of a larger whole, pastoral tribes are constantly pitted against other ethnic groups. In these nations, the state becomes a final authority, a higher-level regulator that attempts to limit conflict between ethnic groups. State organization arose not just to manage agricultural economies but also to regulate the activities of ethnic groups within expanding social and

economic systems.

3.4.3 Chiefdoms

As we have seen, in band and tribal societies, local groups are economically and political autonomous, authority is uncentralized, and populations tend to be generally egalitarian. Moreover, roles are unspecialized, populations are small in size, and economies are largely subsistent in nature. But as societies become more complex-with larger and more specialized population more sophisticated technology, and growing surpluses-their need for more formal and permanent political structures increases. In such societies, known as chiefdoms, political authority is likely to reside with a single individual, either acting alone or in conjunction with an advisory council.

The chiefdom differs from bands and tribes that chiefdom integrates a number of local communities in a more formal and permanent way. Unlike bands and tribes, chiefdoms are made of local communities that are not equal, but rather different from one another in terms of rank and status. Based on their genealogical proximity to the chiefs, nobles and commons hold different levels of prestige and power. Chief ships are frequently hereditary, and the chief and his or her immediate kin constitute social and political elite. Rarely are chiefdoms totally unified politically under single political units, each headed by a chief.

Chiefdoms also differ from tribes and bands in that higher rank, power and authority than others in the society. Unlike bands or tribal headmen or headwomen, chief usually have considerable power, authority, and in some cases, even wealth because the chief usually has authority to make judgments, punish wrongdoers, and settle disputes. Chiefs usually have the authority to distribute land to loyal subjects, recruit people into military service, and recruit laborers for public work projects. Authority is usually reinforced by certain alleged supernatural powers. Polynesian chiefs, for example, were believed to possess the supernatural power of man, which lent a special type of credence to their authority.

Chiefs are also intimately related to the economic activities of their subject through the redistributive system of economics. Subjects give food surpluses to the chief (not uncommonly at the chief's insistence), which are then redistributed by the chief through communal feasts and doles. This system of redistribution through a chief serves the obvious economic function of ensuring that no people in the society go hungry. It also serves the important political function of providing the people with a mechanism for expressing their loyalty and support for the chief.

Within the past hundred and fifty years, a number of societies with no former tradition of chief have had chief ships imposed on them by some of the European colonial power. As the European nations created their colonial empires during the nineteenth century, they created chief (or altered the nature of tradition chief) to facilitate administering local populations. For example, the British created chief for their own administrative convenience among chief less society in Nigeria, Kenya, and Australia. These new chiefs- who were given salaries and high-sounding titles such as paramount chief- were selected primarily on the basis of their willingness to work with the colonial administration rather than any particular popularity among their own people. In some cases, these new chief were held in contempt by their own people because they were collaborators with the colonial governments, which were often viewed as repressive and coercive.

The pre colonial Hawaiian political system of the eighteenth century embodied the feature of typical chiefdom. According to service (1975:152-54), Hawaiian society, covering eight islands, was layered into three basic social strata. At the apex of the threefold social hierarchy was the *ali'i*, major chiefs believed to be direct descendants of the gods; their close relatives of ten served as advisers or bureaucrats under them. The second echelons, known as the *konohiki*, were less important chief who were frequently distant relatives of the *ali'i*. And finally, the great majority people were commoners, known as *maka'ainana*. Since there was little or no intermarriage between these three strata, the society was priestly function by virtue of their connection with the gods, Hawaiian society was a theocracy as well.

The Hawaiian economy during the pre colonial period was based on intensive agriculture (taro, bread –fruit, yams, and coconuts) with extensive irrigation. Owing to their control over the allocation of water, the major chiefs and authority over the general population in addition, chiefs were in control of communal labor. Artisans and gathering people for war Hawaiian chiefs could also bring considerable coercive power to bear on disputants to encourage them to settle their quarrel, although in actual practice most disputes were settled through collective action. In summary, the pre colonial Hawaiian political system, according to service,

... Was a theocracy, held together by an ideology that justified and sanctified the rule of the hereditary aristocracy butressed by age-old custom and etiwuette. Such a system is some contrast contrast to a primitive state, which although it attempts to rule ideologically and customarily, has had to

erect the additional support of a monopoly of force with force with a legal structure that administers the force. (1975:154)

◆ Political and economic systems in chiefdoms

Archaic state formation has often gone through a chiefdom phase. However, state formation remained incomplete and only chiefdom emerged in several areas, including the circum Caribbean (e.g., Caribbean islands, Panama, Colombia), lowland Amazonia, what is now the south eastern United States, and Polynesia. Chiefdom created the megalithic cultures of Europe, such as the one that built Stonehenge. Indeed, between the emergence and spread of food production and the expansion of the Roman Empire, much of Europe was organized at the chiefdom level, to which it reverted after the fall of Rome. The foundations of historic Europe (and thus of the modern world system) emerged as some of those chiefdoms developed into states during the Dark Ages (Johnson and Earle 1987).

Much of our ethnographic knowledge about chiefdoms comes from Polynesia, where they were common at the time of European exploration. In chiefdoms, social relations are regulated by kinship, marriage, descent, age, generation, and generations as they are in bands and tribes. This is a fundamental difference between chiefdoms and states. States bring non relatives together and oblige them all to pledge allegiance to a government.

The following table lists some of the main contrasts between bands, tribes, chiefdoms, and states. You may want to refer to it as you read the following discussion.

NB: Sociopolitical types and their correlates. This table summarizes typical features of bands and tribes, as discussed in the last chapter, and chiefdoms and states, as discussed in this chapter. For example, band-organized societies have foraging as their adaptive strategy. They usually have egalitarian ranking systems, sometimes with gender stratification. Social identity, rights, and obligations are based on kinship and marriage. The scope of political structure and regulation is limited.

Archaic states, by contrast, have agricultural economies and differential access to resources based on stratification. Social identity has a territorial rather than a kin basis. That is, political rights and responsibilities depend mainly on living in a government unit (e.g., a nation, state, province, or township), rather than belonging to a kin-based group. States have permanent political structures and regulate large regions.

Sociopolitical Type	Most Common Adaptive Strategy	Ranking or Stratification	Kin/Non kin Basis	Political Scale
Band	Foraging	Egalitarian/ gender	Kinship / marriage	Limited
Tribe	Horticulture/pastoralism	Prestige/ gender	Kinship/marriage/descent	Temporary Regional
Chiefdom	Intensive cultivation	Differential access ranked	/Kinship / marriage / descent/ seniority	Permanent Regional
State	Agriculture	Differential Access/stratification	Territorial/government	Permanent Regional
Archaic				
Industrial	Industrialism	Class system	Territorial/government	Permanent Regional

Unlike bands and tribes, chiefdoms are characterized by ***permanent political regulation*** of the territory they administer, which includes thousands of people living in many villages and/ or hamlets. Regulation is carried out by the chief and his or her assistants, who occupy political offices. An office is a permanent position, which must be refilled when it is vacated by death or retirement. Because offices are systematically refilled, the structure of chiefdom endures across the generations, ensuring permanent political regulation.

In the Polynesian chiefdoms, the chiefs were fulltime political specialists in charge of regulating production, distribution, and consumption. Polynesian chiefs relied on religion to buttress their authority. They regulated production by commanding or prohibiting (using religious taboos) the cultivation of certain lands and crops. Chiefs also regulated distribution and consumption. At certain seasons often on a ritualized occasion such as a first-fruit ceremony-people would offer part of their harvest to the chief through his or her representatives. Products moved up the hierarchy, eventually reaching the chief. Conversely, illustrating obligatory sharing with kin, chiefs sponsored feasts at which they

gave back much of what they had received.

Such a flow of resources to and then from a central office is known as *chiefly redistribution*. Redistribution offers economic advantages. If different areas specialized in particular crops, goods, or services, chiefly redistribution made those products available to the whole society. Chiefly redistribution also played a role in risk management. It stimulated production beyond the immediate subsistence level and provided a central storehouse for goods that might become scarce at times of famine. Chiefdoms and archaic states had similar economies, often based on intensive cultivation, and both administered systems of regional trade or exchange. The more limited scale of political and economic regulation in chiefdoms tended to be short-lived, developing rapidly into a central government, one of the defining features of the state.

◆ Social status in chiefdoms

Social status in chiefdoms was based on seniority of descent. Because rank, power, prestige, and resources came through kinship and descent, Polynesian chiefs kept extremely long genealogies. Some chiefs (without writing) managed to trace their ancestry back fifty generations. All the people in the chiefdom were thought to be related to each other. Presumably, all were descended from a group of founding ancestors.

The chief (usually a man) had to demonstrate seniority in descent. Degrees of seniority were calculated so intricately on some islands that there were as many ranks as people. For example, the third son would rank below the second, who in turn would rank below the first. The children of an eldest brother, however, would all rank above the children of the next brother, whose children would in turn outrank those of younger brothers. However, even the lowest-ranking person in a chiefdom was still the chief's relative. In such a kin-based context, everyone, even a chief, had to share with his or her relatives.

Because everyone had a slightly different status, it was difficult to draw a line between elites and common people. Although other chiefdoms calculated seniority differently and had shorter genealogies than did those in Polynesia, the concern for genealogy and seniority and the absence of sharp gaps between elites and commoners are features of all chiefdoms.

3.4.4 State systems

The state system of government is the most formal and most complex form of political organization. **A state can be defined as a hierarchical form of political organization that governs many communities within a relatively large geographic area.** States possess the power to collect taxes, can recruit labor for armies' civilian public works projects, and have a monopoly on the right to use force. They are large bureaucratic organizations made up of permanent institutions with legislative, administrative and judicial functions. Whereas bands and tribes have political structures based on kinship, state systems of government organize their power on a *suprakinship* basis. That is a person's membership in a state is based on his/her place of residence and citizenship rather than kinship affiliations. Over the past several thousand years, state systems of government have taken various forms, including Greek city state; the far-reaching Roman Empire; certain traditional African states such as Bunyoro, Buganda, and the Swazi; theocratic states such as ancient Egypt; and such modern nation states as Germany, Japan, and the United States.

The authority of the state rests on two important foundations. **First** the state holds the exclusive right to use force and physical coercion. Any act of violence not expressly permitted by the state is illegal and consequently, punishable by the state. Thus, state government makes written laws, administers them through various levels of the bureaucracy, and enforces them through such mechanisms as police forces, armies, and national guards. The state needs to be continuously vigilant against threats both from within and from without to usurp its power through rebellions and revolutions. **Second**, the state maintains its authority by means of ideology. For the state to maintain its power over the long run there must be a philosophical understanding among the citizenry that the state in fact has the legitimate right to govern. In the absence of such an ideology, it is frequently difficult for the state to maintain its authority by means of coercion alone.

State systems of government, which first appeared about 3500 B.C., are associated with civilization. As such, they are found in societies with complex socio-economic characteristics. For example, state systems of government are supported by intensive agriculture, which is required to support a large number of non food-producing bureaucrats. This fully efficient food production system gives rise to cities, considerable labor specialization, and a complex system of both internal distribution and foreign trade. Since the considerable surpluses produced by intensive agriculture are not distributed equally among all segments of the population, state

societies are stratified. That is such forms of wealth as land and capital tend to be concentrated in the hands of elite who often use their superior wealth and power to control the rest of the population. Moreover, the fairly complex set of laws and regulations needed to control a large and heterogeneous population give rise to the need for some type of writing, record keeping, and weights and measures.

State systems of government are characterized by a large number of specialized political roles. Many people are required to carry out very specific tasks such as law enforcement, tax collection, dispute settlement, recruitment of labor, and protection from outside invasions. These political/ administrative functionaries are both highly specialized and full time to the extent that they do not engage in food-producing activities. These permanent political functionaries, like the society itself, are highly stratified or hierarchical. At the apex of the administrative pyramid are those with the greatest power-e.g., kings, presidents, prime ministers, governors, legislators- who enact law and establish policies. Below them are descending echelons of bureaucrats responsible for the day-to-day administration of the state. And, each level of the bureaucracy is responsible to the level immediately above it.

Although multiple statuses and roles exist in all societies, they are more numerous, complex, and specialized in states than they are in bands, tribes, and chiefdoms. Illustrating general evolutionary trends, certain statuses, systems, and subsystems with specialized functions are found in all states.

They include the following:

1. **Population control:** *fixing of boundaries, establishment of citizenship categories, and the taking of a census*
2. **Judiciary:** *laws, legal procedure, and judges*
3. **Enforcement:** *permanent military and police forces*
4. **Fiscal:** *taxation*

In archaic states, these subsystems were integrated by a ruling system or government composed of civil, military, and religious officials.

1. Population Control

To know whom they govern, all states conduct censuses. States demarcate boundaries that separate them from other societies. Custom agents, immigration officers, navies, and coast guards patrol frontiers, regulating passage from one state to other. Even non industrial states have bound maintenance forces. In Buganda, an archaic state the shores of Lake Victoria in Uganda, the king warded military officers with estates in outlying provinces. They became his guardians against foreign intrusion.

States also control population through administrative subdivision: provinces, districts, "state counties, sub counties, and parishes. Lower-level officials manage the populations and territories of subdivisions.

In non states, people work and relax with their relatives, in-laws, fictive kin, and age mates-people with whom they have a personal relationship. Such a personal social life existed throughout most of human history, but food production spelled eventual decline. After millions of years of human evolution, it took a mere 4,000 years for the population increase and regulatory problems spawned by food production to lead from tribe to chiefdom to state. With state organization, kinship's pervasive role diminished. Descent groups may continue as kin groups within archaic states, but their importance in political organization declines and their exclusive control over their members ends.

States-archaic and modern-foster geographic mobility and resettlement, severing long-standing ties between people, land, and kin. Population placements have increased in the modern world. War, famine, and job seeking across national boundaries churn up migratory currents. People in states come to identify themselves by new statuses, both ascribed and achieved, including ethnic background , place of birth or residence, occupation party, religion, and team or club affiliation, rather than as members of a descent group or extended family.

States also manage their populations by granting different rights and obligations to (making status distinctions between) citizens and non citizens. Distinctions among citizens are also common. Many archaic states granted different rights to Nobels, commoners, and slaves. Unequal rights within state-organized societies persist in today's world, very obviously in South Africa. In recent American history, before the Emancipation

Proclamation there were different laws for slaves and free people. In European colonies, separate courts judged cases involving only natives and those which involved Europeans. In contemporary America a military code of justice and court system continues to co-exist along side the civil judiciary.

2. Judiciary

States have **laws** based on precedent and legislative proclamations. Without writing, laws may be preserved in oral tradition, with justices, elders, and other specialists responsible for remembering them. Oral traditions as repositories of legal wisdom have continued in some nations with writing, such as Great Britain. Laws regulate relations between individuals and groups.

Crimes are violations of the legal code, with specified types of punishment. However, a given act, such as killing some one, may be legally defined in different ways (E.g., as mans laughter, justifiable homicide, or firs degree murder). Further more, even in contemporary North America, where justice is suppose to be “blind” to social distinctions; the poor are prosecuted more often and more severely than are the rich.

To handle disputes and crimes, all states have courts and judges. Pre-colonial African states had sub-county, county and district courts, plus a high court formed by the king or queen and his/her advisors. Most states allow appeals to higher courts, although people are encouraged to solve problems locally.

A striking contrast between states and non-states is intervention in family affairs. In states, aspects of parenting and marriage enter the domain of public law. Governments step in to halt blood feuds and regulate previously private disputes. States attempt to curb **internal** conflict, but they are not always successful. About 85% of the world’s armed conflicts since 1945 have begun within states-in efforts to overthrow a ruling regime or as disputes over tribal, religious, and ethnic minority issues. Only 15% have been fights across national borders.

People in modern nations no longer fight for spouses and cattle but for political, economic, religious, and ideological reasons. Nations battle over philosophies of government-to subdue “the infidel,” to “halt the spread of communism,” or to undermine “capitalist imperialism.” Rebellion, resistance, repression, terrorism, and warfare continue. Indeed, recent states have perpetrated some of history’s bloodiest deeds.

3. Enforcement

All states have agents to enforce judicial decisions. Confinement requires jailors, and a death penalty calls for executioners. Agents of the state collect fines and confiscate property. These officials wield power that is much more effective than the curse of the Nuer Leopard Skin-Man.

A major concern of government is to defend hierarchy, property, and the power of the law. The government suppresses internal disorder (with police) and guards the nation against external traits (within the military). As a relatively new form of socio-political organization, states have competed successfully with less complex societies through out the world. Military organization helps states subdue neighboring non-states, but this is not the only reason for the spread of the state organization. Although stated in both hardships, they also offer advantages. Most obviously, they provide protection from outsiders and preserve internal order. They curb the feuding that has plagued tribes such as the Yanomami and the Nuer. By promoting internal peace states enhance production. Their economies support massive, dense populations, which supply armies and colonists to promote expansion.

4. Fiscal

A financial or **fiscal** sub system is needed in states to support rulers, nobles, officials, judges, military personnel, and thousands of other specialists. As in the Chieftdom, the state intervenes in production, distribution, and consumption. The state may decree that a certain area will produce certain things or forbid certain activities in particular places. Although, like chiefdoms, states also have redistribution (through taxation), generosity and sharing are played down. A smaller proportion of what comes in flows back to the people.

In non-states, people customarily share with relatives, but residents of states face added obligations to bureaucrats and officials. Citizens must turn over a substantial portion of what they produce to the state. Of the resources that they state collects, it reallocates part for the general good and uses another part (often larger) for the elite.

The state does not bring more freedom or leisure to the common people, who usually work harder than do the people in non-states. They may be called on to build monumental public works. Some of these projects, such as dams and irrigations systems, may be

economically necessary. However, people also build temples, palaces, and tombs for the elites.

Monument building began in chiefdoms, where “ceremonies of place” through constructions such as (stone) henge’s of Europe, the mounds of south eastern United States, and the temples of Hawaii. Like chiefs, state officials may use religion to buttress their authority. Archeology shows that temples abounded in early states. Even in mature states, rulers may link themselves to godhood through divine right or claim to be deities or their earthly representatives. Rulers convoke persons or slaves to build magnificent castles or tombs, cementing the ruler’s place in history or status in the after life. Monumental architecture survives as an enduring reminder of the exalted prestige of priests and kings.

Markets and trade are usually under at least some state control, with officials over seeing distribution and exchange, standardizing weights and measures, and collecting taxes on goods passing in to or through the state. States also set standards for artisans, manufacturers, and members of other professions.

Taxes support government which is clearly separated from the common people in regard to activities, privileges, rights, and obligations. Elites take no part in subsistence activities. Taxes also support the many specialists-administrators, tax collectors, judges, law makers, generals, scholars, and priests. As the state matures, the segment of the population freed from direct concern with subsistence grows.

The elites of archaic states revel in the consumption of **sumptuary goods**-jewelry, exotic food and drink, and stylish clothing reserved for, or affordable only by, the rich. Peasants’ diets suffer as they struggle to meet government demands. Commoners perish in territorial wars that have little relevance to their own needs.

◆ Chiefdoms and Non-industrial states

Having looked at bands and tribes, we turn to more complex forms of sociopolitical organization-chiefdoms and states. The first states (or *civilizations*, a near synonym) emerged in the Old World about 5,500 years ago. The first chiefdoms developed perhaps a thousand years earlier, but few survive today. The chiefdom was a transitional form of sociopolitical organization that emerged during the evolution of tribes into states. State formation began in Mesopotamia (currently Iran and Iraq) and then occurred in Egypt, the Indus Valley of Pakistan and India, and northern China. A few thousand years’ later states

also arose in two parts of the Western Hemisphere-Mesoamerica (Mexico, Guatemala, and Belize) and the central Andes (Peru and Bolivia). Early states are known as **archaic** or non industrial, **states**, in contrast to modern industrial nation-states. Robert Carneiro defines the state as

an autonomous political unit encompassing many communities within its territory, having a centralized government with the power to collect taxes, draft men for work or war, and decree and enforce laws. (Carneiro 1970, p. 733)

The chiefdom and the state, like many categories used by social scientists, are ideal types. That is, they are labels that make social contrasts seem more definite than they really are. In reality there is a continuum from tribe to chiefdom to state. Some societies have many attributes of chiefdoms but retain tribal features. Some advanced chiefdoms have many attributes of archaic states and thus are difficult to assign to either category. We see this while our sample of societies in time and space is large enough. Recognizing this “continuous change” (Johnson and Earle 1987), some anthropologist speak of "complex chiefdoms" (Earle 1987), which are almost states.

◆ Status and role

Before discussing status system in chiefdom and state, we pause to note that status has two meanings in social science. One (as in Weber's discussion of social status) is close to the definition of *prestige* and refers to social ranking. Thus, someone (such as a chief) may have more (or higher) social status than someone else does. The other meaning is neutral. Here a status is simply a position in a social structure-any position that determines where someone fits within society. Such social statuses include mother, father, son, daughter, club or team member, Republican, Baptist, accountant, farm worker, herder, hunter, and thousands of others.

Among the multiple statuses we occupy, particular ones dominate in particular settings, such as son or daughter at home and student in the class room. Moving through life, we leave some status behind (e.g., high school senior) and enter others (e.g., first-year college student). When we vacate one status or die, we leave those positions, and others fill them.

The occupant changes while the status endures as part of the social structure.

Some statuses are **ascribed**: people have little no choice about occupying them. Gender is normally an ascribed status, although some culture permits gender changes. Age is another ascribed status. In unilineal societies, descent-group membership is ascribed. People automatically belong to the father's descent group in a patrilineal society and to the mother's in a matrilineal one. In chiefdoms and states, many contrasts in wealth, prestige, and power are ascribed. In chiefdoms they are ascribed by genealogy and seniority. In states some people are born into rich or noble families while others are born into poverty. In archaic states the paramount ruling status known as king or queen was usually ascribed, as was the status of chief in chiefdoms.

Achieved statuses, in contrast, aren't automatic but come through traits, talents, actions, efforts, activities, and accomplishments. Achieved statuses in bands include healer, dancer, and storyteller. In tribes, people may become leaders through work, generosity, charisma, and particular skills. Achieved statuses in tribes include polygynist, warrior, magician, trading partner, and trance specialist, among hundreds of others. *The number of social statuses increases with (and can be used as a rough measure of) social complexity.* More complex societies offer more choices; the number of achieved statuses in particular increases. In the modern world we choose to marry or not and have children or not, so that even our statuses as spouse or parent are achieved. People in traditional societies have less choice about marriage and parenthood.

The distinction between ascribed status and achieved status isn't always clear-cut. For example, although we choose our colleges (from those to which we apply and are accepted) and our jobs (from those we seek out and are offered), family background influences our success. Despite the North American value of individual achievement (including the possibility of rising from "rags to riches"), it is easier for offspring of the middle and upper class to succeed than it is for people born in poverty.

Each status has an associated role—a set of expected (culturally "proper") behaviors, attitudes, rights, and obligations. Through enculturation, we come to expect certain behavior to characterize certain statuses. Cultures develop images of how a "good" or "proper" boss, teacher, mother, or coach acts. For example, "fatherly" behavior might be defined as affectionate, nurturing, and supportive. In some societies, the status of son-in-law entails

strict avoidance of the mother-in-law to the point of leaping off the road if she approaches. In other cultures, the son-in-law role is to treat the mother-in-law like his own mother (or, in still other cultures, like his wife). Cultures may define a girl's younger brother as a pal, a pest, or someone who is socially distant and to be avoided.

Anthropologist Ralph Linton (1936) drew a distinction between status and role by saying that people **occupy** a status but **play** a role. A status is a position in the social structure, but a role involves thought and action. People differ in how well they play the roles that go with the various statuses they occupy. There are disruptive students, sinful ministers, and lousy bosses. A man may be a skilled craftsman but an inattentive father.

◆ Status Systems in Chiefdoms and States

The status systems of chiefdoms and states are similar in that both are based on differential access to resources. This means that some men and women had privileged access to power, prestige, and wealth. They controlled strategic resources such as land, water, and other means of production. Earle characterizes chiefs as "an incipient aristocracy with advantages in wealth and lifestyle" (1987, p. 290). Nevertheless, differential access in chiefdoms was still very much tied to kinship. The people with privileged access were generally chiefs and their nearest relatives and assistants.

Compared with chiefdoms, archaic states drew a much firmer line between elites and masses, distinguishing at least between nobles and commoners. Kinship ties did not extend from the nobles to the commoners because of **stratum endogamy-marriage** within one's own group. Commoners married commoners; elites married elites. Such a division of society into socioeconomic strata contrasts strongly with the status systems of bands and tribes, which are based on prestige, not resources. The prestige differentials that do exist in bands reflect special qualities, talents, and abilities. Good hunters get respect from their fellows as long as they are generous. So does a skilled curer, dancer, story teller or anyone else with a talent or skill that others appreciate.

In tribes, some prestige goes to descent-group leaders, to village heads, and especially to the big man, a regional figure who commands the loyalty and labor of others. However, all these figures must be generous. If they accumulate more resources i.e., property or food than others in the village, they must share them with the others. Since strategic resources are available to everyone,

social classes based on the possession of unequal amounts of resources can never exist.

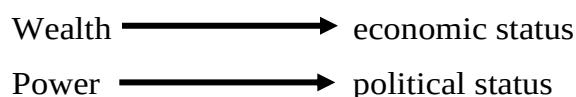
In many tribes, particularly those with patrilineal descent, men have much greater prestige and power than women do. The gender contrast in rights diminishes in chiefdoms, where prestige and access to resources are based on seniority of descent, so that some women are senior to some men. Unlike big men, chiefs are exempt from ordinary work and have rights and privileges that are unavailable to the masses. However, like big men, they still return much of the wealth they take in.

The status system in chiefdoms, although based on differential access, differed from the status system in states because the privileged few were always relatives and assistants of the chief. However, this type of status system didn't last very long. Chiefs would start acting like kings and try to erode the kinship basis of the chiefdom. In Madagascar they would do this by demoting their more distant relatives to commoner status and banning marriage between nobles and commoners (Kottak 1980). Such moves, *if accepted by the society*, created separate social *strata-unrelated* groups that differ in their access to wealth, prestige, and power. (A stratum is one of two or more groups that contrast in regard to social status and access to strategic resources. Each stratum includes people of both sexes and all ages.) The creation of separate social strata is called stratification, and its emergence signified the transition from chiefdom to state. *The presence and acceptance of stratification is one of the key distinguishing features of a state.*

The influential sociologist Max Weber (1864-1920) defined three related dimensions of social stratification:

- 1) Economic status, or wealth, encompasses all a person's material assets, including income, land, and other types of property.
- 2) Power, the ability to exercise one's will over others-to do what one wants-is the basis of political status.
- 3) Prestige-the basis of social status-refers to esteem, respect, or approval for acts, deeds, or qualities considered exemplary. Prestige or "cultural capital" provides people with a sense of worth and respect, which they may often convert into economic advantage

Max Weber's three dimensions of stratification



Prestige  social status

These Weberian dimensions of stratification are present to varying degrees in chiefdoms. However, chiefdoms lack the sharp division into classes that characterizes states. Wealth, power, and prestige in chiefdoms are all tied to kinship factors.

Historically, the emergence of differential access, the chiefdom, stratification, and the state was a gradual process. In some societies, evolution was slowed by temporary collapses of developing political machinery, as happened in Europe after the Roman collapse. Because of this, anthropologists must sometimes decide arbitrarily whether a particular society with political regulation and differential access should be called chiefdom or a state.

In archaic states-for the first time in human evolution-there were contrasts in wealth, power, and prestige between entire groups (social strata) of men and women. Each stratum included people of both sexes and all ages. The super ordinate (the higher or elite) stratum had privileged access to wealth, power, and other valued resources. Access to resources by members of the subordinate (lower or underprivileged) stratum was limited by the privileged group.

Socioeconomic stratification continues as a defining feature of all states, archaic or industrial. The elites control a significant part of the means of production, for example, land, herds, water, capital, farms, or factories. Those born at the bottom of the hierarchy have reduced chances of social mobility. Because of elite ownership rights, ordinary people lack free access to resources. Only in states do the elites get to keep their differential wealth. Unlike big men and chiefs, they don't have to give it back to the people whose labor has built and increased it.

3.5 Variations in Political structures: Some Generalization

The preceding sections have looked at four fundamentally different types of political systems such a four-fold scheme, while recognized by other anthropologists, is not universally accepted. For example, in a classic study of political systems in Africa, Fortes and Evans-Pritchard (1940:5) distinguish between only two types of structure: states system and acephalous (headless) societies. Others (Cohen and Eames 1982:215) recognize three major forms of political

structure: **simple**, **intermediate**, and **complex**. Such differences in the way that various ethnologists have conceptualized political structure should serve as a reminder that all of these schemes are ideal types. That is, all of the societies in the world cannot be fit neatly in to one box or another. Instead of being discrete categories, in reality there is a continuum with bands (the simplest forms) at one extreme and states (the most complex forms) at the other. Thus whether we use two, three, or four major categories of political organization, we should bear in mind that all political systems found in the world vary along a continuum on a number of important dimensions. To illustrate, as we move from bands through tribes and chiefdoms to states, gradations occur as is forwarded below.

Variation in political Aspects of world culture

	Bands	Tribes	Chiefdoms	States
Degree to which Political institutions are distinct from Kinship	Indistinguishable			Distinct
Level of political Integration	Local group			Many groups
Specialized political Roles	Informal Leadership			Highly specialized
	Temporary			Permanent
Degree of political Coerciveness	Little/None			Complete

These variations in political structures are accompanied by corresponding variations in other aspects of the cultures as shown below.

Variations in Socio-economic Aspects of World Cultures

Political Anthropology (SOAN3101)

	Bands	Tribes	Chiefdoms	States
Major mode of	Foraging	Agriculture/Herding		Intensive agriculture
Predominant mode of Distribution	Reciprocity	Redistribution		Market
Population size	Small, low density		Large, high density	
Level of social Differentiation	Egalitarian			Class/Caste

For the overwhelming majority of their existence, humans have lived in small hunting and gathering bands characterized by little or no political integration and few, if any, specialized political roles. Not until the Neolithic revolution (domestication of plants and animals) occurred approximately 10,000 years ago were socio economic forces unleashed that permitted the formation of larger complex socio-political systems. With the new food-producing technologies brought in with the Neolithic revolution, populations have become larger and more heterogeneous; as a result, political organizations have become increasingly complex and centralized. Today state systems of government predominate in the world, while small-scale band societies account for a very small (and decreasing) percentage of the world's societies.

Although the rise of state system of government was clearly a significant development, there is relatively little consensus on why these complex forms of government emerged. By examining both ancient and contemporary societies, anthropologists and social philosophers have developed a number of explanations as to why some societies have developed state systems while others have not. Explanation for the rise of the state hinge on the question of what induces people to surrender at least a portion of their autonomy to the power and control of the state. Some theories suggest that people purposefully and voluntarily give up their sovereignty because of the

perceived benefits. That is, these theorists reason that the limited loss of autonomy was outweighed by the benefits people derived from their integration into a wider political structure.

These benefits included

- ❖ Greater protection from hostile, outside forces;
- ❖ More effective means of conflict resolution; and
- ❖ The opportunity for increased food production.

A good example of this voluntaristic theory of state formation was put forth by the archeologist V. Gordon Childe. According to Childe (1936:82-83), the introduction and development of intensive agriculture (stimulated by the introduction of the plow, irrigation, metallurgy, and draft animals) during the Neolithic period created food surpluses. These food surpluses, in turn, freed up a certain segment of the population from tasks of food production, allowing them to engage in a wide variety of new occupational roles, such as weavers, traders, potters, and metal workers. This dramatic increase in occupational specialization created a need for some wider form of political integration in order to mediate between and protect all of the varied special interest groups and to provide the economic superstructure to enable all of them to work in an efficient and complementary fashion.

Another voluntaristic explanation of the emergence of the state is the **hydraulic theory of state formation**, suggested by Karl Wittfogel. According to this theory (Wittfogel 1957:18), small-scale irrigation farmers in arid or semiarid areas eventually came to see certain economic advantage to surrendering their autonomy and merging their small communities into a larger political entity capable of large-scale irrigation. Even though archaeological evidence indicates that certain states (e.g., China, Mexico, and Mesopotamia) developed prior to the development of large-scale irrigation, centralized political governments do appear to be functional for those agricultural systems dependent on irrigation.

Still another theory of state origins, set forth by Robert Carneiro (1970), suggests that the existence of the state is the direct result of warfare. By offering a coercive theory of state formation, Carneiro holds that “**force, and not enlightened self interest**, is the mechanism by which political evolution has led, step by step, from autonomous villages to the state” (1970:217). Carneiro goes on to elaborate that while warfare is the mechanism of state formation, it operates only under certain environmental conditions—namely, in those areas that

have limited agricultural land for expanding population. To illustrate his theory, Carneiro uses the case of the **Inca** state that developed in the narrow valleys of the Peruvian coast, which were geographically circumscribed in that they faced the ocean, backed up to the mountains, and were flanked on either end by deserts. As populations grew in this region, there was no land into which to expand. Land pressure increased, resulting intense land competition and eventually warfare. Increasing more centralized political units developed to conduct the warfare and to administer subjugated peoples, while the victors headed up increasingly larger and more complex warring political units. Carneiro (1970:219) claims that similar political evolution occurred in other parts of the world characterized by circumscribed agricultural land such as the **Nile valley, Mesopotamia, and the Indus valley.**

3.6 Summary

All societies have political systems that function to manage public affairs, maintain social order, and resolve conflict. The study of political organization involves such topics as the allocation of political roles, levels of political interaction, concentration of power and authority, mechanisms of social control and means for resolving conflict. In other words, Anthropologists may use a sociopolitical typology of bands, tribes, chiefdoms, and states along with an economic typology based on adaptive strategy. Through these classification schemes we can compare the scale and effectiveness of social linkages and political regulation and of variations in power, authority, and legal systems cross-culturally. There are important cross-cultural contrasts in the kinds of groups that are significant, determinants of leadership, reasons for disputes, and means for resolving them.

Political anthropologists generally recognize four fundamentally different levels of political organization and the degree of specialized political roles: bands, tribes, chiefdoms, and state.

Societies based on bands have the least amount of political integration and role specialization. They are most often found in foraging societies and are associated with low population densities, distribution systems based on reciprocity, and egalitarian social relation. Foragers usually have egalitarian societies, with bands and families as characteristic groups. Personal networks link individuals, families, and bands. There is little differential power. Band leaders are first among equals and have no means of enforcing decisions. Disputes rarely arise over strategic resources, because the resources are available to everyone. Among the Eskimos, used which used to exemplify sociopolitical regulation among foragers, disputes traditionally originated

in adultery or wife stealing. Aggrieved individuals might kill offenders, but this could trigger a blood feud. Although no government existed to halt blood feuds, there were certain customary means of resolving disputes.

Tribal organizations are most commonly found among horticulturists and pastoralists. With larger and more sedentary populations than are found in band societies- tribal based societies have certain pan-tribal mechanisms that cut across a number of local segments and integrate them into a large whole.

The descent group is a basic kin group in tribal societies. Unlike families, descent groups have perpetuity – they last for generations. There are several types of descent groups. Lineages are based on demonstrated descent; clans, on stipulated descent. Patrilineal and matrilineal descents are unilineal descent rules.

At the next level of complexity are chiefdoms, which involve a more formal and permanent political structure than is found in tribal societies. Political authority in chiefdoms rests with a single individual, either acting alone or with the advice of a council. Most chiefdom, which tends to have quite distinct social ranks, rely on feasting and tribute as a major way of distributing goods.

State systems- with the greatest amount of political integration and role specialization-are associated with intensive agriculture, market economies, and urbanization and complex social stratification. States, which first appeared about 3500 B.C. have a monopoly on the use of force and can make and enforce law, collect taxes, and recruit labor for military service and public works projects.

CHAPTER FOUR: SOCIAL CONTROL

In the absence of king s, presidents, legislatures and bureaucracies, how is social order maintained in stateless societies?

4.1. Chapter Introduction

As the previous chapter explained, political structures vary from very informal structures such as bands at one extreme to highly complex state systems of government at the other extreme. What ever form of political organization is found in a society, it must inevitably address the issue of social control. In other words, every society must ensure that most of the people behave

themselves in appropriate ways most of the time. State like societies have a wide variety of formalized mechanisms that function to keep people's behavior in line, including written laws, judges, bureaucracies, prisons, electric chairs, and police forces. At the other extreme, small-scale band societies, such as the Eskimos or !kung, while having no centralized political authority, nevertheless maintain social order among their members quite effectively through informal mechanisms of social control. In fact, people deviate from acceptable behavior considerably less in most band societies than in societies with more elaborate and complex forms of political organization.

Thus, this chapter will discuss both the formal and informal mechanisms of correcting individual law breakers in a given human society.

4.3 Social Control: Definition and Nature

Every society has a defined what are normal, proper, or expected ways of behaving. These expectations, known as social norms, serve as behavioral guidelines and help the society work smoothly. To be certain, social norms are not adhered to perfectly, and in fact, there is always a certain level of deviance from them. But most people in any given society abide by them most of the time. Moreover, social norms take a number of different forms, ranging from etiquette to formal laws. Some norms are taken more seriously than others. On the one hand, all societies have certain social expectation of what is "proper" but such behavior is not rigidly enforced. To illustrate, although it is customary in **Ethiopia** for people to shake hands when being introduced, a person's refusal to shake hands would not constitute a serious violation of social norms. The person who does not follow this rule of etiquette might be considered rude but would not be arrested or executed. At the other extreme, certain social norms (such as grand larceny or murder) are taken very seriously in deed because they are considered absolutely necessary for the survival of the society.

All social norms, weather trivial or serious, are sanctioned. That is, societies develop patterned or institutionalized ways of encouraging people to conform to the norms. These sanctions are both positive and negative, for people are rewarded for behaving in socially acceptable ways and punished for violating the norms. Positive sanctions range from a smile of approval to being awarded the Medal of Honor. Negative sanctions include everything from a frown of disapproval to corporal punishment.

Social sanctions may also be formal or informal, depending on whether or not a formal law (legal statute) has been violated. *To illustrate, if a woman in a restaurant is talking in a voice that can be easily overheard by people at nearby tables, she will probably receive stares from the other diners. But if she starts yelling at the top of her lungs in the restaurant, she will probably be arrested for disturbing the peace or disorderly conduct.* The difference, of course is that in the first case the woman wasn't breaking the law while in the second case she was. The following diagram illustrates a continuum of the formal-informal dimension of social norms and sanction.

CONTINUUM OF SOCIAL NORMS

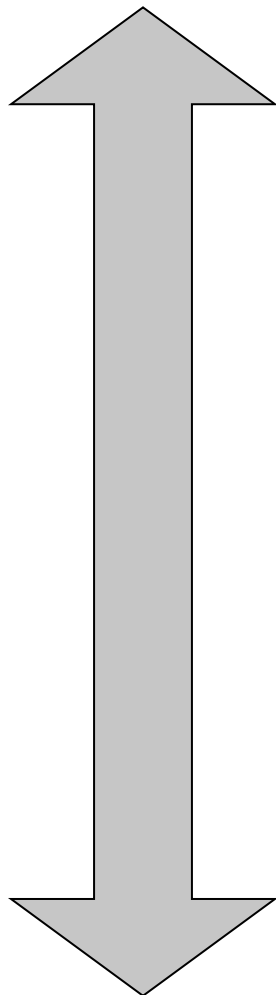
Violation that causes

Weak emotional

Reaction and mild

Type of Misconduct

Punishment



Wearing tuxedo
to anthropology class

Raised eyebrows

Eating dinner with
fingers rather than utensils

Ridicule

Illegal parking

Small fine

Shoplifting

larger fine or a short
Prison term

Grand larceny

long jail term

Treason

long jail term or death

Homicide

long jail term or death

Violation that causes

Strong emotional

Reaction and strong punishment

Just as the types of social norms found in any societies will vary, so will the mechanisms used to encourage people to adhere to those norms. For most the western societies, the most obvious forms of social control are the formal or institutionalized ones. When asked why they tend to “behave themselves” they would probably think of formal laws, police forces courts and prisons. They don’t rob the local convenience store, in other words, because if caught they are likely to go to prisons.

Most of their “proper” behavior is probably due to less formal and perhaps less obvious mechanisms of social control. In band and tribal societies that lack centralized authority, informal mechanisms of social control may be all that exists. The remainder of this Section looks at those informal mechanisms of social control so characteristic of band and tribal societies and at more formal institution aimed primarily at social control, some of which involve laws and adjudication bodies. It should be emphasized, however that this distinction between formal and informal mechanisms should in no way imply that informal means of social control exist only in band and tribal societies. Although societies with complex political organization (state societies in particular) are best known for written laws and courts, they also rely on an appreciable number of informal mechanisms of social control.

4.3.1 Informal means social control

Compared to complex state organization, bands and tribes have little in the way that would appear to be governmental in the western sense of the term. They include very low levels of political integration, have few, if any, specialized political roles, and little political coerciveness. These small-scale political systems have been referred to as *acephalous* (i.e., headless) or as “tribes without rulers”. In the absence of normal governmental structures how do these *acephalous* societies maintain some semblance of social order? The following subsections examine a number of informal mechanisms of social control that not only operate in *acephalous* societies but in many cases also operate in more complex societies.

1. Socialization

Every society if it is to survive; must pass on its social norms from one generation to another. It seems blatantly obvious that people will not be able to conform to the social norms unless they are taught them. Thus, all societies have some system of socialization, which involves teaching the young what the norms are as well as teaching that these norms- since they are inherently “proper”- should not be violated. People learn their social norms with a certain degree of moral compulsion. ***We learn, for example that in our society people wear clothes in public and that we should as well.*** Usually, we internalize our social norms so effectively that we would never consider violating them. Some social norms-like not appearing nude in public- are so thoroughly ingrained in us through socialization that the thought of violating them would be distasteful and embarrassing. Other social norms do not have the same level of moral intensity, such as driving within the speed limit or maintaining good oral hygiene. But as a general rule when people learn their norms, they are at the same time internalizing the normal necessity to obey them.

2. Public Opinion

One of the most compelling reasons for not violating the social norms is public opinion or social pressure. In general, people from all parts of the world wish to be accepted by the other members of their society. Most people fear being rejected or talked about by their fellows. This strong desire to win the approval of other members of one’s societies is summed up in such comments as “don’t do that! What will the neighbors think?” It is, of course, impossible to determine how many people are deterred from violating the social norms because of fear of negative public opinion. At the same time we can cite many examples of how societies use social pressure very deliberately to keep people in line. Indeed, ***gossip, ostracism, and rumor, sarcasm and derision*** are all powerful corrective measure for reforming social behavior. For example, city and country governments in some societies may print the names of tax delinquent in a newspaper in an attempt to embarrass them into paying their taxes. In colonial America, the stock and pillory was an excellent example of how the society used public opinion to control people’s behavior. Some one who was caught breaking the social norm (e.g., committing adultery or stealing) was confined to the stock and pillory, which not coincidentally, was always located right in the center of town. Even though long confinements in the stock and pillory were very physically uncomfortable, the realization that all of your friends, relatives, and neighbors would see you and know of your crime was by far the greater punishment.

The deliberate use of social pressure to maintain social control is particularly important and, in some cases, quite dramatic in acephalous societies. A case in point is the custom of the duel found in Tiwi societies of north Australia. Men in traditional Tiwi society achieve power and status by amassing large numbers of wives. Under such condition of intense polygyny, all females are married or betrothed before or at birth, while men do not take their first wives until their late thirties or early forties. Thus at any given moment in time, all women are married to older men.

If a younger Tiwi male, say one in his twenties, is to have any intimate relation with a Tiwi woman, it must, by definition, be with an older man's wife. When this occurs, the older man challenges the young adulterer to a duel, which like the use of the stock and pillory, is always public. All the people in the community (men, women, and children) form a circle in an open field surrounding the older man and the accused adulterer. With the entire community watching, the older man throws a spear at the young man, along with a string of verbal insults. The younger man is expected to submit himself to this verbal harangue while sidestepping the spears. But before the event can end, the younger man must allow one of the spears to strike him, it is hoped in a no vulnerable place.

The key to understanding the Tiwi duel is its public nature. Even though the alleged guilty party suffers some physical punishment (i.e., the superficial wound), the real punishment is the public disapproval of the younger man's behavior by all of the onlookers. The Tiwi duel, in other words, is an institutionalized form of public humiliation where by public opinion is mobilized in an attempt to reform aberrant behavior. The Tiwi duel is a particularly effective mechanism of social control because it not only helps to reform the behavior of the accused but also serves as a reminder to all of the other members of the community who might be contemplating violating the social norms.

3. Corporate Lineages

Corporate lineages play a dominant role in most small-scale (acephalous) societies. Members of corporate lineages (who can number in the hundreds) frequently live, work, play and pray together. Property is controlled by the lineage; people derive their primary identity from the group, and even religion (in the form of ancestor worship) is a lineage matter. Acting like a small corporation, the lineage has a powerful impact on the everyday lives of its members and can exert considerable pressure on people to conform to the social norms.

One means by which corporate lineage exert control over its member is economic. All important property, such as land and livestock, is controlled by the elders of the corporate lineage. Often property is allocated on the basis of conformity to societal norms. Those who behave as the society expects them to behave are likely to receive the best plots of land and use of the best livestock. Conversely, those who violate social norms are likely to be denied these valuable economic resources.

Corporate lineages, to some degree, also act as mechanisms of social control because of their scale. Corporate lineages serve as localized communities, numbering from several hundred to as many as several thousand relative. Because member of the lineage have frequent and intense interaction with one another on a daily basis, it is virtually impossible for anyone to maintain her or his anonymity. People's lives are played out in such close proximity to one another that every one knows what everyone else is doing. ***To illustrate, a man who wants to engage in socially inappropriate behavior (such as having an extramarital affair) would think twice because it would be difficult, if not impossible, to keep it a secret.*** By way of contrast, it is considerably easier to have an extramarital affair and remain undetected in large city. Thus the small-nature of corporate lineage communities tends to inhibit social deviance because it is much more difficult to “get away” with it.

The way roles are structured in corporate lineage societies also contributes to social control. In terms of role structure, corporate lineages have what is often referred to as diffuse roles. People play social roles in a number of different domains, such as kinship, economic, political, ritual/religious, and recreational roles. A role is diffuse when it ranges over two or more of these domains. For example, a diffuse role structure occurs when a man's grand father (kinship role) is also his teacher (educational role), his priest (religious role), the local chief (political role), and his hunting partner (economic role). The man, in other words, has a number of overlapping roles; he is playing role from a number of different domains with the same person. By way of contrast, role in large-scale complex societies such as the western societies, tend to be segmented or narrowly defined so that single roles are played out with one person at time. People in corporate lineage societies (with diffuse or overlapping role) have a built-in incentive not to violate the social norms, for to do so would have very serious consequence. If the man in the preceding illustration offends his grand father he is not only negatively affecting his kinship domain but is also affecting the educational, economic, political, and religious domains.

Marriage in corporate lineage societies tends to be highly collective. That is, marriage in such societies is regarded primarily as an alliance between two lineages—that of the bride and that of the groom—and only secondarily as a union between individuals. In many cases, the marriage is legitimized by bride wealth (the transfer of property—frequently livestock—from the kin group of the groom to the kin group of the bride). When a man wants to get married, he can not pay the bride wealth himself, since he does not have personal control over property. Like the rest of his relatives, he has limited rights and obligations to such pieces of property as cattle. If marriage cattle are to be transferred from one lineage to another, a group decision will need to be made. If for example, eight cows must be given to the prospective bride's family before the marriage can be legitimate, the prospective groom must convince a number of his kin to give up their limited use of cows. In the event that the prospective groom has a reputation for violating the social norms, it is likely that the permission to transfer the cows will be withheld. Thus, the members of a corporate lineage, through their collective capacity to control marriage, possess considerable power to coerce people into appropriate behavior.

4. Supernatural belief systems

A powerful mechanism of social control in acephalous societies is the belief in supernatural forces such as gods, witches and sorcerers. People will refrain from antisocial behavior if they believe that some supernatural (i.e., above-human) force will punish them for it. It is of course, impossible to determine how many norms are not violated because people fear supernatural retribution, but we have to assume that the belief in supernatural sanction acts as a deterrent to some degree. Nor is it necessary to prove that the gods, for example, will in fact punish the social deviants. If people believe that “god will get them” for doing something wrong, the belief itself is usually enough to discourage the deviant behavior.

5. Ancestor Worship

Ancestor worship is a form of supernatural belief that serves as an effective means of social control in some acephalous societies. In such societies, dead ancestors are considered fully functioning members of the descent group. In fact the death of a respected elder marks that person's elevation in status to supernatural being rather than his or her departure from the group. Respect for the ancestor-gods is frequently demonstrated by sacrifices and proper behavior, for which the living members are believed to be rewarded or punished, depending on how well they meet these obligations.

The Lugbara society of Uganda provides a good example of ancestor worship. This society believes, the well-being of the entire kinship group is ensured only if people behave in socially appropriate ways. The Lugbara believe personal and group tragedies are a direct result of the transgression of certain social norms, such as sowing disrespect to both living and dead elders, adultery, incest assault, and homicide.

The Lugbara generally believes that the ancestor-gods inflict with illness those living kin who endanger the well-being of the lineage committing any of these offenses. Sickness of any type is explained in terms of ancestral displeasure with the conduct of the living. Thus, sickness (resulting from sin) is followed by either ghost *invocation* or *ghostly vengeance*. In ghost invocation, a living man-typically an elder-calls forth the wrath of the ancestor gods against the alleged sinner. Ghostly vengeance is the belief that ancestor gods inflict sickness on their own without having to be invoked.

Whether ancestral ghosts in traditional Lugbara society were directly responsible for sickness among the living is perhaps of greater interest to the theologian than to the anthropologist. What is of interest to the anthropologists, however, is the effects of the belief on the behavior of the living, for it is the belief that has implication for social control rather than its ability to undergo scientific verification. Such rites as ghostly invocation give regular expression to fears of supernatural retribution, which in turn control, or at least influence, a person's conduct.

6. Witchcraft

The belief in witchcraft, which is found often in acephalous societies, also functions to control people's behavior by discouraging socially deviant behavior. In societies that believe in witchcraft, a deviant runs the risk of being labeled a witch, and fear of being accused of witchcraft strongly encourages conformity. For example, in colonial America, nonconformists, free thinkers, and others who did not conform to expected norms were driven from their communities for allegedly being witches. Jean La Fontaine notes the way witchcraft serves as a mechanism of social control among the Bantu-speaking Gisu of East Africa;

.... Witchcraft beliefs act as a form of social control in discouraging behavior that is socially unacceptable. In Bagistu the eccentric is branded a witch... children grow up with the realization that the stigma of non

conformity is dangerous; too great a departure from the norms of everyday conduct will attract the suspicion of others and lead to isolation and eventual destruction (1963:217)

7. Age organization

In some *acephalous* societies, age organizations serve as effective means of social control. Those societies with age organizations have distinct group of people passing periodically through distinct age categories. This involves the basic distinction that cultural anthropologists make between **age** and **grades**. An **age set** is a group of people (usually men), initiated during a periodic ceremony and having a strong sense of group identity with one another. An age set lasts from its inception, usually when most members are late adolescents, until its last member has died. Age Sets pass (as a group) through successive categories called age grades, such as warrior's, elders, or various subdivisions of these grades. Each age grade is associated with a well-understood set of social role (i.e., they perform exclusive function) and statuses (i.e., higher prestige is associated with increasing age). To illustrate this distinction further, an age set is analogous to a group of students who go through college together. The academic grades through which they pass—that is, freshman through senior—are comparable to the age grades. Thus we can speak of particular age set occupying the senior warrior grade at a particular moment in time.

Age organizations function to control behavior in a number of significant ways.

First, since age organizations establish a clear set of roles and statuses, they are particularly effective as channels for the distribution of authority. Since men of every age grade have well defined and well-understood roles, there is little room for infringing on the authority or domain of others. There is little incentive, in other words, to try to usurp the authority of those above you for the simple reason that prided you live long enough, you will eventually have that authority by virtue of your own advanced age.

Second, individuals enter the age set system at the lowest echelon through the process of initiation. These rites of passage are almost always preceded by intense periods of training in the norms and values of the societies. These periods of intense socialization teach the soon-to-become adults not only the expected behaviors should be followed and the penalties for deviation.

Third, the bonds of camaraderie/companionship or solidarity that exist between members of the age are usually so strong that age sets tend to take on the characteristics of corporate group. Age set member who have experienced their initiation ceremonies together support one another through the remainder of their lives in much the same way as do members of the same lineage. Unlike lineages, age sets are neither self perpetuating nor property owning, but they exert the same type of pressure to conform on their member as lineages do on theirs.

4.3.2 Formal means of social control

As previously noted, all societies use informal mechanisms of social control to some degree. Western cultures rely heavily on such mechanisms as socialization, public opinion and supernatural sanctions to encourage people to maintain social order by behaving appropriately. Often these informal mechanisms of social control are not sufficient to maintain the desired level of conformity to the norms. Frequently, the violation of social norms results in disputes between people in the societies. When such disputes become violent conflicts (such as theft, assault, or homicide), we refer to them as crimes. Since societies face the possibility of violent conflict erupting between their members, they need to develop explicit mechanisms to address and, it is hoped, resolve the conflicts.

Although no society in the world is immune from crime, the incidence of crime varies considerably from society to society. It appears that crime is more likely to occur in large, heterogeneous, stratified societies than small-scale societies. For example, the crime rate in U.S. cities is approximately ten times as high as in rural areas; several logical arguments support these findings.

First as mentioned in the discussion of corporate lineages, people in small-scale societies have little or no anonymity, which makes getting away with a crime more difficult.

Second, since people in small-scale societies know most of the other people, they are likely to be concerned with negative public opinion.

Third, the heterogeneous character of populations in large-scale, complex societies means that there will be a number of groups with different and quite likely conflicting, interests.

And finally, the fact that large-scale societies are almost always stratified into class or castes means that certain segment (i.e., the lower strata) of the population may be more likely to want to violate the rights of those in the more privileged strata.

1. Song Duels

Just as societies differ in terms of the incidence of crime; they also differ in the way they handle disputes and crimes, one example of formal mechanisms for resolving disputes were found among the Eskimos of Canada, Alaska, and Greenland. Since the Eskimos had relatively little property because of their nomadic way of life, conflicts rarely arose over violation of property rights. However dispute did occur frequently between men over issue of wife stealing. A man would attempt to steal the wife of a more prominent man as a way of elevating his own standing within the community.

A not uncommon way of resolving wife stealing among the Eskimos was to murder the wife stealer. In fact Rasmussen (1927:250) found that all of the men he studied had been a party to a murder, either as the murderer or as an accessory, and invariably these murders stemmed from allegations of wife stealing. There were, however alternative resolution to disputes over wife stealing. One alternative was to challenge the alleged wife stealer to a derisive song contest, which was fought with song and lyrics rather than with weapons. The plaintiff and defendant, appearing in a public setting, would chide each other with abusive song especially composed for the occasion. The contestant who received the loudest applause emerged the winner of this **“curse by verse” song duel**. Interestingly, the resolution of the conflicts was not based on a determination of guilt or innocence, only on one’s verbal dexterity.

2. Intermediaries

Some societies use intermediaries to help resolve serious conflicts. The Nuer of the African Sudan are a case in point. Even though the Nuer political system is informal and uncategorized, one role in the society –*the leopard-skin chief*- is to a degree, institutionalized in the absence of any formal system of law courts to punish serious crimes such as murder, the leopard-skin chief serves as a mediator between the victim’s family and the family of the murderer. When a homicide occurs, the murderer, fearing the vengeance of the victim’s family takes sanctuary in the home of the leopard-skin chief. In an attempt to prevent an all-out feud, the leopard skin chief attempts to negotiate a settlement between the two families in order to avoid a feud. His role is to work out an equitable settlement between the two families whereby the murder’s family will compensate the victim’s family with some form of property settlement (say, ten head of cattle) for the loss of one of its members.

If either side becomes too unyielding the leopard skin chief can threaten to curse the offending party. The leopard-skin chief does not decide the case, however. Rather, he is only an

intermediary, with no authority to determine guilt or force a settlement between the parties. Intervening on behalf of the public interest, he uses his personal and supernatural influence to bring the disputing parties to some type of agreed-upon settlement of their dispute.

3. Council of elders

A somewhat more structured mechanism for conflict resolution is a council of elders called a **kiama**, which is found among the Kikuyu of Kenya.

Traditionally, the Kiama adjudicated disputes between individuals and groups of individuals on a wide range of matters, including theft, Paternity cases and homicide. Although Kikuyu kiamas continue to operate on the local community level, they deal only with relatively minor civil and criminal cases because serious crimes are handled by the official state-run court system.

The elders question the parties to the case and render judgment on guilt or innocence. If guilt is established, the kiama sets an amount of compensation to which the injured party is entitled. Frequently, the relationship between the guilt party and the victim determines the amount of compensation. Whatever amount is set, however, the emphasis is on compensating the injured party.

Unlike the modern court system, which usually separates the guilty party from society by **incarceration**, the Kikuyu legal system stresses **normalizing** the relations in the community that have been disrupted by the conflict. To day the kiamas have no formal means of enforcing their decisions other than their own persuasiveness & stature within the local community. If the guilty party refuses to pay compensations the case is referred to the official government court system which usually accepts it.

4. Oaths and Ordeals

Another way of resolving conflicts-particularly when law enforcement agencies (such as governments) are not especially strong-is through religiously sanctioned method such as oaths and ordeals.

An oath is a formal declaration to some supernatural force that what you are saying is truthful or that you are innocent. Through they can take many different form, oaths almost always are accompanied by a ritual act, such as smoking a peace pipe, signing a loyalty document or swearing up on the Bible or wholly Quran. Since some believe that to swear a false oath could lead to supernatural retribution, oaths can be effective in determining guilt or innocence.

An ordeal is means of determining guilt by submitting the accused to a dangerous test. If the person passes the test it is believed that a higher supernatural force has determined the party's innocence; if s/he fails, the gods have signaled the party's guilt. Ordeal by drinking poisons was found among the Ashanti in West Africa. If after drinking a poison concoction, the accused vomited, the person was considered innocent; if the accused didn't vomit, he or she died and was therefore considered guilty.

It has been suggested that oaths and ordeals are most likely to be found in relatively complex societies where the political leadership lacks the power to enforce judicial decisions; consequently, the leaders must rely on supernaturally sanctioned mechanisms such as oaths and ordeals to make certain that people will obey. Where political leaders wield greater power, oaths and ordeals are no longer needed.

5. Courts and Codified law

A characteristic of state system of government is that they possess a monopoly on the use of force. Through a system of codified law, the state both forbids individual from using force and determines how it will use force to require citizens to do some things and forbid them from doing others. These laws, which are usually in written form are established by legislative bodies, interpreted by judicial bodies, and enforced by administrators. When legal prescriptions are violated, the state has the authority, through its courts and law enforcement agencies, to fine, imprison, or even execute the wrongdoer. To suggest that the state has a monopoly on the use of force should not imply that only the government uses force. State systems of government are constantly having to deal with unauthorized uses of force, such as crime (violent disputes between individuals or groups), rebellions (attempts to displace the people in power), and revolutions (attempts to overthrow the entire system of government).

The system of codified laws used to resolve disputes and maintain social order in complex societies is distinct from other types of social norms. Legal anthropologist E. Adamson Hoebel (1954:504-6) has identified three basic features of law. While his definition of law goes beyond the type of law found in western societies, it certainly holds true for that type of law as well.

First, law involves the legitimate use of physical coercion. Law without the force to punish or deprive is no law at all, although in most cases force is not necessary, because the very threat of force or compulsion acts as a sufficient deterrent to antisocial behavior. But when it is needed, a true legal system can draw up on the legitimate use of force.

Second, legal systems allocate official authority to privileged people who are able to use coercion legitimately.

Third, law is based on regularity and a certain amount of predictability. That is, since laws build on precedents, new laws are based up on old ones. This regularity and predictability eliminate much of the whim and capriciousness from the law.

Legal systems in complex societies have different objectives than systems of conflict resolution found in other societies. The objective of the Nuer Leopard skin chief and the kikuyu council of elders, for example, were to compensate the victim and to reestablish harmony within the community. Law enforcement and conflict resolution in complex societies, by contrast, tend to emphasize punishment of the wrongdoer, which frequently takes the form of incarceration or, in some cases, death. It is not, in other words, aimed at either compensation or reentering the offender back in to the community. The emphasis on punishment in complex societies is understandable in that law breakers pose a particular threat to the authority of the government officials. Unless serious offenders are punished or separated from the rest of society, they are likely to threaten the very legitimacy of political and legal authority.

4.4 Chapter Summary

In the absence of formal mechanisms of government many band and tribal societies maintain social control by means of a number of informal mechanisms such as socialization, public opinion, corporate lineages, supernatural sanction, and age organizations.

In addition to using informal means of social control, societies control behavior by more formal mechanisms whose major function is maintaining social order and resolving conflicts. These mechanism include verbal competition/song duel, intermediaries, councils of elders, oaths, ordeals, and formal court systems.

CHAPTER FIVE: ORIGIN OF THE STATE

5.1 Chapter Introduction

This section of the module mainly covers the origin of a state and its course of development. The ideas of different theoretical perspective are drawn to explain the origin of the state. These mainly includes the voluntaristic theories consisting of the Social contract theory, the automatic theory, and the hydraulic hypothesis; and the coercive theories which comprises- Social

Circumscription, Resource Concentration, Political Evolution, Environmental Circumscription, Conflict Theory.

5.3 The state

A state is an autonomous political unit, encompassing many communities within its territory and having a centralized government with the power to collect taxes, draft men for work or war, and decree and enforce laws.

For the first 2 million years of his existence, man lived in bands or villages which, as far as we can tell, were completely autonomous. Not until perhaps 5000 B.C. did villages begin to aggregate into larger political units. But, once this process of aggregation began, it continued at a progressively faster pace and led, around 4000 B.C., to the formation of the first state in history. Although it was by all odds the most far-reaching political development in human history, the origin of the state is still very imperfectly understood. Indeed, not one of the current theories of the rise of the state is entirely satisfactory. At one point or another, all of them fail.

Explicit theories of the origin of the state are relatively modern. Classical writers like Aristotle, unfamiliar with other forms of political organization, tended to think of the state as “natural,” and therefore as not requiring an explanation. However, the age of exploration, by making Europeans aware that many peoples throughout the world lived, not in states, but in independent villages or tribes, made the state seem less natural, and thus more in need of explanation. Of the many modern theories of state origins that have been proposed, we can consider only a few. Those with a racial basis, for example, are now so thoroughly discredited that they need not be dealt with here. We can also reject the belief that the state is an expression of the “genius” of a people, or that it arose through a “historical accident.” Such notions make the state appear to be something metaphysical or adventitious, and thus place it beyond scientific understanding. However, the origin of the state was neither mysterious nor fortuitous. It was not the product of “genius” or the result of chance, but the outcome of a regular and determinate cultural process. Moreover, it was not a unique event but a recurring phenomenon: states arose independently in different places and at different times. Where the appropriate conditions existed, the state emerged.

5.4 A Theory of the Origin of the State

Serious theories of state origins are of two general types: *voluntaristic* and *coercive*.

5.4.1. Voluntaristic Theories

Voluntaristic theories hold that, at some point in their history, certain peoples spontaneously, rationally, and voluntarily gave up their individual sovereignties and united with other communities to form a larger political unit deserving to be called a state. Of such theories the best known is the old **Social Contract theory**, which was associated especially with the name of Rousseau. We now know that no such compact was ever subscribed to by human groups, and the Social Contract theory is today nothing more than a historical curiosity.

I. “Automatic” theory

The most widely accepted of modern voluntaristic theories is the one known as the “automatic” theory. According to this theory, the invention of agriculture automatically brought into being a surplus of food, enabling some individuals to divorce themselves from food production and to become potters, weavers, smiths, masons, and so on, thus creating an extensive division of labor. Out of this occupational specialization there developed a political integration which united a number of previously independent communities into a state. This argument was set forth most frequently by the late British archeologist V. Gordon Childe.

The principal difficulty with this theory is that agriculture does *not* automatically create a food surplus. We know this because many agricultural peoples of the world produce no such surplus.

Virtually all Amazonian Indians, for example, were agricultural, but in aboriginal times they did not produce a food surplus. That it was *technically feasible* for them to produce such a surplus is shown by the fact that, under the stimulus of European settlers’ desire for food, a number of tribes did raise manioc in amounts well above their own needs, for the purpose of trading. Thus the technical means for generating a food surplus were there; it was the social mechanisms needed to actualize it that were lacking.

II. Hydraulic hypothesis

Another current voluntaristic theory of state origins is Karl Wittfogel’s “hydraulic hypothesis.”

Wittfogel sees the state arising in the following way. In certain arid and semi-arid areas of the world, where village farmers had to struggle to support themselves by means of small-scale irrigation, a time arrived when they saw that it would be to the advantage of all concerned to set

aside their individual autonomies and merge their villages into a single large political unit capable of carrying out irrigation on a broad scale. The body of officials they created to devise and administer such extensive irrigation works brought the state into being.

This theory has recently run into difficulties. Archeological evidence now makes it appear that in at least three of the areas that Wittfogel cites as exemplifying his “hydraulic hypothesis”—Mesopotamia, China, and Mexico—full-fledged states developed well before large-scale irrigation. Thus, irrigation did not play the causal role in the rise of the state that Wittfogel appears to attribute to it.

This and all other voluntaristic theories of the rise of the state founder on the same rock: the demonstrated inability of autonomous political units to relinquish their sovereignty in the absence of overriding external constraints. We see this inability manifested again and again by political units ranging from tiny villages to great empires. Indeed, one can scan the pages of history without finding a single genuine exception to this rule. Thus, in order to account for the origin of the state we must set aside voluntaristic theories and look elsewhere.

5.4.2. Coercive Theories

I. Conflict Theory

A close examination of history indicates that only a coercive theory can account for the rise of the state. Force, and not enlightened self-interest, is the mechanism by which political evolution has led, step by step, from autonomous villages to the state.

The view that war lies at the root of the state is by no means new. Twenty-five hundred years ago Heraclitus wrote that “war is the father of all things.” The first careful study of the role of warfare in the rise of the state, however, was made less than a hundred years ago, by Herbert Spencer in his *Principles of Sociology*. Perhaps better known than Spencer’s writings on war and the state; are the conquest theories of continental writers such as Ludwig Gumplowicz, Gustav Ratzenhofer, and Franz Oppenheimer.

Oppenheimer, for example, argued that the state emerged when the productive capacity of settled agriculturists was combined with the energy of pastoral nomads through the conquest of the former by the latter. This theory, however, has two serious defects. First, it fails to account for

the rise of states in aboriginal America, where pastoral nomadism was unknown. Second, it is now well established that pastoral nomadism did not arise in the Old World until after the earliest states had emerged.

Regardless of deficiencies in particular coercive theories, however, there is little question that, in one way or another, war played a decisive role in the rise of the state. Historical or archeological evidence of war is found in the early stages of state formation in Mesopotamia, Egypt, India, China, Japan, Greece, Rome, northern Europe, central Africa, Polynesia, Middle America, Peru, and Colombia, to name only the most prominent examples.

Thus, with the Germanic kingdoms of northern Europe especially in mind, Edward Jenks observed that, “historically speaking, there is not the slightest difficulty in proving that all political communities of the modern type [that is, states] owe their existence to successful warfare.” And in reading Jan Vansina’s *Kingdoms of the Savanna*, a book with no theoretical axe to grind, one finds that state after state in central Africa rose in the same manner.

But is it really true that there is no exception to this rule? Might there not be, somewhere in the world, an example of a state which arose without the agency of war?

Until a few years ago, anthropologists generally believed that the Classic Maya provided such an instance. The archeological evidence then available gave no hint of warfare among the early Maya and led scholars to regard them as a peace-loving theocratic state which had arisen entirely without war. However, this view is no longer tenable. Recent archeological discoveries have placed the Classic Maya in a very different light. First came the discovery of the Bonampak murals, showing the early Maya at war and reveling in the torture of war captives. Then, excavations around Tikal revealed large earthworks partly surrounding that Classic Maya city, pointing clearly to a military rivalry with the neighboring city of Uaxactun. Summarizing present thinking on the subject, Michael D. Coe has observed that “the ancient Maya were just as warlike as the . . . bloodthirsty states of the Post-Classic.”

Yet, though warfare is surely a prime mover in the origin of the state, it cannot be the only factor. After all, wars have been fought in many parts of the world where the state never emerged. Thus, while warfare may be a necessary condition for the rise of the state, it is not a sufficient one. Or, to put it another way, while we can identify war as the mechanism of state formation, we need also to specify the conditions under which it gave rise to the state.

II. Environmental Circumscription

How are we to determine these conditions? One promising approach is to look for those factors common to areas of the world in which states arose indigenously—areas such as the Nile, Tigris-Euphrates, and Indus valleys in the Old World and the Valley of Mexico and the mountain and coastal valleys of Peru in the New. These areas differ from one another in many ways—in altitude, temperature, rainfall, soil type, drainage pattern, and many other features. They do, however, have one thing in common: they are all areas of circumscribed agricultural land. Each of them is set off by mountains, seas, or deserts and these environmental features sharply delimit the area that simple farming peoples could occupy and cultivate. In this respect these areas are very different from, say, the Amazon basin or the eastern woodlands of North America, where extensive and unbroken forests provided almost unlimited agricultural land. But what is the significance of circumscribed agricultural land for the origin of the state? Its significance can best be understood by comparing political development in two regions of the world having contrasting ecologies—one a region with circumscribed agricultural land and the other a region where there was extensive and unlimited land. The two areas that are chosen in making this comparison are the coastal valleys of Peru and the Amazon basin.

Our examination begins at the stage where agricultural communities were already present but where each was still completely autonomous. Looking first at the Amazon basin, we see that agricultural villages there were numerous, but widely dispersed. Even in areas with relatively dense clustering, like the Upper Xingu basin, villages were at least 10 or 15 miles apart. Thus, the typical Amazonian community, even though it practiced a simple form of shifting cultivation which required extensive amounts of land, still had around it all the forest land needed for its gardens. For Amazonia as a whole, then, population density was low and subsistence pressure on the land was slight.

Warfare was certainly frequent in Amazonia, but it was waged for reasons of revenge, the taking of women, the gaining of personal prestige, and motives of a similar sort. There being no shortage of land, there was, by and large, no warfare over land.

The consequences of the type of warfare that did occur in Amazonia were as follows. A defeated group was not, as a rule, driven from its land. Nor did the victor make any real effort to subject the vanquished, or to exact tribute from him. This would have been difficult to accomplish in any case, since there was no effective way to prevent the losers from fleeing to a distant part of the forest. Indeed, defeated villages often chose to do just this, not so much to avoid subjugation as to avoid further attack. With settlement so sparse in Amazonia, a new area of forest could be found and occupied with relative ease, and without trespassing on the territory of another village. Moreover, since virtually any area of forest is suitable for cultivation, subsistence agriculture could be carried on in the new habitat just about as well as in the old.

It was apparently by this process of fight and flight that horticultural tribes gradually spread out until they came to cover, thinly but extensively, almost the entire Amazon basin. Thus, under the conditions of unlimited agricultural land and low population density that prevailed in Amazonia, the effect of warfare was to disperse villages over a wide area, and to keep them autonomous. With only a very few exceptions, noted below, there was no tendency in Amazonia for villages to be held in place and to combine into larger political units.

In marked contrast to the situation in Amazonia were the events that transpired in the narrow valleys of the Peruvian coast. The reconstruction of these events that will be presented is admittedly inferential, but it is consistent with the archeological evidence.

Here too our account begins at the stage of small, dispersed, and autonomous farming communities. However, instead of being scattered over a vast expanse of rain forest as they were in Amazonia, villages here were confined to some 78 short and narrow valleys. Each of these valleys, moreover, was backed by the mountains, fronted by the sea, and flanked on either side by desert as dry as any in the world. Nowhere else, perhaps, can one find agricultural valleys more sharply circumscribed than these.

As with Neolithic communities generally, villages of the Peruvian coastal valleys tended to grow in size. Since autonomous villages are likely to fission as they grow, as long as land is available for the settlement of splinter communities, these villages undoubtedly split from time to time. Thus, villages tended to increase in number faster than they grew in size. This increase in the number of villages occupying a valley probably continued, without giving rise to significant changes in subsistence practices, until all the readily arable land in the valley was being farmed.

At this point two changes in agricultural techniques began to occur: the tilling of land already under cultivation was intensified, and new, previously unusable land was brought under cultivation by means of terracing and irrigation.

Yet the rate at which new arable land was created failed to keep pace with the increasing demand for it. Even before the land shortage became so acute that irrigation began to be practiced systematically, villages were undoubtedly already fighting one another over land. Prior to this time, when agricultural villages were still few in number and well supplied with land, the warfare waged in the coastal valleys of Peru had probably been of much the same type as that described above for Amazonia. With increasing pressure of human population on the land, however, the major incentive for war changed from a desire for revenge to a need to acquire land. And, as the causes of war became predominantly economic, the frequency, intensity, and importance of war increased.

Once this stage was reached, a Peruvian village that lost a war faced consequences very different from those faced by a defeated village in Amazonia. There, as we have seen, the vanquished could flee to a new locale, subsisting there about as well as they had subsisted before, and retaining their independence. In Peru, however, this alternative was no longer open to the inhabitants of defeated villages. The mountains, the desert, and the sea—to say nothing of neighboring villages—blocked escape in every direction. A village defeated in war thus faced only grim prospects. If it was allowed to remain on its own land, instead of being exterminated or expelled, this concession came only at a price. And the price was political subordination to the victor. This subordination generally entailed at least the payment of a tribute or tax in kind, which the defeated village could provide only by producing more food than it had produced before. But subordination sometimes involved a further loss of autonomy on the part of the defeated village namely, incorporation into the political unit dominated by the victor.

Through the recurrence of warfare of this type, we see arising in coastal Peru integrated territorial units transcending the village in size and in degree of organization. Political evolution was attaining the level of the chiefdom.

As land shortages continued and became even more acute, so did warfare. Now, however, the competing units were no longer small villages but, often, large chiefdoms. From this point on,

through the conquest of chiefdom by chiefdom, the size of political units increased at a progressively faster rate. Naturally, as autonomous political units increased in size, they decreased in number, with the result that an entire valley was eventually unified under the banner of its strongest chiefdom. The political unit thus formed was undoubtedly sufficiently centralized and complex to warrant being called a state.

The political evolution described for one valley of Peru was also taking place in other valleys, in the highlands as well as on the coast. Once valley-wide kingdoms emerged, the next step was the formation of multi-valley kingdoms through the conquest of weaker valleys by stronger ones. The culmination of this process was the conquest of all of Peru by its most powerful state, and the formation of a single great empire. Although this step may have occurred once or twice before in Andean history, it was achieved most notably, and for the last time, by the Incas.

III. Political Evolution

While the aggregation of villages into chiefdoms, and of chiefdoms into kingdoms, was occurring by external acquisition, the structure of these increasingly larger political units was being elaborated by internal evolution. These inner changes were, of course, closely related to outer events. The expansion of successful states brought within their borders conquered peoples and territory which had to be administered. And it was the individuals who had distinguished themselves in war who were generally appointed to political office and assigned the task of carrying out this administration. Besides maintaining law and order and collecting taxes, the functions of this burgeoning class of administrators included mobilizing labor for building irrigation works, roads, fortresses, palaces, and temples. Thus, their functions helped to weld an assorted collection of petty states into a single integrated and centralized political unit.

These same individuals, who owed their improved social position to their exploits in war, became, along with the ruler and his kinsmen, the nucleus of an upper class. A lower class in turn emerged from the prisoners taken in war and employed as servants and slaves by their captors. In this manner did war contribute to the rise of social classes.

It is noted earlier that peoples attempt to acquire their neighbors' land before they have made the fullest possible use of their own. This implies that every autonomous village has an untapped margin of food productivity, and that this margin is squeezed out only when the village is subjugated and compelled to pay taxes in kind. The surplus food extracted from conquered

villages through taxation, which in the aggregate attained very significant proportions, went largely to support the ruler, his warriors and retainers, officials, priests, and other members of the rising upper class, who thus became completely divorced from food production.

Finally, those made landless by war but not enslaved tended to gravitate to settlements which, because of their specialized administrative, commercial, or religious functions, were growing into towns and cities. Here they were able to make a living as workers and artisans, exchanging their labor or their wares for part of the economic surplus exacted from village farmers by the ruling class and spent by members of that class to raise their standard of living.

The process of political evolution which is outlined for the coastal valleys of Peru was, in its essential features, by no means unique to this region. Areas of circumscribed agricultural land elsewhere in the world, such as the Valley of Mexico, Mesopotamia, the Nile Valley, and the Indus Valley, saw the process occur in much the same way and for essentially the same reasons.

In these areas, too, autonomous Neolithic villages were succeeded by chiefdoms, chiefdoms by kingdoms, and kingdoms by empires. The last stage of this development was, of course, the most impressive. The scale and magnificence attained by the early empires overshadowed everything that had gone before. But, in a sense, empires were merely the logical culmination of the process. The really fundamental step, the one that had triggered the entire train of events that led to empires, was the change from village autonomy to supra-village integration. This step was a change in kind; everything that followed was, in a way, only a change in degree.

In addition to being pivotal, the step to supra-community aggregation was difficult, for it took 2 million years to achieve. But, once it was achieved, once village autonomy was transcended; only two or three millennia were required for the rise of great empires and the flourishing of complex civilizations.

IV. Resource Concentration

Theories are first formulated on the basis of a limited number of facts. Eventually, though, a theory must confront all of the facts. And often new facts are stubborn and do not conform to the theory, or do not conform very well. What distinguishes a successful theory from an unsuccessful one is that it can be modified or elaborated to accommodate the entire range of facts. Let us see how well the “circumscription theory” holds up when it is brought face-to-face with certain facts that appear to be exceptions.

For the first test let us return to Amazonia. Early voyagers down the Amazon left written testimony of a culture along that river higher than the culture I have described for Amazonia generally. In the 1500's, the native population living on the banks of the Amazon was relatively dense, villages were fairly large and close together, and some degree of social stratification existed. Moreover, here and there a paramount chief held sway over many communities.

The question immediately arises: with unbroken stretches of arable land extending back from the Amazon for hundreds of miles, why were there chiefdoms there?

To answer the question we must look closely at the environmental conditions afforded by the Amazon. Along the margins of the river itself, and on islands within it, there is a type of land called *várzea*. The river floods this land every year, covering it with a layer of fertile silt. Because of this annual replenishment, *várzea* is agricultural land of first quality which can be cultivated year after year without ever having to lie fallow. Thus, among native farmers it was highly priced and greatly coveted. The waters of the Amazon were also extraordinarily bountiful, providing fish, manatees, turtles and turtle eggs, caimans, and other riverine foods in inexhaustible amounts. By virtue of this concentration of resources, the Amazon, as a habitat, was distinctly superior to its hinterlands.

Concentration of resources along the Amazon amounted almost to a kind of circumscription. While there was no sharp cleavage between productive and unproductive land, as there was in Peru, there was at least a steep ecological gradient. So much more rewarding was the Amazon River than adjacent areas, and so desirable did it become as a habitat, that people were drawn to it from surrounding regions. Eventually crowding occurred along many portions of the river, leading to warfare over sections of river front. And the losers in war, in order to retain access to the river, often had no choice but to submit to the victors. By this subordination of villages to a paramount chief there arose along the Amazon chiefdoms representing a higher step in political evolution than had occurred elsewhere in the basin.

The notion of resource concentration also helps to explain the surprising degree of political development apparently attained by peoples of the Peruvian coast while they were still depending primarily on fishing for subsistence, and only secondarily on agriculture. Of this seeming anomaly Lanning has written: "To the best of my knowledge, this is the only case in

which so many of the characteristics of civilization have been found without a basically agricultural economic foundation.

Armed with the concept of resource concentration, however, we can show that this development was not so anomalous after all. The explanation, it seems to me, runs as follows. Along the coast of Peru wild food sources occurred in considerable number and variety.

However, they were restricted to a very narrow margin of land. Accordingly, while the abundance of food in this zone led to a sharp rise in population, the restrictedness of this food soon resulted in the almost complete occupation of exploitable areas. And when pressure on the available resources reached a critical level, competition over land ensued. The result of this competition was to set in motion the sequence of events of political evolution that I have described.

Thus, it seems that we can safely add resource concentration to environmental circumscription as a factor leading to warfare over land, and thus to political integration beyond the village level.

V. Social Circumscription

But there is still another factor to be considered in accounting for the rise of the state.

In dealing with the theory of environmental circumscription while discussing the Yanomamö Indians of Venezuela, Napoleon A. Chagnon has introduced the concept of “**social circumscription**.” By this he means that a high density of population in an area can produce effects on peoples living near the center of the area that are similar to effects produced by environmental circumscription. This notion seems to me to be an important addition to our theory. Let us see how, according to Chagnon, social circumscription has operated among the Yanomamö.

The Yanomamö, who number some 10,000, live in an extensive region of non-circumscribed rain forest, away from any large river. One might expect that Yanomamö villages would thus be more or less evenly spaced. However, Chagnon notes that, at the center of Yanomamö territory, villages are closer together than they are at the periphery. Because of this, they tend to impinge on one another more, with the result that warfare is more frequent and intense in the center than in peripheral areas. Moreover, it is more difficult for villages in the nuclear area to escape attack

by moving away, since, unlike villages on the periphery, their ability to move is somewhat restricted.

The net result is that villages in the central area of Yanomamö territory are larger than villages in the other areas, since large village size is an advantage for both attack and defense. A further effect of more intense warfare in the nuclear area is that village headmen are stronger in that area. Yanomamö headmen are also the war leaders, and their influence increases in proportion to their village's participation in war. In addition, offensive and defensive alliances between villages are more common in the center of Yanomamö territory than in outlying areas. Thus, while still at the autonomous village level of political organization, those Yanomamö subject to social circumscription have clearly moved a step or two in the direction of higher political development.

Although the Yanomamö manifest social circumscription only to a modest degree, this amount of it has been enough to make a difference in their level of political organization. What the effects of social circumscription would be in areas where it was more fully expressed should, therefore, be clear. First would come a reduction in the size of the territory of each village. Then, as population pressure became more severe, warfare over land would ensue. But because adjacent land for miles around was already the property of other villages, a defeated village would have nowhere to flee. From this point on, the consequences of warfare for that village, and for political evolution in general, would be essentially the situation of environmental circumscription.

To return to Amazonia, it is clear that, if social circumscription is operative among the Yanomamö today, it was certainly operative among the tribes of the Amazon River 400 years ago. And its effect would undoubtedly have been to give a further spur to political evolution in that region.

We see then that, even in the absence of sharp environmental circumscription, the factors of resource concentration and social circumscription may, by intensifying war and redirecting it toward the taking of land, give a strong impetus to political development.

With these auxiliary hypotheses incorporated into it, the circumscription theory is now better able to confront the entire range of test cases that can be brought before it. For example, it can now account for the rise of the state in the Hwang Valley of northern China, and even in the

Petén region of the Maya lowlands, areas not characterized by strictly circumscribed agricultural land. In the case of the Hwang Valley, there is no question that resource concentration and social circumscription were present and active forces. In the lowland Maya area, resource concentration seems not to have been a major factor, but social circumscription may well have been.

Some archeologists may object that population density in the Petén during formative times was too low to give rise to social circumscription. But, in assessing what constitutes a population dense enough to produce this effect, we must consider not so much the total land area occupied as the amount of land needed to support the existing population. And the size of this supporting area depends not only on the size of the population but also on the mode of subsistence. The shifting cultivation presumably practiced by the ancient Maya required considerably more land, per capita, than did the permanent field cultivation of, say, the valley of Mexico or the coast of Peru. Consequently, insofar as its effects are concerned, a relatively low population density in the Petén may have been equivalent to a much higher one in Mexico or Peru.

We have already learned from the Yanomamö example that social circumscription may begin to operate while population is still relatively sparse. And we can be sure that the Petén was far more densely peopled in Formative times than Yanomamö territory is today. Thus, population density among the lowland Maya, while giving a superficial appearance of sparseness, may actually have been high enough to provoke fighting over land, and thus provide the initial impetus for the formation of a state.

5.5 Chapter Summary

In this chapter an exhaustive discussion has been made on the origin of the state. The chapter mainly focused on two theories that attempt to explain the origin of the state. These are the voluntaristic and *coercive* theories.

Voluntaristic theories hold that, at some point in their history, certain peoples spontaneously, rationally, and voluntarily gave up their individual sovereignties and united with other communities to form a larger political unit deserving to be called a state. The theory includes the old Social Contract theory, “Automatic” theory and Hydraulic hypothesis.

On the other hand, the circumscription theory in its elaborated form goes far toward accounting for the origin of the state. It explains why states arose where they did, and why they failed to arise elsewhere. It shows the state to be a predictable response to certain specific cultural, demographic, and ecological conditions. Thus, it helps to elucidate what undoubtedly the most important single step was ever taken in the political evolution of mankind.

CHAPTER SIX: RELIGION IN POLITICS

6.1 Chapter Introduction

This chapter mainly focuses on the relationship between religion and politics. The chapter further explores the role of religion and supernatural force in politics, sacred legitimacy and symbolism and ritual in secular society. And finally concludes by putting a brief discussion on the nexus between religion, stability, and change-Revitalization movement.

6.3 Religion and politics

It may be not be true, as George Balander has contended, that the sacred is always present in politics; but it is seldom far away. As Mayron Aronof observes, “Religion and politics have been inextricably interrelated since the dawn of human culture and civilization.” Viewers of Leni Riefenstahl’s classical propaganda film *Triumph of the will*, made at the 1934 Nazi party conference in Nuremberg, might justifiably wonder whether they are watching a political rally or a religious ceremony. An implicit sacredness underlies the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States, and offers a divine legitimacy to political succession. In modern –day Iran, Ireland, political conflict may be indistinguishable from religious conflict. However, in pre industrial societies the boundaries of the various sub systems- political, kinship, economic, religious, and so forth-are far less clearly demarcated than in more complex and specialized societies. An African candidate for headman-ship who calls on ancestor spirits for support, no more considers himself resorting to the super natural than would a senatorial candidate in the United States who accepts a campaign contribution from a major corporations.

The role which religion plays in politics is difficult to correlate with evolutionary complexity. We find power directly based on the supernatural at all levels. Among some Eskimos, the shaman was the most powerful of men by virtue of his access to the spirit world; among the tribal Hopi of African southwest, political power is articulated through ceremonies, dances, and religious sodalities; modern Israel is a highly industrialized and international powerful nation-

state ultimately based on common religion and tradition. On the other hand, it would be equally easy to provide examples of hunting-gathering peoples (the !Kung) , tribal groups (the Yanomami), and states (Cuba) in which religion plays relatively little part.

The role of religion and supernatural force in politics is manifested mainly in three ways:

1. The government may be directly based on religion, as in the theocracy
2. Religion may be used to legitimize the ruling elites
3. Religion may provide the underlying structures, beliefs, and traditions that are manipulated by aspirants to power.

6.4 Sacred Legitimacy

There is no clear-cut dividing line between a theocracy and a secular state. Because virtually all pre-industrial claims at least some degree of divine legitimacy, and even most religiously oriented of administrations must solve a number of very secular problems-defense, trade, development of roads, and irrigation networks-the amount of religious emphasis is a matter of degree, not in kind. Even in most cases where religion plays an extremely important role, the secular and priestly bureaucracies are kept quite separate (as true, for example, for the Inca and Maya). While the priests may have enormous power, it is not power that would usually be expended on the mundane functioning of the government. Divine kings may, like the people, express their divinity only on certain specific occasions and in very specific contexts. Jacobus Janssen argues that this was true of the Egyptian pharaohs, who guaranteed and maintained the cosmic order (*ma' at*) while at the same time being subject to that order; their persons were taboo, but they were incapable of working miracles; they were omnipotent but subject to the gods and forced to rule through purely mundane means. People in states that are not as highly segmented as the west seem to have little problem dealing with the simultaneity of the human and divine, the sacred and secular.

Lucy Mair notes two requisites for kingship in Africa: The support of a loyal following, and Some claim on the part of the would-be king to a special relationship with super natural beings. In other words, a king requires both secular support and sacred legitimacy. The first drives from the individual king's personality and abilities and from his rightful claim, within traditional rules, to the throne; he must attain legitimacy through linking himself by myth to a supernatural ancestor responsible for the origin of the group or some crucial event in the mythological history.

The Shilluk of Sudan believe in a semi divine cultural hero who, through an Exodus –like epic adventure, established them as a unique people, set up the first villages, and founded the basic divisions of their society. This deathless hero, Ny'ikang, simply disappeared, and his spirit entered into each succeeding king. The Shilluk were the only contemporary group chosen by James George Frazer, in his classic *The Golden Bough* (1980), to support his theory that the king had to be killed in a ritual manner before he became old, in order that the mystic potency would always remain with a virile leader. Even though it is true that many such kings died young, in battle or through assassination, the belief that the king was ritually killed is itself part of Shilluk mythology. Yet Frazer, while overemphasizing the symbolic value of fertility, did hit on an important element of African Kingship-the symbolic identification of the king's person with the welfare of the whole society.

Religious ritual also has important political functions. The periodic reenactment of legitimizing myths unites the entire community in a sacred bond that transcends private interests and day-to-day conflicts, while re-infusing the society with the mystical power of the world of the ancestors. In some un-centralized societies, religious ceremony was of the major source of tribal integration. For many of the Plains Indians, for example, it was only for two weeks during the summer Sun Dance that the entire tribe came together as a unit. It was at this time that the council of chiefs would meet and make group decisions, and when medicine bundles, which brought both mystical and secular power to their owners, exchanged hands.

6.5 Symbolism and Ritual in Secular Societies

It is comforting to assume that such sacred legitimacy is an anachronism of pre-industrial societies. Yet even secular politics, in which religion is not immediately evident, is often replete with the emotional fervor that marks the realm of the sacred. David Kertzer observes that despite modern man's illusion of political rationality of making decisions based on the weighing of objective evidence, symbolism pervades virtually every aspect of modern politics. Because symbolism, by its very nature is unconscious and has a taken-for-granted quality, there is a tendency to treat symbols as though they were things. Government, party and state are really symbolic constructions, not the concrete entities that most people suppose. Indeed, such organizations take their continuity only through symbols since only the symbols remain constant, while the people making up the organization, including its leaders, are always changing.

There are three properties to true symbol:

1. A symbol is **condensation of meaning**. Example: the ideas of United States as a physical entity, as “one nation under God”, and so forth are all funneled into a single point in the stars and the stripes (the American flag).
2. Symbols are **multi-vocal**- that is, they encompass a wide variety of different meanings. Example: a single symbol such as the Christian cross may mean very different things for different people.
3. True symbols possess **ambiguity**- that is they can not be completely defined; and have no precise meaning.

6.6 Revitalization Movement

Religion helps to maintain social order, but it can also be an instrument of change, some times even of revolution. As a response to conquest or foreign domination, religious leaders often undertake to alter or revitalize society. We call such movements’ nativistic movements or revitalization movements.

Christianity originated as a revitalization movement. Jesus was one of several prophets who preached new religious doctrines while the Middle East was under Roman rule. It was a time of social unrest, when a foreign power ruled the land. Jesus inspired a new, enduring, and major religion. His contemporaries were not so successful.

6.7 Chapter Summary

The chapter mainly assessed the relationship between religion and politics. The role of religion and supernatural force in politics, sacred legitimacy and symbolism and ritual in secular society, are also topics addressed in this chapter. In addition to this, the chapter has also exhaustively discussed the role of religion in bringing about stability as well as change in society.

CHAPTER SEVEN: POLITICAL SUCCESSION

7.1 Chapter Introduction

Power must be counted among the scarcest-and the most desirable of resources. Although it may not be useful to posit a political man who always maximizes power over others, in the same way that economists have created an abstract Economic Man who always maximizes profit, there always seem to be sufficient power-oriented individuals willing to fight for that tiny room at the

top, a room that is almost always occupied by just one individual at a time. Though government-by-committee is often tried, it is extremely unstable, as the founding fathers must have known when they wrote a strong presidency in to the constitution (a presidency which, it might be noted, grows stronger as society becomes increasingly complex).

Just as there is usually a single leader, there tend to be many in the second position. If there were only one person next in line to leadership, that person would be very dangerous. Far better to keep a group of princes with relatively equal power in constant state of rivalry. There are other advantages to not being overly specific in regard to who will succeed the leader. If the rules are too rigid-if the first born inherits leadership, for example -the state might end up in the hands of a child, a weakling, a psychotic, or an idiot (European history provides examples of all of these). A power struggle is an excellent way for various competitors to show their stuff in manipulating public opinion, gaining support of various factions, killing rivals, making war, and otherwise proving themselves capable of meeting the requirements of the job. As Max Gluckman (1960, 1969) pointed out, a society can actually be strengthened by rebellion and conflict because they resolve tensions and bring the strongest to prominence. For this reason, inflexible and highly formalized rules of succession are rare in history.

Unless the rules of succession are carefully spelled out, however, that period between the death of the old king and the crowning of the new is extremely precarious for the group as a whole. A state recently formed out of a number of chiefdoms might revert to smaller units, more over when two competitors can garner relatively equal support, there will almost certainly be civil war. Thus, too much rigidity in political successions threatens the polity because of weakness at the top; too much flexibility may rend it in pieces. This is the fundamental problem of different succession. Through history it has been answered in five different ways (or in combinations of these five): 1. Diffused leadership, 2. hereditary succession, 3. Republican government, 4. Periodic military intervention, and 5. Government by committee. Thus, a brief discussion on these is in order in this chapter.

7.3 Diffused Leadership

In band and tribal societies, the problem of succession to leadership position is solved very easily: there is no succession-at least not in the sense of power being passed from one person to

another. With the death of a leader, so dies the power and any contender must build a power base from scratch. As we have seen, in hunting-gathering bands leadership may be situational, and is in any case minimal. What power exists making them, and leadership is based on personal characteristics or abilities that cannot be transferred. This is also true in horticultural or pastoral tribes, though here power may be more actively sought and there may be well-defined rules of the game.

Among the Siuai of the Solomon Islands in the South Pacific, an aspiring “big man” has to collect as many wives as possible to form alliances with other families and to provide an ongoing visible symbol of status. In addition, pigs must be accumulated, and the taro must be grown to feed them, so that they can be used in competitive feasts designed to humiliate rivals while enlisting followers. If a few hundred men can be recruited through force of personality, generosity, and perhaps success in war to build a large clubhouse, status is fairly assured, though it must be constantly maintained against usurpers. The process tends to snowball: The more power one has, the more followers are attracted, and the more pigs can be rounded up for a feast that in turn attracts more followers and more glory. Some of these “big men” have garnered considerable power, complete with semi-re-distributional economies and the ability to make war. However, loyalties remain focused solely on the individual. His lineage establishes no permanent superiority through his actions, so with his death the whole structure collapses, and loyalties are shifted to another, or several other, power seekers (Burling 1974:14-17).

This is another demonstration of the defining differences between un-centralized and centralized systems: in the former, a leader- no matter how powerful- can neither pass on power nor build on that of a predecessor.

7.4 Hereditary Succession

Political succession in chiefdoms and early states is almost invariably hereditary, which simply reflects the emphasis on kinship, especially unilineal kinship, at this mid-level in political complexity. In fact, unilineal kinship systems can be the foundation on which centralized societies are originally constructed. As the state increases in complexity and requires that its administrators possess specialized knowledge and skills, kinship is gradually overridden as the dominant force in politics.

Within hereditary systems both extremes are usually avoided: no single person (e.g. eldest son) is designated as successor, but neither are all males within the lineage eligible: Succession is

circumscribed by rules restricting their number of contenders, while providing a sufficiently large pool of variability (to borrow a concept from evolutionary biology) from which the fittest might emerge.

Martin Southold's (1966) historical analysis of political succession among the Buganda of Uganda prior to the establishment of the British protectorate in 1894 reveals the complexity of the succession process, even in a hereditary system. The Buganda bureaucracy consisted of a powerful, but not divine, king; a prime minister who was a commoner; an aide to the king, who was also a commoner but who took the leading role in choosing the king's successor; and a series of chiefs and sub chiefs who administered the various territorial divisions of the country. There were about fifty patrilineal clans, including the royal clan of the king, though the latter had no totemic animal and was less formally inclusive than the others. Clan membership, though normal, was not automatic; one had to be accepted by the clan chief to belong. This fact gave clanship a selective character and made clans important political factions.

Southold distinguishes five categories of rules, customs, and principles by which a successor to the king was chosen:

- 1) Prescriptive rules,
- 2) Preferential rules,
- 3) Personality factors,
- 4) Political factors, and
- 5) The electoral institutions.

Prescriptive rules are those held consciously by the people themselves. The primary such rule was that, although all descendants of the king were counted among the royals, only the princes of the Drum (the sons and grandsons of the king) were eligible for the highest office. In addition, the first born son of the king was ineligible, and grandsons could only be selected if all eligible sons were dead. It was the responsibility of the prime minister to care for the sons of the chief, and he would make recommendations, based on the personality factors of the contenders, to the aide who was most responsible for selecting a successor: one son who liked to torture mice and small birds was rejected, for example, on the entirely reasonable assumption that he might prove cruel to the people. The ideal personality type was one who was restrained and humble. Commoners held the ultimate power to choose the king, and they would be careful to make sure his power was not too centralized. Many political factors, then, were involved in the selection.

Because princes of the Drum were ineligible for any office but king, and therefore in direct and intense competition with in their own lineage, they would usually turn to their mothers' lineages for support, specifically to their mother's brothers who might hold power as chiefs or sub chiefs. This meant that the power and influence of each mother's clan was a primary consideration in the king's selection. Also of prime importance were the electoral institutions themselves; though the king's aide had the greatest voice, many other commoner and royal chiefs were involved in the process, and their opinions and strengths had to be considered.

All this is somewhat ideal because it is based on the assumption that the sons really inherited the kingship, that the prescriptive rules were Southwold found that often, especially during a certain extended period succession was fraternal rather than filial, and the mode of succession was rebellion rather than election. In other words, outside the prescriptive rules was a set of preferential rules, one of which stipulated that in periods when maturity and strength were important, brothers were preferred over inexperienced sons.

7.5 The Latin American Model

Though the republican (or representative democracy) form of successions has been analyzed by anthropologists, as has the collective leadership of the Soviet Union and other communist countries, such modern forms of nation-state rule continue to be more within the domain of political science than political anthropology. However, we include here a discussion of Latin American politics which, even at the national level, have been of perennial interest to anthropologists.

The peaceful succession which western democratic nations consider normal may in fact be the norm neither within the vast span of history nor in most modern-day developing countries. It is common knowledge that the turmoil of recent African history derives from the fact that these nations are new, having gained their independence, from the colonial powers only after WWII, and that things settle down as these nations mature. But a glance at Latin America reveals that such expectations may be wishful thinking.

Through more than a century and a half of independence, violence has been a legitimate means for the transfer of power in many countries of Latin America, and governments have sometimes changed types from *caudillo* to *oligarchy* rule, from *military dictatorship* to *representative democracy*, from *one person rule* to *junta* as often as they change leaders. Since the mid-1980s, Latin America has been engaged in widespread process of democratization. This may be fragile,

however, because Third world democracies have not proven particularly adept at solving the vast economic inequalities that underline much violence. In some countries, death squads, usually made up of the military and police, operate with impunity even within democratic settings.

The reasons for this political volatility are legion, but certainly history accounts for a great deal of it. The conquest of North America was accomplished through settlement by vast numbers of immigrants who claimed the land and worked it themselves (or brought in slaves from Africa to work it), and virtual genocide against the native population. In Latin America, with the exception of coastal Brazil and the southern most countries, the land was viewed as a supplier of raw materials to Spain; thus the Indians were left in place to work vast tracts of land given to conquistadores for their service to church and crown. As a result, right from the beginning of European conquest arable land and thus wealth was concentrated in the hands of very few families. Much of the population remained traditionally Indian, living in closed peasant communities with their own languages and their own folk cultures. Over time, intermarriage between Indians and the Spanish conquerors produced an intermediate class of Mestizos. In colonial times, all higher government Office were held by Spanish administrator, and **creoles** (American- born Europeans) had to make do with local councils drawn from the richer families. With the coming of independence, the only experience that the creoles had with government was within these weak and ineffective councils, with often were quickly dominated by strong men on horse back who possessed sufficient charisma to develop militant personal followings. Throughout the nineteenth and much of the twentieth centuries these caudillos have dominated Latin American politics at all levels.

National leaders of the caudillo stripe, such as Juan Peron of Argentina, play at politics in a strongly personalistic way and often draw their power from appeals to the works, or to some working-class segment of society. A dictator is a slightly different phenomenon: men such as Anastasia Somoza in Nicaragua Rafael Trujillo in the Dominican Republic, and Fulgencio Batista in Cuba were skilled in manipulating the richer element of the society, in forming personal armies, and especially in using the United States paranoia of communism to centralize enormous wealth and power. They made only nominal concessions to the masses.

Few dictators have held absolute power; at least in the early years of their rule .A basic job requirement is the ability to balance many forces within the country while simultaneously juggling rival claims and rival interests. Historically, the two key forces-haves been the oligarchy

and the army, either of which might assume the reins of government oligarchies originally consisted of the landed elite. In many countries, such as Peru and Uruguay, the big money has been shifted from land to industry with the result that it is no longer possible to speak of a few families who control most of the arable land. Today, elites are formed out of agrarian-industrial complexes with close ties to multinational corporations based in the United States, Europe, and Japan. There is often a symbiotic relationship between the army and the elite in these countries. At the same time, the army usually has a high degree of autonomy, which it jealously guards. Armies have not always acted predictably—they have sometimes been willing to step aside to civilian rule, to allow total chaos to develop (as in Argentina) before assuming dictatorial power, and even to impose extensive popular reforms (as in Juan Velasco's government in Peru). In contrast to the developed western countries, however, the army is autonomous of any government it does not itself run.

All Latin American governments have constitutions. Some have closets full of constitutions, abrogated and rewritten as often as governments change. Because some of these countries lack any real commitment to constitutional succession, have long repudiated the idea of hereditary leadership, and possess massive illiterate and semi-literate populations that often identify more peaceful means of political succession have not always found favor in Latin American countries. In the absence of any direct means of popular input, the primary goal of government has been to protect the wealth of the elite and the power of the military. Of course, adjustments are made as deemed necessary to suppress popular discontent; these can range from agrarian reform and minimum wage laws to brutal repression.

Eric Wolf and Edward Hansen 1972 have developed a typology of Latin American succession. ***Machetismo*** refers to the process, long the norm at the local rural level, by which one caudillo is able to garner enough local power to impose his absolute will through a following of armed men in the nineteenth century, often cane workers armed with ***machetes***. When raised to the national level, this type of succession may involve scores of regional strong men. Each with his own private army fighting to attain the status of ***jefe maximo***; one such conflict in Colombia between 1899 and 1903 cost one hundred thousand lives. ***Cuartelezco*** refers to a barracks rebellion (cartel = barracks). The classic pattern is for one group of military officers to coordinate simultaneous attacks on communication centers, military supplies, and the seat of government immediately followed by the announcement of a new junta and of reforms. If carried out smoothly, at a time

when the standing government is sufficiently unpopular and is alienated from the military such a change of power may be relatively bloodless. A *golpe de estado* (the Spanish phrasing of coup d'état) may bypass the military; it strikes directly at the seat of power, through either the assassination or the detention of the president.

The obvious problem with such violent means of succession is that the new government may possess little in the way of legitimacy in the eyes of the people. One method of gaining such legitimacy is to sponsor an election: this has the added advantage of providing the elected government (assuming it is allowed to come to power) with a friendly pat on the back from the United States. However, the legitimacy of an election can be contrived to some degree through *imposicion*, a process by which the ruling forces handpick a candidate and rig the election to make sure he wins; or by candidate *unico*, in which the ruler holds an election with himself as the sole candidate. A more subtle approach to prolonging power is *continuismo*, by which a president's term of office is extended through manipulation of the existing constitution, by writing a new Constitution, by new legislation, or by a favorable judicial ruling. Even where there exist all of the formal trappings of democracy, an autonomous military probably maintains enormous control over the levers of power, and the constant threat of a *golpe* may have to be considered in government decisions. Also, democracy may in some cases offer no more than the opportunity to vote for one or another faction of the elite, while elite rule is legitimized by the illusion that the masses have the ability to affect substantive change.

In reality, little structural change –toward a more equitable wealth distribution, for example–has been effected in Latin American democracies.

All of the more violent forms of political succession are what Max Gluckman (1960) would have called rebellion: the head of state changes, but the system remains intact. True revolution– actual structural change in the system itself –has occurred only in Mexico, Cuba, and Nicaragua. This is not to say that massive changes have not taken place in virtually all Latin American countries; but in the majority and this may not be true to a great degree, of Mexico also these changes are more in the line of adaptive adjustments that have permitted the old economic structures to remain intact through making some, often minimal, concessions to popular unrest or which have brought new elites into the political process.

7.6 Summary

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