

# Turn of Century Cultural Evolutionism: Ethnocentric and Racist

Social Classification		
	Civilized	Savage
Social Practices		
Marriage	Monogamy	Polygyny
Family	Nuclear	Extended
Kinship	Descriptive	Classificatory
Religion	Monotheistic	Polytheistic
Legal system	Law	Custom

## Lewis Henry Morgan's Scheme for Social Evolution in *Ancient Society*

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

# Ethnocentric Unilinear Model



Protestantism



Catholicism



Monotheism



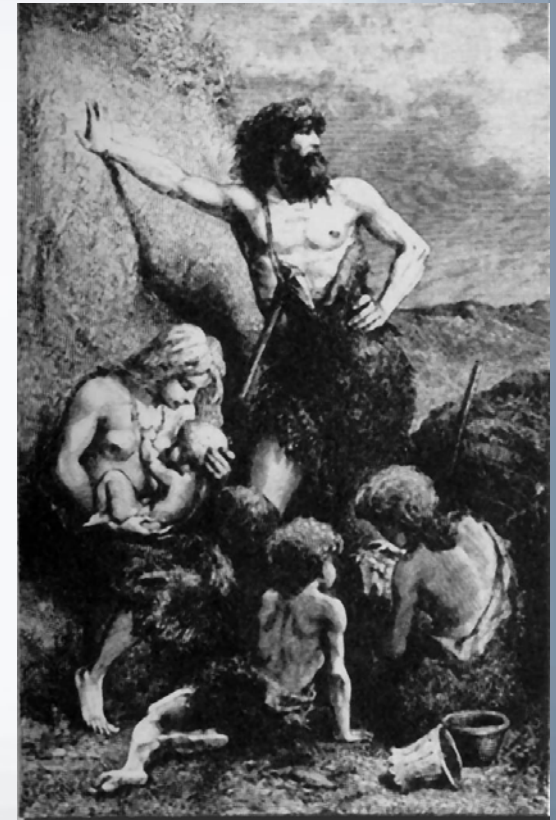
Polytheism



Totemism



Animism



Note moral and “progressive” ranking

# Which tool is more complex ?

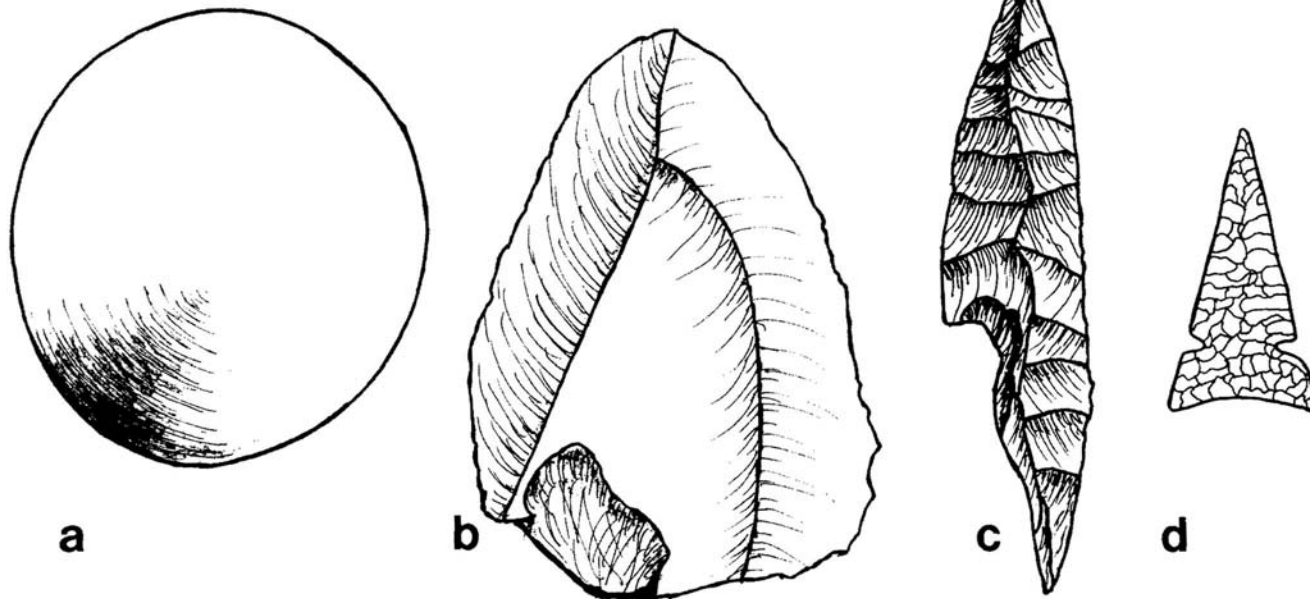


Figure 1. Stone tools: The first distance weapons. a) Water-polished cobble; b) Mousterian point from the Levant (ca. 55–65,000); c) Solutrian point made by behaviorally modern humans in Western Europe (ca. 18,000–22,000 ya); d) flint arrowhead from the American Midwest (ca. 1000 ya). Figures are approximately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

# How do we measure complexity?

## Some components:

- ☑ **More parts**
- ☑ **Specialization of parts**
- ☑ **Integration of parts**
- ☑ **Parts have limited purpose**

# Characteristics of Bands

## ➤ **Leadership**

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

## ➤ **Status**

- age & sex
- accomplishments
- shaman


## ➤ **Religion**

- ethnic
- shamanic

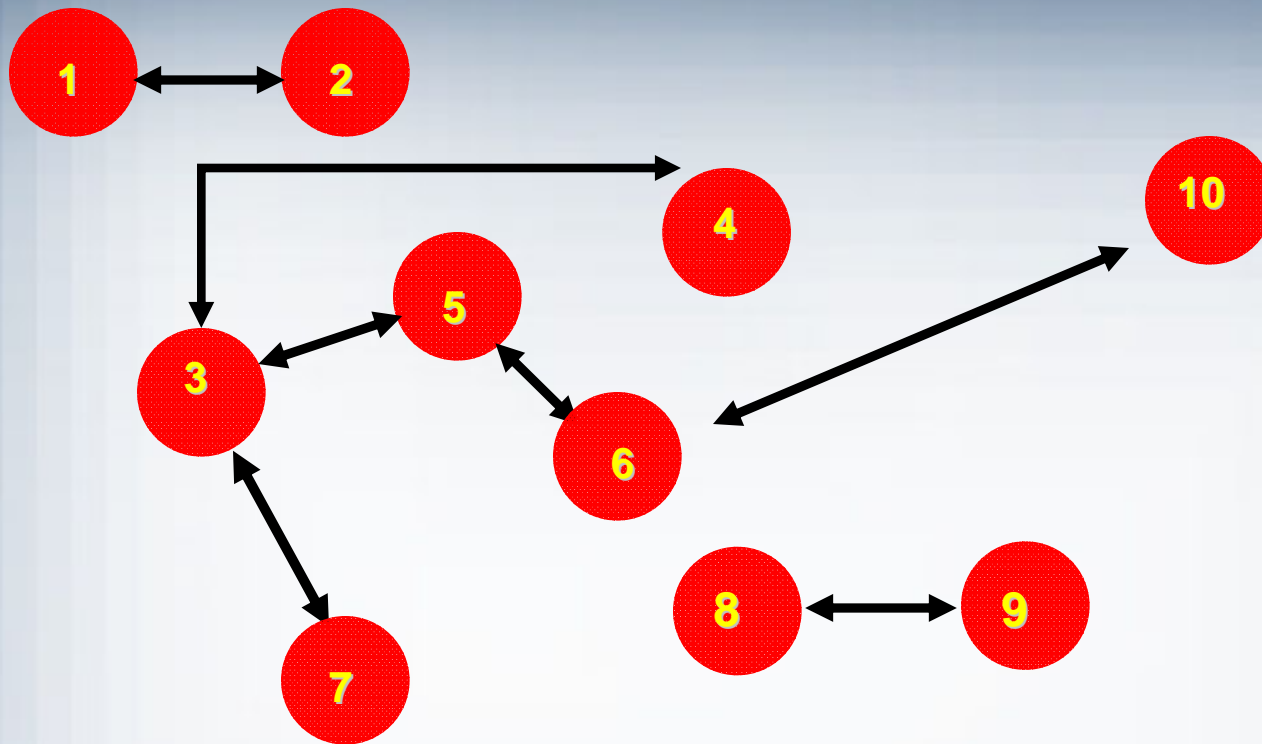
## ➤ **Economics**

- sex division of labor
- reciprocity
- generalization

# Characteristics of Tribes

- Leadership
  - headman or bigman
- Status
  - based on accumulation of wealth
- Sodality
  - organizations such as age grades, lineages, or secret societies that cross-cut territorial boundaries 
- Corporateness of local residential group

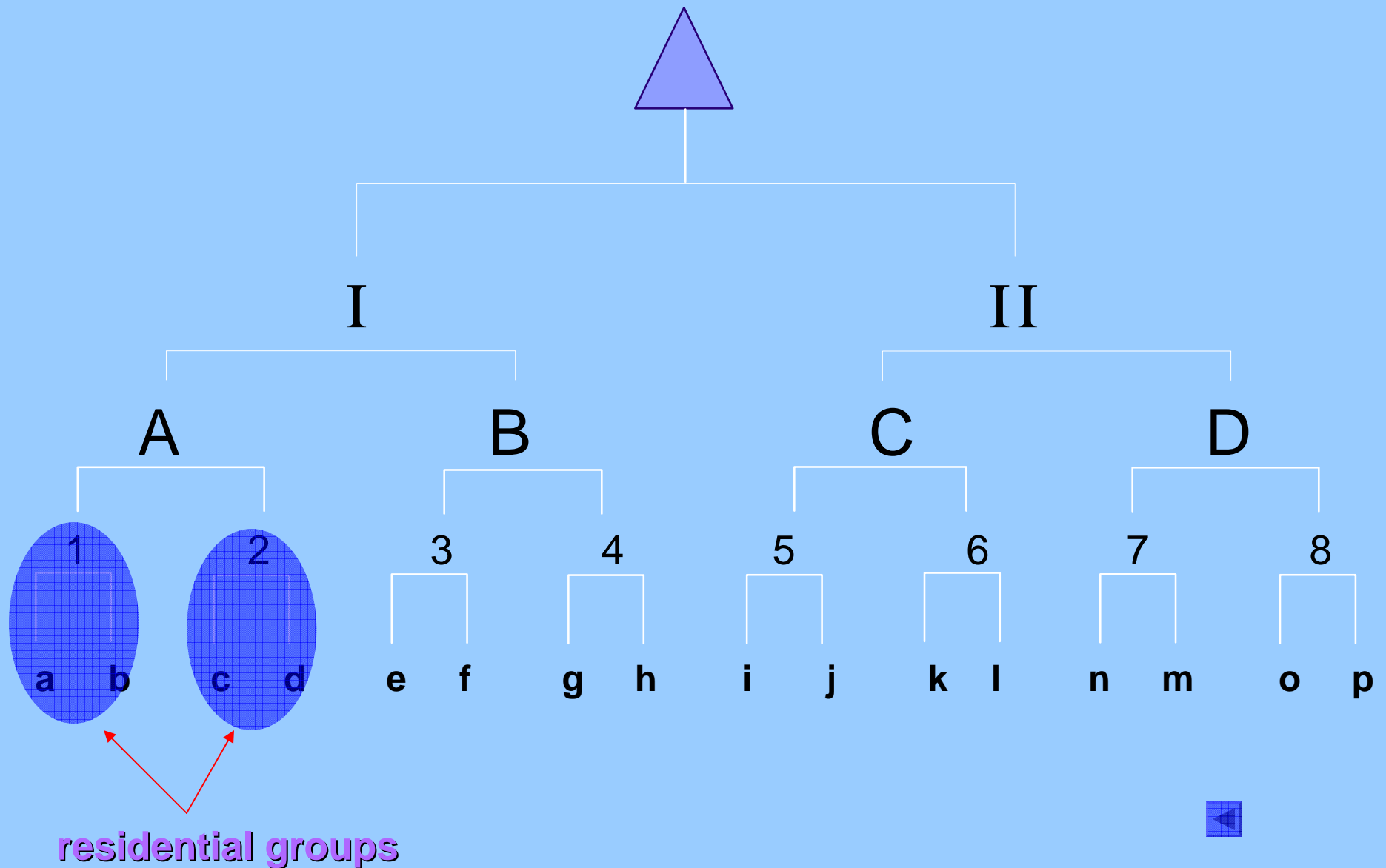
Simple ad hoc non-hierarchical alliance system: ties are short-lived and can be unilaterally broken and usually found in bands



**Circles represent villages and double-arrows alliances**



# Hierarchical alliance system based on kinship: Segmentary Lineage



# Characteristics of Headmen & Big Men

- Generosity
- Oratorical abilities
- Dispute settlement
- Consensus forming

## – **Benefits of being a headman**

- Polygyny (in some cases)
- Family members may be better treated

# Dealing with an aggrandizing headman

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

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

*Boehm, C. (1993). "Egalitarian behavior and reverse dominance hierarchy." Current Anthropology 34: 227-254.*

# Example of egalitarianism in sharing:

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

Told to Peter Fruechen after he thanked an Inuit man for giving him a share of seal meat (*Book of the Eskimos*, Page 154, 1961)

## Example of egalitarianism in sharing: San “Belittling of the Meat”

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

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

# Evolution and Dominance

- Boehm shows that among social primates there are dominance hierarchies that allow dominants to have:
  - Priority of access to
    - Food
    - Mates
    - Shelter
- In egalitarian societies this is not the case
- In tribal systems with strong big men and clearly in chiefdoms the primate dominance pattern reasserts itself

**C. Boehm *Hierarchy in the forest: The evolution of egalitarian behavior.*  
Cambridge University Press (1999)**

# Reverse Dominance Hierarchy

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

# Prestige and Dominance

- In primate societies there is a dominance hierarchy which leads to high dominance individuals having priority of access to resources and mates. Dominant individuals coerce sub-dominants, are approached submissively, and advertise their dominance through aggressive displays.
- In egalitarian societies this is much diminished.
- Instead certain individuals because of their expertise in cultural knowledge or performance have high **prestige**. Examples include:
  - Hunting ability
  - Artifact manufacture
  - Curing
  - Historical, social, & knowledge
  - Dispute resolution skills
- High prestige individuals:
  - Do things that are useful to the group through teaching, curing, or high productive abilities (e.g., good hunters)
  - They may gain certain advantages (extra food or mates) from those that pay them respect.



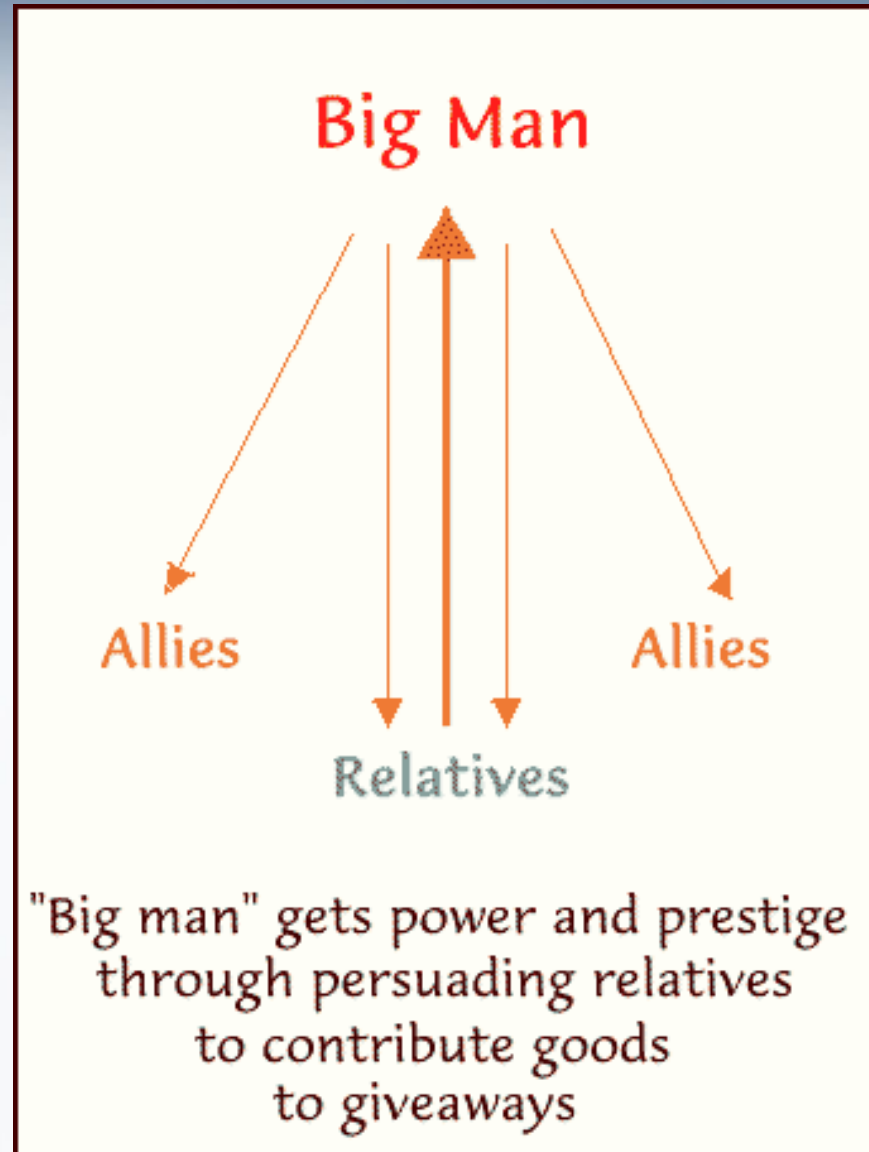
# Big Man in New Guinea

First steps back  
toward  
dominance



THE BIGMAN IS AN INFORMAL LEADER IN MANY MELANESIAN CULTURES. MUCH OF HIS INFLUENCE IS BASED ON HIS ABILITY TO DISTRIBUTE RESOURCES, AMONG WHICH PIGS ARE MOST IMPORTANT.

# Big Man Relations



# The Great Transformation

Hereditary

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Inequality

# Characteristics of Chiefdoms

## ➤ Leadership

- chief
- hereditary position (primogeniture)
- coercion

## ➤ Status

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

## ➤ Religion

- theocratic & ethnic
- ancestor worship

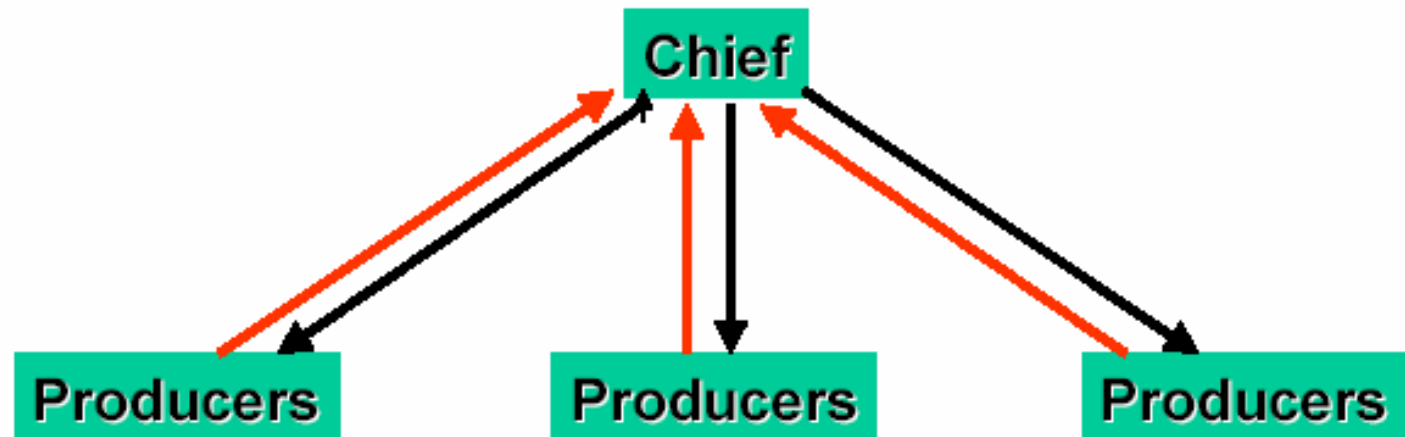
## ➤ Economics

- redistribution
- craft specialization

# Redistribution

## Distributing Goods and Services

**Redistribution:** goods flow up the system to a center (e.g., a chief) and then flow back down when needed

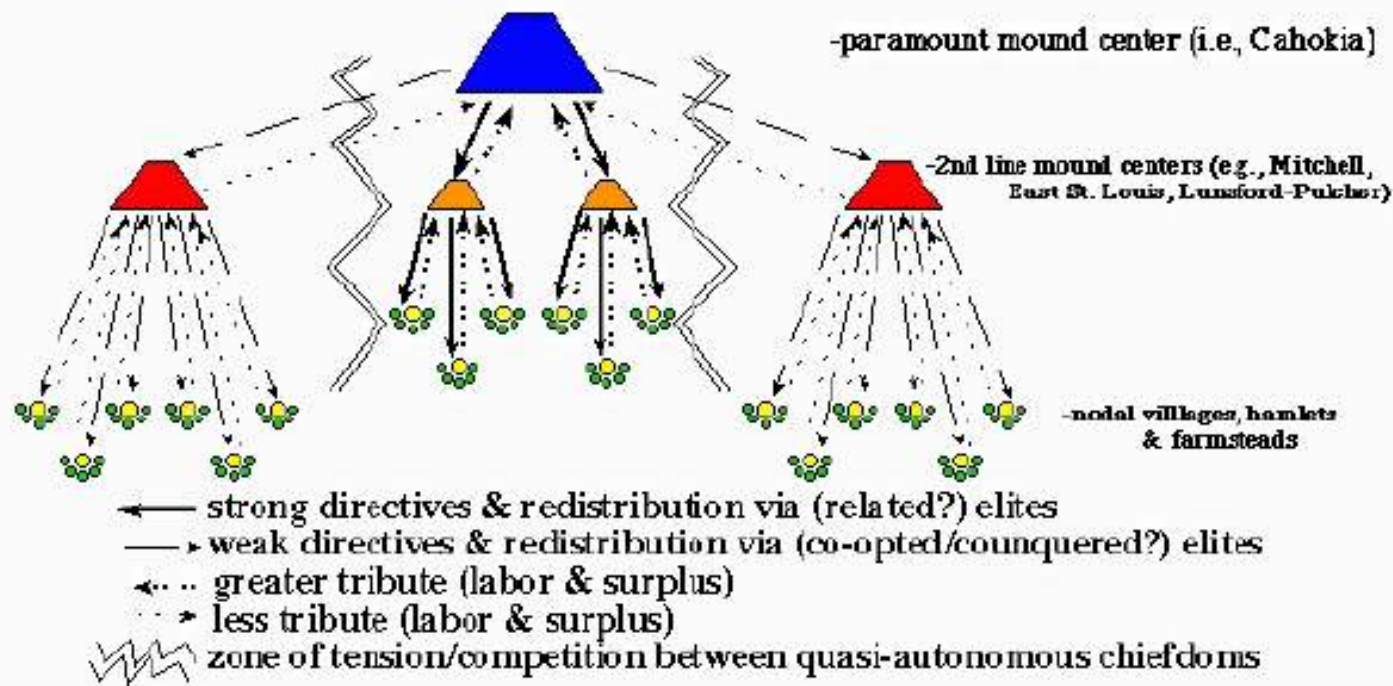


# Large Scale Political Integration

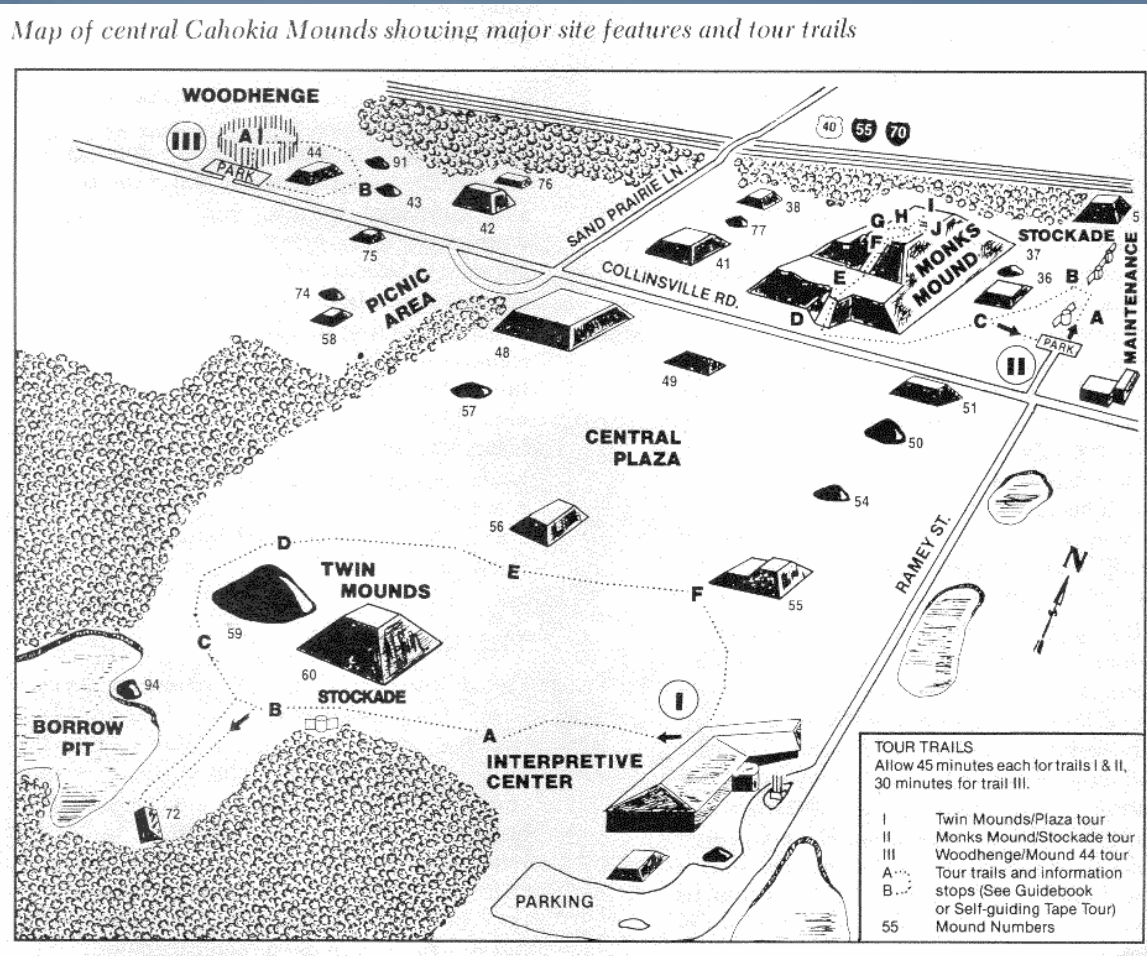
- Chiefdoms are hierarchical and regional polities incorporating several local groups.
- Leaders are members of a ruling aristocracy with dominant roles in social, political, and religious affairs

# Highly Integrated Chiefdom

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



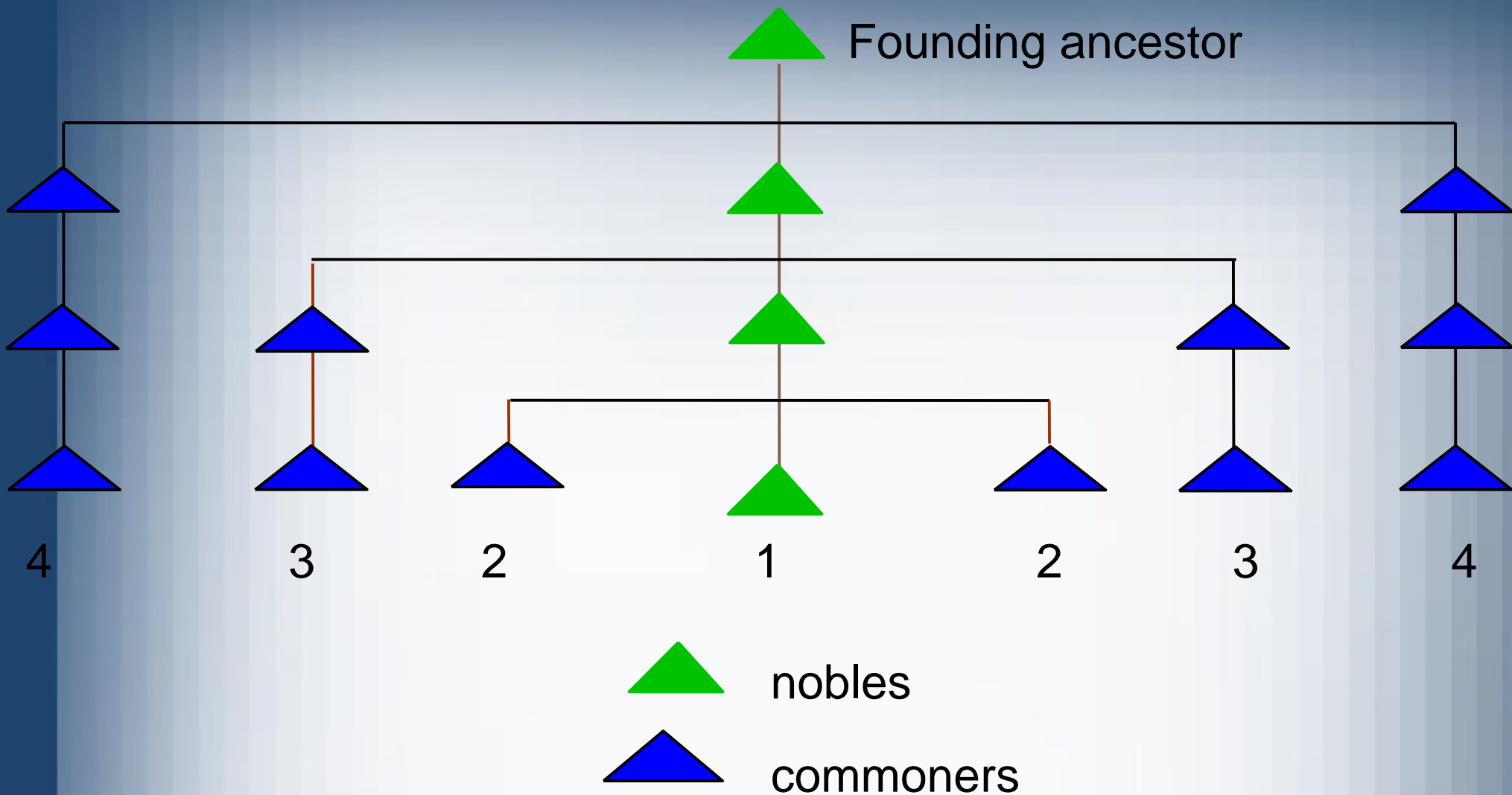
# Cahokia: A complex chiefdom



<http://www.cahokiamounds.com/cahokia.html>



# Conical Descent Group



# Characteristics of States



## Leadership & Politics

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

## Religion

- imperial or universalistic
- overlay of local ethnic religions

## Status

- continues to be based on birth (ascription)
- power of kinship groups begins to decline except among high status ●
- Mobility may be low or high (closed or open stratified systems) →

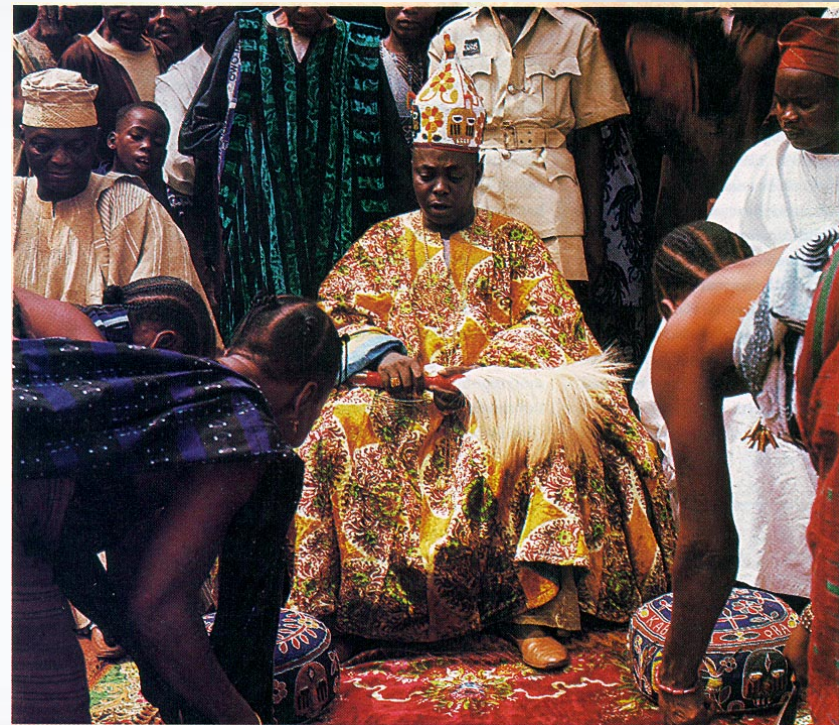
## Economics

- increased specialization often in hereditary guilds or castes

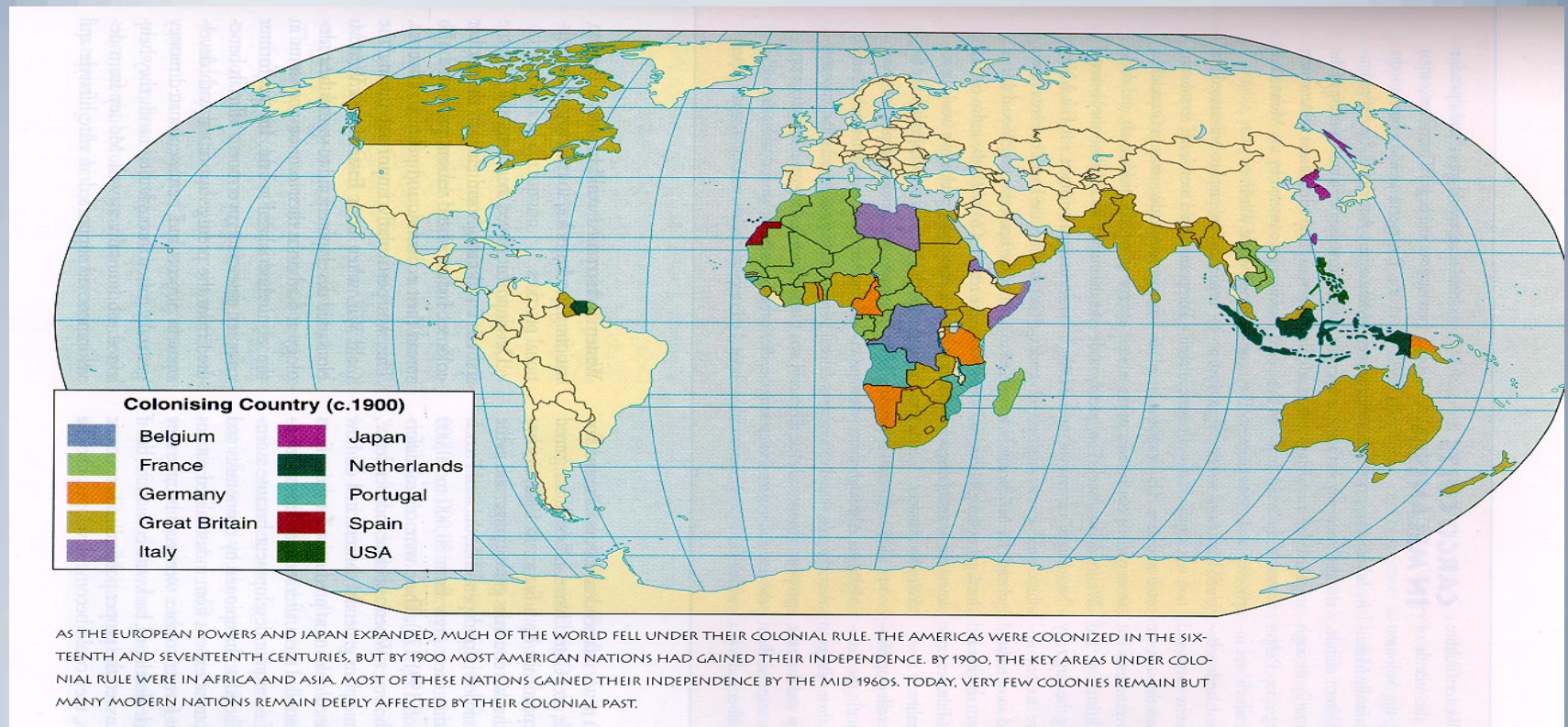


# Modes of Social Control in States

- **Direct Repression**
  - use of police,
  - jails, courts, and informers
- **Ideological Manipulation**
  - magico-religious institutions
  - education system
  - monumental architecture
  - state propaganda
- **Provision of Benefits**
  - military protection
  - police
  - infrastructure
  - social insurance



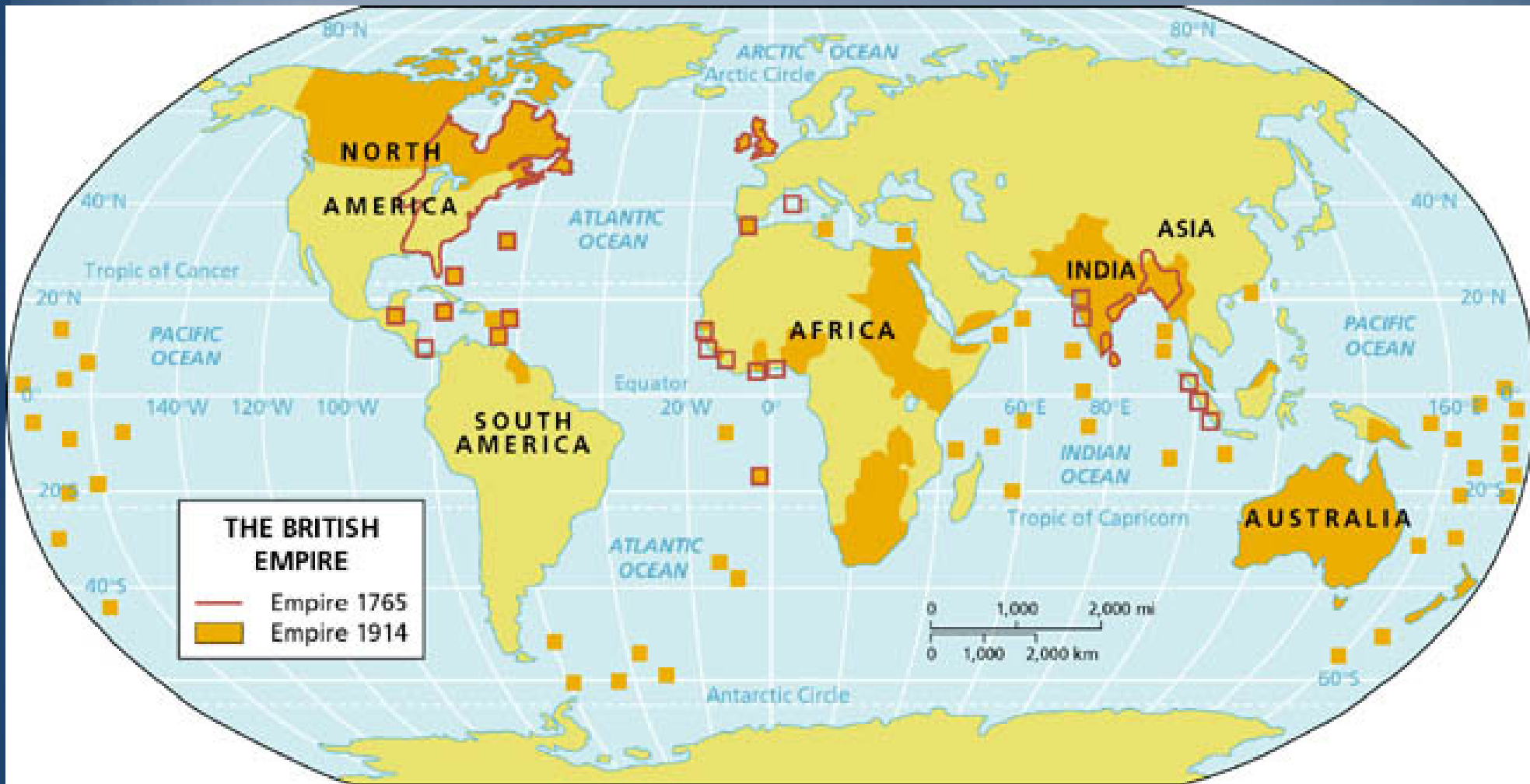
# Empires



# Scramble for Africa



# Britain's share of the world



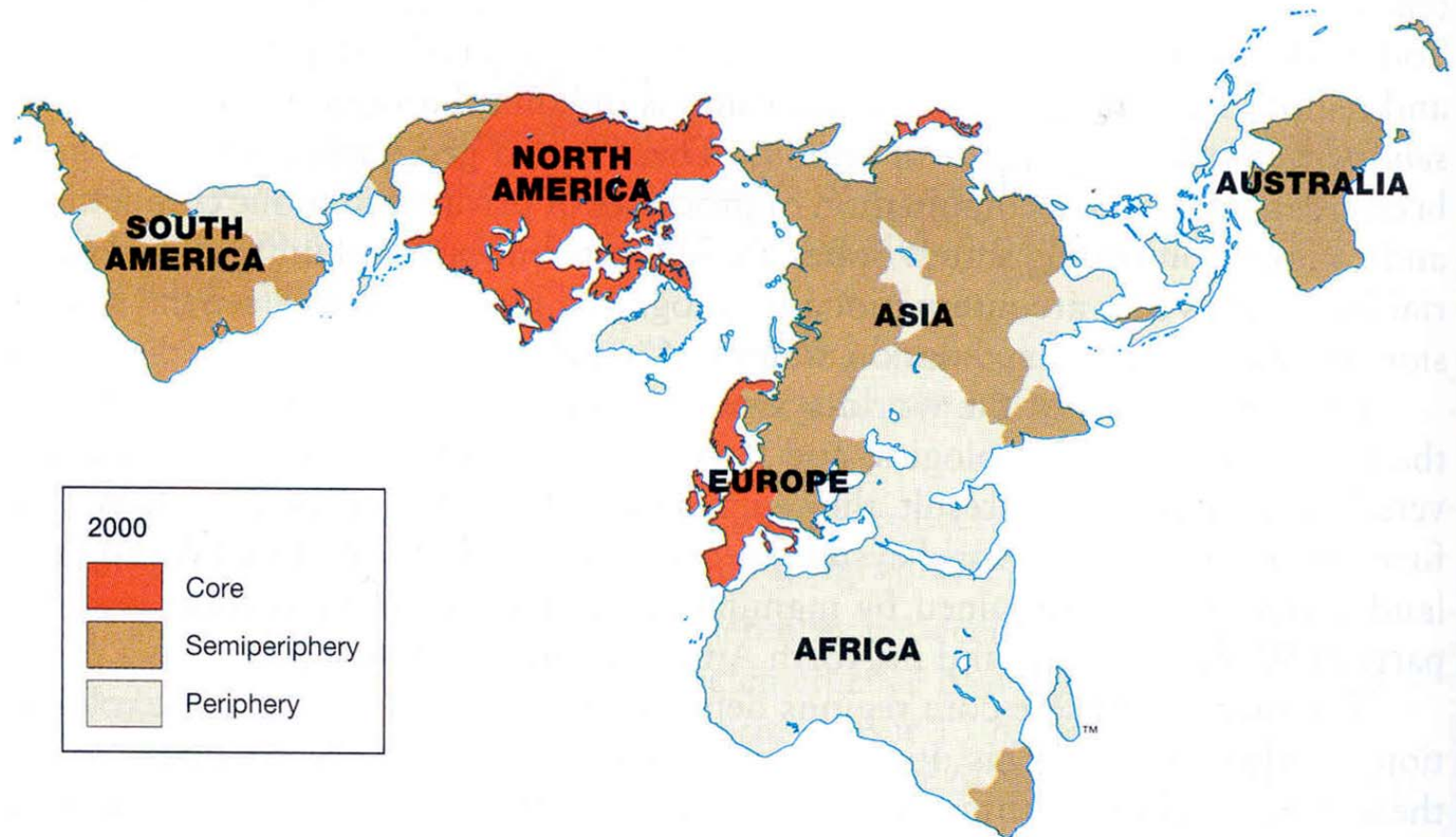
# Recent Trends

## World Systems Theory

Emmanuel Wallerstein

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

# World Systems





# States obliterate lineages because states:

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

Y. Cohen "Ends and means in political control. *American Anthropologist* 71 (1969)



# General Trends in Cultural Evolution

## Band

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

## Tribe

- Leader: bigman
- Politics: sodality

## Chiefdom

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

## State

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

Increasing social  
complexity

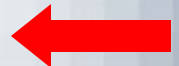


# Overall Evolutionary Trends

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

# Family Power Relationships

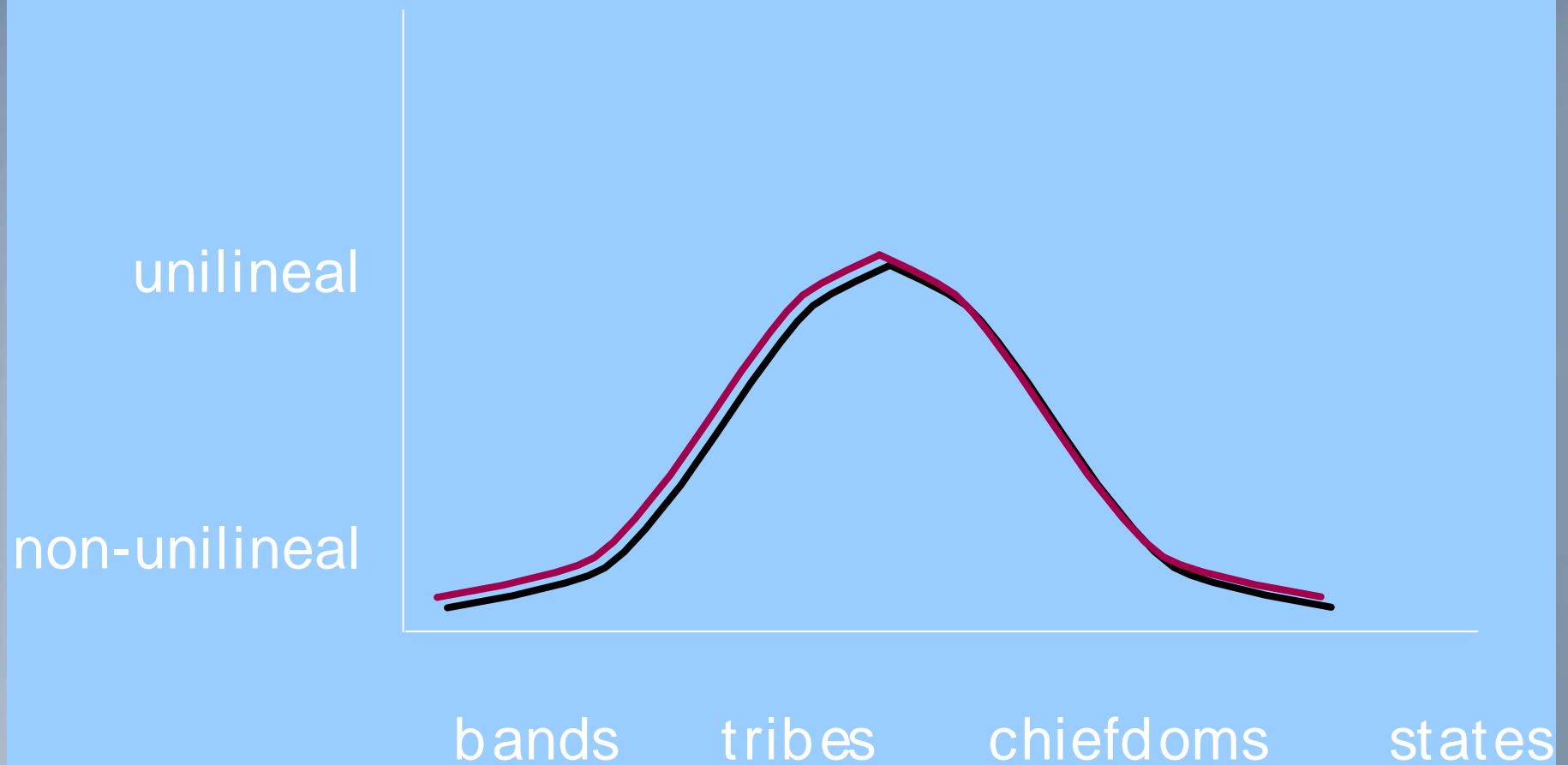
- Children must go to school
- Content of curriculum relating to civic & moral issues in the hands of “experts”
- Parents cannot abuse or neglect children
- Spousal abuse is prohibited
- Children free to seek medical treatment or parents cannot forbid medical treatment under certain circumstances



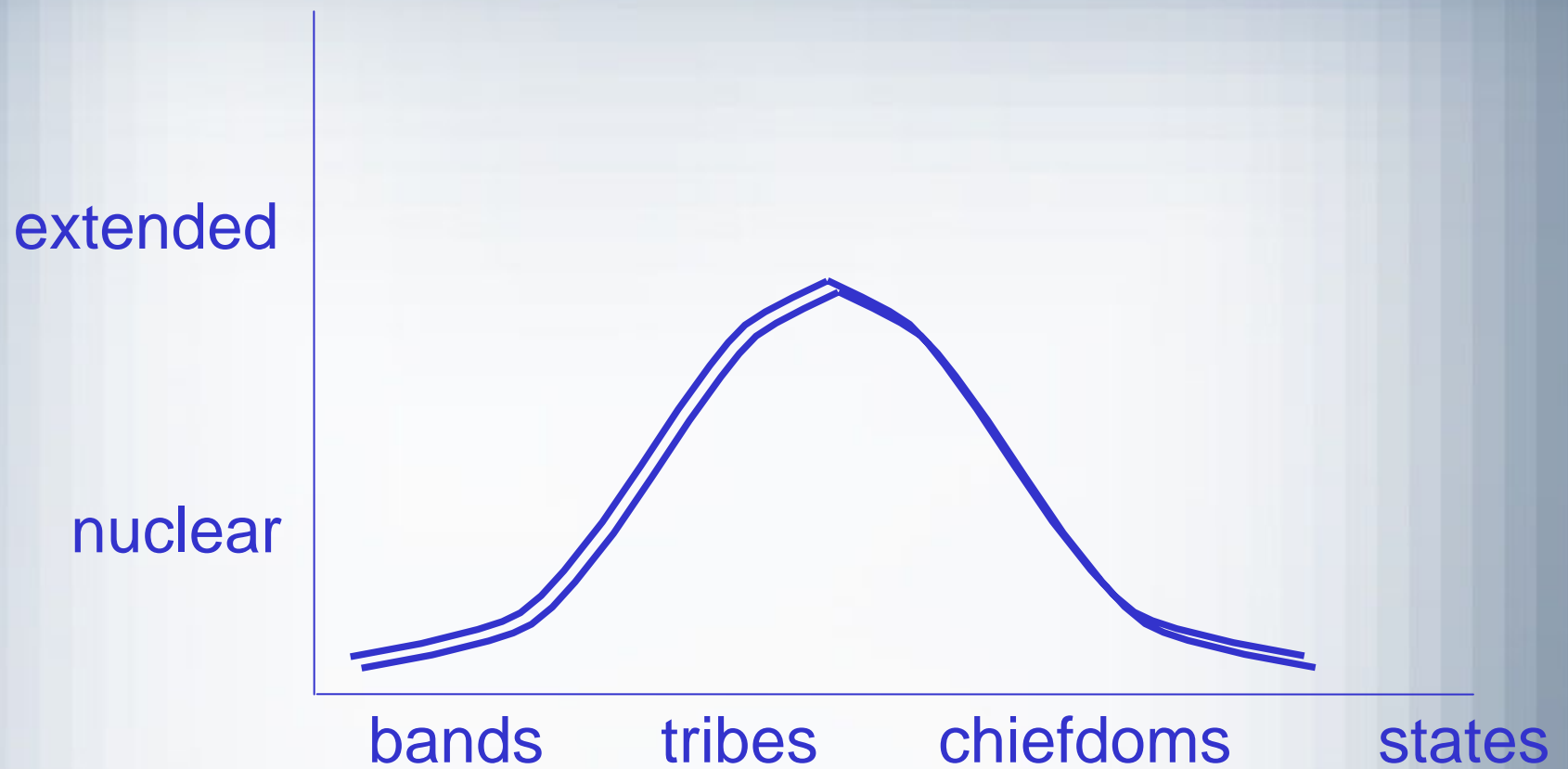
# World Systems Theory Classification

- **Core Societies:** powerful industrial societies that dominate other regions economically. They dominate trade, control advanced technology, and have highly diversified and productive economies.
- **Peripheral Societies:** non-industrial societies that have little control over their own economies and are dominated by core societies..
- **Semi-Peripheral Societies:** societies that are partially industrialized & enjoy some economic autonomy but not as advanced as core societies.


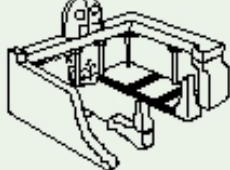



# Unilineal Descent & Social Complexity



# Family Form and Social Complexity



# Alternative Look at Cultural Evolution

	Prestate			State-Organized Societies
	Band	Tribe	Chiefdom	
Total Numbers	Less than 100	Up to a few thousand	5,000 - 20,000+	Generally 20,000+
Social Organization	Egalitarian Informal leadership	Segmentary society Pan-tribal associations Raids by small groups	Kinship-based ranking under hereditary leader High-ranking warriors	Class-based hierarchy under king or emperor Armies
Economic Organization	Mobile hunter-gatherers	Settled farmers Pastoralist herders	Central accumulation and redistribution Some craft specialization	Centralized bureaucracy Tribute-based Taxation Laws
Settlement Pattern	Temporary camps	Permanent villages	Fortified centers Ritual centers	Urban: cities, towns Frontier defenses Roads
Religious Organization	Shamans	Religious elders Calendrical rituals	Hereditary chief with religious duties	Priestly class Pantheistic or monotheistic religion
Architecture	Temporary shelters  <i>Paleolithic skin tents, Ukraine</i>	Permanent huts Burial mounds Shrines  <i>Neolithic shrine Çatalhöyük, Turkey</i>	Large-scale monuments  <i>Stonehenge, England — final form</i>	Palaces, temples, and other public buildings  <i>Pyramids at Giza</i>  <i>Castillo Chichén Itzá, Mexico</i>
Archaeological Examples	All Paleolithic societies, including Paleo-Indians	All early farmers (Neolithic/Archaic)	Many early metalworking and Formative societies Mississippian, USA Smaller African kingdoms	All ancient civilizations, e.g., in Mesoamerica, Peru, Near East, Southwest Asia, India and China, Greece and Rome
Modern Examples	Eskimos !Kung San Australian Aborigines	Pueblos, Southwest USA New Guinea Highlanders Nuer and Dinka in East Africa	Northwest Coast Indians, USA 18th-century Polynesian chiefdoms in Tonga, Tahiti, Hawaii	All modern states

General categories of ancient human societies. (Modified from Renfrew and Bahn, 2000.)



# Caste System in India: example of low mobility

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

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**Outcastes and untouchables: polluted workers**

