Turn of Century Cultural Evolutionism: Ethnocentric and Racist

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<th>Civilized</th>
<th>Savage</th>
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| Older Period of Savagery | Fruits, nuts, roots, living in groves, caves, in trees       | Promiscuous Intercourse
Consanguine Family: brothers & sisters marry                                    | Malayan System (Hawaiian)             | Consanguine Horde                | Property Inconsiderable                |
| Middle Period of Savagery | Fish subsistence, use of fire                                      | Punaluan Family: Group marriage, but sibs excluded                           |                                    | Matrilineal Gens; Tribes               | Lands owned by tribes; children inherit from mother |
| Later Period of Savagery | Invention of bow and arrow                                     |                                    |                                    | Patrilineal Gens                   | Large increase of personal property. Land owned in common. Inheritance of father's property. |
| Older Period of Barbarism | Pottery                                                         |                                    | Turanian and Gandowanian System (Iroquois) |                          |                                         |
| Middle Period of Barbarism | Domestication of animals (Eastern Hemisphere), Cultivation by irrigation (Western Hemisphere) | Syndiasmian Family: casual monogamy, divorce common                          | Patrilineal Gens                   |                          |                                         |
| Later Period of Barbarism | Manufacture of Iron                                             |                                    |                                    | State                               | Property in masses; individual ownership; state ownership |
| Civilization         | Invention of phonetic alphabet; Production of literary records | Patriarchal Family; Monogamian Family                                       | Aryan, Semitic and Uralian System (Eskimo) | State                               |                                         |
Ethnocentric Unilinear Model

Protestantism
Catholicism
Monotheism
Polytheism
Totemism
Animism

Note moral and “progressive” ranking
Which tool is more complex?

Figure 1. Stone tools: The first distance weapons. a) Water-polished cobble; b) Mousterian point from the Levant (ca. 55–65,000); c) Solutrian point made by behaviorally modern humans in Western Europe (ca. 18,000–22,000 ya); d) flint arrowhead from the American Midwest (ca. 1000 ya). Figures are approximately actual size. Humans have used weapons since the origin of Homo ca. 2–2.5 million years ago. All of these tools/weapons had multiple uses; however, on the coalitional enforcement hypothesis, their most fundamental use was in coercive enforcement of kinship-independent social cooperation.
How do we measure complexity?
Some components:

- More parts
- Specialization of parts
- Integration of parts
- Parts have limited purpose
Characteristics of Bands

**Leadership**
- headman
- ephemeral (non-hereditary)
- charismatic
- demonstrated competence

**Status**
- age & sex
- accomplishments
- shaman

**Religion**
- ethnic
- shamanic

**Economics**
- sex division of labor
- reciprocity
- generalization
Characteristics of Tribes

- Leadership
  - headman or bigman

- Status
  - based on accumulation of wealth

- Sodality
  - organizations such as age grades, lineages, or secret societies that cross-cut territorial boundaries

- Corporateness of local residential group
Simple ad hoc non-hierarchical alliance system: ties are short-lived and can be unilaterally broken and usually found in bands
Hierarchical alliance system based on kinship: Segmentary Lineage
Characteristics of Headmen & Big Men

- Generosity
- Oratorical abilities
- Dispute settlement
- Consensus forming

- Benefits of being a headman
  - Polygyny (in some cases)
  - Family members may be better treated
Dealing with an aggrandizing headman

Mechanisms used by the rank-and-file to prevent dominance by their leader:

- criticism, gossip, and ridicule
- disobedience
- public denouncement (usually by a council of men)
- desertion
- exile
- execution

Example of egalitarianism in sharing:

"You must not thank for your meat; it is your right to get parts. In this country, nobody wishes to be dependent on others. Therefore, there is nobody who gives or gets gifts, for thereby you become dependent. With gifts you make slaves just as with whips you make dogs."

Told to Peter Fruechen after he thanked an Inuit man for giving him a share of seal meat (Book of the Eskimos, Page 154, 1961)
Example of egalitarianism in sharing: San “Belittling of the Meat”

“Yes, when a young man kills much meat he comes to think of himself as a chief or a big man, and he thinks of the rest of us as his servants or inferiors. We can’t accept this. We refuse one who boasts, for someday his pride will make him kill somebody. So we always speak of his meat as worthless. This way we cool his heart and make him gentle”.

Told to ethnographer Richard Lee (1979: 156), The Ju/'hoansi. (1979)
Evolution and Dominance

• Boehm shows that among social primates there are dominance hierarchies that allow dominants to have:
  – Priority of access to
    ➢ Food
    ➢ Mates
    ➢ Shelter

• In egalitarian societies this is not the case
• In tribal systems with strong big men and clearly in chiefdoms the primate dominance pattern reasserts itself

Reverse Dominance Hierarchy

- Social apes (chimps and gorillas) have dominance hierarchies whereby alpha males monopolize fertile females and food resources.
- In simple humans these hierarchies are absent or attenuated.
- The human state of affairs may be a consequence of weapons (a powerful equalizer in conflict) or language (permitting easy coalition formation).
- In later stages of human cultural evolution hierarchy reasserts itself.

Source: Boehm, *Hierarchy in the Forest*
Prestige and Dominance

• In primate societies there is a dominance hierarchy which leads to high dominance individuals having priority of access to resources and mates. Dominant individuals coerce sub-dominants, are approached submissively, and advertise their dominance through aggressive displays.

• In egalitarian societies this is much diminished.

• Instead certain individuals because of their expertise in cultural knowledge or performance have high **prestige**. Examples include:
  – Hunting ability
  – Artifact manufacture
  – Curing
  – Historical, social, & knowledge
  – Dispute resolution skills

• High prestige individuals:
  – Do things that are useful to the group through teaching, curing, or high productive abilities (e.g., good hunters)
  – They may gain certain advantages (extra food or mates) from those that pay them respect.

Big Man in New Guinea

First steps back toward dominance

The Bigman is an informal leader in many Melanesian cultures. Much of his influence is based on his ability to distribute resources, among which pigs are most important.
"Big man" gets power and prestige through persuading relatives to contribute goods to giveaways.
The Great Transformation

Hereditary

Inequality
Characteristics of Chiefdoms

Leadership
- chief
- hereditary position (primogeniture)
- coercion

Status
- age & sex
- birth
- priest (=chief)
- conical or ranked clans

Religion
- theocratic & ethnic
- ancestor worship

Economics
- redistribution
- craft specialization
Redistribution: goods flow up the system to a center (e.g., a chief) and then flow back down when needed.
Large Scale Political Integration

- Chiefdoms are hierarchical and regional polities incorporating several local groups.
- Leaders are members of a ruling aristocracy with dominant roles in social, political, and religious affairs.
Highly Integrated Chiefdom

ALTERNATIVE MODEL of CAHOKIA:
A SERIES of QUASI-AUTONOMOUS & COMPETITIVE CHIEFDOMS

- paramount mound center (i.e., Cahokia)
- 2nd line mound centers (e.g., Mitchell, East St. Louis, Lumsford-Pukar):)
- nodal villages, hamlets & farmsteads

← strong directives & redistribution via (related?) elites
↓ weak directives & redistribution via (co-opted/coonquered?) elites
← ... greater tribute (labor & surplus)
↓ less tribute (labor & surplus)

zone of tension/competition between quasi-autonomous chiefdoms
Cahokia: A complex chiefdom

http://www.cahokiamounds.com/cahokia.html
Conical Descent Group

Founding ancestor

nobles

commoners
Characteristics of States

Leadership & Politics
- a ruler who has the monopoly of the use of physical coercion in a geographic area
- concept of a crime & rule of law

Economics
- increased specialization often in hereditary guilds or castes

Religion
- imperial or universalistic
- overlay of local ethnic religions

Status
- continues to be based on birth (ascription)
- power of kinship groups begins to decline except among high status
- Mobility may be low or high (closed or open stratified systems)
Modes of Social Control in States

- **Direct Repression**
  - use of police,
  - jails, courts, and informers

- **Ideological Manipulation**
  - magico-religious institutions
  - education system
  - monumental architecture
  - state propaganda

- **Provision of Benefits**
  - military protection
  - police
  - infrastructure
  - social insurance
As the European powers and Japan expanded, much of the world fell under their colonial rule. The Americas were colonized in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but by 1900, most American nations had gained their independence. By 1900, the key areas under colonial rule were in Africa and Asia. Most of these nations gained their independence by the mid-1960s. Today, very few colonies remain but many modern nations remain deeply affected by their colonial past.
Scramble for Africa
Britain’s share of the world
Recent Trends

**World Systems Theory**

Emmanuel Wallerstein

- **Core Societies:** powerful industrial societies that dominate other regions economically.
- **Peripheral Societies:** non-industrial societies that have little control over their own economies and are dominated by core societies.
- **Semi-Peripheral Societies:** societies that are partially industrialized & enjoy some economic autonomy, but not as advanced as core societies.
World Systems
States obliterates lineages because states:

- have the exclusive right to wage war
- enact and administer laws
- control productivity and redistribute wealth
- lay claim to right of eminent domain and administer tenure
- exact tribute, and the like

### General Trends in Cultural Evolution

#### Band
- **Leader:** headman
- **Status:** age, sex, & accomplishments
- **Division of labor:** general
- **Exchange:** reciprocity
- **Politics:** local sovereignty
- **Religion:** ethnic, shaman

#### Tribe
- **Leader:** bigman
- **Politics:** sodality

#### Chiefdom
- **Leader:** chief
- **Status:** hereditary inequality
- **Division of labor:** some specialization
- **Exchange:** redistribution
- **Politics:** multiple settlements, conical clan
- **Religion:** theocracy, priest, ancestor worship

#### State
- **Leader:** king, president, etc.
- **Division of labor:** specialized
- **Exchange:** money
- **Politics:** monopoly of physical coercion, concept of crime
- **Religion:** universalistic

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Increasing social complexity
Overall Evolutionary Trends

- Decrease in number of independent political units (Carneiro estimates at 1000 BC there were at least 100,000 independent political units but today there are about 200).
- Increase in size of independent political units
- Reduction in family power relations (especially parents over children and husbands over wives)
- Greater bureaucratic control
- Greater specialization in all areas of life
- Family and kinship are not correlated in a straightforward manner with social complexity
Family Power Relationships

- Children must go to school
- Content of curriculum relating to civic & moral issues in the hands of “experts”
- Parents cannot abuse or neglect children
- Spousal abuse is prohibited
- Children free to seek medical treatment or parents cannot forbid medical treatment under certain circumstances
World Systems Theory Classification

- **Core Societies**: powerful industrial societies that dominate other regions economically. They dominate trade, control advanced technology, and have highly diversified and productive economies.

- **Peripheral Societies**: non-industrial societies that have little control over their own economies and are dominated by core societies.

- **Semi-Peripheral Societies**: societies that are partially industrialized & enjoy some economic autonomy but not as advanced as core societies.
Unilineal Descent & Social Complexity

The diagram illustrates the relationship between unilineal and non-unilineal descent systems across different levels of social complexity, ranging from bands to states.
Family Form and Social Complexity

- extended
- nuclear

bands | tribes | chiefdoms | states
Alternative Look at Cultural Evolution

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<tr>
<th>Pretate</th>
<th>Band</th>
<th>Tribe</th>
<th>Chiefdom</th>
<th>State-Organized Societies</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Numbers</strong></td>
<td>Less than 100</td>
<td>Up to a few thousand</td>
<td>5,000 - 20,000+</td>
<td>Generally 20,000+</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Social Organization</strong></td>
<td>Egalitarian</td>
<td>Segmentary society</td>
<td>Kinship-based ranking under hereditary leader</td>
<td>Class-based hierarchy under king or emperor</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Informal leadership</td>
<td>Pan-tribal associations</td>
<td>High-ranking warriors</td>
<td>Armies</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Economic Organization</strong></td>
<td>Mobile hunter-gatherers</td>
<td>Settled farmers</td>
<td>Central accumulation and redistribution</td>
<td>Centralized bureaucracy</td>
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<td>Pastoralist herders</td>
<td>Some craft specialization</td>
<td>Tribute-based</td>
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<td><strong>Settlement Pattern</strong></td>
<td>Temporary camps</td>
<td>Permanent villages</td>
<td>Fortified centers</td>
<td>Taxation</td>
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<td>Ritual centers</td>
<td>Laws</td>
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<td><strong>Religious Organization</strong></td>
<td>Shamans</td>
<td>Religious elders</td>
<td>Hereditary chief with religious duties</td>
<td>Priestly class</td>
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<td>Calendrical rituals</td>
<td></td>
<td>Pantheistic or monotheistic religion</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Architecture</strong></td>
<td>Temporary shelters</td>
<td>Permanent huts</td>
<td>Large-scale monuments</td>
<td>Palaces, temples, and other public buildings</td>
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<td>Burial mounds</td>
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<td>Pyramids at Giza</td>
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<td>Shrines</td>
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<td>Castillo Chichen Itzal, Mexico</td>
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<td><strong>Archaeological Examples</strong></td>
<td>All Paleolithic societies, including Paleo-Indians</td>
<td>All early farmers (Neolithic/Archaic)</td>
<td>Many early metalworking and Formative societies</td>
<td>All ancient civilizations, e.g., in Mesoamerica, Peru, Near East, Southwest Asia, India and China, Greece and Rome</td>
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<td><strong>Modern Examples</strong></td>
<td>Eskimos</td>
<td>Pueblos, Southwest USA</td>
<td>Northwest Coast Indians, USA</td>
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<td>I!Kung San</td>
<td>New Guinea Highlanders</td>
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<td>Australian Aborigines</td>
<td>Nuer and Dinka in</td>
<td>18th-century Polynesian chiefdoms in Tonga,</td>
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<td>East Africa</td>
<td>Tahiti, Hawaii</td>
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General categories of ancient human societies. (Modified from Renfrew and Bahn, 2000.)
Caste System in India: example of low mobility

- Brahmins: priests and teachers
- Ksatriyas: warriors and rulers
- Vaisyas: merchants, farmers, artisans
- Sudras: laborers

Outcastes and untouchables: polluted workers