

Notes on P&B Chapter 11 (Politics)

A.) A **polity**, a politically-organized group, may not correspond to a cultural group. i.e., the Comanche

B.) Levels of Socio-Political Evolution:

- 1.) Usually found in **ecologically uncircumscribed territory** (Robert Carneiro, modern American ethnologist, has worked in Amazon)
- 1.) **simple bands**=extended family, hunting **non-migratory** game such as deer, guanaco, etc.
- 2.) **composite bands**=leaders are **big men**, hunting **migratory** animals such as buffalo, required i.e., the Comanche before 1875 6,000 people in 5-13 bands **headmen**, one served as **peace chief** to coordinate hunt
- 3.) **tribes**, i.e., Cheyenne in early 1800s, 3,500 people, 10 nomadic villages; they only came together in the early summer for ceremonies; had a Council of 44 and the **Warrior Societies** as camp police; **War & Peace Chiefs**
 - i.) have **sodalities** (things that allow groups of men to relate to other men; geographically dispersed)
 - a.) Descent Groups: lineage, clan, moeity
 - b.) Age Sets/Age Grades
 - c.) Voluntary Associations
 - ii.) Little Economic Specialization=**Village Specialists**
 - iii.) **social circumscription** (Chagnon modifies Carneiro) a temporary condition based on crowding, enhances the power of **war chiefs** out of headmen
- 4.) **chiefdoms**=Chiefs over several villages, position was hereditary, altho exact rank might differ, i.e., **ranked society**.
 - i.) **Intermediate Ecological Circumscription**, such as in low mountain valleys, like Colombia, or in islands like the Caribbean
 - ii.) The population is larger, i.e., 30,000 in Tahiti
 - iii.) Resources can be **individually owned**, not joint
 - iv.) Maintained by stratified redistribution
 - v.) & some system of **spiritual elevation/pollution** like **taboo** [tapu] in Polynesia
 - vi.) That + conquest produces basically a 2 level system: chiefs & commoners, i.e., K'pelle or Taíno
 - v.) Generally has only **two ranks**: nobles & commoners ex., K'pelle=Rich Cattle-owning Chiefs & poor rice farmers
- 5.) **States**:
 - a.) Characteristics of the State:
 - i.) produced by **conquest warfare**
 - ii.) as a result of horticultural/agricultural societies' **pro-natalist** need for children as cheap agricultural labor=>**demographic growth**
 - iii.) First Karl Wittfogel, a Sinologist (historian of China) noted 1st **pristine states** were associated with arid landscape thru which flowed a flooding river:
 - Sumerian in Tigris-Euphrates, 3,200 B.C.
 - Egyptian on Nile, 3,200 B.C.
 - Harappan in Indus Valley, India-1,500 B.C.

-Shang on Yellow River, northern China-1,500 B.C.

-Sechín in Casma Valley, N. Peru-1,500 B.C.

-**but** Olmec-Humid swamp coast of Veracruz, an **exception!**

- iv.) In addition, archaeological research has now shown that complex irrigation systems **post-date** not **pre-date** the state
 - v.) Hence, the Wittfogel hypothesis no longer works.
 - vi.) It has been replaced by Carneiro's **environmetally circumscribed ecozones** hypothesis: (Robert Carneiro); i.e., Sechín on coast of Peru
 - iii.) A 3-level system:ruling élite, bureaucracy & populace
 - iv.) earliest are theocratic=Egypt, Inca & Hawaii (Divine Right of Kings)
 - v.) Can be maintained by **royal incest=endogmay as ultimate power**
 - vi.) But, in competing states, by **marital alliance**
 - vii.) **Writing** & Administration:"Huno "=10,000 households, then 5,000-1,000-500-100 and 50, all recorded without writing=**quipus** ("memory-aid" device). Labor tax=corvée, 1530s conquered
 - ix.) Largest populations, in the millions; i.e., the Inca Empire of Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia and Chile: 12 million people stretching 2,500 miles, 9,500 mile highway system (longer than Roman) the "Sapa Inca" was the ruler of 4 quarters,
 - x.) -mechanisms to **control** such large populations like **mass population relocation**
- b.) Kingdoms (limited to 1 ethnic group); became **nation state**
- c.) Empires (spanned culture geographic regions & ethnic groups)-
-last empire was the USSR

Notes on P&B Chapter 12 (Stratification)

A.) Authority [Status]=Influence [Role], the moral dimension, to suggest

B.) Power, ability to command

1.) Legitimate Power

2.) Illegitimate Power=Coercion

P&B use in a different sense; they substitute Influence for Authority, calling the latter "legitimate power"

Morton Fried-1967-3 kinds of societies: (1.) **egalitarian**, (2.) **ranked**, and (3.) **stratified**

C.) Mechanisms of:

1.) Can be upheld by **force** and/or by

2.) Stratification ideology, such as **mana**, or by

3.) **Education** and/or by

4.) **Social contacts** (networks)

D.) Types of Social Stratum:

1.) **Ranks**: usually only **2** (often by conquest):

a.) Nobles

b.) Commoners

c.) no two ranks the same because are individually **achieved statuses** within the generally **ascribed statuses**, i.e., Samuel Paye is now only a Clan Chief, not a Paramount Chief like his father Dolo Kem Paye (altho he is still a cattle-owning and high-ranking chief)-volatility

d.) therefore, can't inherit automatically

e.) usually found in **chiefdom** societies like Kpelle of Liberia or Taíno of ancient Caribbean

2.) The appearance of **corporate prestige architectural features** like the ballpark in the Greater Antilles for Amerindian soccer

a.) a material culture of **public power** replaces the tribal material culture of **personal presentation**

i.) via **large size**

ii.) static **immobility**

iii.) resultant **long-range visibility**

iv.) **frontality**

v.) increasing **anthropomorphic** imagery

aa.) starting out with were-creatures

bb.) becoming increasingly **anthropocentric** over time as animal imagery is replaced by human imagery (i.e., from the theriomorphic winged Babylonian angel to modern "Michael")

- b.) produced by **stratified redistribution** (ex., the cow feasts of Dolo Kem Paye)
- c.) and paid **full-time occupational specialists**, the shamanic **seer** or pronosticator becomes the liscensed **ordeal operator**, Old Man David, and the **priest**
- d.) and the **priest-temple-idol complex** coupled with an **oracle** (like the later state-level oracle at Delphi in Greece)
- c.) which is justified by **ritual regulation** (Roy Rappaport, a modern American ethnographer) and **Calendrics**
 - i.) empirical statements
 - ii.) non-empirical statements (if the former work, you as a participant, will tend to believe the latter)

2.) **Classes** (associated with **States**):

- a.) Individuals more equivalent or interchangeable
- b.) Permit some social mobility, often via:
 - i.) Education
 - ii.) Entrepreneurial activity
 - iii.) Military exploits
 - iv.) **Hypergamy**="marrying up"; the Cinderella story=

classes permit **exogamy**

- c.) Often membership is not obvious; often one can't identify one's own group, as when 4/5ths of Americans define themselves as "middle class"
- d.) Key defining characteristic is work, one's membership is defined by what one does; "what do you do?" being the 1st question Americans ask, occupation=income=lifestyle
- e.) **but**, "status groups" don't equal "economic classes", as when a college professor, doing "brain work" earns less than a plumber [blue collar] doing manual work.
- f.) Yet, in **post-industrial** society, as in the U.S. for 1997, the richest 20% earned about 50% of all income, the poorest 20% only 3%! The wealth of the wealthiest is growing by 44%, poorest by only 8%. That means that **inequality is growing rapidly**. If one compares **assets**, not **income**, it is even more marked, the wealthiest 10% own 72% of all assets, the rest, 90%, own but 28%!

E.) **Inequality**:

- 1.) **Functionalist Theories of Inequality**="one must reward to attract the best", **but** American corporation presidents now earn 25X

more than what workers make, while Japanese bosses are only paid 10x more

- 2.) **Conflict Theory of Inequality**=elites gain control of productive resources like land, technology or, increasingly, information (but this is hard to do); in Marxism everybody is exploited + it is believed that one can organize a complex society non-hierarchically (impossible).
- 3.) **Castes**, as in India & West Africa:
 - a.) Established initially by **military conquest** by an **alien ethnic élite**
 - b.) Therefore, continues to be **endogamous**, therefore **hereditary**
 - c.) Maintained by **prohibitions=taboos** on contact between castes, i.e., ritual "purity" and "pollution"
 - d.) And **occupationally specialized**
 - e.) This "fixes" or "fossilizes" the conquest-period society & its technology; very hard to adjust to technical change, i.e., where do you put software engineers?

F.) Most Famous Example: **India**

- 1.) "Hinduism" & Caste in India, 1,500 B.C. Aryan conquest of Dravidian speakers
- 2.) Hindu society composed of 4 **varnas** (or caste groupings) + the outside group, the "untouchables" (sweepers=removed excrement leather workers, butchers, body cremators, etc.). They can't go into temples, must drink out of their own wells, etc. midwives are also included in this group, generally darkest in skin color= the original **Dravidian** speakers

- 1.) **Brahmin**=priests & scholars, must purify themselves after contact with lower castes
- 2.) **Kshatriyas**=nobles & warriors
- 3.) **Vaishas**=merchants & artisans
- 4.) **Shudras**=farmers
- 3.) Within each caste there are sub-divisions=**jati**, as in a shudra varna village being divided into several jati: "potters", "weavers", "tailors", etc.
- 4.) Economically, made practical by the **Patron/Client**=Jajmani system, jajman[patron]/kamin[client]
- 5.) Justified thru religion, the **Rig Vedda**, in Sanskrit, social order= cosmological order., **Cosmological Body**, Brahmins=Head, Kshatriyas=arms, Vaishas=torso and legs, Shudras=feet
- 6.) in ethnomedicine=**Ayurvedic Medicine**
- 7.) & in Cosmology=**Reincarnation & karma** through vast kalpas= (cycles) of time
- 8.) This may lead to "reinventing" the history of one's own caste to maintain that it came from a higher **varna**; one can see this in social promotion in foreign settings like Guyana where many shudras have become brahmins & send their children back to India for a classical education
- 9.) Castes are not just exotic phenomena; The American South before the mid-20th century & the Civil Rights Movement was a **caste society** via the "Jim Crow", or **segregation laws**, as was **apartheid** in S. Africa before Nelson Mandella

