CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY

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Book: Cultural Anthropology (Saneda)

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Licensing

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

1: Anthropology and Culture

Learning Objectives

- describe the discipline Anthropology
- describe, explain, and operationalize The Culture Concept
- investigate the anthropology of Language
- investigate the relationship between culture and Identity
- explore Cultural Anthropology Methodology & Theory

1.1: What is Anthropology?
1.2: The Culture Perspectives
1.3: Language
1.4: Identity
1.5: Cultural Anthropology Methodology and Theory
1.6: Cultural Anthropology Theory
1.7: More Theories

Thumbnail: Maori warriors perform a Haka, meaning dance of welcome, for Secretary of Defense Leon E. Panetta during a Powhiri ceremony while visiting Auckland, New Zealand Sept. 21, 2012. The ceremony is an ancient Maori tradition used to determine if visitors came in peace or with hostile intent. (Publc Domain; Erin A. Kirk-Cuomo).

1.1: What is Anthropology?

Anthropology is the study of what makes us human. Anthropologists take a broad approach to understanding the many different aspects of the human experience, which we call holism. They consider the past, through archaeology, to see how human groups lived hundreds or thousands of years ago and what was important to them. They consider what makes up our biological bodies and genetics, as well as our bones, diet, and health. Anthropologists also compare humans with other animals (most often, other primates like monkeys and chimpanzees) to see what we have in common with them and what makes us unique. Even though nearly all humans need the same things to survive, like food, water, and companionship, the ways people meet these needs can be very different. For example, everyone needs to eat, but people eat different foods and get food in different ways. So anthropologists look at how different groups of people get food, prepare it, and share it. World hunger is not a problem of production but social barriers to distribution, and that Amartya Sen won a Nobel Prize for showing this was the case for all of the 20th century's famines. Anthropologists also try to understand how people interact in social relationships (for example with families and friends). They look at the different ways people dress and communicate in different societies. Anthropologists sometimes use these comparisons to understand their own society. Many anthropologists work in their own societies looking at economics, health, education, law, and policy (to name just a few topics). When trying to understand these complex issues, they keep in mind what they know about biology, culture, types of communication, and how humans lived in the past.

The Four Subfields

American anthropology is generally divided into four subfields. Each of the subfields teaches distinctive skills. However, the subfields also have a number of similarities. For example, each subfield applies theories, employs systematic research methodologies, formulates and tests hypotheses, and develops extensive sets of data.

Archaeology

Archaeologists study human culture by analyzing the objects people have made. They carefully remove from the ground such things as pottery and tools, and they map the locations of houses, trash pits, and burials in order to learn about the daily lives of a people. They also analyze human bones and teeth to gain information on a people's diet and the diseases they suffered. Archaeologists collect the remains of plants, animals, and soils from the places where people have lived in order to understand how people used and changed their natural environments. The time range for archaeological research begins with the earliest human ancestors millions of years ago and extends all the way up to the present day. Like other areas of anthropology, archaeologists are concerned with explaining differences and similarities in human societies across space and time.

Biological Anthropology

Biological anthropologists seek to understand how humans adapt to different environments, what causes disease and early death, and how humans evolved from other animals. To do this, they study humans (living and dead), other primates such as monkeys and apes, and human ancestors (fossils). They are also interested in how biology and culture work together to shape our lives. They are interested in explaining the similarities and differences that are found among humans across the world. Through this work, biological anthropologists have shown that, while humans do vary in their biology and behavior, they are more similar to one another than different.

Cultural Anthropology

Sociocultural anthropologists explore how people in different places live and understand the world around them. They want to know what people think is important and the rules they make about how they should interact with one another. Even within one country or society, people may disagree about how they should speak, dress, eat, or treat others. Anthropologists want to listen to all voices and viewpoints in order to understand how societies vary and what they have in common. Sociocultural anthropologists often find that the best way to learn about diverse peoples and cultures is to spend time living among them. They try to understand the perspectives, practices, and social organization of other groups whose values and lifeways may be very different from their own. The knowledge they gain can enrich human understanding on a broader level.

Linguistic Anthropology

Linguistic anthropologists study the many ways people communicate across the globe. They are interested in how language is linked to how we see the world and how we relate to each other. This can mean looking at how language works in all its different forms, and how it changes over time. It also means looking at what we believe about language and communication, and how we

use language in our lives. This includes the ways we use language to build and share meaning, to form or change identities, and to make or change relations of power. For linguistic anthropologists, language and communication are keys to how we make society and culture.

Applied and Practicing Anthropology

Applied or practicing anthropologists are an important part of anthropology. Each of the four subfields of anthropology can be applied. Applied anthropologists work to solve real world problems by using anthropological methods and ideas. For example, they may work in local communities helping to solve problems related to health, education or the environment. They might also work for museums or national or state parks helping to interpret history. They might work for local, state or federal governments or for non-profit organizations. Others may work for businesses, like retail stores or software and technology companies, to learn more about how people use products or technology in their daily lives. Some work in the USA while others work internationally. Jobs for applied anthropologists have shown strong growth in the recent past with more and more opportunities becoming available as demand grows for their valuable skill sets. Visit the Careers page to learn more.

Anthropology Around the World

While anthropologists devote much of their attention to what human groups share across time and space, they also study how these groups are different. Just as there is diversity in the ways people physically adapt to their environment, build and organize societies, and communicate, there are also many ways to do anthropology. Unique approaches to anthropology developed in many countries around the world. For example, in some countries the four-field approach is not as strong as it is in others. Anthropologists from across the globe work together through international organizations to try and understand more about our lives as humans.

The World Council of Anthropology Associations is a network of international and national anthropology associations that aims to promote worldwide communication and cooperation in anthropology. To learn more about the work of the council, visit its website here: http://www.wcaanet.org/. You can also visit the list of member organizations to learn more about anthropology in different parts of the world: http://www.wcaanet.org/members.shtml

Employment

Anthropologists are employed in a number of different sectors, from colleges and universities to government agencies, NGOs, businesses, and health and human services. Within the university, they teach undergraduate and graduate anthropology, and many offer anthropology courses in other departments and professional schools such as business, education, design, and public health. Anthropologists contribute significantly to interdisciplinary fields such as international studies and ethnic and gender studies, and some work in academic research centers. Outside the university, anthropologists work in government agencies, private businesses, community organizations, museums, independent research institutes, service organizations, the media; and others work as independent consultants and research staff for agencies such as the Centers for Disease Control, UNESCO, the World Health Organization, and the World Bank. More than half of all anthropologists now work in organizations outside the university. Their work may involve building research partnerships, assessing economic needs, evaluating policies, developing new educational programs, recording little-known community histories, providing health services, and other socially relevant activities. You will find anthropologists addressing social and cultural consequences of natural disasters, equitable access to limited resources, and human rights at the global level.

As you can see from the extensive list of sections within the American Anthropological Association, anthropologists have research interests that cut across academic and applied domains of scholarship. These domains reflect the many significant issues and questions that anthropologists engage today, their areas of employment, the locations around the world where they do research, and their commitment to using research results to improve lives. We invite you to explore the diversity of topics and approaches in this exciting field.

This is Anthropology Subject Profiles

- This is Anthropology: Ebola Emergency Response
- This is Anthropology: Climate Change Research and Policy
- This is Anthropology: Understanding Race

1.2: The Culture Perspectives

Anthropological Culture Concept

Culture is a concept that often invokes thoughts of a Monet, a Mozart symphony, or ballerinas in tutus dancing Swan Lake. In the popular vernacular culture often refers to the arts. A person that is cultured has knowledge of and is a patron of the arts. Then there is pop culture; what trends are current and hip. Within anthropology these things are simply aspects of culture. To understand the anthropological culture concept, we need to think broader and holistically.

***Figure* 1.2.1** - *Fremont Solstice Parade June 2010 Seattle, WA*

Anthropologists have long debated an appropriate definition of culture. Even today some anthropologists criticize the culture concept as oversimplifying and stereotyping cultures, which will be discussed more below. The first anthropological definition of culture comes from 19th-century British anthropologist Edward Tylor:

> *Culture...is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society (Tylor 1920 [1871]: 1).*

It is probably the most enduring definition of culture even though it relates more to the specifics, or particulars, of culture groups. As Bohannan and Glazer comment in High Points in Anthropology (1988: 62), "...[it is the definition] most anthropologists can quote correctly, and the one they fall back on when others prove too cumbersome." Tylor, echoing the French idea of civilization progressing from a barbaric state to “science, secularism, and rational thought” (Beldo 2010), believed that all human culture passed through stages of development with the pinnacle being that of 19th century England. He believed, as many others of this time period did, that all other cultures were inherently inferior. Franz Boas, a German American anthropologist, challenged Tylor’s approach. He drew on the German concept of kultur, local and personal behaviors and traditions, to develop his ideas about culture. Boas thought that cultures did not follow a linear progression as espoused by cultural evolutionists like Tylor, but developed in different directions based on historical events. Boas took years to develop a working definition of culture, but it is one that influences anthropologists to this day: culture is an integrated system of symbols, ideas and values that should be studied as a working system, an organic whole (Kuper 1999:56).

Over time, anthropologists learned that including specifics into the definition of culture limited that definition. In other words, the definition would not apply to all cultures. Anthropologists began to develop a definition of culture that could be applied broadly. Alfred Kroeber and Clyde Kluckhohn proposed that culture was not simply behaviors, but a product of psychological, social, biological, and material factors (Beldo 2010). Thus began a focus on the meaning of behavior, not just a description of the behavior itself.

A general definition of **culture** that can be applied to all cultures is patterns of behavior that are common within a particular population of people. One way to think about culture is to break down the concept into two distinct categories: the Big C and the little c. The Big C is an overarching general concept that can be applied to all culture groups; it is the anthropological perspective. The little c is the particulars of a specific culture group.

***Figure* 1.2.2** - *Graphic illustration of culture concept*

Big C is learned behavior. Culture is not something we are born with; it is non-biological. We learn it over our lifetime.It is easiest to think of the Big C as elements that comprise culture (not a specific group).

- Culture is shared. While we each have our own cultural peculiarities, we share a large part of our culture with others.
- Culture is symbolic. It gives meaning to things. Language might be the most important example of the symbolic nature of culture. Language is one of the primary ways that we communicate with one another.
- Culture is holistic. Ideally, culture is all encompassing. It is a blueprint for living and tells us how to respond in any given situation. Of course in reality, culture doesn't give us all the answers. That's when we see culture change.
- Lastly, culture is integrated. Think of it as a clock. Clocks have an intricate mechanical system that work together to make the clock operational. Culture is also a system – a system of institutions that work together to meet the needs of the group.

Little c, as mentioned above, is the particulars of any given culture group, for instance, the marriage or subsistence pattern of a group of people. Traditions, a concept many people associate with culture, would fall into the little c. A good portion of this course is devoted to examining the various manifestations of social institutions, or some of a culture group's particulars, so we will return to the little c later.

Levels of culture

Anthropologists describe patterns of behavior that are common within a particular population of people—a culture. This is sometimes referred to as the dominant or mainstream culture. In using the word dominant, do not confuse this with "majority." The dominant culture may be a result of political power and not absolute numbers of people. However, the dominant culture draws on other cultures, adding and dropping elements that are seen to be either beneficial or no longer necessary. Within the dominant culture, there are subcultures that vary somewhat from the mainstream. Even at the individual level there may be differences from the dominant culture. Keep in mind that while anthropologists talk about these general patterns, it is acknowledged that there is variation within any given culture. The levels that are discussed below is a classification system. Classification systems help people organize the plethora of information that comes their way, breaking it down into understandable units. The levels of culture allow us to understand culture in smaller interconnected units.

The overarching patterns described by anthropologists can be grouped at several different levels. The levels move from general to specific. While most people don't think about their culture at the most general levels, these levels do impact our cultures even if we're not aware of it. As mentioned above, one of the criticisms of the culture concept is that it generalizes and stereotypes groups of people. Indeed as you read about the levels of culture you may agree with this criticism. However, these generalizations can be used to develop a starting point in learning about a culture.

The Levels

***Figure* 1.2.3** - *Stora Enso pulp and paper mill in Oulu seen from Pikisaari*

International: this is divided into two categories: Western culture and Eastern culture. Historically, the division fell along two lines: religion and industry.

Eastern culture is usually thought of as non-industrial; however, through the process of modern development, this line is less clear than it used to be. Eastern culture also refers to a different way of thinking, which is best exemplified in the East's religions such as Buddhism, Hinduism, and Confucianism. Interdependence of people is a defining characteristic of "eastern" philosophy. Duty to family over self is stressed. The other thing that encapsulates eastern culture is their approach to healing—in the east, it is generally identified as ancient, naturalistic traditions…think acupuncture and herbal remedies.

Western culture arose out of the philosophies of ancient Greece and Rome. Currently it is characterized by industrial economies where capitalism rules and behavior geared for independent success is stressed. Western cultures are predominately Christian or Islamic. In regards to health, institutionally educated doctors and scientifically developed medicines are predominant.

There is much variation within Western and Eastern cultures, but think in terms of dominance. Eastern cultures do encourage people to develop their skills; it's just that it is not for themselves, but for their group (which can be family, village, or some other entity). In western cultures, duty to family is not absent; it's just not stressed as strongly. Keep in mind that the East vs. West mentality or approach is rapidly breaking down through the process of globalization and not all levels will apply to every culture.

The variability of the international level can be broken down into various subcultures, starting with the most general, the National. Subcultures incorporate values and norms from the more general levels, but perhaps not all of the same values and norms.

***Figure* 1.2.4** - *Balloon and Capitol of Kentucky*

National: Just as the word implies, we're talking about a country's culture. For instance, if someone talks about Ireland, Russia, or Brazil certain mental pictures come to mind.

Regional: Nations are frequently divided into regions. If we were to talk about the United States in terms of the South, the Midwest, or the Southwest, we start to make some assumptions about the culture of individuals from those geographic regions, e.g., the Midwest is populated by farmers.

State-level: Within regions, there are often states, provinces, or territories. If we picked a state in the United States, many people would start to form a mental picture of the people there. If we were to choose an east coast state such as Massachusetts we would make some assumptions about the people's forms of dress, speech, etc., that is very different from what would assume if the person was from California.

Local: This level could be along the lines of urban vs. suburban vs. rural or it could be something like Seattle vs. Tacoma. It could be a neighborhood or an occupation. There are simply a lot of ways to view the local.

Counter-cultures: Counter-cultures go against something in the mainstream or dominant culture. The classic example of a counter-culture is the hippie/protest movement during the 1960s in the United States. A more recent example is the anti-globalization movement.

The final level of culture, and the most specific, is the **idiosyncratic** culture. This refers to our personal culture. We are influenced by and choose norms from all of the previous levels of culture to create our personal cultures. Our family and friends are often most influential, but as we mature and move away from home our personal culture may begin to look nothing like the culture we grew up in.

Clearly, all of these levels of cultures are broad generalizations. There is variety of culture in any given place in the world. What these broad generalizations do is provide us with a level of expectations. They help us cope with the unknown. Problems arise when people use these generalizations as a way to judge other peoples. Ethnocentrism, the judging of others using your own culture

as the standard, contributes to negative views of The Other and is a way to dehumanize another human being, a necessary step before being able to compete successfully against our fellow humans.

Culture is both overt and covert. There are elements of culture that we are specifically taught--they are overt…how to eat with utensils or how to ride a bicycle. But there are also elements that we are not taught---they are covert and picked up most likely through observation…a good example of this is proxemics. Proxemics refers to our personal bubble---how much space we need around our physical person. In the United States, we have a large personal bubble. We don't like people to get near to us unless invited. Standing smashed up against someone else on the bus is considered bad manners in the US and is only tolerated if there is absolutely no choice. We aren't specifically taught this; we pick it up through observation.

We think about our culture, particularly our national culture, in its ideal form. For instance, when asked to describe the values of US culture, people often mention equality, democracy, and freedom. The reality of US culture is that there is not complete equality of citizens and some believe the US only promotes democracy unequally across the globe.

All of these things contribute to our worldview. Worldview is a way of understanding how the world works and what our place is in it. Everyone has a worldview that impacts their perceptions and interpretations of events occurring in their lives. Some people think everyone else interprets or sees things the same way they do. This is referred to as naïve realism. We all start out that way, but through education, our naïve realism lessens as we learn about other people's perspectives…in effect, our culture is changing.

Culture Change

Cultures change in a number of ways. The only way new cultural traits emerge is through the process of **discovery and invention**. Someone perceives a need and invents something to meet that need. Seems a simple enough concept; however, it often takes a long time for a new invention to be fully integrated into a culture. Why? Because often other elements of the culture have to change to meet or maintain the needs of the new invention. This is referred to as culture lag. The automobile is a good example of discovery and invention and culture lag. The auto was invented as a mode of more efficient transportation. Many things had to change in order for the automobile to become a fixture in a culture. People had to be persuaded that the automobile was a better form of transportation. Roads had to be constructed; a way to procure fuel needed to be developed; mechanics were needed to fix cars; efficient production of cars had to be developed to meet supply demands; safety concerns, rules of the road, insurance, and numerous other elements of culture had to catch up with the invention of the automobile.

***Figure* 1.2.5** - *Elwood Hayes in his first automobile.*

Another way cultures change is through **diffusion**. Diffusion is simply the borrowing of traits. There is a long laundry list of things in US culture that were borrowed from other cultures. Pajamas made their way to the US from India. Spaghetti was borrowed from China by way of Italy, and corn came from Mesoamerica. Ralph Linton, a noted anthropologist, wrote a short article entitled "One Hundred Percent American" in which he outlines numerous things that U.S. culture borrowed from other cultures. You can read Linton's article here: http://staffwww.fullcoll.edu/jmcdermott/Cultural%20Anthropology_files/One%20Hundred%20Percent%20American.pdf.

Yet another way cultures change is through the process of **acculturation**. Acculturation is also the borrowing of traits; however, there is a **superordinate**, or dominant, and **subordinate**, or minority, relationship between cultures. The dominant culture picks and chooses those traits from the subordinate culture that it deems useful, i.e., diffusion. The subordinate culture is pressured to adopt the traits of the dominant culture. It is the element of pressure that differentiates acculturation from diffusion.

Acculturation manifests itself in multiple ways. One way is called the **Melting Pot**. The melting pot refers to a blending of cultures. This primarily occurs through intermarriage of people from the two cultures. What frequently happens is that one of the two cultures is dominant and the other subordinate within the relationship so that only some of its traits are practiced.

Another form of acculturation is called the Salad Bowl, or **cultural pluralism**. This occurs when people immigrate and keep as many original cultural traits as possible. Chinatown in San Francisco is a good example of the salad bowl. The different types of acculturation are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Even in the case of cultural pluralism people must adopt certain traits of the host country; i.e., the laws, in order to thrive, but they do keep as many traditions as possible.

Host conformity occurs when an individual has fully assimilated into the host culture.

Values & Norms

Values are abstract concepts that certain kinds of behaviors are good, right, ethical, moral and therefore desirable. In the United States, one value is freedom; another is equality. These values can come from a variety of sub-cultures or social institutions. A society can have all of the values it wants, but if it doesn't have a way to enforce those values, then having values means nothing. So societies have developed forms of social control, which is the process people use to maintain order in group life.

There are two main categories of social control: norms and laws. A norm is a standard of behavior. At some point people in the society agree that these are standards. Some people learn by being taught, but mostly we pick them up just by being exposed to them.

There are a couple of types of norms: folkways and mores. Folkways are norms related to everyday life—eating with silverware, getting up in the morning and going to work or school for example. There are also mores, which are behaviors that are right or wrong…don't kill people, don't steal…

Some norms are explicitly taught, others are tacit—we pick them up through observation. We pick up forms of greeting, roles, which side of the sidewalk to walk on…the list could go on and on. Sometimes, particularly in state-level societies, the mores are codified into laws or binding rules. So, stealing as a bad behavior becomes a crime. Murder—crime.

So, how do societies encourage compliance with norms and laws? There are rewards and punishment. For instance, if you kill someone in our society, if you're caught, you go to trial and if found guilty, you go to prison, or you can be put to death. We have developed specific jobs and organizations that carry out enforcement of laws…police, court system, prison, military. These are official forms of social control enforcement. Now these forms don't have to be negative. Some are positive…a good example would be something like a Citizen Hero award.

There is also informal enforcement of norms and laws. As with the official forms of social control enforcement, the unofficial can be both positive and negative—giving your child an allowance for completing chores is an example of positive enforcement; spanking or time outs are examples of negative enforcement. Peer pressure and religious doctrine are other informal methods of enforcement of both norms and laws. Ostracism, or shunning, is yet another.

However, there are times when norm or even law violations don't result in punishment, but these types of violations are very specifically defined. For instance, it is generally accepted that if you kill someone in self-defense or in a time of war, the punishments do not apply.

***Figure* 1.2.5** - *Buddhist temple at Royal Palace in Luong, Prabang*

Now, all of these norms and laws can be organized into a set of social institutions. A social institution is a patterned set of behaviors developed to meet perceived needs. This way people aren't doing whatever they want whenever they want to meet their needs. In US culture, we treasure independence, but that independence must be exercised within the constructed social institutions. That's not to say that there aren't people who go outside of these social constraints, they do. That is actually important behavior in an evolutionary sense as it provides variation of behaviors. It is those behaviors where social change is instigated.

Anthropologists put these patterns of behavior into some general categories, for instance, economic systems, religion, expressive culture and political organization. The exact pattern varies from group to group, but the needs that are met is pretty much the same.

We'll be looking at some of these categories later in the quarter.

As we move through the quarter and read about other cultures, I'd like you to think about the values and norms of your own culture. When you have a reaction, particularly a strong reaction, stop and think about what values, norms and laws are being violated. This will help you have a deeper understanding of the material we cover in the course.

Explore: Learn More about the Anthropologists

- Franz Boas: http://www.biography.com/people/franz-boas-9216786
- Clyde Kluckhohn: http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/320159/Clyde-KM-Kluckhohn
- Alfred Kroeber: http://www.americanethnography.com/article.php?id=10
- Ralph Linton: http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/342635/Ralph-Linton
- E. B. Tylor: http://www.americanethnography.com/article.php?id=9

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1.3: Language

Linguistic Anthropology

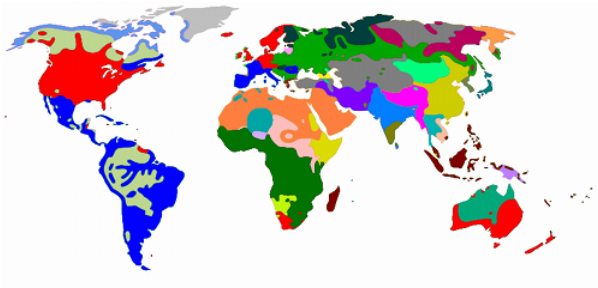

***Figure* 1.3.1** - *Repartition map of the languages over the world*

> *"It is quite an illusion to imagine that one adjusts to reality essentially without the use of language and that language is merely an incidental means of solving specific problems of communication or reflection" – Edward Sapir*

As implied from the quote above language and communication are key components of the human experience. Language can be one of the easiest ways to make connections with other people. It helps us quickly identify the groups to which we belong. It is how we convey information from one generation to the next. But language is only one way that humans communicate with one another. Non-verbal forms of communication are as important if not more so. (The Human Face episode 4: www.youtube.com/watch?v=jh047M5pHGY-à). **Linguistic anthropology** is the sub-discipline that studies communication systems, particularly language. Using comparative analysis, linguistic anthropologists examine the interaction of language and culture. They look at the connection between language and thought and how it informs about social values and norms. Linguistic data has been used to examine worldview, migration patterns, origins of peoples, etc.

***Figure* 1.3.2** - *Edward Sapir (1184-1939)*

Language

Language is a set of arbitrary symbols shared among a group. These symbols may be verbal, signed, or written. It is one of the primary ways that we **communicate**, or send and receive messages. Non-verbal forms of communication include body language, body modification, and appearance (what we wear and our hairstyle).

Even non-human primates have a communication system; the difference, as far as we can determine, is that non-human primates use a **call system**, which is a system of oral communication that uses a set of sounds in response to environmental factors, e.g., a predator approaching. They can only signal one thing at a time. For instance, ‘here is food,’ or ‘a leopard is attacking.’ They cannot signal something like ‘I’ve found food but there’s a leopard here so run away.’

***Figure* 1.3.3** - *Chimpanzee vocalizing.*

However, primatologists conducting communication studies with great apes raise questions about the great apes' ability to communicate. Primatologists like Susan Savage-Rumbaugh, Sally Boysen, and Francine "Penny" Patterson report that they have been able to have human-like communication with bonobos, chimpanzees, and gorillas through sign language, even conveying feelings like sympathy. Washoe was the first chimpanzee to learn American Sign Language. Washoe, who was rescued in the wild after her mother was killed by poachers, learned over three hundred signs, some of which she taught to her adopted son, Loulis, without any help from human agents. She also told jokes, lied, and swore. Other great apes like Koko, a western lowland gorilla born at the San Francisco Zoo, have demonstrated **linguistic displacement**, which is the ability to talk about things that are not present or even real, by signing for her kitten when it was not present. She also displayed mourning behavior after being told that actor and comedian Robin Williams died (read more about Koko's reaction in this *Huffington* Post *article*, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/08/13/koko-gorilla-robin-williams_n_5675300.html).

***Figure* 1.3.4** - *Chinese man with plaid hat and pompoms*

Linguistic displacement has long been identified as a hallmark of human communication, something that set it apart from non-human primate communication. Coupled with **productivity**, human language systems do appear to be more complex then our non-human primate cousins. Productivity refers to "the ability to create an infinite range of understandable expressions from a finite set of rules" (Miller 2011: 206). Using combinations of symbols, facial expressions, sounds, written word, signs, and body language, humans can communicate things in a myriad of ways (for a humorous look at facial expressions, check out "What a Girl's Facial Expressions Mean" on YouTube [youtu.be/KAJvUXkIBeo]).

All cultures have language. Most individuals within that culture are fully competent users of the language without being formally taught it. One can learn a language simply by being exposed to it, which is why foreign language teachers espouse immersion as the best way to learn.

No one language has more efficient grammar than another, and there is no correlation between grammatical complexity and social complexity; some small, homogenous cultures have the most complex language. In December 2009, *The Economist* named the Tuyuca language the "hardest" language. The Tuyuca live in the eastern Amazon. It is not as hard to speak as some other languages as there are simple consonants and a few nasal vowels; however, it is an **agglutinative** language**, so the word *hóabãsiriga*** means "I do not know how to write." *Hóabãsiriga* has multiple morphemes each of which contribute to the word's meaning. A **morpheme** is the smallest sound that has meaning. Consider the word 'cow.' It is a single morpheme—if we try to break the word down into smaller sound units it has no meaning. Same with the word 'boy.' Put them together and we have a word with two morphemes (O'Neil 2013). Morphemes are a part of **morphology**, which is the grammatical category of analysis concerned with

how sounds, or **phonemes**, are combined. Morphemes are combined into strings of sounds to create speech, which is grouped into sentences and phrases. The rules that govern how words should be combined are called **syntax**, which is the second of two grammar categories of analysis. In Tuyuca, all statements require a verb-ending to indicate how the speaker knows something. For instance, *diga ape-wi* means that the speaker knows the boy played soccer because of direct observation, but *diga ape-hiyi* means that the speaker assumed the boy played soccer. Tuyuca has somewhere between fifty and one hundred forty noun classes based on gender, compared to Spanish which has two noun classes that are based on gender.

***Figure* 1.3.5** - *A Saami family,Norway, 1890s.*

Every language has a **lexicon**, or vocabulary. **Semantics** is the study of a language meaning system. Anthropologists are particularly interested in **ethnosemantics**, which is the study of semantics within a specific cultural context. Ethnosemantics helps anthropologists understand how people perceive, define, and classify their world. **Focal vocabularies** are sets of words that pertain to important aspects of the culture. For example, the Saami, the indigenous reindeer hunters in Scandinavia, have numerous words for reindeer, snow, and ice. Snow and ice terminology is based on the physical condition of the layers as well as changes due to weather and temperature. Reindeer terminology is based primarily on sex, age, color, and appearance of various body parts, but may be based on others things such as personality and habits.

Table 5 - Saami Reindeer terminology based on personality and habits (Magga 2006)

Biltu	Shy and wild, usually refers to females
Doalli	Apt to resist
Goaisu	Male reindeer who keeps apart all summer and is very fat when autumn comes
Já?as	Obstinate, difficult to lead
Láiddas	Easy to lead by a rope or rein
Lojat	Very tractable driving-reindeer
Lojáš	Very tame female reindeer
Láiddot	Reindeer which is very *láiddas*
Moggaraš	Female reindeer who slips the lasso over head in order to avoid being caught
Njirru	Female reindeer which is very unmanageable and difficult to hold when tied
Ravdaboazu	Reindeer which keeps itself to the edge of the herd
Sarat	Smallish male reindeer which chases a female out of the herd in order to mate with it
Šlohtur	Reindeer which hardly lifts its feet
Stoalut	Reindeer which is no longer afraid of the dog

Table 6 - Saami Terminology for Condition and Layers of Snow (Magga 2006)

Čahki	Hard lump of snow; hard snowball
Geardni	Thin crust of snow
Gska-geardi	Layer of crust
Gaska-skárta	Hard layer of crust
Goahpálat	The kind of snowstorm in which the snow falls thickly and sticks to things
Guoldu	A cloud of snow which blows up from the ground when there is a hard frost without very much wind
Luotkku	Loose snow
Moarri	Brittle crust of snow; thin crust of ice
Njáhcu	Thaw
Ruokna	Thin hard crust of ice on snow
Seanaš	Granular snow at the bottom of the layer of snow
Skárta	Thin layer of snow frozen on to the ground
Skáva	Very thin layer of frozen snow
Skávvi	Crust of ice on snow, formed in the evening after the sun has thawed the top of the snow during the day
Soavli	Very wet, slushy snow, snow-slush
Skoavdi	Empty space between snow and the ground
Vahca	Loose snow, especially new snow on the top of a layer of older snow or on a road with snow on it

Non-Verbal Communication

Cultures also have non-verbal forms of communication, but there are still rules and symbols involved. **Kinesics** is the study of communication through body language, including gestures, facial expressions, body movement, and stances. Hand gestures add emphasis; a facial expression may contradict verbal communication. Voice level and tone add to our communication. Even silence can be an effective form of communication.

***Figure* 1.3.6** - *Brazil vs. Chile in Mineirão 17.*

Body language is culture specific. The same body postures and gestures can have different meanings in different cultures. For instance, holding your hand out, fingers together, and palm facing outward is a symbol for stop in North America. In Greece, the same gesture is highly insulting. Crossing your fingers for luck in North America is an obscene gesture in Vietnam where the crossed fingers are thought to resemble female genitalia. A thumbs-up in North America might mean approval, but in Thailand it is a sign of condemnation usually used by children similar to how children in the United States stick out their tongue. The A-OK

symbol gesture of index finger placed on the thumb might mean everything is OK in the United Kingdom and United States, but in some Mediterranean countries, Germany, and Brazil it is the equivalent of calling someone an ass.

Bowing in Japan communicates many things depending on how it is done. *Ojigi*, or Japanese bowing, is used as a greeting, a way to apologize, and a way to show respect. The degree of the bow indicates the amount of respect. Fifteen degrees is the common greeting bow for those you already know or are on an equal social level. A thirty-degree bow is used for people who have a higher social rank, such as a boss, but not someone to whom you are related. The highest respect bow is forty-five degrees and used when you apologize.

***Figure* 1.3.7** - *Woman bowing to whale.*

Other forms of non-verbal communication include clothing, hairstyles, eye contact, even how close we stand to one another. **Proxemics** is the study of cultural aspects of the use of space. This can be both in an individual's personal and physical territory. The use of color in one's physical space is an example of proxemics of physical territory. A health spa is more likely to use soothing, cool greens and blues rather than reds and oranges to create a relaxing atmosphere. Personal territory refers to the "bubble" of space we keep between others and ourselves. This varies depending on the other person and the situation, for instance, in the United States public space is defined as somewhere between twelve to twenty-five feet, and is generally adhered to in public speaking situations. Social space, used between business associates and social space such as bus stops, varies between four and ten feet. Personal space is reserved for friends and family, and queues, and ranges between two and four feet. Intimate space is less than a foot and usually involves a high probability of touching. We generally feel uncomfortable or violated if any of these spaces are "invaded" without an invitation.

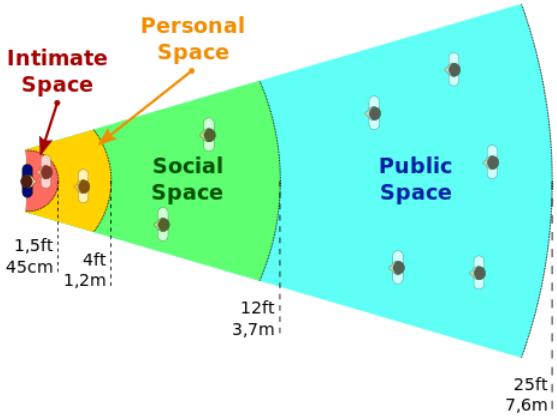

***Figure* 1.3.8** - *Personal Spaces in Proxemics*

Models of Language and Culture

There are two models used in anthropology to study language and culture. In the early twentieth century, Edward Sapir and Benjamin Whorf proposed that language influences the way we think. This idea, known as the **Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis**, is the

foundation of the theory of **linguistic**determinism**, which states that it is impossible to fully learn or** understand a second language because the primary language is so fully ingrained within an individual. Consequently, it is impossible to fully understand other cultures. The Saami concepts of snow listed above serves as an example of the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis. Someone from the desert or the tropics who has never experienced snow cannot *think* about snow. Try to imagine how you would explain snow to someone who had never experienced snow. It would be necessary to start with a common frame of reference and try to move on from there, but it would be difficult if not impossible to explain snow.

The second model is **sociolinguistics**. This is the study of how language is shaped within its cultural context; it is basically how people use language. This approach has been instrumental in demonstrating how language is used in different social, economic, and political situations. Sociolinguists contend that language reflects social status, gender, ethnicity, and other forms of social diversity. In the United States, ethnicity can be expressed through the use of specific words and patterns of speech, e.g., Black English Vernacular (BEV), African American English (AAE), or African American Vernacular English (AAVE). AAE is used by many African American youth, particularly in urban centers and conveys an immediate sense of belonging to a group. AAE grew out of slavery and thus carries the prejudice and discrimination associated with that practice. People speaking AAE instead of American Mainstream English (AME) are often seen as less intelligent and less educated. You can learn more about AAE at http://www.pbs.org/speak/seatosea/americanvarieties/AAVE/.

Languages often blend when two cultures that do not speak the same language come into contact creating a **pidgin** language. Many pidgin languages emerged through the process of European colonialism. Bislama (Vanuatu) and Nigerian Pidgin are two examples. **Creole** languages evolve from pidgin languages. They have a larger vocabulary and more developed grammar. It becomes the mother tongue of a people. Tok Pisin was a pidgin language in Papua New Guinea, but is now an officially recognized language in that country. Other examples of creole languages include Gullah, Jamaican Creole, and Louisiana Creole. Some confusion can arise with the terms pidgin and creole. In linguistic anthropology they are technical terms as defined above. How culture groups and individuals use the term can be different. Jamaicans do not refer to their language as creole, but as *patwa*. People speaking Hawai'I Creole English call their language pidgin.

Regional dialects frequently emerge within specific areas of countries. Regional dialects may have specific words, phrases, accents, and intonations by which they are identified. In the United States what you call a fizzy, highly sugared beverage (soda, pop, Coke) can indicate if you are from the South, Midwest or other region (check out www4.ncsu.edu/~jakatz2/project-dialect.html for an interactive map of regional words and phrases for the U.S.). Speaking Cockney, Brummy, or Geordie will immediately inform people of where you are from in Great Britain.

Gender status and roles can be highlighted by language. In the United States, white Euro-American females have three prominent patterns (Miller 2011: 269):

1. Politeness
2. Rising intonation at the end of sentences
3. Frequent use of tag questions (questions placed at the end of sentences seeking affirmation, e.g., "It's a nice day, isn't it?"

***Figure* 1.3.9** - *Kogals* in Japan.

In Japan, female speech patterns also are more polite than males. An honorific "o-" is attached to nouns, making their speech more refined, e.g., a book is *hon* for males and *ohon* for females. Young Japanese females, or *kogals*, use language and other forms of communication to shake up the traditional feminine roles. They use masculine forms of words, talk openly about sex, and are creating new words using compounds. Heavily influenced by globalization, the *kogals* are rethinking their traditional roles in Japanese society.

Language can give us clues as to what is taboo within a society or what makes people uncomfortable without anyone specifically telling us. **Euphemisms** are words or phrases used to indirectly infer to a taboo or uncomfortable topic, such as body parts related to sexual intercourse, pregnancy, disability, mental illness, body shape, and socioeconomic status. Even underclothes have euphemisms…unmentionables, pants, and underpants. Political correctness is a form of euphemism. Disabled is "differently abled," "sex worker" instead of prostitute, and "Caucasian" instead of white people. Minced oaths are another form of euphemism. These euphemisms reword rude words like "pissed off" into such things as teed off and kissed off.

Euphemisms occur in all languages. Through repeated use they often lose their effectiveness and become a direct part of speech. Euphemisms for sexual intercourse like consummation, copulation, and intercourse itself become commonplace and must be replaced with new euphemisms. This is a good example of how language changes as cultures change. Changes can reflect new conflict and concerns within a culture. Languages can also go extinct. Recent research suggests that of the approximate 6,700 languages spoken in the word today, about 3,500 of them will be extinct by the year 2100 (Solash 2010). In fact, it is estimated that one indigenous language goes extinct every two weeks (Gezen and Kottak 2014). While this may make communication easier between people, a vast amount of knowledge will be lost. More information on endangered indigenous languages can be found at Living Tongues, Institute for Endangered Languages (http://livingtongues.org/).

Explore: Learn about the anthropologists

Edward Sapir: http://www.ruf.rice.edu/~kemmer/Found/sapirbio.html

Benjamin Whorf: http://www.notablebiographies.com/supp/Supplement-Sp-Z/Whorf-Benjamin-Lee.html

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1.4: Identity

***Figure* 1.4.1** - *Young Guatemalan girls*

Identity is constructed and influenced by many things, including gender, sex, norms, etc.

Culture and Identity

What values do you hold? What clothes do you like to wear? Who do you think you are? Culture impacts the answer to each of these questions. Our identities are constructed within specific cultural contexts. Frequently, people self-identify as a member of a particular religion or nation or gender. We draw on those things we learn over our lifetime to become the people we are today. Who we are changes over time as we learn new things and encounter new people. In this section, we focus on how our earliest identities are formed and two concepts related to identity that many people think are simple, but in fact can be complicated: gender and race/ethnicity.

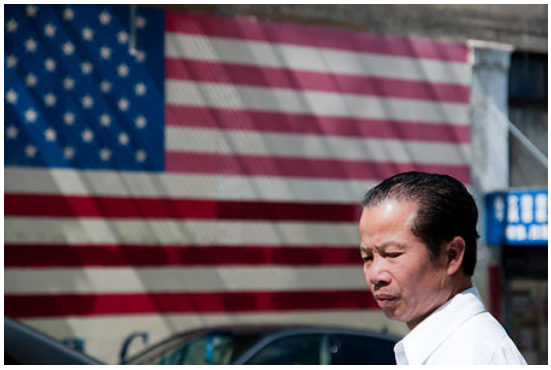

***Figure* 1.4.2**

Enculturation

When we are born, we are totally dependent upon others for our survival. For years, human children are dependent upon someone else to care for them. In fact, among the primates, humans have the longest period of childcare. During these years, children constantly learn about their culture. This process of being socialized into culture we live within is called enculturation. **Enculturation** starts immediately after birth and continues throughout our lives. Enculturation occurs both informally and formally. Informally, through the process of observation and listening, we learn language and cultural rules.

Because we learn most of our cultural rules unconsciously, we come to feel that our behavior is natural, a result of our nature rather our culture. And because we feel that our behavior, attitudes, and values come from our nature, we generally don't question their appropriateness. Instead, we "naturalize" our culture, taking these behaviors and attitudes as part of our nature rather than recognizing their cultural origins (Bonvillain 2010: 95).

Because we tend to view our behaviors, attitudes, and values as natural, we rarely question them and view those in the culture who do question them as rebels or troublemakers. We can easily become offended when these things are challenged, and may react passionately or even violently in order to defend our behaviors, attitudes, and values. We may view different behaviors, attitudes, and values as "weird" or "unnatural" simply because they are not like our own. This is where the practice of cultural relativism is beneficial as it encourages us to try and understand those behaviors, attitudes, and values that are different from our own.

Informal enculturation can occur by observing the actions of parents, siblings, or other family and friends. It can occur through the toys that a child is encouraged to play with, e.g., in industrial societies young girls are encouraged to play with "dolls," while young boys play with "action figures." Recently there has been a societal backlash against the genderization of toys and clothing for children. The topic is being explored at multiple levels: academically: JeongMee Yoon's "The Pink & Blue Project," (http://www.jeongmeeyoon.com/aw_pinkblue.htm), institutionally: the "She-Culture" project sponsored by the EU Culture Programme 2007-2103 (http://www.she-culture.com/en/), in the popular press: Slate's article on "Kindergarten Fashion: Did children always wear gender-specific clothing?" (http://www.slate.com/articles/news_and_politics/explainer/2010/07/kindergarten_fashion.html), and by individuals: Tree Change Dolls (http://treechangedolls.tumblr.com/).

Formal enculturation occurs through schools, churches, and other institutions. The K-12 system in the United States uses formal education to train children in their roles as citizens of the U.S. It instills norms beneficial for a capitalist society: competition (for grades) and conformity (to authority). Formal learning can also occur through trade apprenticeships where skills and submission to authority are instilled. The age where children can begin to work varies from country to country. Conditions are often dangers and many nations implemented child labor laws to address the exploitation of children.

"Correct" behavior can be taught through nursery rhymes, children's books, religious doctrine, and rites of passage. A **rite of passage** is a ritual that commemorates a significant transition, e.g., childhood to adulthood, marriage, birth, and death. It moves an individual from one social status to another. During the ritual, the individual learns about the behaviors, attitudes, and values that are appropriate for their new role. Initiation rites, or rites that mark the acceptance of a person into a group, can be particularly influential in shaping identity by providing guidelines on how to think about one's self. Initiation rites can:

- Weed out those not willing to conform to the group's behaviors, attitudes, and values,
- Create a sense of self-doubt, discord, or disconnectedness that results in a willingness to learn from and accept the group,
- Create a sense of obligation and thankfulness that ties the individual to the group,
- Create a sense of accomplishment and inclusion when a person successfully completes the initiation rites, and
- Create bonds between the initiates who went through the experience together.

There are numerous examples of rites of passage, including coming of age rituals (bar and bat mitzvah, quinceañera, okuyi), marriage, graduation, wiccaning, and pilgrimage. Enculturation does not stop once we reach a certain age. It continues throughout our life as we reach new age statuses or milestones such as parenthood or start a new job.

Gender

***Figure* 1.4.3** - *Modification of gender sign for alternate use*

The enculturation process informs us of our expected gender roles. Gender is different than sex. **Sex** is a biological state of being generally based on the observable genital characteristics. There is some debate on the actual number of biological sexes; female, male, and intersex are more commonly identified, but there are some researchers using genetic status as the indicator, e.g., XX, XY, XXX, XO, and XXY (for a short discussion of intersex, visit http://www.isna.org/faq/what_is_intersex; for a longer discussion visit http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/gender/). **Gender** is the "…cultural construction of whether one is female, male, or something else" (Gezen and Kottak 2014: 146). A **gender role** consists of the norms and values assigned to the sexes. **Gender stereotypes** are prevalent among cultures and are generalizations about the characteristics of the sexes. Cultural groups may have specific ideas about which sex has more access to resources, e.g., wages, prestige, personal freedom, leading to unequal distribution of rewards or **gender stratification**.

Gender enculturation begins immediately after birth. It occurs in how children are spoken to and treated. As mentioned previously, it occurs in how children are dressed and which toys with which they are given for play. In the United States, mainstream society traditionally recognizes two genders: male and female. In the 21st-century, there is a growing movement to recognize a third gender, transgender, a designation for people who feel that they are neither gender, both genders, or that their biological sex does not indicate how they feel about their gender. In other cultures, other genders have been recognized and incorporated into the norm. The hijra of India are one example. Hijra "…are culturally defined as "neither men nor women" or as men who become women by adopting women's dress and behavior" (Nanda 2015: 96). In Samoa, men who live as women are called fa'afafine and fulfill traditional female roles. Sworn virgins are biological females born into some Balkan societies who take on traditional male roles when there is a shortage or men, a concept similar to the virginal transvestites in North Albania. In many Native American societies we find the two-spirit persons who, traditionally, some considered sacred, as they possessed the spirit of both male and female. While many third gender persons face still discrimination and ostracism, there is a growing global movement to stop such actions.

Ethnicity & Race

Human beings seem to have an innate need to classify, perhaps due to the sheer volume of information that must be processed on any given day. This need extends beyond the need to classify the natural world around them, but to classify other human beings as well. In doing so, clear lines are drawn between themselves and others. These lines serve to identify to whom we have social obligations and with whom we are competing for resources. Culturally, two ways to do this is through identification of an individual's ethnicity or race.

Ethnicity refers to an ethnic group that a person identifies with or feels a part of to the exclusion of other groups. An **ethnic group** shares similar values and norms defined by such things as language (e.g., Hispanics), geography (e.g., Somalis), religion (e.g., Jews), or race (see discussion of race below). While this seems like a straightforward concept, it can be murky. Children of parents of different ethnicities may perceive themselves one way and others perceive them as something else. This can occur even among the siblings of or between generations in mixed-ethnic families.

Ethnic identity is tied to social status, therefore, a person's ethnic identity may change depending on the context, where one ethnic identity is used in certain contexts and a different identity is used in another context. This is called the **situational negotiation of identity**. Gezen and Kottak (2014: 215) discuss Hispanics as an example of situational negotiation of identity. "Hispanic" as noted above is an ethnic identity based primarily on language. It includes people of varying skin color and geography. When issues impacting all Hispanics arise in the United States, people who identify as Mexican American, Cuban American and Puerto Ricans may act together to address the issue. At other times, they identify as peoples with different interests; e.g., Mexican Americans may be interested in immigration reform, Puerto Ricans on statehood, and Cuban Americans on lifting of trade sanctions on Cuba. Ethnic identity is often tied directly to the sociopolitical hierarchy of a country. Ethnic groups become equated with minority groups who have less power and prestige then the majority group. Ethnic groups are frequently confused with races. **Race** is cultural construct that groups people together based on perceived biological similarities. In the biological sciences, a race is a "geographically related subdivision of a species" (Gezen and Kottak 2014: 216). This definition does not apply to Homo sapiens. Genetically, it is clear that human groups have been interbreeding for millennia as we are genetically similar to one another. This is not to say that there is no diversity in human beings; one only has to look around to see some variability, but at a genetic level the diversity we see is, well, superficial.

***Figure* 1.4.4** - *Black and white handshake*

This tendency to group peoples together based on a perceived similarity is not a new phenomenon. The ancient Greek philosopher, Hippocrates (460-370 BC), wrote about the essences of organisms, or humors, that determined its physical traits, temperament, intelligence, and behavior (Brown 2010: 66). Building off of Aristotle's scale of nature, medieval Europeans created an immutable, or unchanging, "great chain of being" to categorize the world, placing themselves near the top of the chain following only angels and God, with the rest of humanity categorized below. This approach is referred to as the essentialist approach.

During the late Renaissance and Enlightenment periods, philosophers and scientists continued to try to categorize human beings. French philosopher Jean Boudin (1530-1596) followed the Greeks in using humors coupled with skin color to classify humans. In Boudin's schema white-skinned Europeans had a predominance of phlegm and were both reflective and rational. Black-skinned Africans had black bile and were lethargic and less-intelligent than other peoples. Red-skinned Indians were savage, war-like, and associated with blood, while Asians were associated with yellow bile, yellow skin, deviousness, and slyness. Carolus Linneaus (1707-1778) used a similar system when creating his scientific classification system in the 1700s.

Anthropology has contributed to the tenacity of the race concept throughout the years. Johann Friedrich Blumenbach (1752-1840), the father of physical anthropology, rejected external characteristics such as skin color to focus on skull shape to create five types: Caucasian, Mongolian, Malayan, Ethiopian, and American. Shortly after Blumenbach published his schema, skin color was attached to each of the racial types: white, yellow, brown, black, and red. Franz Boas (1858-1942) was the first anthropologist to challenge the essentialist approach. He pointed out essentialist schemes were based on the faulty assumption that there was a connection between skin color and temperament. In fact, no biological connection between skin color and temperament had ever been demonstrated. Boas argued that natural and cultural environment were keys to shaping behavior. Conducting a study of Sicilian immigrants over a ten-year period, Boas demonstrated that both behavior and biological characteristics could change based on the natural and cultural environment. The debate on and research into the usefulness, accuracy, and efficacy of the race concept continues. While all anthropologists acknowledge the inherent flaws in the concept, primarily that there are no biological human races, forensic anthropologists continue to use the concept to help law enforcement identify human remains. Forensic anthropologists use measurements from multiple features of the skeleton to predict biological affiliation. Nonetheless, most American anthropologists support the American Anthropological Association's position on race:

> *In the United States both scholars and the general public have been conditioned to viewing human races as natural and separate divisions within the human species based on visible physical differences. With the vast expansion of scientific knowledge in this century, however, it has become clear that human populations are not unambiguous, clearly demarcated, biologically distinct groups. Evidence from the analysis of genetics (e.g., DNA) indicates that most physical variation, about 94%, lies within so-called racial groups. Conventional geographic "racial" groupings differ from one another only in about 6% of their genes. This means that there is greater variation within "racial" groups than between them. In neighboring populations there is much overlapping of genes and their phenotypic (physical) expressions. Throughout history whenever different groups have come into contact, they have interbred. The continued sharing of genetic materials has maintained all of humankind as a single species (American Anthropological Association 1998).*

The complete statement is available at http://www.aaanet.org/stmts/racepp.htm.

One may wonder that if there are no biological human races, why does the concept persist? It persists because people live the experience of race. What this means is that people discriminate based on appearance, which includes not only skin color, but language, social behavior, etc.

> *We tend to separate people into ethnic categories, but we often use racial terms to identify these categories. Thus, one talks about "black" culture or "white" culture as if the color of one's skin is somehow connected to one's behavior. While the connection is clearly not genetic, it is real nonetheless. An example can be found in the 2008 presidential election when then-candidate Obama was criticized by some leaders in the African American community for not being "black enough." Clearly, they were not talking about his skin color, but rather his lived experiences as a person of color. Obama didn't go through the "typical" black experience of discrimination and the social injustice that goes along with it, because he was raised by a white family in biologically and ethnically diverse Hawaii... Using racial labels like "black" or "white" as shorthand for ethnic experiences may be useful and even necessary for Americans when talking about race. However, it also keeps alive the centuries-old essentialist notions about race and behavior (Brown 2010: 74).*

As we have learned, there are many things that contribute to our personal identities. Cultural concepts about ethnicity, race, and gender create boxes that we are expected to operate within. Breaking free from those expectations can be a difficult and painful process as we place others into unfamiliar territory where their cultural expectations are negated. This creates conflict for all parties involved because of fear of the unknown; however, the end result can be one of change for the whole society not just the individuals involved.

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1.5: Cultural Anthropology Methodology and Theory

Methodology

Ethnography is a research strategy where the approach is to get as much information as possible about a particular culture. The ethnographer, or cultural anthropologist, tries to get information from many angles to see whole picture--again, striving for that holistic view. There are multiple methodologies that can be employed:

1. **Participant Observation** – this the hallmark of anthropology. This method was pioneered by Branislaw Malinowski. Using this method, the ethnographer not only observes but participates in the activities of the culture. In this manner, anthropologists attempt to record the **emic**, or insider's view of the behavior, as opposed to the **etic**, or outsider's view. This does not mean that the emic and etic are mutually exclusive; they can compliment one another by giving both subjective and objective interpretation.
2. **Interviews**, **Conversation** - this works best when the ethnographer has learned the language. Interpreters can and are used; however, it is always best to be able to learn the language oneself. Not only does it lessen the chance of misinterpretation via a third person, but it helps build confidence with the culture group being studied.
3. **Informant** - an informant is a key individual—usually someone with a lot of knowledge about the group being studied. This individual is interviewed and used as a contact point with the group. The problem with this is that the researcher only gets a small picture of what's going on.
4. **Genealogical Method** - this method is strictly about learning the kinship, family, and marriage patterns of a group. It is a basic method used to help anthropologists understand social relationships and history.
5. **Life Histories** - this method relies on getting the personal history of an individual. This can help anthropologists arrive at some insights into perceptions about a culture. It can help the researcher understand the emic. Ideally, several life histories would be collected in order to get more balanced information.
6. **Interpretive Anthropology** - ethnographers produce ethnographies, which are reports on their ethnographic work. Over the years the approach to writing ethnographies has changed. Early ethnographies used the etic approach to portray a scientific, objective view of the society. This approach is referred to as **ethnographic realism**. In the 1970s there was a movement to use an emic approach. This was an endeavor to try to get past the researcher's ethnocentrism to understand the natives' viewpoint. From this, interpretive anthropology arose. **Interpretive anthropology** requires the ethnographer to reflect on what their presence is doing to the study group as well as what it is in their personal culture that is impacting the interpretation of what they observe. It also allows for the ethnographer to relate their own feelings and reactions, all in the attempt to understand their interpretation.
7. **Problem-oriented ethnography** - cultural anthropologists using a problem-oriented ethnographic approach research a specific question; they collect data just on that question, e.g., the effects of modernization on social organization, while they are in the field.
8. **Ethnohistory** - this approach requires library and archival research; ethnohistorians attempt to reconstruct the history of a people using both their own accounts and those of outside observers. In this manner, ethnohistorians try to understand the modern condition of a people by understanding the historical events and processes that got the group to where they are now.
9. **Ethnology** (cross-cultural comparison) - cross-cultural comparison is employed by cultural anthropologists in order to understand the similarities and differences among cultures; this can help us to better understand the processes of change and adaptation in human culture.

***Figure* 1.5.1** - *Gillian Harper Ice conducting fieldwork for the Kenyan Grandparents study: "http://www.oucom.ohiou.edu/internati...enya/index.htm"*

Fieldwork

Nancy Bonvillain (2010: 54-57) outlines the basic approach to cultural anthropology fieldwork. The first step is define a problem and choose a field site. Identifying a problem can happen multiple ways; it might stem from something an anthropologist has read about; it might begin with a long-term interest in a particular region or country, or in the case of graduate students, it might be a class that captures an interest.

The second step is to do background research. Before leaving for the field it is imperative for anthropologists to do a thorough literature search. This involves doing library research to determine what research has already been done by other anthropologists. It also involves learning about the area in which they are going to study--the history, politics, environment, climate, customs, etc. It is particularly important for anthropologists to find out if there are legal restrictions for working outside of their home country. Many anthropologists do mini-trips to their research ares to make preliminary contacts, learn the language, and make plans for a longer stay.

***Figure* 1.5.2** - *Dr. Crystal Patil in Tanzania*

The third step is actually going to the field to conduct research. this can be the most exciting and most nerve-racking part of anthropological work. Until steeped in the local traditions, there is always a chance that the researcher will unwittingly violate local norms, making it more difficult to get to know the study group. Being in the field can lead to culture shock. One of the first things anthropologists will do in the field is find a place to live. Choosing to live in the same place as the study group is the best way to conduct research, but living in close proximity can make it difficult for the anthropologist to remain neutral local conflicts, something that is important for the researcher to do.

Once settled in, data collection can begin. Anthropologists can collect both qualitative and quantitative data while in the field. Qualitative data might include information gleaned from interviews or participant observation. Quantitative data could be anything that can be measured statistically, e.g., mortality rates, birth rates, etc.

The interpretation of data occurs both in the field and once the anthropologist returns home. Hopefully, the research will be published in some form, whether that be in an academic journal or as an ethnography. If the data is not published then it does not do the academic community much good as the information is inaccessible.

Ethics

No matter the technique and ethnographic approach, it is obligatory that cultural anthropologists conduct ethical research. This includes getting informed consent, which means that the group/person under study agree to take part in research. It will probably include seeking the permission of national government, local government, and individuals. Cultural anthropologists must always put the welfare and interests of research subjects before their own research.

Part of the challenge in making ethical decisions is the fact that anthropology has always been an activist discipline. E. B. Taylor claimed that, "the science of culture is essentially a reformer's science" and Ruth Benedict said that the "purpose of anthropology was to make the world safe for human difference." John Bodley has been quoted saying that anthropology is a subversive science. So where do anthropologists draw the line between cultural relativism and intervention? **Cultural relativism** is the idea that traits can only be understood within their cultural context. If we consider cultural relativism on a spectrum, then one extreme holds that all traits good within their cultural context…as stated by Conrad Kottak in Mirror for Humanity…Nazi Germany would be evaluated as non-judgmentally as Athenian Greece using this extreme. On the other end there is the idea that there is no way to be truly culturally relative because we are all human beings with cultural baggage—have ideas about what are right and wrong. Robert Reed, a former professor at The Ohio State University once said that we can be culturally relative and still disagree with a behavior if, and this is an important if, if you try to understand why that behavior exists in the group. In other words, why do people practice the behavior.

A big question that every cultural anthropologist has to think about is this: What do you do if intervention could change the culture? Is that our role as researchers? Most anthropologists would say that it isn't our job to change things; however that doesn't mean we can't give people information that they can use as they will.

Another question that cultural anthropologists face is what to do when a cultural trait interferes with an individual's human rights? Where is the ethical line in that situation? Recently in anthropology there was a heated debate about anthropologists working for the US government in Iraq (click here to read the New York Times article). Since WWII there has been mistrust in the anthropological community regarding governments and especially the military. In WWII, the military wanted to use anthropological studies to help develop military strategy against the Axis powers. Many anthropologists had trouble with that as the information would be used in a manner that did not advance the welfare of the people studied. It's the same situation today with the Iraq war.

Perhaps one of the most critical ethical debates in anthropology in general is that of informed consent. Informed consent includes the "...full disclosure of research goals, research methods, types of analyses, and reporting procedures" (Bonvillain 2010: 62). In April 2010, the New York Times ran an article about alleged misuse of DNA samples collected from the Havasupi tribe in 1990. This article highlights the issue of informed consent.

The American Anthropological Association has a number of real ethical dilemmas posted on their web site. These posts also include comments by other anthropologists— sometimes agreeing with the researchers decision and sometimes not. It's interesting information and I urge you to take a look at a couple of the cases.

AAA Code of Ethics

1.6: Cultural Anthropology Theory

Anthropological Theory

Why learn theory? "Theories are analytical tools for understanding, explaining, and making predictions about a given subject matter" (http://en.Wikipedia.org/wiki/Theory). Theories help to direct our thinking and provide a common framework from which people can work. Oftentimes through the process of using a theoretical framework, we discover that it lacks explanatory abilities. When that happens, it is modified or even abandoned.

There are a number of theoretical approaches used in cultural anthropology. This page highlights some of the major theoretical approaches used in cultural anthropology.Not all of the theories reviewed are in use any more. Social evolutionism was abandoned early on in cultural anthropology. Culture and Personality, Cultural Ecology, and Cultural Materialism have all been jumping off points for more modern theoretical perspectives.

***Figure* 1.6.1** - *Franz Boas, Father of American Anthropology*

Social Evolution

Proposed in the 19th century, social evolution, which is sometimes referred to as Unilineal Evolution, was the first theory developed for anthropology. This theory claims that societies develop according to one universal order of cultural evolution, albeit at different rates, which explained why there were different types of society existing in the world. E. B. Tylor, Lewis Henry Morgan, and Herbert Spencer (a sociologist) were the most notable of the Nineteenth-century social evolutionists. They collected data from missionaries and traders; they themselves rarely went to the societies that they were analyzing. They organized these second-hand data and applied the general theory they developed to all societies.

Social evolutionists identified universal evolutionary stages to classify different societies as in a state of savagery, barbarism, or civilization. Morgan further subdivided savagery and barbarism into sub-categories: low, middle, and high. The stages were based primarily on technological characteristics, but included other things such as political organization, marriage, family, and religion. Since Western societies had the most advanced technology, they put those societies at the highest rank of civilization. Societies at a stage of savagery or barbarism were viewed as inherently inferior to civilized society. Spencer's theory of social evolution, which is often referred to as Social Darwinism but which he called synthetic philosophy, proposed that war promoted evolution, stating that those societies that conducted more warfare were the most evolved. He also coined the phrase "survival of the fittest" and advocated for allowing societies to compete, thereby allowing the most fit in society to survive. With these ideas, Spencer opposed social policy that would help the poor. Eugenicists used Spencer's ideas to promote intellectual and ethnic cleansing as a 'natural' occurrence.

There are two main assumptions embedded in social evolutionism: psychic unity and the superiority of Western cultures. Psychic unity is a concept that suggests human minds share similar characteristics all over the world. This means that all people and their societies will go through the same process of development. The assumption of Western superiority was not unusual for the time period. This assumption was deeply rooted in European colonialism and based on the fact that Western societies had more technologically sophisticated technology and a belief that Christianity was the true religion.

Nineteenth-century evolutionists contributed to anthropology by providing the first systematic methods for thinking about and explaining human societies; however, contemporary anthropologists view nineteenth-century evolutionism as too simplistic to explain the development of societies in the world. In general, the nineteenth-century evolutionists relied on racist views of human development that were popular at that time. For example, both Lewis Henry Morgan and E. B. Tylor believed that people in various

societies have different levels of intelligence, which leads to societal differences, a view of intelligence that is no longer valid in contemporary science. Nineteenth-century evolutionism was strongly attacked by historical particularists for being speculative and ethnocentric in the early twentieth-century. At the same time, its materialist approaches and cross-cultural views influenced Marxist Anthropology and Neo-evolutionists.

Historical Particularism

Franz Boas and his students developed *historical particularism* early in the twentieth century. This approach claims that each society has its own unique historical development and must be understood based on its own specific cultural and environmental context, especially its historical process. Its core premise was that culture was a "set of ideas or symbols held in common by a group of people who see themselves as a social group" (Darnell 2013: 399). Historical particularists criticized the theory of the nineteenth-century social evolution as non-scientific and proclaimed themselves to be free from preconceived ideas. Boas believed that there were universal laws that could be derived from the comparative study of cultures; however, he thought that the ethnographic database was not yet robust enough for us to identify those laws. To that end, he and his students collected a vast amount of first-hand cultural data by conducting ethnographic fieldwork. Based on these raw data, they described particular cultures instead of trying to establish general theories that apply to all societies.

The Historical particularists valued fieldwork and history as critical methods of cultural analysis. At the same time, the anthropologists in this theoretical school had different views on the importance of individuals in a society. For example, Frantz Boas saw each individual as the basic component of a society. He gathered information from individual informants and considered such data valuable enough for cultural analysis. On the other hand, Alfred Kroeber did not see individuals as the fundamental elements of a society. He believed a society evolves according to its own internal laws that do not directly originate from its individuals. He named this cultural aspect superorganic and claimed that a society cannot be explained without considering this impersonal force.

Historical particularism was a dominant trend in anthropology during the first half of the twentieth century. One of the achievements of the historical particularists was that they succeeded in excluding racism from anthropology. The nineteenth-century evolutionists explained cultural similarities and differences by classifying societies into superior and inferior categories. Historical particularists showed that this labeling is based on insufficient evidence and claimed that societies cannot be ranked by the value judgment of researchers. Historical particularists were also responsible for showing the need for long-term, intensive fieldwork in order to produce accurate descriptions of cultures. One important part of doing that was to learn the language of the study group.

Learn more about the anthropologists

Lewis Henry Morgan: https://rochester.edu/College/ANT/morgan/bio.html

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1.7: More Theories

Functionalism

The roots of functionalism are found in the work of sociologists Herbert Spencer and Émile Durkheim. Functionalism considers a culture as an interrelated whole, not a collection of isolated traits. Like a human being has various organs that are interconnected and necessary for the body to function correctly, so society is a system of interconnected parts that make the whole function efficiently. The Functionalists examined how a particular cultural phase is interrelated with other aspects of the culture and how it affects the whole system of the society; in other words, cause and effect. The theory of Functionalism emerged in the 1920s and then declined after World War II because of cultural changes caused by the war. Since the theory did not emphasize social transformations, it was replaced by other theories related to cultural changes. Even so, the basic idea of Functionalism has become part of a common sense for cultural analysis in anthropology. Anthropologists generally consider interconnections of different cultural domains when they analyze cultures, e.g., the connections between subsistence strategies and family organization or religion.

***Figure* 1.7.1** - *Émile Durkheim*

The method of functionalism was based on fieldwork and direct observations of societies. Anthropologists were to describe various cultural institutions that make up a society, explain their social function, and show their contribution to the overall stability of a society. At the same time, this functionalist approach was criticized for not considering cultural changes of traditional societies.

Structural functionalism was a form of functionalism that arose in Great Britain. British anthropologist, A.R Radcliffe-Brown, was its most prominent advocate. In the structural functionalism approach, society, its institutions and roles, was the appropriate thing to study. Cultural traits supported or helped to preserve social structures. This approach had little interest in the individual, which contrasts with the approach advocated for by Branislaw Malinowski.

Culture and Personality

Attributed to anthropologists Ruth Benedict and Margaret Mead, the Culture and Personality school of thought drew on the work of Edward Sapir to explain relationships between childrearing customs and human behaviors in different societies. They suggested anthropologists could gain an understanding of a national culture through examination of individual personalities. There were two main themes in this theoretical school. One was about the relationship between culture and human nature. The other was about the correlation between culture and individual personality.

***Figure* 1.7.2** - *Ruth Benedict*

The theory of Culture and Personality also drew on Boas' cultural relativism and Freud's psychoanalysis about early childhood. If we premise that all humans are hereditarily equal, why are people so unique from society to society? The theoretical school

answered this question by using Freud's psychoanalysis: the differences between people in various societies usually stem from cultural differences installed in childhood. In other words, the foundations of personality development are set in early childhood according to each society's unique cultural traits. Based on this basis, the theoretical school of Culture and Personality researched childrearing in different societies and compared the results cross-culturally. They described distinctive characteristics of people in certain cultures and attributed these unique traits to the different methods of childrearing. The aim of this comparison was to show the correlation between childrearing practices and adult personality types.

The Culture and Personality proponents were on the cutting edge when it emerged in the early 20th century. Using clinical interviews, dream analysis, life histories, participant observation, and projective tests (e.g., Rorschach), the culture and personality analysis of the correlation between childrearing customs and human behaviors was, at that time, a practical alternative to using racism explanations for analyzing different human behaviors. In fact, the culture and personality school was responsible for greatly limiting the number of racist, hierarchical descriptions of culture types common during the early to mid-20th century. This approach to understanding culture was instrumental in moving the focus to the individual in order to understand behaviors within a culture instead of looking for universal laws of human behavior.

Cultural Ecology

Ecology is a biological term for the interaction of organisms and their environment, which includes other organisms. Cultural ecology is a theoretical approach that attempts to explain similarities and differences in culture in relation to the environment. Highly focused on how the material culture, or technology, related to basic survival, i.e., subsistence, cultural ecology was the first theoretical approach to provide a causal explanation for those similarities and differences. Developed by Julian Steward in the 1930s and 1940s, cultural ecology became an influential approach within anthropology, particularly archaeology. Elements of the approach are still seen today in ethnoecology, political ecology, human behavioral ecology, and the ecosystems approach (Tucker 2013).

Using Steward's approach, anthropologists compare cultures in order to determine what factors influence similar cultural development; in other words, similar adaptations. In cultural ecology, cultures, not individuals, adapt. This approach assumes that culture is superorganic, a concept Steward learned from Alfred Kroeber (see historical particularism).

***Figure* 1.7.3** - *Julian Steward*

Steward proposed that we could begin to understand these adaptations by first examining the cultural core, as this was the critical cultural component that dealt with the ability of the culture to survive. The cultural core was comprised of the technology, knowledge, labor, and family organization used to collect resources from the environment (Tucker 2013). He then thought that examination of behaviors associated with the cultural core was necessary, which included the organization of labor. Thirdly, Steward advocated for examining how social institutions and belief systems were impacted by subsistence-related behaviors. According to the cultural ecology school of thought, cultural similarities were explained by adaptations to similar environmental conditions, causing the approach to be labeled environmental determinism. Cultural changes were due to changing environmental conditions. Since environmental changes were not predictable, cultures changed in multiple directions. Cultures that may have been similar at one point might become dissimilar if environmental conditions changed. Conversely, cultures that were dissimilar could become similar. This idea of multi-directional change is called multilinear evolution and is one of the major departures from earlier evolutionary explanations of culture. Leslie White was another proponent of cultural ecology, although he was focused primarily on how cultures harvested energy from the environment and how much energy they used.

Cultural Materialism

Materialism is one of the major anthropological perspectives for analyzing human societies. It incorporates ideas from Marxism, cultural evolution, and cultural ecology. Materialism contends that the physical world impacts and sets constraints on human behavior. The materialists believe that human behavior is part of nature and therefore, it can be understood by using the methods of

natural science. Materialists do not necessarily assume that material reality is more important than mental reality. However, they give priority to the material world over the world of the mind when they explain human societies. This doctrine of materialism started and developed from the work of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. Marx and Engels presented an evolutionary model of societies based on the materialist perspective. They argued that societies go through the several stages, from tribalism to feudalism to capitalism to communism. Their work drew little attention from anthropology in the early twentieth-century. However, since the late 1920s, anthropologists have increasingly come to depend on materialist explanations for analyzing societal development and some inherent problems of capitalist societies. Anthropologists who heavily rely on the insights of Marx and Engels include neo-evolutionists, neo-materialists, feminists, and postmodernists.

Cultural materialists identify three levels of social systems that constitute a universal pattern: 1) infrastructure, 2) structure, and 3) superstructure. Infrastructure is the basis for all other levels and includes how basic needs are met and how it interacts with the local environment. Structure refers to a society's economic, social, and political organization, while superstructure is related to ideology and symbolism. Cultural materialists like Marvin Harris contend that the infrastructure is the most critical aspect as it is here where the interaction between culture and environment occurs. All three of the levels are interrelated so that changes in the infrastructure results in changes in the structure and superstructure, although the changes might not be immediate. While this appears to be environmental determinism, cultural materialists do not disclaim that change in the structure and superstructure cannot occur without first change in the infrastructure. They do however claim that if change in those structures is not compatible with the existing infrastructure the change is not likely to become set within the culture.

Symbolic and Interpretive Anthropology

The theoretical school of Symbolic and Interpretive Anthropology assumes that culture does not exist beyond individuals. Rather, culture lies in individuals' interpretations of events and things around them. With a reference to socially established signs and symbols, people shape the patterns of their behaviors and give meanings to their experiences. Therefore, the goal of Symbolic and Interpretive Anthropology is to analyze how people give meanings to their reality and how this reality is expressed by their cultural symbols. The major accomplishment of symbolic anthropology has been to turn anthropology towards issues of culture and interpretation rather than grand theories.

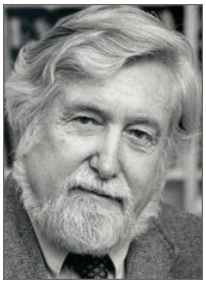

***Figure* 1.7.4** - *Clifford Geertz*

Symbolic and Interpretive Anthropology emerged in the 1960s when Victor Turner, Clifford Geertz, and David Schneider were at the University of Chicago and is still influential today. Symbolic and Interpretive Anthropology does not follow the model of physical sciences, which focus on empirical material phenomena, but is literary-based. This does not mean that Symbolic and Interpretive anthropologists do not conduct fieldwork, but instead refers to the practice of drawing on non-anthropological literature as a primary source of data. The Symbolic and Interpretive Anthropologists view culture as a mental phenomenon and reject the idea that culture can be modeled like mathematics or logic. When they study symbolic action in cultures, they use a variety of analytical tools from psychology, history, and literature. This method has been criticized for a lack of objective method. In other words, this method seems to allow analysts to see meaning wherever and however they wish. In spite of this criticism, Symbolic and Interpretive Anthropology has forced anthropologists to become aware of cultural texts they interpret and of ethnographic texts they create. In order to work as intercultural translators, anthropologists need to be aware of their own cultural biases as well as other cultures they research.

There are two schools of thought within Symbolic and Interpretive Anthropology. The British school was interested in how societies maintained cohesion and is illustrated by the work of Victor Turner and Mary Douglas. The American school is exemplified by Clifford Geertz and Sherry Ortner and was focused on "how ideas shaped individuals subjectivities and actions" (Johnson 2013: 842). An important contribution of Symbolic and Interpretive anthropologists, specifically Clifford Geertz, is "thick description," which encourages rich descriptions and explanations of behaviors with an end goal of understanding their cultural

significance. Geertz borrowed this concept from Gilbert Ryle, an Oxford philosopher. The classic example of thick description is the difference between a wink and a blink. A blink is an involuntary twitch (thin description) while a wink is a conspiratorial signal to another person (thick description). The physical movements are identical, but the meaning is different.

Postmodernism

Postmodernism is a theoretical approach that arose in the 1980s to explain an historical period, post-modernity, which is generally accepted to have begun in the late 1960s and early 1970s. This is a period related to the Cold War and social upheaval in many parts of the world. The postmodernism theoretical approach is difficult to define and delineate. It is generally scoffed at in the Natural Sciences, debated in the Social Sciences, and more favorably accepted within the Humanities. In the past, debates on the merits of the postmodern approach have created divisions among faculty and derision between disciplines. The postmodern approach challenges the "dominating and bullying nature of science and reason" and focuses on "…splitting the truth, the standards, and the ideal into what has been deconstructed and into what is about to be deconstructed, and denying in advance the right of any new doctrine, theory, or revelation to take the place of the discarded rules of the past" (Cooke 2006: 2014). It is the academic equivalent of the social clamor against the establishment that arose in the 1960s and 1970s. Postmodernists claim that it is impossible for anyone to have objective and neutral knowledge of another culture. This view comes from the notion that we all interpret the world around us in our own way according to our language, cultural background, and personal experiences. In other words, everybody has their own views based on his or her social and personal contexts. Because of this aspect of human nature, anthropologists can never be unbiased observers of other cultures. When postmodern anthropologists analyze different societies, they are sensitive to this limitation. They do not assume that their way of conceptualizing culture is the only way. The postmodernists believe that anthropological texts are influenced by the political and social contexts within which they are written. Therefore, it is unreasonable when authors try to justify their interpretations and underlying biases by using the concept of objectivity. The postmodernists claim that the acceptance of an interpretation is ultimately an issue of power and wealth. In other words, we tend to legitimize particular statements represented by those with political and economic advantage. In order to heighten sensitivity towards those who are not part of mainstream culture, the postmodernists often promote underrepresented viewpoints, such as those of ethnic minorities, women, and others. Postmodernists also re-introduced a focus on individual behavior, which has become known as agency theory. Agency approaches examine how individual agents shape culture. Postmodern anthropologists gave other anthropologists an opportunity to reconsider their approaches of cultural analysis by ushering in an era of reflexive anthropology. The anthropologist tries to become sensitive to his or her unconscious assumptions. For example, anthropologists now consider whether they should include in ethnographies different interpretations of culture other than their own. Furthermore, anthropologists need to determine their own standards for choosing what kind of information can be counted as knowledge. This reflection leads anthropologists to enrich their work. At the same time, the challenges by postmodernists often result in backlash from those who feel their understandings are threatened. Some anthropologists claim that the postmodernists rely on a particular moral model rather than empirical data or scientific methods. This moral model is structured by sympathy to those who do not possess the same privilege that the mainstream has in Western societies. Therefore, postmodernism will undermine the legitimacy of anthropology by introducing this political bias. Another typical criticism on postmodernism comes from the fear of extremely relativistic view. Such critics argue that postmodernism will lead to nihilism because it does not assume a common ground of understanding. Some opponents claim that postmodernism will undermine universal human rights and will even justify dictatorship. Postmodernism is an ongoing debate, especially regarding whether anthropology should rely on scientific or humanistic approaches.

Explore: Learn more about the anthropologists

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- Mary Douglas: www.theguardian.com/news/2007...ies.obituaries
- Clifford Geertz: http://www.nytimes.com/2006/11/01/obituaries/01geertz.html?pagewanted=all
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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

2: Social Institutions

Learning Objectives

- Economic Organization, including production (subsistence strategies) and distribution
- Kinship, Family, and Marriage
- Political Systems
- Illness & Healing
- Expressive Culture: Religion

2.1: Subsistence Strategies
2.2: Economic Organization
2.3: Kinship
2.4: Family
2.5: Marriage
2.6: Political Organizations
2.7: Illness, Healing, Death and Dying
2.8: Expressive Culture

2.1: Subsistence Strategies

All cultures need ways to produce goods and distribute them for consumption. This is the essence of an economic system. The forms these take vary across the globe and make involve interaction with family or non-family. It many involve work from the home or it may be with a corporation. Some economic systems support the independence of families, while others result in a greater, albeit oft unacknowledged, interdependence. In this section we start with the mode of production, including how people get their food.

Mode of Production

The ways in which food and other material items are collected is called a system of production. Specifically, the manner in which a group produces its food is referred to as a subsistence strategy. In a capitalist system, money is the key to production. From the farmer who must purchase land and seed in order to produce food to non-farmers who must have money in order to buy food and other goods, everybody needs money in order to meet their needs. In kin-based types of economic systems, social obligations fulfill the role of money.

The primary focus of this section will be subsistence strategies as they influence other types of behavior. Anthropologists frequently categorize groups by their subsistence strategy, or how they get their food. Through research, anthropologists discovered that the subsistence strategy oftentimes predicted other forms of behavior, e.g., population size, division of labor, and social structure.

Food Gathering

Foraging

For roughly 90% of history, humans were *foragers* who used simple technology to gather, fish, and hunt wild food resources. Today only about a quarter million people living in marginal environments, e.g., deserts, the Arctic and topical forests, forage as their primary subsistence strategy. While studying foraging societies allows anthropologists to understand their cultures in their own right, the data from these studies provides us with an avenue to understanding past cultures.

***Figure* 2.1.1** - *Haida village, Wrangel, Alaska circa 1902*

General Characteristics: Foraging

While the resources foraging groups utilize vary depending on the environment, there are some common characteristics among foragers:

- Foragers generally make their own tools using materials available in the local environment, however, through the process of development and increasing contact with other groups of people, machine made tools are making their way into foraging societies.
- There is a high degree of mobility as the group may follow migrating herds or seasonally available resources.
- Group size and population density is small so as not to surpass the carrying capacity of the environment.
- Resource use is extensive and temporary. In other words, foragers may use a wide-variety of resources over a large territory; however, they leave enough resources so that the area can regenerate. Once the resources reach a certain level, the group moves on.
- Permanent settlements are rare.
- Production is for personal use or to share and trade.

- The division of labor tends to be divided by age and gender.
- Kin relations are usually reckoned on both the mother and father's side.
- There is usually no concept of personal ownership, particularly of land.
- If left to follow traditional patterns, foraging as a subsistence strategy is highly sustainable.

Types of Foraging Groups

- **Aquatic**: Aquatic foragers, like the Ou Haadas, or the Haida, who live in the Queen Charlotte Islands, British Columbia, Canada, and Prince of Wales Island in Alaska, United States, rely primarily on resources from water. At the time of contact with Europeans, the Haidu utilized a wide variety of foods from the surrounding waters, including salmon, halibut, crabs, scallops, sea cucumber, sea lion, otters, and seaweed. They also hunted for land mammals like bear and deer and gathered wild plants such as rhubarb, fern, and berries.
- **Pedestrian**: As the name implies, pedestrian foragers get their food by collecting on foot. The !Kung San are more properly known as the Zhu|õasi. They live in the Kalahari desert are one example of a pedestrian foraging group. The Zhu|õasi use about 100 species of animals and over 150 species of plants, although not all are used for food. The primary food source is the mongongo nut that is high in protein. The Zhu|õasi eat their way out of areas, starting with their favorite food and then the less desirable food. Once the resources get low, the group will move to a new area. The Zhu|õasi also move seasonally as resources become available. During the rainy season, the Zhu|õasi live in small groups of 2-3 families. In the dry season, large camps of 20-40 people are established near permanent water sources.
- **Equestrian**: Equestrian foragers are the most rare type of foraging group, being identified only the Great Plains of North America and the pampas and steppes of South America. This type of foraging strategy emerged after contact with European settlers who reintroduced the horse to the Americas. The Aonikenks live on the Patagonian Steppes of South America. The Aonikenks, also called the Tehuelche or people of the south, hunted guanaco, an indigenous camelid, in seasonal rounds. They also ate rhea (sometimes referred to as the South American ostrich), roots, and seeds.

Food Production

Pastoralists

Pastoralism is a subsistence strategy dependent on the herding of animals, particularly sheep, goats and cattle, although there are pastoralists who herd reindeer, horses, yak, camel, and llamas. This does not mean that the people only eat the animals they raise, in fact, some pastoralists only eat their animals for special occasions. They often rely on secondary resources from the animals for food, e.g., blood or milk, or use the by-products like wool to trade for food. Some pastoralists forage for food while others do small-scale farming to supplement their diet. Like foragers, many pastoralists are forced to live in the world's marginal environments all over the world.

General Characteristics: Pastoralists

- Production is for more than meat and milk. Some animals are used as beasts of burden, while others are used for their fur. Animal products are for both personal use and trade.
- Pastoralism is characterized by extensive land use. Animals are moved to pasture; fodder is not brought to them.
- Generally speaking, pastoralists live in extended families in order to have enough people to take care of all of the duties associated with animal care and other domestic duties.
- Division of labor is gender based.
- Most pastoralists are monotheistic (but not all of them); usually the belief is tied closely to their animals.
- The concept of ownership is restricted to animals, housing and some domestic goods. Land is communal and many pastoralists contend that they have travel rights over lands because of centuries-old migratory patterns that supersede modern land ownership.
- Wealth is determined by herd size and often the number of wives and offspring a man has.
- Kin relations are patrilineal, which means that the father’s side of the family is reckoned as kin.
- While some pastoralists are more sedentary, most are nomadic, moving to temporary pastures as needed or seasonally. Semi-permanent camps are set up with each move. Decisions about when to move are made communally.
- Because of the low to moderate consumption rate, the sustainability of pastoralism is high if the herders have access to enough land.

The Ariaal are one example of pastoralists. They live on the plains and slopes of modern Kenya. The Ariaal are successful because they practice a highly diversified system of animal husbandry with the key being herd diversity (camel, cattle, sheep and goats) and mobility. The Ariaal split the herd and pasture them in different places, a practice that ensures herd survivability against disease and drought. The herds are used to encourage growth of seasonal vegetation, which provides the group with trade items.

***Figure* 2.1.2** - *Dogon pastoralists*

Sheep and goats are used primarily for food, as is camel milk. The blood of the animals is also used. This is a good adaptation because blood is a renewable resource and it is highly nutritious. Cattle are used as bride price (more on bride price in the section on Marriage and Family). The exchange of cattle as part of a marriage helps to maintain herd diversity and distribute the wealth among the people.

Ariaal settlements are widely dispersed, making it difficult to maintain social cohesion. One way the Ariaal have devised to help with social cohesion is age-sets. An age set is a group of individuals of roughly the same age that are given specific duties within the society at large. In the case of the Ariaal, there are three age-sets for each sex: for males the age sets are boy, warrior, elder; for females, girl, adolescent, married. Each age set has a specific set of clothes, diet, duties and socializing rules. For instance, adolescent girls are not allowed to associate with any males, including their father while warriors are not allowed to associate with women, including their mother. This practice not only ensures that labor is distributed among members of the group, but serves as a form of population control.

Horticulturists

Horticulturalists are small-scale farmers, but this should not be confused with family farming in industrial regions of the world. Horticulturalists grow not only crops, but often raise animals and gather economically useful plants. They generally produce only what they can consume themselves, a practice anthropologists refer to as subsistence farming. Horticulturalists are found in all areas of the world except the Arctic.

General Characteristics: Horticulturists

- Domestic crops are cultivated using hand tools, which may have been made by hand.
- Farming is done in conjunction with foraging activities and/or trade.
- There is limited surplus production, although as a result of modern development there may be some surplus production.
- Groups have a staple crop around which ritual and social activity takes place. This staple varies from culture to culture, but is generally a plant that can be stored easily such as tubers, maize, rice, or wheat.
- Production is primarily for personal use and trade.
- The division of labor is generally by gender, although all members of the groups may be called upon to help with the crops.
- Kin relations may are predominantly patrilineal, but occasionally may be matrilineal.
- Status is often based on the size of family that can be supported or on how much an individual can give away to gain allies.
- In ancient horticultural societies, the belief system was polytheistic with the primary deities focused on rain and crops. Modern horticulturists follow a variety of different belief systems, but often still have elements of the polytheistic system of old.
- Most horticulturalists do not own the land they use to grow food; however, they claim land-use rights to it.
- Land use is extensive as fields are often used for only a couple of years and then allowed to lie fallow from anywhere to 2-15 years. This is called shifting field agriculture.
- Many horticulturalists practice slash-and burn agriculture whereby vegetation is cut down and burned. When it rains, nutrients from the ash seeps into the soil thereby regenerating soil fertility.
- Permanent settlements are common.
- Horticulturalists may practice polycropping (planting different crops in the same field).
- Like foraging and pastoralism, if given enough land to utilize, horticulture is fairly sustainable.

The Chimbu of the central highlands of Papua New Guinea grow sweet potatoes, which are used to feed both people and domesticated pigs. The Chimbu recognize over 130 different types of sweet potatoes, each grown in its own microclimate and having its specific use. Sugarcane, bananas, taro, beans and various nuts and fruits are also grown in year-round gardens. Pigs and sweet potatoes are both important resources for food exchange. Food exchanges were used to foster reciprocal relationships among people. If an individual did not uphold the reciprocal relationship by repaying the food exchange, they would lose status within the society. Today, not only is food a part of the exchange, but money earned through the sale of coffee, vegetables and jobs.

***Figure* 2.1.3** - *Slash and burn agriculture.*

The Chimbu reckon descent through the father's line. Traditionally, men live in communal houses away from women and children. The men's communal houses are usually placed in areas that were easily defensible. The women and children live in natal groups near their gardens where they can keep a close eye on the crops. Women are also responsible for raising pigs. Currently, the traditional patterns of residence are breaking down and nuclear families are becoming more common.

Intensive Agriculture

Intensive agriculture was developed in order to produce greater amounts of food for large populations. It is the most recent form of subsistence strategy emerging about 5000 years ago. With the emergence of intensive agriculture major changes occurred in other areas of culture. Deities in polytheistic cultures began to represent rain and important plants. Power began to become more centralized as the need arose to organize the growing, harvesting, and distribution of crops. With a changing power structure, social ranking became the norm. People became more dependent on one another as occupational specialization developed. Urbanization occurred as there was now a method to feed a large, non-food producing populace. In other words, a class-based society emerges.

***Figure* 2.1.4** - *Indian farmer*

There are two basic forms of intensive agriculture: **non-industrial** and **industrial**. The former is dependent on human labor and draft animals, while the latter is reliant on machinery. However, there are characteristics that unite the two forms. Both forms of intensive agriculture manipulate the landscape. This may entail actual modification of the landscape through clearing tracts of land, terracing hillsides or digging irrigation systems. Fertilizers are usually required because growing takes place on permanent fields. The type of fertilizers varies. Non-industrial agriculturalists may use natural fertilizers such as animal dung. Industrial agriculturalists use chemical fertilizers.

Private ownership is the norm for intensive agriculture. While non-industrial agriculturalists may own the land with extended family, a single family or corporation owns industrial agricultural land. Permanent residences became the norm.

With the advent of industrial agriculture other changes occurred. Women began to be relegated to the private arena; they became the homemakers while men engaged in public work, farming, politics, etc. Mass production of food became the primary focus of agricultural endeavors. Monocropping replaced polycropping. Machinery became common, requiring agriculturalists to have a high capital investment in their farms, eventually leading to many family farms being bought out by large corporations. Unlike the other

forms of subsistence, intensive agriculture is not sustainable because it destroys habitats, increases erosion, increases water use, undermines stability of other systems, and encourages high consumption both of fossil fuels and food itself.

All four of the subsistence strategies are in use today. Foragers, pastoralists, and horticulturalists are threatened through government selling and protecting of areas such as game preserves, thereby restricting land use.

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2.2: Economic Organization

Economic Organization: Distribution

Once people have produced goods those goods need to be distributed for consumption. This guided through several principles: redistribution, reciprocity, and market. These principles are not mutually exclusive and all may be found within the same society. The **market principle** is based on the practice of goods bought and sold using money. Profit is a key motivating principle. Value is theoretically based on demand and supply, but supply can be artificially manipulated to value and, therefore, increase profit margin. Market economies are the hallmark of large-scale, industrial groups. Other characteristics of market economies include the accumulation of capital (wealth used to fund more production) and complex economic interactions, including international components. Market economies are synonymous with intensive agricultural societies. In the modern world, non-market economies exist under the umbrella of a national market economy; however, there are some cultural groups, e.g., foragers, who have little interaction with the national economy. Groups such as this are generally left out of economic development plans. In fact, they are often seen as impediments to modern economic development, leading to marginalization and deprivation as their ability to meet their needs is impeded.

***Figure* 2.2.1** - *Men selling various fruit and vegetables at an outdoor market in Zanzibar*

Non-market economies are based on reciprocity or redistribution. **Reciprocity** is a direct exchange of goods or services while **redistribution** refers to the movement of goods or services from a central authority to the members of the society.

There are three types of reciprocity: generalized, balanced, and negative. **Generalized reciprocity** refers to an exchange that incurs no calculation of value or immediate repayment of the goods or services. This usually happens among close kin and friends; e.g., !Kung hunters sharing meat with other members of the family or buying a cup of coffee for a friend. It acts as a form of social security among kin—sharing with family ensures that they in turn will share with you. Generalized reciprocity has an element of altruism to it. Think about a person who makes a bunch of sandwiches and then hands them out to the homeless. That person is distributing food without expectation of repayment.

Balanced reciprocity involves calculation of value and repayment of the goods or services within a specified timeframe. Some foragers will exchange wild game for modern hunting implements such as metal knives. Horticulturalists may exchange some of their product for machetes. Storeowners may exchange goods for services of skilled tradesmen. Gift giving in modern society is another example of balanced reciprocity. As adults, when gifts are given there is an expectation that we will receive a gift of equal value in return at a fixed point in the future. For instance, if we receive a birthday gift from a friend, it is expected that we will give that friend a gift of similar value on their birthday.

Negative reciprocity occurs when one party attempts to get more out of the exchange than the other party. This can happen through hard-bargaining, deception, stealing, or even selling food at an inflated price because there is no other option; e.g., vendors at special events.

Redistribution refers to the movement of goods or services to and from a central authority. The authority may be a single individual, e.g., a chief, or a group of people, e.g., temple priests. The central authority may not be interested in accumulating wealth for themselves, but use the distribution of goods and services to create interdependence among the parties involved. The Big Men of Highland Papua New Guinea redistribute goods they have accumulated to create and maintain alliances in an area where

conflict with other groups occur relatively frequently. In industrial societies, progressive income taxes are an example of redistribution—taxes are collected from individuals dependent on their personal income and then that money is distributed to other members of society through various government programs. Charitable donations function similarly.

The **potlatch** is a specialized form of redistribution that was common among native cultures of the Pacific Northwest. Native tribes living in the coastal areas of what is now known as Oregon, Washington, British Columbia, and southern Alaska created a competitive system involving elaborate feasting and gift giving that was used to increase status of the giver. The giver often took years to accumulate all of the goods necessary for the potlatch. Statuses were easily determined by who received the most goods. An element of negative reciprocity was involved in the potlatch as it created an expectation that in the future, receivers would give back to the giver more than they received. While that suggests that the potlatch impoverished families, the relative continual redistribution of goods throughout the society ensured that people were taken care of; the potlatch created interdependence among members of the society.

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2.3: Kinship

In this section, we will look at **kinship patterns**. These patterns determine how we connect with others through descent and marriage. It is a basic system of social organization. Kin that are related to us through descent (parent to child) are called **consanguine** or blood relatives. Anthropologists oftentimes discuss how many links there are between individuals. For instance, between a father and a daughter there is one link in the chain of familial connections. Between that daughter and her sibling there are two links, one to the parent and one to the sibling. If that sibling had a child then there would be three links between the daughter mentioned in the first example: one to the parent, one to the sibling and one to the niece or nephew. Kin that are related through marriage are called **affine**. In the United States, we refer to affine as in-laws.

***Figure* 2.3.1** - *Family reunion*

Kinship Diagrams

Anthropologists draw kinship diagrams to illustrate relationships. Kinship diagrams allow cultural anthropologists to quickly sketch out relationships between people during the interview process. It also provides a means to visually present a culture's kinship pattern without resorting to names, which can be confusing, and allows for anonymity for the people. There are some basic symbols that are used in kinship diagrams. One set of symbols is used to represent people. The other set is used to represent relationships or connections between people. In the diagram below, a circle represents a female, a triangle a male, and a square represents a person self-identified as neither sex or both sexes.

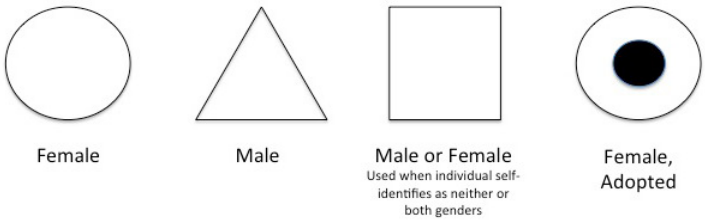

***Figure* 2.3.2** - *Graphic of basic symbols use in kinship diagrams*

To indicate that a person is deceased, a line is placed through the symbol.

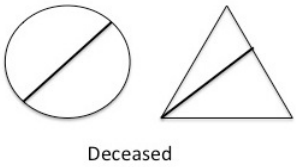

***Figure* 2.3.3** - *Deceased kinship symbols*

Other kinship symbols indicate relationships.

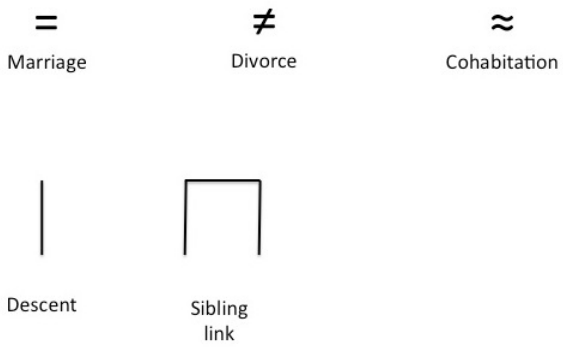

***Figure* 2.3.4** - *Decent kinship symbols*

Some anthropologists develop their own kinship symbols. This is an accepted practice as long as a key or description of the symbol is provided. One individual, usually the informant, is designated as the starting point for the kinship diagram. This person is identified as EGO on the diagram.

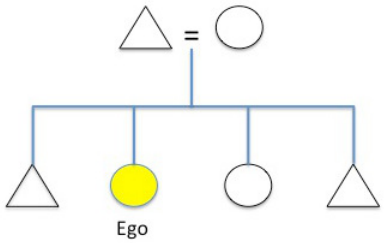

***Figure* 2.3.5** - *Ego kinship symbols*

Descent Rules

Cultural recognition of children as kin of one or both parents is basis for the descent concept. Some societies trace through both parents (e.g., Canada and the United States). Other societies trace descent through only one of the parent's family line.

There are two basic descent systems: corporate and cognatic. **Cognatic descent** is also referred to as non-unilineal descent and there are two types of cognatic descent: bilateral and ambilineal. Anthropological data suggests that cognatic descent arose in cultures where warfare is uncommon and there is a political organization that can organize and fight on behalf of the members. In **bilateral** systems, children are equally descended through both parents. People from both sides of the family are considered relatives. This is the form of descent practiced in the United States.

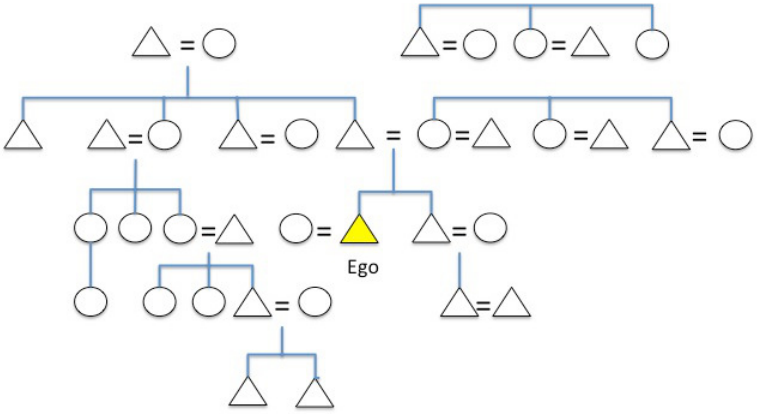

***Figure* 2.3.6** - *Bilateral kinship symbols*

Ambilineal systems require children to choose either the mother or father's side of the family to be reckoned relatives. Some Native American tribes use the ambilineal system. In the illustration below, if EGO chooses the father's side of the family, then everyone marked in blue would be considered kin. If EGO chooses the mother's side, then everyone marked in orange would be considered family

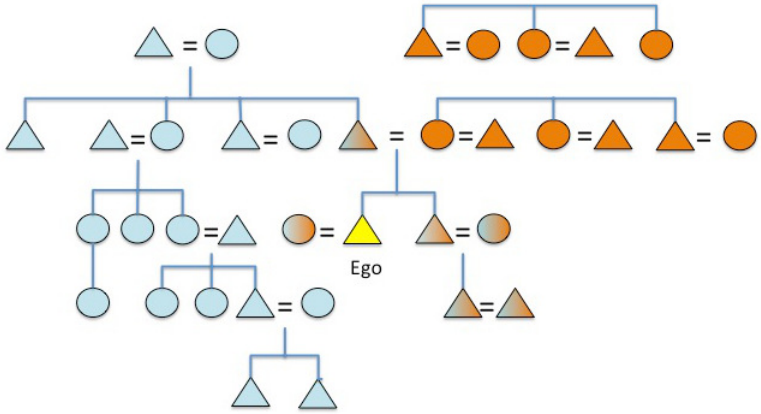

***Figure* 2.3.7** *- Ambilineal kinship symbols*

In **corporate descent** cultures only one family line is recognized as kin. The group typically owns property together. When family is reckoned along the father's line the group is **patrilineal**.

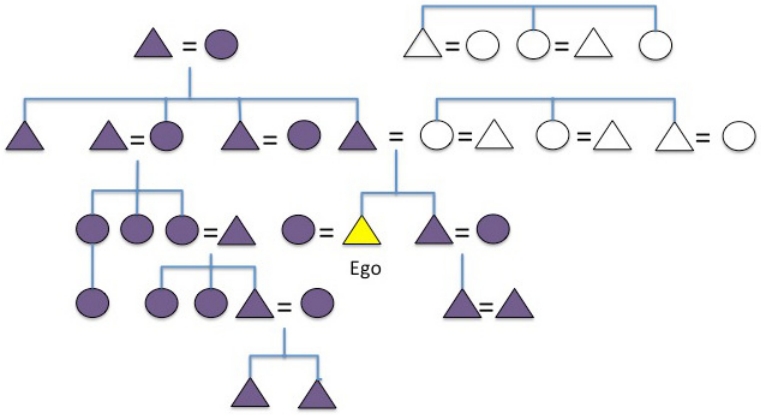

***Figure* 2.3.8** *- Patrilineal kinship symbols*

When family is reckoned along the mother's line the group is **matrilineal**. Keep in mind that this is at the cultural level. Individuals in a culture may think of other people as kin even though they are not formally recognized by the culture itself.

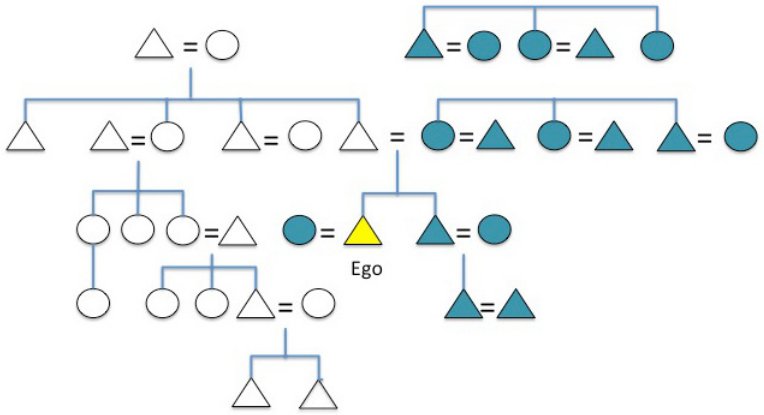

***Figure* 2.3.9** - *Matrilineal kinship symbols*

Descent Groups

In all societies there are social groups whose membership is based on descent; members share a common ancestor or living relative. Descent groups help to define the pool of potential mates, the group of people who are obligated to help in economic and political issues, and may even dictate which religion is followed, particularly in unilineal descent groups.

Unilineal Descent Groups

- **Lineages** trace lines of descent to the same ancestor. A matriline is traced through the mother's family line and partrilines are traced through the father's. Ambilines are traced through either the mother's or father's line; the choice, which might be made based on friendship or availability of resources, is left open.
- **Clans** are groups who acknowledge a common ancestor but the exact genealogy might not be remembered. Oftentimes, the ancestor may be so far back in time that history becomes distorted so that the ancestor takes on heroic proportions. For instance, Native American groups have clans, an ancient lineage that is often just referred to as an animal (wolf, raven). Clans can be quite big, with a large number of people.
- **Phratries** are groups of clans (at least three clans) who are believed to be related by kinship. There are not usually economic ties between the clans.
- **Moieties** are also linked clans; however, in this case, there are only two clans involved. There may be economic ties between moieties.

Non-Unilineal Descent Groups

There is only one type of non-unilineal descent group, the **kindred**. Kindreds count all individuals from each parent as relatives. This kind of descent group is usually seen where small family groups are more adaptive than large ones and individual mobility is high, e.g., industrial societies. Often, kindreds fall apart when the unifying individual dies.

Kinship Terminology

"Cross-cultural comparisons of categories of kin terms (words used to identify relatives) can sometimes reveal basic similarities and differences in worldview and experience" (Bonvillain 2010: 201). Terminology systems take a myriad of things into account (although they may not take all of these things into account):

- paternal vs. maternal kin
- generation
- differences in relative age
- sex
- consanguine vs. affinal ties
- person's descent line vs. linked
- descent line
- sex of linking relative

Terminology Systems

While the actual form of the words vary from culture to culture, anthropologists have identified only six terminology systems.

The Hawaiian System. This system is the simplest in that it has the fewest terms. The key distinctions are generation and gender. For example, all the males of the biological father's generation are called father, while all the females are called mother. The Hawaiian system is common where nuclear families are dependent on other kin; the system emphasizes cohesion of the extended family. It is common among Pacific Island peoples.

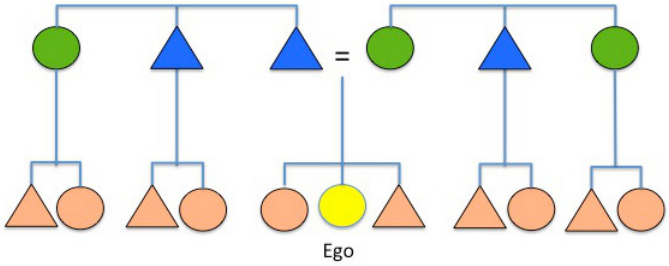

***Figure* 2.3.10** - *The Hawaiian System*

The Eskimo System. The nuclear family is emphasized in this system. Relatives outside of the nuclear family are distinguished by gender. Terms like mother, father, sister, and brother not used for relatives outside of the nuclear family. On the other hand, terms for aunt, uncle, cousin, grandfather and grandmother are used for both sides of family. The Eskimo system is associated with societies where nuclear family is economically independent.

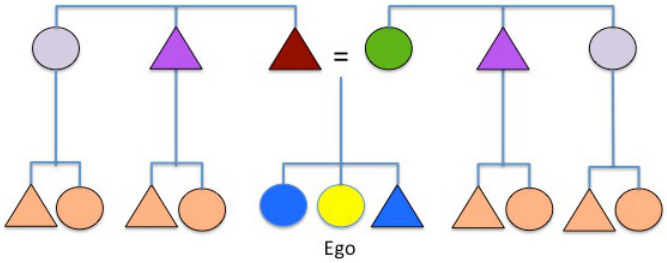

***Figure* 2.3.11** - *The Eskimo System*

The Omaha System. In this system, terms create a contrast between paternal and maternal relatives. It is found in patrilineal societies and has a small number of terms to refer to many different kin. On the father's side of the family, members are groups by sex and generation. On the mother's side of the family, members are lumped by sex only; there are no generational distinctions.

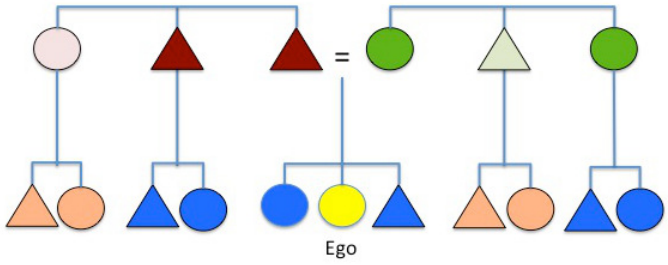

***Figure* 2.3.12** - *The Omaha System*

The Crow System. This system is the flip side of the Omaha system. It is associated with matrilineal societies. In this system, relatives on the mother's side of the family are lumped by sex and generation, while on the father's side, people are categorized by sex only.

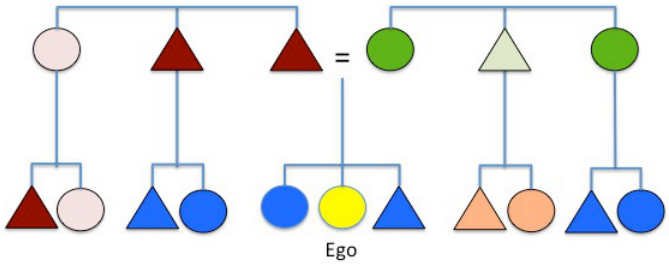

***Figure* 2.3.13** - *The Crow System*

The Iroquois System. The Iroquois system, found only in matrilineal societies, has different terms for maternal and paternal relatives based on sex and generation. It makes distinctions between parental siblings of opposite sexes. What this means is that any sisters the mother has are also called mother and any brothers of the father are called father. However, brothers of the mother are called uncle and sisters of the father are called aunt. Offspring of the mother's sister or father's brother are consider siblings, while children of the parents' siblings of the opposite sex are called cousin.

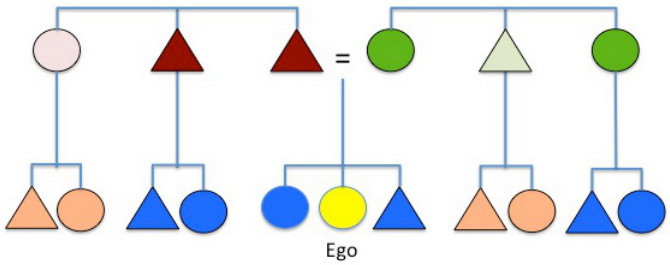

***Figure* 2.3.14** - *The Iroquois System*

The Sudanese System. This is the largest terminology system. It has a descriptive term for each relative. There are nuclear family terms as well as terms for both maternal and paternal uncles, aunts, and cousins. This type of system is used in cultures that have both class stratification and occupational specialization along with political complexity (Ember and Ember 2011).

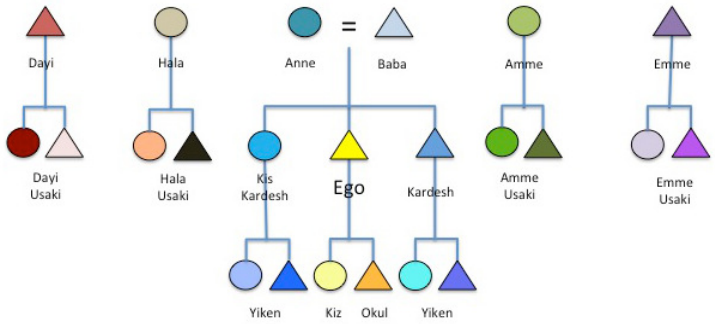

***Figure* 2.3.15** - *The Sudanese System*

Some anthropologists recognize fictive kin (Bonvillain 2010), or people who are not relatives by descent or marriage. This type of kin may include adopted relatives, ceremonial relatives such as godparents and occupational brotherhoods and sisterhoods.

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2.4: Family

According to Bonvillain (2010: 211), family is a “basic unit of economic cooperation and stability” that generally includes at least one parent or parent substitute and children. Families provide both economic and social support for its members. It is the primary group responsible for rearing children and is where the enculturation process begins (enculturation refers to the process of learning the culture we are born into). The children in the family are not always the biological offspring. Through the process of adoption, other family members or strangers may adopt children who have lost their biological parents. This practice ensures that children without parents are cared for and not a burden on the rest of society. In some places, children are “adopted out” due to economic hardships facing the family.

***Figure* 2.4.1** *- Edward S. Curtis Collection, Inuit family, 1928*

Postmarital Residence Patterns

One thing that may help define a family is their place of residence after the parents are married. There are several types of residence patterns:

- **Patrilocal**: In this residence pattern the newlyweds live with or near the husband’s family. This is the most common form found in the world. It is common in societies where solidarity of the male group is important; e.g., where there is heavy labor to be done or frequent warfare. Many cultures in the Persian Gulf region and North Africa are patrilocal.
- **Matrilocal**: This, the 2nd most common residence pattern, is found in societies where the newly married couple moves in with or near the bride’s family. This is found in gardening societies (horticulturalists) or groups where warfare occurs with distant peoples and not near neighbors. The Hopi of the American Southwest are one example of a matrilocal group.
- **Bilocal** (ambilocal): This type of residence pattern is the bilocal or ambilocal pattern. In this practice the bride and groom pick which family to go live with or near. It is found in societies where extended kin networks important and where land may be limited. The !Kung Bushmen are bilocal.
- **Neolocal**: For this residence pattern, which is common in industrial societies, newlyweds live separate from both the bride and groom's parents. They are economically independent from their parents. With the export of American culture through modern development, the neolocal residence pattern is becoming increasingly widespread.
- **Avunculocal**: This residence pattern is found only in matrilineal societies like the Trobriand Islanders where men of the family must be cohesive. Usually it forms when warfare is not uncommon, but the threat is at some distance. This pattern is characterized by the newlyweds living in or near the house of groom’s mother’s brother.

Types of Families

What constitutes a family varies across the globe depending on a variety of factors including subsistence practices and economic behaviors. Family defines obligations that group members have to one another, both economically and socially. Generally, family members live together, but that is not always the case.

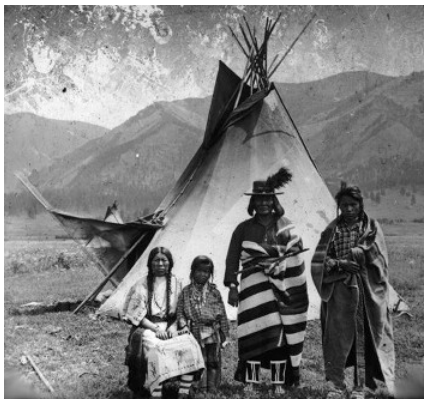

***Figure* 2.4.2** - *Flathead family (United States)*

Family Types

- **Nuclear family**: This is also known as the conjugal family or family of procreation. Nuclear families are comprised of married partners and their offspring. This is common in industrial societies, but it is not the most common type of family in the world, although the practice is spreading through modern development. Some anthropologists identify a second type of nuclear family, the non-conjugal family. In this type of nuclear family, there is one parent with dependent children. Additionally, there is the polygymous family, which is comprised of multiple spouses and dependent children (Lavenda and Schultz 2010; note that Lavenda and Schultz refer to a polygynous family, not a polygymous family, but that term does not encompass a married woman living with multiple husbands and dependent children).
- **Extended family**: The extended family is the most common type of family in the world. Extended families include at least three generations: grandparents, married offspring, and grandchildren.
- **Joint family**: Joint families are composed of sets of siblings, theirs spouses, and their dependent children.
- **Blended family**: Blended families are becoming more common, especially in industrial societies like the United States. A blended family is formed when divorced or widowed parents who have children marry.
- **Family by Choice**: A relatively newly recognized type of family, again especially in industrial countries like the United States, is the family by choice. The term was popularized by the LGBTQ (Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer) community to describe a family not recognized by the legal system. Family by choice can include adopted children, live-in partners, kin of each member of the household, and close friends. Increasingly family by choice is being practiced by unmarried people and families who move away from the consanguine family.

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2.5: Marriage

All societies have customs governing how and under what circumstances sex and reproduction can occur--generally marriage plays a central role in these customs. **Marriage** is a socially approved union that united two or more individuals as spouses. Implicit in this union is that there will be sexual relations, procreation, and permanence in the relationship.


***Figure* 2.5.1** - *Ethiopien marriage* ***Figure* 2.5.2** - *Marriage ceremony in Thailand*

Functions of Marriage

1. Marriage regulates sexual behavior.

Marriage helps cultural groups to have a measure of control over population growth by providing proscribed rules about when it is appropriate to have children. Regulating sexual behavior helps to reduce sexual competition and negative effects associate with sexual competition. This does not mean that there are no socially approved sexual unions that take place outside of marriage. Early anthropological studies documented that the Toda living in the Nilgiri Mountains of Southern India allowed married women to have intercourse with male priests with the husband's approval. In the Philippines, the Kalinda institutionalized mistresses. If a man's wife was unable to have children, he could take a mistress in order to have children. Usally his wife would help him choose a mistress.

2. Marriage fulfills the economic needs of marriage partners.

Marriage provides the framework within which people's needs are met: shelter, food, clothing, safety, etc. Through the institution of marriage, people know for whom they are economically and socially responsible.

3. Marriage perpetuates kinship groups.

This is related to the previous function, but instead of simply knowing who is with whom economically and socially, marriage in a legitimate sense lets people know about inheritance.

4. Marriage provides institution for the care and enculturation of children.

Within the unbrella of the marriage, children begin to learn their gender roles and other cultural norms. Marriage lets everyone know who is responsible for children. It legitimizes children by socially establishing their birthrights.

Forms of Marriage

Monogamy, the union between two individuals, is the most common form of marriage. While monogamy traditionally referred to the union of one man and one woman, there are some countries that recognize same-sex unions. As of early 2015, The Netherlands, Spain, Canada, South Africa, Norway, Sweden, Portugal, Iceland, Argentina, Denmark, Brazil, France, Uruguay, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, Luxembourg, and Finland legally allow same sex marriage. In other countries, the debate continues over whether or not to legalize same-sex marriage or guarantee rights to homosexuals. For instance, certain states in the United States and Mexico allow same sex marriage, but not the entire nation. Serial monogamy, where an individual has multiple spouses over their lifetime, but only one at a time, is quite common in industrial societies.

***Figure* 2.5.3** - *Countries that legally allow same sex marriage (based on BBC map at http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/10630683; Nepal added)*

Polygamy, the union between three or more individuals is the second most common form of marriage. Generally when polygamy is mentioned by the media, a marriage between a man and multiple women is being referenced; however, the term is being misused. **Polygyny** is the correct term for a marriage between a man and multiple women. **Polyandry**refers to a marriage between a woman and multiple men. Polyandry mostly occurs between a woman and brothers, a system referred to as fraternal polyandry. One reason that polyandry might be the preferred marriage pattern for a group is if there is a shortage of women or land is scarce. For instance, the Nyinba of Nepal practice fraternal polyandry because there is not enough land to divide between brothers and the high mortality rate of female child and infant mortality. Male children are preferred, therefore are better cared for then female offspring (Bonvillain 2010: 218-219).

Polygyny is more common than polyandry. It is generally found in societies where rapid population growth is beneficial to the survival of the group, such as frontier and warrior societies, or where the ratio of women to men is high. Men with multiple wives and many children usually have higher status within the group because they have demonstrated that they can afford to support a large family. Men may also marry several women to help increase his wealth as he will then have more hands helping to bring in resources to the family. Many groups across the globe have or do practice polygyny, e.g., G/wi, Australian Aborigines, Turkana, Samburu, and the Tswana.

A question that anthropologists asked was what are the benefits of multiple spouses? What they found were several possible benefits:

- increased social status
- a new set of affines (in-laws) gives individuals more people for help w/trade, political alliances, support
- a larger labor force
- lessens the burden of work because it distributed among several women
- better chance children are provided for

Group marriage is a rare form of marriage where several males are married simultaneously to several females. This form of marriage was once practiced by the Toda; however, it is no longer known in any extant society.

There are a few other types of marriage. A **symbolic marriage** is one that does not establish economic or social ties, e.g., a Catholic nun marrying Jesus Christ. **Fixed-term marriages** are temporary marriages that are entered into for a fixed period of time. Once the time period is ended, the parties go their separate ways. There may be a financial gain for the woman, however there are no social ties once the marriage has ended. Fixed-term marriages legitimize sexual relationships for individuals whose culture may forbid sexual relationships outside of marriage, e.g., soldiers during times of war or students attending college in a foreign country.

Some cultures have developed special rules for marriage if a married family member dies. The **levirate** obliges a man to marry his deceased brother's wife; e.g., Orthodox Judaism (although rarely practiced today, the widow must perform the chalitzah ceremony before she can remarry). The brother is then responsible for his brother's widow and children. This helps keep the children and other resources the deceased had collected within the family. The **sororate** is the flip side of the levirate. In this system, a woman must marry the husband of her deceased sister. The Nuer practice a form of the levirate called **ghost marriage**. If an elder brother dies without fathering children, one of his younger brothers must marry his widow. Children resulting from the ghost marriage are considered the offspring of the deceased brother (Bonvillain 2010).

Rules for Marriage

For the societies that practice marriage there are rules about whom one can marry and cannot marry (note: not all groups marry; traditionally the Na in Southwest China do not marry). All societies have some form of an incest taboo that forbids sexual relationships with certain people. This is variable from culture to culture. Several explanations have been proferred to explain the origins of incest taboos. One cites biological reasons. Non-human primates seem to have an instinctual aversion to having sex with near relatives, so perhaps the same happens for humans. Another biological reason is that the incest taboo was established to maintain biological diversity. This suggests that people understood the consequences of breeding with relatives.

Another theory suggests that familiarity breeds contempt, while yet another suggests that incest taboos were developed to ensure that alliances were made outside of the family. Whatever the case may be, there have been culturally approved violations of the incest taboo usually in royal families such as those in pre-contact Hawaii, ancient Peru and Egypt (Bonvillain 2010).

Exogamy stipulates that an individual must marry outside of a kin, residential, or other specified group. For instance, the Yanomami must marry outside of their residential village. Endogamy, on the other hand, stipulates that an individual must marry within a specified kinship categories or social group. The classic example of endogamy is the Indian caste system. Arranged marriages are quite common among human societies. With arranged marriages, family elders, usually the parents, choose spouses for their children. Arranged marriages promote political, social, and economic ties.

Sometimes within the practices outlined above, other rules that single out certain kin as ideal marriage partners are adhered to. Cross-cousin marriage unites cousins linked by parents of opposite sex (brother/sister) while parallel-cousin marriage unites the children of siblings of the same sex. The benefits of these types of marriages is that it helps to maintain the family lineage.

Economic Aspects of Marriage

Most marriages have some type of economic exchange associated with them. Only about 25% of marriages do not have an economic aspect (Ember and Ember 2011: 195).

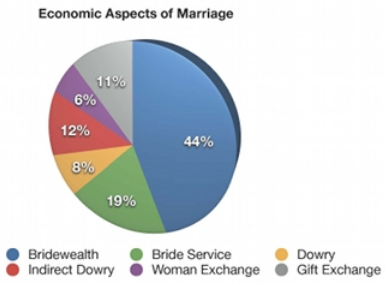

***Figure* 2.5.4** - *Economic Aspects of Marriage (from Ember and Ember 2011: 195)*

Anthropologists have identified the following practices:

- **Bridewealth** or **Bride price**: In this practice goods are transferred from the groom's family to bride's family in compensation for losing the productive and reproductive services of one of their daughters.
- **Bride service**: This entails the groom performing a service for the family of the bride. Bride service could take several months or even years to complete.
- **Dowry**: Dowry generally is practiced in cultures where women's roles are less valued then men. This practice requires the transfer of goods from the bride's family to the groom to compensate for acceptance of the responsibility of her support. This is most common in pastoral or agricultural societies where a market exchange is prevalent. **Hypergamy**occurs when a woman uses her dowry to "marry up" and increase her and subsequently her children's social status. Indirect dowry is a little like bride price. With this custom, the groom's family gives goods to the bride's father who in turn gifts them to his daughter.
- **Woman exchange**: With woman exchange, no gifts are exchanged by the families but each family gives a bride to the other family; each family loses a daughter but gains a daughter-in-law.
- **Gift exchange**: In this practice, the families of the betrothed exchange gifts of equal value.

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2.6: Political Organizations

Political Systems

Human groups have developed ways in which public decision-making, leadership, maintenance of social cohesion and order, protection of group rights, and safety from external threats are handled. Anthropologists identify these as **political systems** or **political organizations**. In studying political systems, anthropologists have learned about the myriad ways that people acquire **power**, or the ability to get others to do what one wants, and **authority**, or socially acceptable ways in which to wield power. While political anthropologists and political scientists share an interest in political systems, political anthropologists are interested in the political systems from all different types of societies while political scientists focus on contemporary nation-states.

***Figure* 2.6.1** *- A protester in Cairo's Tahrir Square show unity with protesters in Wisconsin.*

Political Organization

Anthropologists use a typological system when discussing political organization. Introduced by Elman Service in 1962, the system uses "…types of leadership, societal integration and cohesion, decision-making mechanisms, and degree of control over people" (Bonvillain 2010: 303) to categorize a group's political organization. Service identified four types of political organizations: bands, tribes, chiefdoms, and states that are closely related to subsistence strategies. As with any typological system, these types are ideals and there is variation within groups. Political organization can be thought of as a continuum with groups falling in between the ideals. It is important to note that today the various types of political organizations operate within the modern nation-state system.

Bands

A **band** is a "…small, loosely organized [group] of people held together by informal means" (Gezen and Kottak 2014: 303). Its political organization is concerned with meeting basic needs for survival. Decision-making and leadership are focused on how best to meet those needs. Membership can be fluid. Power can be situational with leadership based on the skills and personality of an individual. Leaders do not have the power to enforce their will on the group; all members of the group, generally adults, contribute to the decision-making process. Because of this group decision-making process and the fact that everyone has access to the resources needed to survive, bands are **egalitarian**. Just like other members of the band, leaders are expected to contribute to the economic resources of the group. Authority is relegated within families, but due to the egalitarian nature of bands, even within families authority may not be strong.

In general, bands have a small number of people who are kin or loyal to the leader. Subsistence is based on foraging, thus bands need a fair amount of land from which to gather, hunt, and fish, which also contributes to the small size of bands as the group does not want to surpass the carrying capacity of their territory. Bands may be fairly mobile as they seasonally follow food sources. They may have semi-permanent settlements that are reused at specific times of the year. The concept of private property is generally absent, although if it is present, it is weak. This means that land is not owned, but can be used communally. Social stratification is absent or based on skills and age.

Bands in the modern world are relegated to marginal environments such as the arctic, deserts, and dense forests. Examples include the Mbuti and Ju'/hoansi in Africa, the Netsilik and Inuit in Canada, the Lapp of Scandinavia, the Tiwi in Australia, and the Ainu in Japan.

***Figure* 2.6.2** - *Ainu bear sacrifice.*

The Ainu, meaning “human,” are traditional foraging peoples of the Far East. There are three major groups named after the islands on which they live, the Hokkaidō, the Sakhalin, and the Kurlie. Hokkaidō Island currently is part of Japan, while Sakhalin and Kurlie islands are part of Russia.

There was some variability in the settlement pattern of the three groups up until the 20th century when interaction with modern nation-states greatly changed their cultures. The Sakhalin and Kurlie were fairly mobile with the former settling near the coast during the summer and inland during winter. The Kurlie moved more frequently. The Hokkaidō resided in permanent settlements along rivers rich in fish. It was in the richest environments along rivers that supported denser populations. Most settlements contained no more than five families.

Fishing, hunting, and gathering provided necessary sustenance. The division of labor fell out along gender lines, with men responsible for fishing both freshwater and marine species and hunting (bear and deer in Hokkaidō and musk deer and reindeer in Sakhalin) and women responsible for gathering plants. Traditional tools such as bow and arrow, set-trap bow, spears, nets, and weirs were used for hunting and fishing. The Hokkaidō used trained hunting dogs (the Sakhalin used sled dogs as well). Aconite and stingray poison was employed to ensure wounded animals would collapse within a short distance.

There is some variation in kinship among the Ainu, but generally, they are patrilineal with the nuclear family as the basic social unit. Polygyny is acceptable among prominent males. Cousins from an individual’s mother’s side are prohibited from marrying. Sociopolitical power is held by males and has a strong religious component. Political organization is within settlements; however, some smaller settlements may align themselves with adjacent larger settlements. Elders are involved in the decision-making process.

Religious beliefs permeate all aspects of Ainu life; from the way food scraps are disposed of to declaration of war have religious overtones. Nature deities reign supreme among the Ainu, with animal deities taking the form of humans when interacting with the Ainu people. The bear, representing the supreme deity in disguise, is the most sacred figure. The Ainu have many religious ceremonies, but the bear ceremony, which takes two years to complete, is the most important. It is a funeral ritual for a dead bear in which the soul of the bear is sent back to the mountains to be reborn as another bear. This is to ensure that the deities continue to gift the Ainu with fur and meat. The bear ceremony has political overtones, as the political leader is responsible for hosting the ceremony. The ceremony acts as a way for the leader to display their power as they are expected to display their wealth through trade items. Both men and women can be shamans, or religious leaders. In fact, most shamans are women and represents a socially acceptable way for a woman to wield, albeit little, power within Ainu culture.

The Ainu culture has been greatly impacted by contact with both Japanese and Russian governments as control of traditional lands changed hands. The Hokkaidō’s, through influence from the Japanese, were forced to live in smaller territories and to adopt an agricultural lifestyle. In recent years, the Ainu, like indigenous peoples worldwide, struggle against prejudice and discrimination in

Japan. The Japanese government did not recognize the Ainu as indigenous to Japan until 2008. Two times as many Hokkaidō rely on social welfare programs compared to the majority of Japanese population (Irvine 2015), but the Japanese government is now trying to learn more about the challenges that face the Ainu peoples.

Optional: You can learn more about the Ainu by visiting the Ainu museum, www.ainu-museum.or.jp/en/study/eng01.html, and NOVA's "Origins of the Ainu," http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/hokkaido/ainu.html.

Tribes

Like bands, tribes' political organization is focused on meeting basic needs of the group; however, the structure and organization are more formalized because most are reliant on pastoralism or horticulture. This leads to concepts of communal ownership of animals or land. Membership in tribes is usually restricted to descent groups. Tribes generally have more permanent settlements than bands. While still relatively egalitarian, political leaders have more power than the leaders of bands. However, leaders who try to exercise too much power can be deposed through socially structured methods. This helps to prevent over-centralization of power and wealth.

Tribal leaders are reliant on personal skills and charisma to achieve and maintain their power and status. **Status** refers to the position an individual has within a society. An individual holds multiple statuses that can change over time. Some statuses are **ascribed** in that they are assigned to us without reference to personal skill, e.g., sex and age. Other statuses are **achieved** and are based on our skills, choices, and accomplishments. Tribal leaders have a combination of ascribed status and achieved status. Most tribal leaders are male (ascribed status) and eloquent (achieved status). Many tribal leaders are leaders solely of their village. The Yanomami of the Amazon region have a village head with limited authority. The village head is always male who leads through example and persuasion. He may be called upon to mediate conflict, but lacks the power to enforce his decision. The headman is expected to be more generous and fierce than others in the village. If people within the village do not like how the headman is leading the group, they may leave and create their own village. In Papua New Guinea and the Melanesian Islands, the **big man** is the political leader. While big men have some similarities to the headman, one difference is that they have regional influence with supporters in multiple villages. Highly charismatic, the big man uses his powers of persuasion to convince others to hold feasts and support him during times of conflict. Another difference is that big men are wealthier than others. In New Guinea, the big man's wealth resides in the number of pigs that he has; however, the big man was expected to redistribute his wealth in the form of feasts. Pigs were also used to trade for support. Sometimes tribes would band together to form a p**antribal sodality**, "…a nonkin-based group that exists throughout a tribe…" (Gezen and Kottak 2014: 107). These sodalities span multiple villages and may form during times of warfare with other tribes.

Examples of tribal cultures include the Cheyenne and Blackfeet of North America, the Berbers and Amhara of Africa, the Munda of India, the Hmong of Southeast Asia, and the Basseri of Iran.

The Basseri live in the Fars Province of southwest Iran. They are a pastoral people, raising a variety of animals including donkeys, camels, horses, sheep, and goats. The Basseri share a language and cultural traits with nearby tribes, but consider themselves a distinct cultural group who traditionally fell under the authority of a supreme chief. In the 1950s, the government of Iran wrested power from the traditional chief and invested it in the national army operating in the Fars region. The information that follows relates to pre-1950s Basseri. Anthropological research on the Basseri is notably lacking since the late 1950s.

The Basseri move seasonally, spending the rainy season on mountain flanks and spring in the lower valleys. In summer, the Bessari moved south to live in large, summer camps where they would stay until the rainy season began. If someone lost their herd, they usually left the group to live with local agricultural peoples. If the individual was able to earn enough money to reestablish their herd, they returned to the Basseri. Sheep and goats were the most important herd animals as they provided the people with not only meat and milk, but wool and hides. The Basseri used lambskins, wool, clarified butter, and the occasional livestock to sell so they could buy flour, fruits, vegetables, tea, sugar, and other items they needed. Wealth was not just in their herds, but the wealthier Basseri often had luxury goods such as china, narcotics, jewelry, saddles, etc. Ownership of pastureland belonged to patrilineages. Any member of that patriline had the right to use the pastureland.

The basic social unit was the "tent," which was basically a nuclear family headed by a man. Each tent was considered an independent political unit responsible for its own production and consumption. Tents belonged to camps consisting of the same descent group. Tent- or camp leaders made joint decisions about herd movement, selection of campsites, etc. Sometimes a camp leader would emerge, generally someone with considerable persuasive power, but consensus was the main form of decision-making. Political authority was vested in a tribal chief who had autocratic authority, or total authority and control, over the Basseri. The chief used gifts to influence camp leaders. When disputes could not be settled within a camp, the chief made the final decision.

The division of labor fell along gender lines. Women and girls were responsible for cooking, baking, and other household duties. They were also responsible for making rugs, packbags, and other items used for packing belongings. Men provided wood and water for the household, and were responsible for the protection of the group. They also represented the household in all social and economic dealings.

Chiefdoms

Chiefdoms constitute a political organization characterized by social hierarchies and consolidation of political power into fulltime specialists who control production and distribution of resources. Sometimes the prestige of the leader and their family is higher, but not always. The leader, or chief, was a bit like a big man on steroids; they were reliant on their persuasive skills, but had more control over resources. Chiefs were often spiritual leaders, which helped to demonstrate their right to lead. They were responsible for settling disputes among their constituents, but could not always enforce their decisions. Successive leadership usually fell within a family line, something that contributed to the development of a hierarchical society; however, leadership was not guaranteed. Chiefs had to continually demonstrate their ability to lead. Competition for leadership could be fierce. Warfare was frequent, the nature of which changed; economic gain was a primary motive.

All chiefdoms that have been anthropologically identified were based on horticulture or intensive agriculture with one notable exception. In the Pacific Northwest of North America, chiefdoms emerged based on foraging. This was possible because the rich environment was able to produce a surplus. Having a surplus of food in particular allowed leaders to have enough goods to redistribute and accumulate in order to maintain power. Members of the chiefdom were required to handover part of their harvest to the leader (or chief/king) or their appointed representatives. The chief was expected to redistribute some of this “tax” back to the people through gifting and feasting. Prestige within the chiefdom lay in the amount people were able to give to the chief and in the amount the chief gave back to individuals or families. This **differential access**, or unequal access to resources, prestige, and power, is a hallmark of a stratified society. In some groups, it was impossible to move out of one social strata and into another.

Membership in the chiefdom was primarily kin-based, but the group could be significantly larger than a tribe. Chiefdoms incorporated multiple hamlets, villages, and possibly small cities into one political unit. Occupational specialization, where people have different jobs within the society and are reliant on others for some of the goods they consume, becomes prevalent within chiefdoms. Within this cultural environment, people began to have a sense of belonging to entities beyond their kin group, their occupation being one of their identities.

Examples of chiefdoms include the Trobriand and Tongan Islanders in the Pacific, the Maori of New Zealand, the ancient Olmec of Mexico (only known archaeologically), the Natchez of the Mississippi Valley, the Kwakwaka’wakw of British Columbia, and the Zulu and Ashanti in Africa.

***Figure* 2.6.3** - *The Ashanti, Ghana (The National Archives UK)*

The Ashanti are one of several Akan groups in southern and central Ghana and the Ivory Coast. In the eighteenth-century, the Ashanti formed a confederacy of several Akan groups. Over the following century, the Ashanti expanded their territory through conquest, providing a larger economic base for the chief or Omanhene. After decades of conflict with the British colonial power, in 1901 the British prevailed and the Ashanti leaders were exiled.

The basic settlement pattern of the Ashanti chiefdom was a series of villages and towns centered on the palace of a chief. Kin groups inhabited the villages. Agriculture based on yam, guinea corn, manioc, and maize formed the backbone of subsistence. Pre-British takeover, slave and servants comprised farm labor. After, hired laborers and sharecropping are the norm. Craft specialization was an important part of the Ashanti economy. Weaving, woodcarving, ceramics, and metallurgy were the primary occupations. While women and men shared in the farming work, women were only allowed to specialize in pottery making; all of the other craft specialization was the purview of men. The Ashanti engaged in trade with neighboring societies with gold and slaves forming the commercial basis of the traditional trade economy (Gilbert et al n.d.).

Clans held ownership of land. It was inherited along matrilines. If a clan failed to work the land, ownership would resort to the chiefdom itself. While all Ashanti recognize matrilineal descent, power is restricted to men. The mother's line determines to which clan an individual belongs, while paternity determines membership in other groups such as spirit. Membership in the various categories includes obligations to observe certain rituals and taboos. The Ashanti believe that an individual's personality is influenced by membership in the various groups.

The Omanhene always came from "kingly lineages." Officials, including the matriarchs of the clans, elected the Omanhene. This individual was chosen based on his personal qualities such as personality and competency. Once selected the individual was "enstooled," which refers to the act of being seated upon the stool that symbolized kingship. The new king takes on the identity of the previous ruler, forsaking his previous identity. He becomes a sacred person and cannot eat, drink, speak, or be spoken to publically. Communication takes place through the Okyeame, or linguist. The king never steps barefoot on the earth and is covered with an umbrella when he ventures outside. While the power of modern Ashanti kings has eroded, in the past, they had the power of life and death over their constituents.

States

State-level societies are the most complex in terms of social, economic, and political organization, and have a formal government and social classes. States control or influence many areas of its members lives. From regulation of social relations like marriage to outlining the rights and obligations of its citizens, there is little in daily life that is not impacted. States have large populations and share the following characteristics:

States have power over their domain. They define citizenship and its rights and responsibilities. Inequality is the norm, with clear social classes defined. States monopolize the use of force and maintenance of law and order through laws, courts, and police. States maintain standing armies and police forces. They keep track of citizens in terms of number, age, gender, location, and wealth through census systems. They have the power to extract resources from citizens through taxes, which can be through cash such as the U. S. tax system or through labor such as the Incan *mita* system where people paid with their labor. States also have the ability to manipulate information.

States control population in numerous ways. They regulate marriage and adoption. They create administrative divisions, e.g., provinces, districts, counties, townships, that help to create loyalties and help to administer social services and organize law enforcement. They may foster geographic mobility and resettlement that breaks down the power of kin relationships and create divided loyalty, e.g., resettlement of Native Americans on reservations.

States often uses religious beliefs and symbols to maintain power. State leaders may claim to be a deity may conscript popular ideology for political purposes. Regalia may be used to create a sense of pageantry and authority.

Most states are hierarchical and patriarchal. There have been female leaders, e.g., Indira Gandhi (India), Golda Meir (Israel), Margaret Thatcher (Great Britain), and Benazir Bhutto (Pakistan), but no female-dominated states have been documented.

Social control is of key concern to state leadership and is maintained through the formal methods mentioned above and informal methods such as psychological manipulation. **Hegemony** is the internalization of a dominant ideology (Gezen and Kottak 2014: 116), which can happen through such things as the enculturation process and persuasion through media and propaganda. The social order then seems normal and natural. Resistance is quickly squashed through shaming, gossip, stigma, and use of formal enforcement and judiciary means.

The subsistence base of all states is intensive agriculture. The first states centered production on one major crop that could be produced in large quantities and was easily storable: wheat, rice, millet, barley, maize, and tubers (potato, manioc, yams). Wheat, rice, and maize still dominate production today.

Explore: Learn more about the anthropologists

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2.7: Illness, Healing, Death and Dying

Medical anthropology is the research area within cultural anthropology that marries concepts from biological and cultural anthropology to better understand health and disease among humans. It is one of the fastest growing research areas within anthropology. Some would classify it as part of **applied anthropology**, the fifth (often overlooked) anthropological sub-discipline. Applied anthropologists use anthropological research methods and results to "identify, assess, and solve contemporary problems" (Gezen and Kottak 2014: 240). Applied anthropologists are found in many areas of work, including public health, economic development, forensics, linguistics, and human rights, in both rural and urban settings across the globe. For decades, anthropologists have been studying the interaction of cultural values and norms on health-related issues. In recent years, Western medical practitioners are beginning to use anthropological data to better understand their multicultural patients' responses to "modern" health care practices.

***Figure* 2.7.1** *- The U.S. Army - MEDRETE in the Bac Ninh Province of Vietnam.*

Defining Health and Illness

In order to understand the anthropological approach to health and illness, it is necessary to know the definitions of terms related to the topics.

All definitions of health are imbued with moral, ethical, and political implications. Perhaps the broadest definition of **health** is that proposed by the World Health Organization (WHO), defining health with reference to an "overall sense of well-being." By WHO's criteria, only a relatively small percentage of the world's population could be classified as healthy (Glazier and Hallin 2010: 925).

Disease and illness are separate concepts. **Disease** is a condition caused by a pathogen, e.g., bacterium, parasite, or virus, which has been scientifically verified; it is something that can be objectively measured. These can vary by group (e.g., ethnicity and socioeconomic status), geography, incidence, and severity. **Illness** is a feeling or perception of not being healthy. Illness may be caused by disease, but it can also be caused by psychological or spiritual factors and tied to an individual's worldview. **Health systems** include cultural perceptions and classification of health-related issues, healing practices, diagnosis, prevention, and healers (Miller 2011).

Theoretical Approaches

Anthropologists George Foster and Barbara Anderson, who together with Khwaja Hassan established the field of medical anthropology, identified three disease theory systems that explain illness:

1. **Personalistic disease theory**: Illness is due to the action of an agent such as a witch, sorcerer, or supernatural entity, e.g., ancestor spirit or ghost. Healers must use supernatural means to learn the cause and to help cure illness.
2. **Emotionalistic disease theory**: Illness is due to a negative emotional experience. For many Latin Americans, anxiety or fright may cause lethargy and distraction, an illness called susto. Psychotherapists are interested in the role emotions play in physical health.
3. **Naturalistic theory**: Illness is due to an impersonal factor, e.g., pathogen, malnutrition, obstruction (e.g., kidney stone), or organic deterioration (e.g., heart failure). Naturalistic theory has its origins in the work of Hippocrates and dominates the pedagogy of modern medical schools.

Barbara Miller (2011) outlines three theoretical approaches that attempt to understand health systems:

1. **Ecological/Epidemiological Approach**: This approach aims to produce data that can be used by public health programs by focusing how the interaction of the natural environment and culture can cause health problems and influence their spread through a population.
2. **Interpretivist Approach**: Drawing on the work of Claude Lévi-Strauss, the interpretivist approach examines how community and individual distress is alleviated through healing systems and how illness is defined and experienced. The assumption is that the healing system provides meaning for suffering.
3. **Critical Medical Anthropology**: Critical medical anthropologists examine how health systems are impacted by structural elements, e.g., social inequality, political economy, global media, etc.

Ethnomedicine

The cross-cultural study of health systems is called **ethnomedicine**. It goes beyond examination of health systems to look at such things as the impact of globalization on the health system as well as cultural concepts of the body and disability and the use of plants and animals within the health system. Early ethnomedicine studies focused on the health systems of indigenous peoples across the globe. More recently Western biomedical practices are identified as an ethnomedicine and included in the scope of ethnomedicine studies.

All people try to understand the cause of illness and disease. The cross-cultural study of specific causal explanations for health-related problems is called **ethno-etiology**. Ethno-etiological studies of migraines demonstrate that in the Bahia area of Brazil, certain types of winds are the causal explanation of migraines. In the U.S., biomedical explanations for migraines include emotional stress, sensitivity to certain chemicals and preservatives in food, excessive caffeine, menstrual periods, skipping meals, changes in sleep patterns, excessive fatigue, changing weather conditions, and numerous medical conditions such as hypertension, asthma, and chronic fatigue syndrome.

Structural suffering, or social suffering resulting from poverty, famine, conflict, and forced migration, is a focus of ethnomedicine and medical anthropology in general. Frequently, structural suffering is related to **culture-bound syndromes**, which are psychopathologies (suite of signs and symptoms) restricted to certain cultural environments. Witiko is a culture-bound syndrome found among indigenous peoples of Canada. The symptoms include an aversion to food accompanied by depression and anxiety. The witiko spirit, which is a giant human-eating monster, eventually possesses the inflicted individual causing the person to acts of cannibalism and homicide. Studies indicate that witiko is an extreme form of starvation anxiety (Martin 2012). Other examples of culture-bound syndromes that are not necessarily to structural suffering include:

- Amok afflicts males in Indonesia, Malaysai, and Thailand. The term means ‘to engage furiously in battle.’ Symptoms include wild, aggressive behavior. The inflicted first withdraws or broods then attempts to kill or hurt another person until they are restrained, exhausted, or killed. The condition is caused by loss of either social or economic status, a loved one, or a real or perceived insult (Gomez 2006).
- Anorexia nervosa is a culture-bound syndrome associated with affluent industrial societies. It is an eating disorder characterized by self-starvation. Affecting primarily women, anorexia nervosa is associated with cultures that place excessive value on female thinness. Contributing factors include over-controlling parents and socially, economically upwardly mobile family, earl onset of puberty, tallness, low self-esteem, depression, and some illnesses like juvenile diabetes.
- Hwa-byung, meaning fire disease, occurs in Korea. Eastern medicine relates its cause to an imbalance between yin (negative force) and yang (positive force) or between ki (vital energy) and hwa (illness with properties of fire). Western biomedicine attributes it to incomplete suppressed anger or projection of anger into the body. Symptoms include feelings of frustration, anxiety, guilt, fear, humiliation, hatred, depression, and disappointment. Physical manifestations are many, including palpitations, indigestion, dizziness, nausea, constipation, pain, insomnia, and more. Individuals suffering from hwa-byung may be abnormally talkative, short-tempered, absent-minded, paranoid, and have suicidal thoughts (Park 2006).
- Latah has been found predominantly in Malaysia, but similar syndromes occur in the Philippines (mali-mali), Burma (yaun), and among indigenous peoples in Siberia (myriachif) and Japan (imo). Caused by a sudden shock, e.g., death of a loved one, or fright, the individual enters a dissociative, highly suggestible state where they readily follow the commands of others. They often suffer from echolalia when they compulsively repeat what others say, or echopraxia when they mimic the actions of others. Socially inappropriate behaviors are common with this syndrome, including touching or hitting others, saying sexually explicit things, and singing out loud (Legerski 2006).

Healing & Healers

In the Western biomedical approach to healing, private healing is the norm; oftentimes only the patient and the professional health practitioner(s) is/are in the room. In other health systems community healing or humoral healing are common. The **community healing approach** considers social context critical for the healing process. Healing practices take place in front of the whole community and often involve their participation. One example is the healing dance of Ju/hoansi foragers of the Kalahari. Several times a month, the healing dance is performed to draw on the collective energy of the participants. Men, and sometimes women, dance around a circle of women who sit around a fire, clapping and singing. Healers draw on the spiritual energy of the dancers and singers to enhance their consciousness. During this period of enhanced consciousness, healers can heal those in need (Miller 2011).

Humoral healing systems use a philosophy centered on the idea that heat and coolness imbalances in the body cause disease. Coolness causes death in some Chinese, Indian, and Islamic cultures while in others such as the Orang Asli in Malaysia heat is the culprit. Food and drugs are used to offset these imbalances.

***Figure* 2.7.2** *- A Tsaatan shaman in northern Mongolia prepares for a ceremony. Khovsgol Province, Mongolia.*

Healing is generally done through a combination of informal methods, e.g., self-diagnosis and treatment, and formal treatment using a healing specialist. There are many different types of healing specialists:

- Shamans and shmankas,
- Midwives,
- Bonesetters,
- Doctors,
- Nurses,
- Dentists,
- Chiropractors,
- Herbalists,
- Psychiatrists and psychologists, and
- Acupuncturists.

All healing specialists go through similar process to become specialists. First there is the selection process. In most cases, the candidate must show some aptitude. In an indigenous society it might be an ability to connect with the supernatural realm. In cultures reliant on the Western biomedical approach, candidates must past entry exams and academic courses to become specialists. Training from seasoned healing specialists is a key component for all those who wish to become healing specialist whether in the form of apprenticeship with a shaman to formal training in a medical school. Training can be arduous both physically and mentally no matter the type of training. Once training is complete, the candidate earns a medical degree in the Western biomedical system. In indigenous societies, initiation rituals are performed. Once this certification process is complete, the healing specialist can adopt the raiment of the professional healer, e.g., the white coat of the medical doctor. Payment is generally expected for services rendered. What constitutes payment is highly variable, from salaries to livestock.

Explore: Learn more about the anthropologists

Claude Lévi-Strauss: www.egs.edu/library/claude-le...uss/biography/

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2.8: Expressive Culture

Religion

This section is not meant to provide an in-depth exploration of religion, but simply to introduce students to the anthropological approach to the study of religion. You should start with Wade Davis' TED Talk on The Worldwide Web of Belief and Ritual.


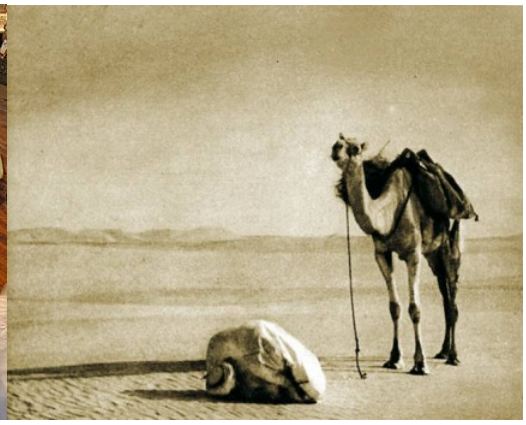

***Figure* 2.8.1** - *Sufi Whirling Dervishes and* ***Figure* 2.8.2** - *Nomad praying*

Definitions

There are various ways to define religion. One, the **analytic definition** stresses how religion manifests itself within a culture and identifies six dimensions of religion:

1. Institutional: this refers to the organizational and leadership structure of religions; this may be complex with a bureaucracy or simple with only one leader
2. Narrative: this refers to myths, e.g., creation stories
3. Ritual: all religions have rites of passage and other activities
4. Social: religions have social activities, perhaps beyond rituals, that helps to promote bonds between members
5. Ethical: religions establish a moral code and approved behaviors for its members and even society at large
6. Experiential: religious behavior is often focused on connection with a sacred reality beyond everyday experience

The **functional definition** highlights the role religion plays within a culture. This approach defines religion in terms of how it fulfills cognitive, emotional and social needs for its adherents.

The third definition looks at the essential nature of religion, hence its name, the **essentialist definition**. This approach defines religion as a system of beliefs and behaviors that characterizes the relationship between people and the supernatural. It is an adaptive behavior that promotes a sense of togetherness, unity and belonging. It helps to define one of the groups to which we belong. Warms (2008) takes an essentialist approach when he defines religion as a system that is composed of stories, includes rituals, has specialists, believes in the supernatural, and uses symbols and symbolism as well as altered states of consciousness. Additionally, Warms states that a key factor in religion is that it changes over time.

Let's look at these parts in more detail:

Religious systems have stories, or sacred narratives. Some stories may be more sacred than others, e.g., in Christianity the story of Christ's resurrection is more sacred then the story of Him turning water into wine at a wedding celebration. Stories may be about many things, but there are some common themes: origins of earth and humans, what happens when we die, deeds of important people, and disasters. Anthropologists can study these stories, or **myths**, to learn more about the people. Myth in anthropology should not be interpreted as a falsehood. In anthropology, a myth is a truism for the people following that belief system.

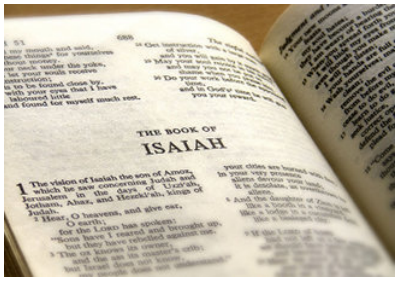

***Figure* 2.8.2**

An important part of religion is the belief in the **supernatural**, which includes a variety of beings from angels and demons to ghosts and gods and souls. The supernatural is a realm separate from the physical world inhabited by humans, although the supernatural can influence the human realm either through direct action or by influencing humans. For some peoples the supernatural realm is disconnected from everyday life; for others it is an intricate part of it. The supernatural can also refer to an unseen power that infuses humans, nature and for some belief systems, inanimate objects. Some groups refer to this power as **mana**, a term that is sometimes used to represent this supernatural power. This belief in a supernatural power is called **animatism**, while the belief in supernatural beings is **animism**.

Through rituals, people can influence or call upon the supernatural and supernatural power using symbolic action. **Rituals**are standardized patterns of behavior; e.g., prayer, congregation, etc. In the realm of religion, rituals are a sacred practice. In some religions, rituals are highly stereotyped and deviation from the ritual results in either no influence on the supernatural or negative consequences. Nature based religions, particularly those led by shamans (see below) are not as wedded to the ritual and employ a degree of creativity when trying to influence the supernatural.

***Figure* 2.8.3** - *Diwali, Festival of Lights*

Ritual promotes what Victor Turner called **communitas**, a sense of unity that transcends social distinctions like socioeconomic class. During the period of the ritual, rank and status are forgotten as members think of themselves as a community. This helps cement unity among community members.

Ritual can also be a **portrayal Influence** or a reenactment of myth, e.g., communion or baptism. Portrayal influence invokes magic to manipulate the supernatural. This has nothing to do with David Copperfield type of magic—it is about harnessing supernatural forces. If the magic does not seem to work, there is not a problem with the magic, but with the ritual—the practitioner did something wrong in their performance.

Magic uses a couple of principles: imitation (or similarity) and contagion. The **principle of similarity** states that if one acts out what one wants to happen then the likelihood of that occurring increases. Baptism is a good example of this as is the Pueblo Indians ritual of whipping yucca juice into frothy suds, which symbolize rain clouds. The **principle of contagion** states that things that been in contact with the supernatural remain connected to the supernatural. That connection can be used to transfer mana from the one thing to the other. Voodoo dolls are the classic example of the law of contagion, however, some cultures belief that names also have mana, so for anyone outside of the family to know their real name gives them the power to perform black magic against them.

Another form of magic is divination. **Divination** is the use of ritual to obtain answers to questions from supernatural sources, e.g., oracle bones, tea leaves, way a person falls, date of birth, etc. There are two main categories of divination: those results that can be influenced by diviner and those that cannot. Tarot cards, tea leaves, randomly selecting a Bible verse and interpreting an astrological sign are examples of the former. Casting lots, flipping a coin or checking to see whether something floats on water are examples of the latter.

Ritual is infused with symbolic expression. Emile Durkheim suggested that religious systems were a set of practices related to sacred things. The sacred is that which inspires awe, respect and reverence because it is set apart from the secular world or is

forbidden. People create symbols to represent aspects of society that inspire these feelings. For instance, the **totems** of Australian aborigine groups is spiritually related to members of the society. The human soul is a kindred spirit to the sacred plant or animal. Clifford Geertz discussed how symbols expressed feelings of society to maintain stability. This approach helped to broaden early definitions of religion beyond supernatural to incorporate actions of people and helped to account for the deep commitment and behavior of adherents.

There are several types of religious practitioners or people who specialize in religious behaviors. These are individuals who specialize in the use of spiritual power to influence others. A **shaman** is an

***Figure* 2.8.4** - *Buddhist monks*

individual who has access to supernatural power that can then be used for the benefit of specific clients. Found in indigenous cultures, shamans may be part-time specialists, but is usually the only person in the group that can access the supernatural. They have specialized knowledge that is deemed too dangerous for everyone to know because they do not have the training to handle the knowledge. Oftentimes, shamans train their replacement in the ways of contacting and utilizing the supernatural. Shamans are often innovative in their practices, using trance states to contact the supernatural.

The term shaman originated with the Tungus peoples of eastern Siberia. Anthropologists debate the ethics of using the term to apply to all indigenous religious practitioners. Some think that we should use each cultures' name for their religious practitioners; others take the position that use of the term is not meant to be disrespectful but is simply a way for all anthropologists to categorize a cultural trait much like we use the names of several cultures for the anthropological kinship terminology systems. There is also public debate about the increasing number of so-called white shamans, especially in the United States where there is still heated debate about the plight of Native Americans. For more information on this debate, check out the video White Shamans and Plastic Medicine Men on YouTube.

Priests are another type of religious practitioner who are trained to perform rituals for benefit of group. Priests differ from shamans is a couple of important ways. For priests, rituals are key—innovation and creativity are generally not prized or encouraged. Priests are found in most organized religions, e.g., Buddhism, Christianity and Judaism, although they have a different name such as monks, ministers, or rabbis.

Sorcerers and **witches**, unlike shamans and priests who have high status in their cultures, usually have low status because their abilities are seen in a negative manner. Both sorcerers and witches have the ability to connect with the supernatural for ill purposes. Sorcerers often take on a role similar to law enforcement in the United States; they are used by people to punish someone who has violated socially proscribed rules. Witches are believed to have an innate connection to the supernatural, one that they often cannot control. Because witches may inadvertently hurt people because they cannot control their power, if discovered, they are often ostracized or forced to leave their group. It is important to differentiate witches in some cultures from Wiccans. While Christianity makes no distinction between Wiccans and witches as described above, Wicca has clear mandates against using magic to harm others. The Wiccan rede states, “An' it harm none, do what ye will.”

Mediums are part-time practitioners who use trance and possession to heal and divine. Oftentimes after a trance or possession, the medium remembers nothing about the experience or their actions.

Anthropologists have identified a pattern linking the type and number of practitioners with social complexity: the more complex the society, the more variety of religious practitioners. Foraging cultures tend to have only one practitioner, a shaman. If a culture has two practitioners, a shaman and a priest, chances are that they are agriculturalists, albeit without complex political and social organization. Agriculturalists and pastoralists with more complex political organization that goes beyond the immediate

community, generally have a least three types of practitioners, shamans, priests and a sorcerer, witch or medium. Cultures with complex political organization, agriculture, and complex social organization usually have all four practitioners (Bonvillain 2010).

Patterns of Belief

Patterns of belief focused on one or more gods of extrahuman origin is called a **theism**. The pattern may be a reflection of social organization, e.g., the more centralized and stratified the society, the fewer gods.

- **Monotheism**: belief in one god (Judaism, Christianity, Islam)
- **Henotheism**: worship of only one god, while acknowledging that other gods exist. Henotheists do not necessarily view other gods as legitimate objects of worship, even while acknowledging they exist (Hinduism)
- **Polytheism**: belief in many gods (Aztec, ancient Greeks, Egyptians)

Religious Change

Religious beliefs and rituals can be the catalyst or vehicle of social change. Most religions are **syncretic**; they borrow practices, beliefs and organizational characteristics from other religions. Sometimes this is done voluntarily and at other times it is done by force. For instance, Catholicism through the practice of forced conversion during the period of European colonialism influenced other religions. Vodoun borrowed heavily from Catholicism. The one god is manifested in Bondye while St. Patrick is symbolized by Vodoun's rainbow serpent deity, Ochumare. Oftentimes special days are adopted by religions. Catholicism adopted Yule, the winter solstice celebration of Pagans, to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ. The Zuni merged their native religion with Catholicism, incorporating images of Christ into their cloths and jewelry.

Revitalization movements are frequently associated with religion. They often occur in disorganized societies due to warfare, revolutions, etc. They usually call for the destruction of existing social institutions in order to resolve conflict and stabilize the culture through reorganization. Most recorded revitalization movements were an adaptive response to rapidly changing social and economic circumstances brought on by contact with an outside culture.

The cargo cults of Melanesia are one example of movements that make a conscious effort to build an ideology that will be relevant to changing cultural needs. Cargo cults arose in Melanesia and other areas of the world after European contact in response to “...the expropriation of native land, and the relegation of indigenous peoples to roles as menial laborers and second-class citizens” (Bonvillain 2010: 374). Rituals were performed in the belief that they would result in increased wealth and prosperity in line with the European idea of material wealth.

***Figure* 2.8.5** - *The Ghost Dance*

Another example of a revitalization movement is the Ghost Dance that swept through western Native American cultures in from 1870-1890. The Ghost Dance was begun by a Pauite, Wovoka. Wovoka claimed to have a vision from God during eclipse. In this vision, he was brought before God and given message for people of earth about peace and right living. He was shown the circle dance, that represented the movement of harmony around sun. Wovoka prohesized that dead Indian forebears would return soon to take possession of technology of whites, who would simultaneously be exterminated in huge explosion, resulting in a renewal of earth. Many Native American nations rallied to the Ghost Dance; e.g., Lakota, Ute, Washoe, Shoshone, Cheyenne, Arapaho, Kiowa, Mandan, and Comanche. However, during the process of learning about the Ghost Dance from Wovoka, some of the new adherents changed its meaning and intent. The Lakota were one group who changed some of the meaning of the Ghost Dance.

The Lakota had suffered greatly at hands of US Army. Their lands were taken away by miners, the railroads were given rights to build through the reservations, and traditional hunting grounds were being settled by farmers. One Lakota warrior, Kicking Bear, visited Wovoka, and returned to his people with the message of the Ghost Dance, but he injected militancy into it. He claimed that if the people wore a special costume for the dance, one that included eagle feathers, the dancer would be impervious to the white man's bullets. The Ghost Dance made the United States government nervous and in November 1890 sent thousands of troops onto

the Pine Ridge and Rosebud reservations. Sitting Bull, one of the Lakota peace chiefs was arrested and subsequently murdered. Meanwhile another peace chief, Big Foot was encamped with his people along Wounded Knee Creek. On December 28, 1890, soldiers showed up at camp to confiscate weapons in response to the Ghost Dance. One Lakotan man who was deaf and did not understand what the army was doing struggled to keep his gun, which went off in the melee. This caused the soldiers to open fire on the camp of mainly elders, women and children. The resulting massacre left 153 Lakotans dead, mostly women and children. Twenty-five soldiers were killed as well, most by friendly fire, all of whom were posthumously awarded medals of honor.

Why Are People Religious? The Function of Religion

There appear to be two primary explanations for the emergence of religious systems: for psychological reasons and social reasons. Psychologically, religion helps people answer the big existential questions, why do we die and suffer, and help people cope with uncertainty. Religion provides a clear cut way to deal with the unknown. The Trobriand Islanders are excellent mariners, yet perform elaborate rituals before setting sail. On 9/11 and in the days following, tens of thousands US citizens went to church, temple, or mosque to pray and find comfort and answers to the devastation of the terrorist attack.

Socially, religion helps to mediate tension between social roles and relationships. It provides guidelines for how husbands and wives are supposed to act towards one another. It proscribes the relationship of children to parents, and individuals to their society at large. Religion is a way for adherents to achieve consensus. It provides guidelines for right living and identifies what values to hold. Religion gives groups a set of social rules that help to maintain order, invoking a supernatural punishment if its tenets are not followed.

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

3: Globalization, Modernization and Development

Learning Objectives

By the end of the unit, you should be able to answer the following questions:

- What is globalization?
- How did the modern era of globalization develop?
- What is the relationship between culture and globalization?

In this unit, you will explore globalization and development and its effects on indigenous peoples. Modern economic and political development is driven by the assumption that the results will be beneficial for all people; however, cultural differences are not taken into consideration, leading often to the destruction of indigenous cultures. Understanding the context of modern development students become versant in the current debate about globalization.

3.1: Introduction to Globalization, Modernization and Development
3.2: Modernization
3.3: Legacy of Colonialism
3.4: Development
3.5: Anthropology and Development
3.6: Appendix

Thumbnail: Counter service in a McDonald's restaurant in Dukhan, Qatar. (CC BY-SA 3.0; Vincent van Zeijst).

3.1: Introduction to Globalization, Modernization and Development

***Figure* 3.1.1** - *Mall culture in Jakarta*

> *We talk about globalization today as if it's some great big new thing that we've all just discovered. But there's really nothing new about it.*
> *~ Jacqueline Winspear*

***Figure* 3.1.2** - *English and Hebrew Coke labels.*

In this section, we will skim the surface of globalization with a particular emphasis of the history of modern era of globalization and its effects on indigenous peoples. Modern economic and political development is driven by the assumption that modernization and development will be beneficial for all people; however, cultural differences are not taken into consideration, often leading to the destruction of indigenous cultures. Understanding the context of modern development enables us to understand our own place in an increasingly interconnected world.

Start with this TedTalk video of Wade Davis, anthropologist in residence at the National Geographic Society, speaking about endangered cultures [run time: 22.04].

What is globalization?

The answer to this question is not a simple one. There are various definitions of globalization depending on the perspective with which the topic is approached. Many think of globalization as processes that cause changes that make people more interconnected and interdependent. Others think of it as "…a reorganization of time and space in which many movements of peoples, things, and ideas throughout much of the world have become increasingly faster and effortless (Morris 2010: 865). Still others focus on the interaction and integration promoted by international trade, investment, and information technology (The Levin Institute 2015). Anthropologists acknowledge that all of these definitions are relevant to the study of globalization and use long-term ethnographic studies to understand the dynamics of globalization. One of the things that make anthropological research on globalization important is that it remains focused on the impact of these global processes on individuals and cultures. Anthropologists do not assume that globalization is "natural and unavoidable" as that approach is steeped in Social Darwinist ideology and obscures how power and privilege are constructed and maintained (Morris 2010). It is an experiential process, meaning that it is different for each

person. In an anthropological sense, **globalization** is "…an intensification of global interconnectedness, suggesting a world full of movement and mixture, contact and linkages, and persistent cultural interaction and exchange" (Inda and Rosaldo 2002: 2).

Enmeshed in the concept of globalization are modernization, development, and the legacy of European colonialism.

3.2: Modernization

What it means to be modern is a concept that has changed over time. In the 5th century AD, Roman converts to Christianity used term to differentiate themselves from “barbarians.” Barbarians were non-Christian peoples, particularly people of the Jewish faith. During the Renaissance to be modern one had to cultivate a lifestyle based on classical Greek and Roman civilizations, while in the Enlightenment period rationalism, science-based knowledge, and the pursuit of “progress” was the hallmark of modernity. What all of these definitions have in common is that the people in power defined what it meant to be modern. This practice continues today with “modern” being synonymous with the Western industrial world led by the United States. Time must be reckoned in a linear manner; scientific knowledge and legal-rational institutions reign supreme. Technology, a capitalist economy, and a democratic political system are considered characteristics of modernity. **Modernization** then is a process of cultural and socio-economic change whereby less developed countries (LDCs) acquire characteristics of western, industrialized societies. It should be noted that this definition is used primarily by European-derived cultures. Modernization implies that other societies should be more like “us;” otherwise, that society is inferior. This is the legacy of European colonialism.

3.3: Legacy of Colonialism

In a broad view, colonialism, like globalization, is not new. Since the first hominins left Africa some 1.8 million years ago, people have been colonizing the earth. Sometimes that movement across the globe involved people encroaching on areas already inhabited by other humans. Archaeologists have been documenting the movement of peoples throughout prehistory and history, using a variety of data to reconstruct what those interactions may have looked like. **Colonialism** refers to the domination of one culture, society, or nation over another. In the context of modern globalization and to oversimplify, colonialism specifically refers to Western European domination over much of the world starting in the fifteenth century, but the origins of that movement is in the Asian overland-trade routes previously established. In the remainder of this article, any reference to colonialism refers specifically to Western European colonialism.

***Figure* 3.3.1** *- Map of the Silk Road.*

The process of colonialism left a legacy that infuses modern globalization. As Western European nations overtook control of various areas, leaders and merchants moved many indigenous peoples from their homelands to solve labor shortages faced by the colonial powers. The African slave trade is the example that comes to mind for most people, but other peoples were also enslaved, e.g., Chinese and Indian. The slave trade was possible because there was a belief that anyone not living in the manner of Western Europeans was inherently backward or lesser than white Europeans. This **dehumanization**, or denial of humanness, was essential to colonial practices as it provided a justification for aggressive and morally questionable practices (Haslam et al. 2007). We can still see the effects of this ideology today in various social movements such as Occupy and the green movement.

***Figure* 3.3.2** *- Group of men and women being taken to a slave market.*

Under European colonial rule, political and economic systems were reorganized. High-status Europeans were in charge of the colonies. By the end of the nineteenth century, colonial administrations were self-financing systems. Local indigenous leaders were bribed with titles, land, and tax breaks. This created an atmosphere of privilege that would create problems after decolonization. Local leaders then helped colonial administrators to force the local population in to a capitalist economic system. **Primary commodity production**, or the production of raw materials, became the enforced norm, undermining traditional crafts and mixed farming systems. Following the pattern of the forced-enclosure movement in Europe where communal lands were enclosed and used privately for the production of market-based agriculture, farmers were forced into growing cash-crops instead of growing

crops for personal use. A culture of **export monoculture** where a country produces one or more primary commodity became established, a practice that is still at the heart of international trade today. South Africa became known for gold and diamonds, Mexico for corn, and, India for cotton, tea, peanuts, and sugar cane. As a result of this reorganization, many indigenous farmers lost their land to commercial agricultural production. Men were frequently removed from their homes to work on these industrial farms in order to meet the growing demands for goods of European urban populations. The families left behind struggled to make ends meet. Malnutrition and social unrest grew among indigenous groups.

Colonial administrators rarely acknowledged traditional female gender roles if they did not mirror the female gender role in Europe, which stated that women were the property of men, either fathers or husbands. In areas where women had property rights, they were ignored by the colonial powers. In Kenya, Kikuyu women had rights to inherit land. After European domination, men were removed to work on European-owned farms and the land assumed to be owned by those men confiscated. Women lost control of the ability to grow sufficient food for their families and lost their status, wealth, and authority.

***Figure* 3.3.3** - *Frontispiece from the book Saint-Domingue, ou Histoire de Ses Révolutions. ca. 1815.*

The loss of self-governance and status, disruption of gender roles and family, and the loss of resources led to social unrest as large segments of indigenous populations were enslaved, killed, or died due to disease. Decolonization movements began in Haiti in 1791. The Haitian revolt was started by slaves on sugar plantations and was the only slave revolt to result in the founding of a state. Independence movements gained momentum over time, spreading to Latin America, Asia, and Africa even as late as the 1990s (South Africa). After the end of World War II, colonial subjects who had fought in the war returned with the ideologies of freedom and self-determination. As colonies gained their independence, new leaders were expected to operate on the global stage in the same manner as and with their former colonial rulers in order to be considered legitimate. Frequently, people had some power in the colonial administration due to bribery or having some relationship to the former powers gained power in the newly independent states. Many newly emerged states required economic stimulation that came in the form proscribed by the only nation that had economic growth during WWII, the United States. This model of economic development is sometimes referred to as **neocolonialism**; in other words, the new states were closely tied to former colonial powers economically.

We still see the lingering effects of colonial **cultural imperialism**, or expansion of one culture at the expense of others, in the languages, customs, and worldviews of former colonies. In Haiti, French is the national language; in Brazil, Portuguese. Spanish is spoken in most South and Central American countries, English in a wide-geographic distribution resulting from that nation's imperialist expansion.

3.4: Development

In this context, **development** refers to "change directed toward improving human welfare" (Miller 2011: 260). What this definition fails to mention is that the change is based on a model developed by former colonial powers the result of which is "dislocated cultural space" (Inda and Rosaldo 2002:25). While western culture has historically taken precedence through the process of colonialism in more recent years that dominance has been challenged resulting in interconnected cultural space (Inda and Rosaldo 2002:26).

Post WWII, development focused on rebuilding countries devastated by the global conflict. Impacting the course of development were two polarizing social ideologies: communism and democracy. Much of the economic and political development pursued by the United States was geared toward stopping the spread of communism. The goal was to help underdeveloped countries, or countries that did not economically use all their available resources to the degree deemed appropriate by the former colonial powers, become modern. The assumption was that all countries were on a universal path to modernity, an idea straight out of eighteenth century philosophies like social evolution (see theories section from the beginning of the quarter) and Social Darwinism. Several institutions were started to aid in development, particularly on the economic level: United Nations (UN), World Bank (WB), and International Monetary Fund (IMF).

The UN was chartered in 1945 with fifty-one countries as original members. The UN and its family of organizations work to promote respect for human rights, protect the environment, fight disease, foster development, and reduce poverty. It oversees progress and works to foster cooperation among nations. The UN has also become a "neutral" peacekeeper in more recent years, but it is totally dependent upon member nations to provide military and financial resources to fulfill its mission. The UN currently has 193 member states each of which has a single vote in the General Assembly. The UN Security Council, which is responsible for overseeing international peace and security, has fifteen members: five permanent members (China, France, Russian Federation, United Kingdom, and United States) and ten non-permanent members who are elected for a term of two-years by the General Assembly. Any nation can take part in discussions of the Security Council, but only the fifteen members have a vote. A student of history might recognize that the five permanent members of the Security Council were allies during WWII and represent the two post-WWII social ideologies mentioned above.

***Figure* 3.4.1** - *United Nations building, New York City.*

At the same time that the UN was being organized, it was decided that an international banking system was integral to reconstruct the post-war world economy. In July 1944 at Bretton Woods, NH, a conference of forty-four financial ministers from Allied nations met to discuss the rebuilding of the world economy. The United States encouraged the foundation of the "twin sisters" – the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. The WB focused on making loans to governments in order to rebuild railroads, highways, bridges, ports, and other infrastructures. Its initial focus would be on rebuilding Western Europe and Japan, and then the focus would shift to the underdeveloped world. In 2015, the WB had 188 member countries, or shareholders, each of which is required to be a member of the IMF as well. Those members with the largest shares tend to have more influence in both institutions. The IMF's initial goal was to stabilize international currency exchange. In 2012, the IMF's mandate was modified to include economic and financial issues related to global stability.

The WB and IMF come under harsh criticism for their lending practices. In order to borrow money from the IMF or WB, debtor countries must agree to implement structural adjustment policies "…ensure open market access for corporations while cutting social spending on programs such as education, health care, and production credits for poor farmers" (Global Exchange 2011).

Debtor countries must also privatize publicly owned utilities and industries. Critics claim that the institutions are setting social and economic policy without representation by elected representatives.

Why was all this control deemed necessary? Walt Rostow, a preeminent development economist remarked in 1956 that the natural resources located in underdeveloped nations should be kept safe from Communist control in order for the United States, Western Europe, and Japan to maintain their way of life.

Development Models

Since the end of WWII, models of development have changed based on political, economic, and social needs. The earliest development models were developed using several assumptions:

1. The model works anywhere; it can be universally applied without regard to specific cultural patterns – this is referred to **underdifferentiation**, or the failure to recognize that cultural norms vary.
2. Non-monetary systems are "backward." Any economic exchange that did not rely on the market system was inherently inferior. Modernization = monetization. Traditional lifeways were viewed as an impediment to development because wealth was often community based and not individually based.
3. There is a common destiny of society and the common good arises out of the pursuit of individual self-interests.
4. Living standards can be quantified with a monetary index, e.g., Gross National Product (GNP) and life expectancy. Basically, they assumed that wealth is equal to happiness.

Modernization Model: This model is focused on change through economic growth. It is the basic model outlined above in the background information on the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. Material progress through industrialization, market expansion, and technological innovation are key components as is a democratic political system with consolidated power vested in the state. Material progress would result in better lives for the citizenry even if the environment and society suffered. Critics of this cookie-cutter approach to development claim that it is not sustainable because of the high consumption levels of resources. Anthropological research indicates that this model is detrimental to indigenous peoples as their land and resources are subsumed by the state and sold or leased to corporations for resource extraction, leading to destruction of their cultures. This model also encourages reduction in both cultural and bio-diversity (Miller 2011). See Optional: Further Reading for information on specific studies.

Growth-Oriented Development Model: Drawing on the modernization model and Rostow's stages of growth theory (see Rostow's Theory of Modernization Development https://www.academia.edu/3596310/Rostows_theory_of_modernization_development), the growth-oriented development model proposes that a trickle-down effect will occur when there is investment in economic growth. As wealth increases for those investing in economic growth, some of the wealth will make its way down to those less well off thereby positively impacting human welfare. Participation in the international market and industrialization of both agriculture and manufacturing are key elements. Privatization of public services is also imperative. This may be familiar as these ideas are incorporated in the World Bank and IMF structural adjustment policies (Miller 2011). One of the criticisms of this model is that it ignores the fact that "underdeveloped nations" did not have a history of development. Such is not the case. Many indigenous societies had well-established trade with other groups both close by and long distance. There were also lucrative indigenous industries such as the Indian textile industry mentioned previously. This model concentrates resources into the hands of the few creating marked inequality in society. Recent research and criticism focuses on the unsustainability of this model of development.

Distributional Development Model: Growing out of criticism of the trickle-down effect, the distributional development model is concerned with social equity. The distributional development model claims that no development program will work without ensuring that there is equitable access to resources for all (Miller 2011).

Human Development Model: In this model, the focus is on investment in human welfare, better education, health care, security, and safety, with the belief that it will lead to economic growth (Miller 2011).

Sustainable Development Model: Probably the most recent development model, sustainable development focuses on the conservation of non-renewable resources and, in some cases, survival of indigenous peoples. This model also proposes investment in development projects that are financially sustainable over time.

Indigenous Development Model: Indigenous development models draw on local cultural practices to promote realistic change and not **overinnovation** (too much change in daily life).

***Figure* 3.4.2** - *Traditional cultivation in Bangladesh.*

What is clear is that the development projects that work best are socially compatible and recognize that the economy is part of a culture and not a separate entity. **Culture fit** or the practice of "…taking the local culture into account in project design" (Miller 2011: 369) is at the heart of a development project failure in rural Bangladesh. A farming cooperative program with support from the government was begun with adult males, ignoring the traditional role of women in farming practices (male bias in development is common) and requiring the use of crop seeds, fertilizers and pesticides. Over time, the pesticides entered the food chain through seepage into local rivers and streams, which then were absorbed by fish and eventually people, causing an increase in birth defects. The local people noticed that their livestock became sick and died after the increased use of pesticides for farming. The people rejected the development program after some years and returned to their traditional ways of organic farming, sparking a "new agricultural" movement, Nayakrishi, with the help of the Center for Development Alternatives, a non-governmental organization based in Dhaka, the capital of Bangladesh (McKibben 2001). Since the Nayakrishi began over 300,000 Bengali families have returned to organic farming and development projects focused on culture fit like that of Hunger Free World (www.hungerfree.net/english/wh...desh/lcbd.html) have been successful.

***Figure* 3.4.3** - *Pastoralists, Lake Turkana, 1979.*

In East Africa, the World Bank sponsored an irrigation and settlement project geared to transform local pastoralists into small-scale sedentary farmers. Pastoralists were expected to simply abandon their traditional way of life and their territory turned over to new commercial farms. While this would have benefitted the commercial farmers it required the pastoralists to work "…three times harder growing rice and picking cotton for the bosses," a case of overinnovation (Kottak 1990: 725). This project failed and was canceled and redesigned. World Bank projects in South Asia, South America, the Middle East, and West Africa also failed when culture fit was not considered. Unfortunately, there are numerous development projects that result in the loss of land and resources for local, indigenous populations; from hydroelectric dams and logging (Kayapo, Amazon rainforest) to fish-processing factories in pastoral areas of Kenya and international trade agreements like the North American Free Trade Agreement - NAFTA (Zapatista, Mexico), traditional lifeways are at risk due to **development aggression**, the "imposition of development projects and policies without the free, prior, and informed consent of the affected people (Miller 2011: 377).

3.5: Anthropology and Development

Anthropologists specializing in development studies may call themselves applied anthropologists, economic anthropologists, environmental anthropologists, ecological anthropologists, or development anthropologists. Anthropological approaches to development are important because,

> *…[anthropology provides] the analytical means to understand the heterogeneity of loca/ actors and their interests, to see the multiple links in their social lives and appreciate their everyday strategies, to tap into local understandings and comprehend resistance to perceived outside interference (Sillitoe 2007: 154 quoted in O'Driscoll 2009: 17).*

While anthropology might not have a monopoly on insight into multidisciplinary approaches or insight into the benefits of including indigenous knowledge, it is at the forefront of anthropological approaches. Involvement in development projects may create an ethical dilemma for anthropologists, as the tenet that is drilled into every anthropology student's head is not to change the cultures we study and to do no harm. As outlined above there are development projects that do not help people in the way that the planners envision. Frankly, it is not uncommon for the interests of development planners and local peoples to conflict. Some argue that it is imperative for anthropologist to be involved in development discourse to work with local people to help them assess their needs and ideas for change or to even advocate for localized, community-specific initiatives. Some anthropologists suggest that we should not be involved with international development agencies, but only with indigenous rights movements. Still others suggest that anthropologists study both small and large development institutions in order to better understand the development system. Anthropological data can help development projects maximize social and economic benefits by ensuring projects are a cultural fit, respond to local needs, involve the appropriate local social actors and organizations in the project, and are flexible (Gezen and Kottak 2014)

3.6: Appendix

Optional: Further Reading

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Glossary

Acculturation | loss of a minority group's cultural distinctiveness in relation to the dominant culture.

Adaptive | Traits that increase the capacity of individuals to survive and reproduce.

Affinal | family relationships created through marriage.

Age grades | groups of men who are close to one another in age and share similar duties or responsibilities.

Age sets | named categories to which men of a certain age are assigned at birth.

Agency | An individual's ability to make independent choices and act upon his/her will.

Agriculture | the cultivation of domesticated plants and animals using technologies that allow for intensive use of the land.

Amalgamation | interactions between members of distinct ethnic and cultural groups that reduce barriers between the groups over time.

Androgyny | cultural definitions of gender that recognize some gender differentiation, but also accept "gender bending" and role-crossing according to individual capacities and preferences.

Animatism | a religious system organized around a belief in an impersonal supernatural force.

Animism | a religious system organized around a belief that plants, animals, inanimate objects, or natural phenomena have a spiritual or supernatural element.

Anthropocene | a term proposed to describe the current moment (or epoch) in geological time in which the effects of human activities have altered the fundamental geochemical cycles of the earth. There is some disagreement about when the Anthropocene period began—most likely, it began with industrialization.

Anthropogenic | environments and pollutants produced by human activities.

Anthropomorphic | an object or being that has human characteristics.

Arbitrariness | the relationship between a symbol and its referent (meaning), in which there is no obvious connection between them.

Area studies | a way of organizing research and academic programs around world regions such as Africa, the Middle East, East Asia, China, Latin America, and Europe.

Armchair anthropology | an early and discredited method of anthropological research that did not involve direct contact with the people studied.

Assimilation | pressure placed on minority groups to adopt the customs and traditions of the dominant culture.

Avunculocal | married individuals live with or near an uncle.

Balanced reciprocity | the exchange of something with the expectation that something of equal value will be returned within a specific time period.

Band | the smallest unit of political organization, consisting of only a few families and no formal leadership positions.

Big man | a form of temporary or situational leadership; influence results from acquiring followers.

Bilateral cross-cousin marriage | a man marries a woman who is both his mother's brother's daughter and his father's sister's daughter.

Bilateral descent | kinship (family) systems that recognize both the mother's and the father's "sides" of the family.

Binary model of gender | cultural definitions of gender that include only two identities–male and female.

Biocultural evolution | Describes the interactions between biology and culture that have influenced human evolution.

Biologic sex | refers to male and female identity based on internal and external sex organs and chromosomes. While male and female are the most common biologic sexes, a percentage of the human population is intersex with ambiguous or mixed biological sex characteristics.

Biological determinism | a theory that biological differences between males and females leads to fundamentally different capacities, preferences, and gendered behaviors. This scientifically unsupported view suggests that gender roles are rooted in biology, not culture.

Biomedical | An approach to medicine that is based on the application of insights from science, particularly biology and chemistry.

Bound morpheme | a unit of meaning that cannot stand alone; it must be attached to another morpheme.

Bridewealth | payments made to the bride's family by the groom's family before marriage.

Broad spectrum diet | a diet based on a wide range of food resources.

Built environment | spaces that are human-made, including cultivated land as well as buildings.

Cargo cult | a term sometimes used to describe rituals that seek to attract material prosperity. The term is generally not preferred by anthropologists.

Carrying capacity | a measurement of the number of calories that can be extracted from a particular unit of land in order to support a human population.

Caste system | the division of society into hierarchical levels; one's position is determined by birth and remains fixed for life.

Chiefdom | large political units in which the chief, who usually is determined by heredity, holds a formal position of power.

Circumscription | the enclosure of an area by a geographic feature such as mountain ranges or desert or by the boundaries of a state.

Cisgender | a term used to describe those who identify with the sex and gender they were assigned at birth

Clan | a group of people who have a general notion of common descent that is not attached to a specific biological ancestor.

Cline | differences in the traits that occur in populations across a geographical area. In a cline, a trait may be more common in one geographical area than another, but the variation is gradual and continuous, with no sharp breaks.

Closed system | a form of communication that cannot create new meanings or messages; it can only convey pre-programmed (innate) messages.

Code-switching | using two or more language varieties in a particular interaction.

Codified law | formal legal systems in which damages, crimes, remedies, and punishments are specified.

Coercive harmony | an approach to dispute resolution that emphasizes compromise and consensus rather than confrontation and results in the marginalization of dissent (harmony ideology) and the repression of demands for justice.

Collective effervescence | the passion or energy that arises when groups of people share the same thoughts and emotions.

Commodity chain | the series of steps a food takes from location where it is produced to the store where it is sold to consumers.

Communal healing | An approach to healing that directs the combined efforts of the community toward treating illness.

Community of practice | A group of people who engaged in a shared activity or vocation, such as dance or medicine.

Consumption | the process of buying, eating, or using a resource, food, commodity, or service.

Contested identity | a dispute within a group about the collective identity or identities of the group.

Cosmology | an explanation for the origin or history of the world.

Creole | a language that develops from a pidgin when the pidgin becomes so widely used that children acquire it as one of their first languages. Creoles are more fully complex than creoles.

Critical age range hypothesis | research suggesting that a child will gradually lose the ability to acquire language naturally and without effort if he or she is not exposed to other people speaking a language until past the age of puberty. This applies to the acquisition of a second language as well.

Cultural appropriation | the act of copying an idea from another culture and in the process distorting its meaning.

Cultural determinism | the idea that behavioral differences are a result of cultural, not racial or genetic causes.

Cultural ecology | a subfield of cultural anthropology that explores the relationship between human cultural beliefs and practice and the ecosystems in which those beliefs and practices occur.

Cultural evolutionism | a discredited theory popular in nineteenth century anthropology suggesting that societies evolved through stages from simple to advanced.

Cultural imperialism | Attempts to impose unequal and unfair relationships between members of different societies.

Cultural infrastructure | The values and beliefs of communities, states, and/or societies that make the imagining of a particular type of network possible.

Cultural Performance | A performance such as a concert or a play.

Cultural relativism | the idea that we should seek to understand another person's beliefs and behaviors from the perspective of their own culture and not our own.

Cultural transmission | the need for some aspects of the system to be learned; a feature of some species' communication systems.

Culture | a set of beliefs, practices, and symbols that are learned and shared. Together, they form an all-encompassing, integrated whole that binds people together and shapes their worldview and lifeways.

Culture-bound syndrome | An illness recognized only within a specific culture.

Deductive | reasoning from the general to the specific; the inverse of inductive reasoning. Deductive research is more common in the natural sciences than in anthropology. In a deductive approach, the researcher creates a hypothesis and then designs a study to prove or disprove the hypothesis. The results of deductive research can be generalizable to other settings.

Delayed return system | techniques for obtaining food that require an investment of work over a period of time before the food becomes available for consumption. Farming is a delayed return system due to the passage of time between planting and harvest. The opposite is an immediate return system in which the food acquired can be immediately consumed. Foraging is an immediate return system.

Descent groups | relationships that provide members with a sense of identity and social support based on ties of shared ancestry.

Design features | descriptive characteristics of the communication systems of all species, including that of humans, proposed by linguist Charles Hockett to serve as a definition of human language.

Dialect | a variety of speech. The term is often applied to a subordinate variety of a language. Speakers of two dialects of the same language do not necessarily always understand each other.

Diaspora | the scattering of a group of people who have left their original homeland and now live in various locations. Examples of people living in the diaspora are Salvadorian immigrants in the United States and Europe, Somalian refugees in various countries, and Jewish people living around the world.

Discourse | Widely circulated knowledge within a community.

Discreteness | a feature of human speech that they can be isolated from others.

Displacement | the ability to communicate about things that are outside of the here and now.

Domestic economy | the work associated with obtaining food for a family or household.

Domestic group | a term that can be used to describe a group of people who live together even if members do not consider themselves to be family.

Dowry | payments made to the groom's family by the bride's family before marriage.

Duality of patterning | at the first level of patterning, meaningless discrete sounds of speech are combined to form words and parts of words that carry meaning. In the second level of patterning, those units of meaning are recombined to form an infinite possible number of longer messages such as phrases and sentences.

Dyads | two people in a socially approved pairing. One example is a married couple.

Eco-justice | a movement to recognize and remedy the adverse relationship between social inequality and the harms and risks that come from environmental destruction and pollutants.

Ecocide | destruction of an environment, especially when done intentionally by humans.

Egalitarian | societies in which there is no great difference in status or power between individuals and there are as many valued status positions in the societies as there are persons able to fill them.

Emic | a description of the studied culture from the perspective of a member of the culture or insider.

Emotionalistic explanation | Suggests that illnesses are caused by strong emotions such as fright, anger, or grief; this is an example of a naturalistic ethno-etiology.

Enculturation | the process of learning the characteristics and expectations of a culture or group.

Endogamy | a term describing expectations that individuals must marry within a particular group.

Epidemiological transition | The sharp drop in mortality rates, particularly among children, that occurs in a society as a result of improved sanitation and access to healthcare.

Ethnic group | people in a society who claim a distinct identity for themselves based on shared cultural characteristics and ancestry.

Ethnicity | the degree to which a person identifies with and feels an attachment to a particular ethnic group.

Ethno-etiology | Cultural explanations about the underlying causes of health problems.

Ethnocentrism | the tendency to view one's own culture as most important and correct and as the stick by which to measure all other cultures.

Ethnocide | destruction of a culture, often intentionally, through destruction of or removal from their territory, forced assimilation, or acculturation.

Ethnoecology | the relationships between cultural beliefs and practices and the local environment. Components include ethnobiology, ethnobotany, and ethnozoology.

Ethnogenesis | gradual emergence of new ethnicities in response to changing social circumstances.

Ethnography | the in-depth study of the everyday practices and lives of a people.

Ethnomedicine | The comparative study of cultural ideas about wellness, illness, and healing.

Ethnoscape | the flow of people across boundaries.

Etic | a description of the studied culture from the perspective of an observer or outsider.

Exogamy | a term describing expectations that individuals must marry outside a particular group.

Extended family | a family of at least three-generations sharing a household.

Extractive reserves | community-managed protected areas designed to allow for sustainable extraction of certain natural resources (such as fish, rubber, Brazil nuts, and rattan) while maintaining key ecosystems in place.

Exurban | migration of generally affluent people from urban areas to rural areas for the amenities of nature, recreation, and scenic beauty associated with rural areas.

Fabrication | A technique for reporting on research data that involves mixing information provided by various people into a narrative account that demonstrates the point of focus for researchers.

Family | the smallest group of individuals who see themselves as connected to one another.

Family of orientation | the family in which an individual is raised.

Family of procreation | a new household formed for the purpose of conceiving and raising children.

Feuds | disputes of long duration characterized by a state of recurring hostilities between families, lineages, or other kin groups.

Filial piety | a tradition requiring that the young provide care for the elderly and in some cases ancestral spirits.

Financescape | the flow of money across political borders.

Food taboos | Cultural rules against the preparation and/or consumption of certain foods.

Foodways | the cultural norms and attitudes surrounding food and eating.

Foraging | a subsistence system that relies on wild plant and animal food resources. This system is sometimes called "hunting and gathering."

Functionalism | an approach to anthropology developed in British anthropology that emphasized the way that parts of a society work together to support the functioning of the whole.

Functionalist | an approach developed in British anthropology that emphasized the ways that the parts of a society work together to support the functioning of the whole.

Gender | the set of culturally and historically invented beliefs and expectations about gender that one learns and performs. Gender is an "identity" one can choose in some societies, but there is pressure in all societies to conform to expected gender roles and identities.

Gender ideology | a complex set of beliefs about gender and gendered capacities, propensities, preferences, identities and socially expected behaviors and interactions that apply to males, females, and other gender categories. Gender ideology can differ among cultures and is acquired through enculturation. Also known as a cultural model of gender.

General purpose money | a medium of exchange that can be used in all economic transactions.

Generalized reciprocity | giving without expecting a specific thing in return.

Gesture-call system | a system of non-verbal communication using varying combinations of sound, body language, scent, facial expression, and touch, typical of great apes and other primates, as well as humans.

Global North | refers to the wealthier countries of the world. The definition includes countries that are sometimes called "First World" or "Highly Developed Economies."

Global South | refers to the poorest countries of the world. The definition includes countries that are sometimes called "Third World" or "Least Developed Economies."

Glocalization | the adaptation of global ideas into locally palatable forms.

Going native | becoming fully integrated into a cultural group through acts such as taking a leadership position, assuming key roles in society, entering into marriage, or other behaviors that incorporate an anthropologist into the society he or she is studying.

Habitus | the dispositions, attitudes, or preferences that are the learned basis for personal "taste" and lifestyles.

Harmful traditional practices | Behaviors that are viewed as ordinary and acceptable by members of a local community, but appear to be destructive or even criminal to outsiders.

Hegemonic discourses | Situations in which thoughts and actions are dictated by those in authority.

Hegemony | Power so pervasive that it is rarely acknowledged or even recognized, yet informs everyday actions.

Heteronormativity | a term coined by French philosopher Michel Foucault to refer to the often-unnoticed system of rights and privileges that accompany normative sexual choices and family formation.

Historical ecology | the study of how human cultures have developed over time as a result of interactions with the environment.

Historical linguistics | the study of how languages change.

Historical particularism | the theory that every culture develops in a unique way due to its history, including the interaction of people with the natural environment.

Holism | taking a broad view of the historical, environmental, and cultural foundations of behavior.

Homeostasis | the movement of a particular system (a human body, an ecosystem) towards equilibrium. In ecology this is associated with the idea that ecosystems should remain at a climax ecosystem associated with an area.

Hominin | Humans (Homo sapiens) and their close relatives and immediate ancestors.

Homo economicus | a term used to describe a person who would make rational decisions in ways predicted by economic theories.

Horticulture | a subsistence system based on the small-scale cultivation of crops intended primarily for the direct consumption of the household or immediate community.

Household | family members who reside together.

Humoral healing | An approach to healing that seeks to treat medical ailments by achieving a balance between the forces, or elements, of the body.

Hypodescent | a racial classification system that assigns a person with mixed racial heritage to the racial category that is considered least privileged.

Ideologies | ideas designed to reinforce the right of powerholders to rule.

Ideoscape | the global flow of ideas.

Indigenous | people who have continually lived in a particular location for a long period of time (prior to the arrival of others) or who have historical ties to a location and who are culturally distinct from the dominant population surrounding them. Other terms used to refer to indigenous people are aboriginal, native, original, first nation, and first people. Some examples of indigenous people are Native Americans of North America, Australian Aborigines, and the Berber (or Amazigh) of North Africa.

Indigenous media | Media produced by and for indigenous communities often outside of the commercial mainstream.

Inductive | a type of reasoning that uses specific information to draw general conclusions. In an inductive approach, the researcher seeks to collect evidence without trying to definitively prove or disprove a hypothesis. The researcher usually first spends time in the field to become familiar with the people before identifying a hypothesis or research question. Inductive research usually is not generalizable to other settings.

Interchangeability | the ability of all individuals of the species to both send and receive messages; a feature of some species' communication systems.

Jim Crow | a term used to describe laws passed by state and local governments in the United States during the early twentieth century to enforce racial segregation of public and private places.

Joint family | a very large extended family that includes multiple generations.

Key Informants | individuals who are more knowledgeable about their culture than others and who are particularly helpful to the anthropologist.

Kinesics | the study of all forms of human body language.

Kinship | blood ties, common ancestry, and social relationships that form families within human groups.

Kinship diagrams | charts used by anthropologists to visually represent relationships between members of a kinship group.

Kinship system | the pattern of culturally recognized relationships between family members.

Kinship terminology | the terms used in a language to describe relatives.

Land tenure | how property rights to land are allocated within societies, including how permissions are granted to access, use, control, and transfer land.

Language | an idealized form of speech, usually referred to as the standard variety.

Language death | the total extinction of a language.

Language shift | when a community stops using their old language and adopts a new one.

Language universals | characteristics shared by all linguists.

Larynx | the voice box, containing the vocal bands that produce the voice.

Legitimacy | the perception that an individual has a valid right to leadership.

Legitimizing ideologies | a set of complex belief systems, often developed by those in power, to rationalize, explain, and perpetuate systems of inequality.

Levirate | the practice of a woman marrying one of her deceased husband's brothers.

Lexicon | the vocabulary of a language.

Lineage | individuals who can trace or demonstrate their descent through a line of males or females back to a founding ancestor.

Linguistic relativity | the idea that the structures and words of a language influence how its speakers think, how they behave, and ultimately the culture itself (also known as the Whorf Hypothesis).

Magic | practices intended to bring supernatural forces under one's personal control.

Maladaptive | Traits that decrease the capacity of individuals to survive and reproduce.

Mass communication | One-to-many communication that privileges the sender and/or owner of the technology that transmits the media.

Materialism | a Marxist theory emphasizing the ways in which human social and cultural practices are influenced by basic subsistence (economic) needs.

Matriarchal | a society in which women have authority to make decisions.

Matrifocal | groups of related females (e.g. mother-her sisters-their offspring) form the core of the family and constitute the family's most central and enduring social and emotional ties.

Matrilateral cross-cousinmarriage | a man marries a woman who is his mother's brother's daughter.

Matrilineal | societies where descent or kinship group membership is transmitted through women, from mothers to their children (male and female), and then through daughters, to their children, and so forth.

Matrilineal descent | a kinship group created through the maternal line (mothers and their children).

Matrilocal | a woman-centered kinship group where living arrangements after marriage often center around households containing related women.

Matrilocal residence | married individuals live with or near the wife's mother's family.

Means of production | the resources used to produce goods in a society such as land for farming or factories.

Mechanical infrastructure | The apparatuses that bring networks of technology into existence.

Media | A word that used to describe a set of technologies that connect multiple people at one time to shared content.

Media practices | The habits or behaviors of the people who produce media, the audiences who interact with media, and everyone in between.

Mediascape | the flow of media across borders.

Medical anthropology | A distinct sub-specialty within the discipline of anthropology that investigates human health and health care systems in comparative perspective.

Middle English | the form of the English language spoken from 1066 AD until about 1500 AD.

Millenarians | people who believe that major transformations of the world are imminent.

Minimal response | the vocal indications that one is listening to a speaker.

Mode of production | the social relations through which human labor is used to transform energy from nature using tools, skills, organization, and knowledge.

Modern English | the form of the English language spoken from about 1500 AD to the present.

Modes of subsistence | the techniques used by the members of a society to obtain food. Anthropologists classify subsistence into four broad categories: foraging, pastoralism, horticulture, and agriculture.

Mono-cropping | the reliance on a single plant species as a food source. Mono-cropping leads to decreased dietary diversity and carries the risk of malnutrition compared to a more diverse diet.

Monotheistic | religious systems that recognize a single supreme God.

Morphemes | the basic meaningful units in a language.

Morphology | the study of the morphemes of language.

Multiculturalism | maintenance of multiple cultural traditions in a single society.

Multispecies ethnographies | an ethnographic approach in which anthropologists include non-human species as active participants in a society or culture and study their influence and actions.

Nation | an ethnic population

Naturalistic ethno-etiology | Views disease as the result of natural forces such as cold, heat, winds, or an upset in the balance of the basic body elements.

Negative reciprocity | an attempt to get something for nothing; exchange in which both parties try to take advantage of the other.

Negative reinforcements | punishments for noncompliance through fines, imprisonment, and death sentences.

Neoliberalism | the ideology of free-market capitalism emphasizing privatization and unregulated markets.

Neolithic Revolution | a period of rapid innovation in subsistence technologies that began 10,000 years ago and led to the emergence of agriculture. Neolithic means "new stone age," a name referring to the stone tools produced during this time period.

Neolocal residence | newly married individuals establish a household separate from other family members.

Noble savage | an inaccurate way of portraying indigenous groups or minority cultures as innocent, childlike, or uncorrupted by the negative characteristics of "civilization."

Nonconcordant | genetic traits that are inherited independently rather than as a package.

Nuclear family | a parent or parents who are in a culturally-recognized relationship, such as marriage, along with minor or dependent children.

Oaths | the practice of calling on a deity to bear witness to the truth of what one says.

Old English | English language from its beginnings to about 1066 AD.

One-drop rule | the practice of excluding a person with any non-white ancestry from the white racial category

Open system | a form of communication that can create an infinite number of new messages; a feature of human language only.

Oralist approach | an approach to the education of deaf children that emphasizes lip reading and speaking orally while discouraging use of signed language.

Ordeal | a test used to determine guilt or innocence by submitting the accused to dangerous, painful, or risky tests believed to be controlled by supernatural forces.

Palate | the roof of the mouth.

Paleoanthropologist | biological anthropologists who study ancient human relatives.

Paralanguage | those characteristics of speech beyond the actual words spoken, such as pitch, loudness, tempo.

Participant-observation | a type of observation in which the anthropologist observes while participating in the same activities in which her informants are engaged

Pastoralism | a subsistence system in which people raise herds of domesticated livestock.

Patriarchy | describes a society with a male-dominated political and authority structure and an ideology that privileges males over females in domestic and public spheres

Patrifocal | groups of related males (e.g. a father-his brothers) and their male offspring form the core of the family and constitute the family's most central and enduring social and emotional ties.

Patrilateral cousin marriage | the practice of marrying a male or female cousin on the father's side of the family.

Patrilineal | societies where descent or kinship group membership is transmitted through men, from men to their children (male and female), and then through sons, to their children, and so forth.

Patrilineal descent | a kinship group created through the paternal line (fathers and their children).

Patrilocal | a male-centered kinship group where living arrangements after marriage often center around households containing related men.

Patrilocal residence | married individuals live with or near the husband's father's family.

Peasants | residents of a state who earn a living through farming.

Performativity | Words or actions that cause something to happen.

Performing culture | Everyday words and actions that reflect cultural ideas and can be studied by anthropologists as a means of understanding a culture.

Personal front | Aspects of one's clothing, physical characteristics, comportment, and facial expressions that communicate an impression to others.

Personalistic ethno-etiology | Views disease as the result of the actions of human or supernatural beings.

Pharynx | the throat cavity, located above the larynx.

Phonemes | the basic meaningless sounds of a language.

Phonology | the study of the sounds of language.

Photovoice | A research method that puts cameras into people's hands so they can make their own representations of their lives and the activities.

Pidgin | a simplified language that springs up out of a situation in which people who do not share a language must spend extended amounts of time together.

Pigmentocracy | a society characterized by strong correlation between a person's skin color and his or her social class.

Placebo effect | A response to treatment that occurs because the person receiving the treatment believes it will work, not because the treatment itself is effective.

Plasticity | refers to the human capacity to learn any language or culture.

Political ecology | an interdisciplinary field of research that emphasizes the political and economic dimensions of environmental concerns.

Political economy | an approach in anthropology that investigates the historical evolution of economic relationships as well as the contemporary political processes and social structures that contribute to differences in income and wealth.

Polyandry | marriages with one wife and multiple husbands.

Polygamous | families based on plural marriages in which there are multiple wives or, in rarer cases, multiple husbands.

Polygyny | marriages in which there is one husband and multiple wives.

Polysemy | Settings, situations, and symbols that convey multiple meanings.

Polytheistic | religious systems that recognize several gods.

Poro and sande | secret societies for men and women, respectively, found in the Mande-speaking peoples of West Africa, particularly in Liberia, Sierra Leone, the Ivory Coast, and Guinea.

Positive reinforcements | rewards for compliance; examples include medals, financial incentives, and other forms of public recognition.

Pragmatic function | the useful purpose of a communication. Usefulness is a feature of all species' communication systems.

Pragmatics | how social context contributes to meaning in an interaction.

Presentation of self | The management of the impressions others have of us.

Priests | full-time religious practitioners.

Processual archaeology | a shift in archaeological studies toward scientific methods, testing of hypotheses, quantitative analysis, and theory-driven approaches and away from an earlier emphasis on typologies and descriptive analysis.

Productivity/creativity | the ability to produce and understand messages that have never been expressed before.

Profane | objects or ideas are ordinary and can be treated with disregard or contempt.

Proletarianization | a process through which farmers are removed from the land and forced to take wage labor employment.

Prophet | a person who claims to have direct communication with the supernatural realm and who can communicate divine messages to others.

Protected areas | lands set aside for conservation of the environment for their scenic beauty, biodiversity, recreational value, and other reasons.

Proxemics | the study of the social use of space, including the amount of space an individual tries to maintain around himself in his interactions with others.

Qualitative | anthropological research designed to gain an in-depth, contextualized understanding of human behavior.

Quantitative | anthropological research that uses statistical, mathematical, and/or numerical data to study human behavior.

Race | an attempt to categorize humans based on observed physical differences.

Racial formation | the process of defining and redefining racial categories in a society.

Raids | short-term uses of physical force organized and planned to achieve a limited objective.

Ranked | societies in which there are substantial differences in the wealth and social status of individuals; there are a limited number of positions of power or status, and only a few can occupy them.

Redistribution | the accumulation of goods or labor by a particular person or institution for the purpose of dispersal at a later date.

Reflexivity | Awareness of how one's own position and perspective impact what is observed and how it is evaluated.

Register | a style of speech that varies depending on who is speaking to whom and in what context.

Reified | the process by which an inaccurate concept or idea is accepted as "truth."

Reincarnation | the idea that a living being can begin another life in a new body after death.

Religion | the extension of human society and culture to include the supernatural.

Remittances | money that migrants laboring outside of the region or country send back to their hometowns and families. In Mexico, remittances make up a substantial share of the total income of some towns' populations.

Restricted exchange | a marriage system in which only two extended families can engage in this exchange.

Reverse dominance | societies in which people reject attempts by any individual to exercise power.

Revitalization rituals | attempts to resolve serious problems, such as war, famine or poverty through a spiritual or supernatural intervention.

Rite of intensification | actions designed to bring a community together, often following a period of crisis.

Rite of passage | a ceremony designed to transition individuals between life stages.

Role | the set of behaviors expected of an individual who occupies a particular status.

Sacred | objects or ideas are set apart from the ordinary and treated with great respect or care.

Segmentary lineage | a hierarchy of lineages that contains both close and relatively distant family members.

Semanticity | the meaning of signs in a communication system; a feature of all species' communication systems.

Semantics | how meaning is conveyed at the word and phrase level.

Serial monogamy | marriage to a succession of spouses one after the other

Shaman | a part time religious practitioner who carries out religious rituals when needed, but also participates in the normal work of the community.

Social classes | the division of society into groups based on wealth and status.

Socially constructed | a concept developed by society that is maintained over time through social interactions that make the idea seem "real."

Sodality | a system used to encourage solidarity or feelings of connectedness between people who are not related by family ties.

Somatic | Symptoms that are physical manifestations of emotional pain.

Sorcerer | an individual who seeks to use magic for his or her own purposes.

Sororate marriage | the practice of a man marrying the sister of his deceased wife.

Speech act | the intention or goal of an utterance; the intention may be different from the dictionary definitions of the words involved.

Standard | the variant of any language that has been given special prestige in the community.

Staple crops | foods that form the backbone of the subsistence system by providing the majority of the calories a society consumes.

State | the most complex form of political organization characterized by a central government that has a monopoly over legitimate uses of physical force, a sizeable bureaucracy, a system of formal laws, and a standing military force.

Status | any culturally-designated position a person occupies in a particular setting.

Stem family | a version of an extended family that includes an older couple and one of their adult children with a spouse (or spouses) and children.

Stratified | societies in which there are large differences in the wealth, status, and power of individuals based on unequal access to resources and positions of power.

Structural violence | a form of violence in which a social structure or institution harms people by preventing them from meeting their basic needs.

Structural-Functionalism | an approach to anthropology that focuses on the ways in which the customs or social institutions in a culture contribute to the organization of society and the maintenance of social order.

Subsistence farmers | people who raise plants and animals for their own consumption, but not for sale to others.

Subsistence system | the set of skills, practices, and technologies used by members of a society to acquire and distribute food.

Succession | changes in types of species in an area over time. For example, it would describe the different ecosystems that gradually replace one other after a forest fire.

Sumptuary rules | norms that permit persons of higher rank to enjoy greater social status by wearing distinctive clothing, jewelry, and/or decorations denied those of lower rank.

Supernatural | describes entities or forces not governed by natural laws.

Sustainable development | development that can meet present needs without damaging the environment or limiting the potential for future generations.

Swidden | an agricultural practice, also called shifting cultivation and slash-and-burn, in which fields are cleared, burned, and planted for several seasons before being returned to fallow for an extended period.

Symbol | anything that serves to refer to something else.

Symbolic ethnicity | limited or occasional displays of ethnic pride and identity that are primarily for public display.

Syncretism | the combination of different beliefs, even those that are seemingly contradictory, into a new, harmonious whole.

Syntax | the rules by which a language combines morphemes into larger units.

Taxonomies | a system of classification.

Taxonomy | a system of classification.

Technoscape | the global flows of technology.

The Other | is a term that has been used to describe people whose customs, beliefs, or behaviors are "different" from one's own

Thick description | a term coined by anthropologist Clifford Geertz in his 1973 book The Interpretation of Cultures to describe a detailed description of the studied group that not only explains the behavior or cultural event in question but also the context in which it occurs and anthropological interpretations of it.

Third gender | a gender identity that exists in non-binary gender systems offering one or more gender roles separate from male or female.

Transgender | a category for people who identify as a different gender than the one that was assigned to them at birth. This may entail a social transition or a physical one, using a number of methods

Tribe | political units organized around family ties that have fluid or shifting systems of temporary leadership.

Unbound morpheme | a morpheme that can stand alone as a separate word.

Undocumented | the preferred term for immigrants who live in a country without formal authorization from the state. Undocumented refers to the fact that these people lack the official documents that would legally permit them to reside in the country. Other terms such as illegal immigrant and illegal alien are often used to refer to this population. Anthropologists consider those terms to be discriminatory and dehumanizing. The word undocumented acknowledges the human dignity and cultural and political ties immigrants have developed in their country of residence despite their inability to establish formal residence permissions.

Unilineal | descent is recognized through only one line or side of the family.

Unilineal descent | kinship (family) systems that recognize only one sex-based "side" of the family.

Universal grammar (UG) | a theory developed by linguist Noam Chomsky suggesting that a basic template for all human languages is embedded in our genes.

Vernaculars | non-standard varieties of a language, which are usually distinguished from the standard by their inclusion of stigmatized forms.

Wilderness | a natural area that is untouched or unchanged by human activities and often seen as a cultural construct of the American West.

World system | a complex economic system through which goods circulate around the globe. The world system for food is characterized by a separation of the producers of goods from the consumers.

World Systems Theory | an approach to social science and history that involves examination of the development and functioning of the world economic system.

Zoomorphic | an object or being that has animal characteristics.

Zoonotic | Diseases that have origins in animals and are transmitted to humans.

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