PLAINS INDIAN POLITICAL STRUCTURE[1]

A Comparative Study

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Introduction

The study of comparative political systems has, in recent years, attracted considerable attention. Methodological and theoretical approaches have been written by inter alia, Sutton (1955), and Eisenstadt (1959). The gist of these writings is that a political unit is a territorial representative unit, and that it has the power to call upon legitimized force in order to meet societal ends (Eisenstadt 1959 and Sutton 1955). These writings point out that the function of the political unit is to attain group goals and integrate the various "collectivities" or subsystems. Only Eisenstadt, however, has dealt with the Plains culture area of North America in a discussion of government.

Eisenstadt conceives Plains Indian government to be segmentary and "associational" (1959:208-209, 216). He lumps the Plains with the Pueblоans on the basis of his segmentary-associational criteria; because these tribes are without a centralized political organization and because "the most important offices are vested either in members of hereditary kinship groups or in members of the various associations which are characteristic of these tribes." He considers the "various kinship, territorial, and associational groups" to be "self-regulatory." (Eisenstadt 1959:208). Eisenstadt considers the emphasis on war and "pursuit of collective goals" to be important in value orientation and societal goals, and these, in turn, affect the associations themselves. Finally, Eisenstadt acknowledges the seasonal occurrence of a centralized polity and attributes it to the necessary result of an emphasis on collective goals (Eisenstadt 1959:216).

The only extensive comparisons of Plains political organization that have come to my attention are those by MacLeod (1937), Provinse (1955), Smith (1925), and, on a more limited basis both by tribe and subject (law), Hoebel (1954) who deals with the Comanche, Cheyenne and Kiowa.

Provinse[2] also deals with Plains social control, but analyzes it in the light of Radcliffe-Brown's primary, secondary, and mixed sanctions (Radcliffe-Brown 1935). Concerning the military societies and Lowie's ascription and later rejection of statelike origin to them, Provinse says, "One does not find in these Plains military societies the germs of law and the state. One finds that the germs have germinated and grown up. They are comparable, not antecedent, to our modern state" (Provinse 1955:365). Provinse later concludes that "law, even in the most formal and restricted sense in which it can be defined, did exist, not only as criminal law but also, though to a lesser extent, as civil law" (Provinse 1955:370).

Smith (1925), who summarizes tribe by tribe data on Plains Indian political structure, is interested in the function of the council in its political role. In his discussion of the council, Smith begins by stating, in direct opposition to MacLeod, that "The Indians of the Plains had little formal government, because they had little need of it" (Smith 1925:73). He states that "Before the historic period little power seems to have been held by the chiefs," and in a footnote excepts the Kiowa and Iowa (Smith 1925:73). Smith ascribes to the council "a great socializing force" that emphasized tribal unity. Finally, he believes that the council preceded the chief and remained after more complex political systems were instituted (Smith 1925:77). In short, Smith considers the council to be the most important political unit on the Plains.

Hoebel (1954:127-176) uses the Comanche, Cheyennes and Kiowa inter alii to illustrate legal processes in primitive societies. He summarizes his own reports on the Comanche (1940 and 1952), Cheyenne (1936 and 1941), and Richardson's monograph on the Kiowa (1940), by saying, "So ran the law in this group of Plains tribes. Comanche law expressed individualism checked at critical points by social use of other individuals. Cheyenne law expressed a supreme sense of social well-being kept flexible by a continuous concern for individualism. The Kiowas never had a clear idea of which they preferred and muddled along trying to serve both ends" (Hoebel 1954:176).

The basic tenets of the above syntheses of Plains Indian political organization can be summarized by stating that there was a reasonably well developed body of law and that there was, at least in the summer, a certain amount of complexity of development of tribal polity on the Plains. I will modify the definition of a political unit given above because of the difficulty in defining a territorial unit. Hence, my basic definition is that a political unit is a representative unit of one or more persons from a larger body of people occupying and exploiting a certain, but not fixed, amount of territory and acknowledging the authority of the representative unit. I shall consider the primary function of the political unit to be the successful integration of the various subsystems of the society, and secondarily the successful attainment of societal goals and upholding societal values. Within this framework, then, I propose that the political units on the Plains attempted to integrate what, in some respects, was a primarily disintegrative society.

Disintegrative Factors

The forces that tended toward tribal disintegration and segmentation were numerous. To a certain extent they varied from tribe to tribe, but a few generalizations can be made. Briefly, among the potentially disintegrative factors were the rivalry between men's societies, individualism in war and other pursuits, band organization prevalent in much or most of the year, and finally the factionalism which resulted from increased contact with whites and terminated in the various "Indian wars" of the second half of the nineteenth century.

Men's associations serving fraternal, military, recreational, and police functions are so common as to have been considered one of the traits delineating the Plains as a culture area (inter alii Wissler 1920; 1938, Lowie 1954). The only groups lacking a societal organization were the Comanche (Lowie 1915a:809-

812 and Wallace and Hoebel 1952) and perhaps the Wind River Shoshone (Murphy 1959a).

An important distinction should be drawn here between age graded, universalistic societies (Blackfoot, Mandan, Hidatsa, Arapaho, and Gros Ventre) and the particularistic ungraded societies comprising the rest of the Plains groups (except of course the Comanche).[3] Because of the universalistic character of age grades, age grades as disintegrative factors in a society can be discounted. Indeed, the effect of age grades upon a society would probably be greater integration. For this reason the five graded tribes will be excluded from this part of the discussion.

Rivalry between men's associations is explicit or implied in the data for many of the ungraded multi-associational Plains tribes. Concerning the Crow, Lowie says, "In the 'sixties and 'seventies the grouping of most men into either the Lumpwood or Fox club provided a natural line of cleavage; accordingly, we learn that in certain games the men of one of these societies and their wives are pitted against the members of the other society and their wives. But alignment in two opposite camps revolved essentially about two activities: mutual wife kidnapping . . . and competition for the honor of striking the first coup of the season" (Lowie 1956:186).

After successfully stealing wives and flaunting them in a great parade (Lowie 1956:190-191), the societies went out on the warpath, each striving to strike the first coup of the season. So institutionalized was this rivalry that "Whether any other club got ahead of both did not matter" (Lowie 1956: 191). Whoever counted the first coup then mocked the opposing club "until they had struck the first coup in a subsequent encounter" (Lowie 1956:191). In short, the rivalry between men's societies among the Crow was important, and by its very nature might tend to be disruptive to Crow society.

Among the Iowa, Skinner says, "Rivalry was keen between the military societies, and each tried to be represented on the warpath. Coups counted by members increased the society's prestige, and the organization was allowed to boast of them. Hence, each society courted the membership of braves, and tried to outdo all others" (Skinner 1915:692). On the same page Skinner compares the situation of the Iowa rivalry to that of the Crow Fox and Lumpwood rivalry and assigns this specific type of relationship to two specific societies.

Rivalry among Teton associations was certainly as great, although not as institutionalized as among the Crow. "Although all akichita [men's police] societies have much in common, they seem not to have felt any bonds or obligations toward each other. We are told that wife stealing was a great sport [all wives of members of other societies] being legitimate prey. "On going out with a war party, there [was] considerable rivalry between the members of different societies as to who [would] kill the enemy first . . . on returning home they [held] a ceremony of rivalry. Two societies gathered together, one on each side. First one member [would] get up and tell of how he killed an enemy. . . Then someone on the other side [would] tell of a deed, etc. (Wissler 1912:74). In short, it can be seen that intense rivalry between men's associations was part of the Teton pattern.

Of the ungraded, multi-associational tribes, certain groups are specifically mentioned as being without societal rivalry. Among them are the Kiowa (Lowie 1916b:843), Pawnee (Lowie 1916a:891), and the Wind River Shoshone (Lowie 1915:814). For each of these, however, there is room for explanation. The Kiowa societies, for example, functioned only during the four weeks of the buffalo hunt and sun dance (Richardson 1940).

For the rest of the Plains tribes, rivalry between men's associations probably, to a greater or lesser extent, did exist, even, it seems among some of the age-graded tribes, for example the Gros Ventre (Lowie 1916a:934). Since Lowie in his age-grading paper thinks of inter-associational rivalry as being of the Crow-Teton type of institutionalized rivalry, there is the possibility that a less institutionalized rivalry existed between men's associations among other tribes on the Plains. In any case, the characteristic of rivalry between men's associations might tend to threaten the cohesion of the social system and thus would constitute a potential disintegrative factor. That a men's association might become a "territorial" unit and, as such, a political segment of a tribe, is exemplified by the Cheyenne Dog Soldier band (Llewelyn and Hoebel 1941:100). In brief, then, it would appear that men's associations might constitute one disintegrative factor in Plains society.

Individualism

Pronounced individualism in war and to a lesser extent in other aspects of life would seem to be another potentially disintegrative factor in Plains Indian society.

Individualism in war is implicit in many of the institutions in the Plains Indian war complex. The Teton warrior fought "not so much to damage the enemy as to distinguish himself" (Vestal 1957:10). The basic individualism of warriors is again borne out by reference to other sources such as Lowie (1954) or Wissler (1920), etc. Indeed, the basic institution of counting coup (Grinnell 1910 in Kroeber and Waterman 1931:367-373) is in itself a mark of individualism. The use of officers beneath the war leader among the Teton to help hold back ambitious young men (Wissler 1912:54-61) implies the individualistic tendencies of warriors wanting to count the first coup at the expense, for instance, of a planned ambush or horse raid. The Cheyenne, Crow, Hidatsa, Omaha, and Teton had problems with war parties starting out at inauspicious times and police were called in to stop them (Provinse 1955:347-348; Llewelyn and Hoebel 1941:146ff.; Lowie 1956:5; Fletcher and La Flesche 1911:210, 404-405). Here, the fact that unauthorized war parties did slip away upon occasion, flaunting the religious and secular sanctions against unauthorized war parties, tends to show the disintegrative factor of war individualism. In short, it appears that war individualism among Plains Indians proved a potentially disruptive factor to social cohesion.

The other principal manifestation of individuality as a threat to group cohesion is found in the flaunting of hunt police authority. Since all of the sources prescribe punishment for premature hunting of buffalo and driving away the herd, it would appear that this threat to the system happened often enough to necessitate the inauguration of an actual hunt police force among all but

the Comanche (Wallace and Hoebel 1952, Hoebel 1940, Lowie 1915:809-812) and the Sarsi (Goddard 1914:465). Among the Cheyenne, four and perhaps five of the fifty three cases dealt with are concerned with hunt infractions (Llewelyn and Hoebel 1941:9-12, 95, 112-113, 116-117, 117-118). Since data on other tribes are unclear, I can only make the inference, based upon the presence of police, that premature buffalo hunting was quite a common occurrence on the Plains, particularly among the more eastern groups who came onto the Plains relatively late where the central polity and concomitant police seem to be stronger. The fact, then, that hunt police were found among all tribes except the Comanche and Sarsi, bespeaks, I think, the individualism of hunters.

Probably the most highly individualistic of all the Plains groups is the Comanche. "The adult male was a warrior, vigorous, self-reliant and agressive. He took what he could get and held what he had without much regard for the abstract rights of those weaker than himself. A ready willingness to arbitrate differences or to ignore slights, was a sign of weakness resulting in loss of prestige" (Wallace and Hoebel 1952:146; for the original, unacknowledged source of these sentences see Linton 1936:121). Furthermore, because of the great number of legal cases involving torts and settled by the people concerned in battle or spite, Wallace and Hoebel have considered the ethos of the Comanche to be highly individualistic (1952).

To summarize, individualism, whether it be that connected with war or with the hunt, or with any other aspect of camp life, was another factor that could lead to the disintegration of Plains society.

Segmentary Band Organization

With the possible exception of some of the village tribes; that is, the Hidatsa, Arikara and Southern Siouans, the principal socio-economic and politically represented unit for all of the Plains was the band. Fluid as they might have been, for most of the year the bands of each tribe were probably autonomous except when they congregated under a centralized government at the time the tribal ceremony and buffalo hunt was held. Again the Comanche proved the exception by never congregating on a tribal basis (Wallace and Hoebel 1952:212, 214). More specifically, bands are ascribed to the Comanche (Wallace and Hoebel 1952:22, 214), Kiowa (Richardson 1940:6ff.), Kiowa-Apache (McAllister 1955:165-166), Cheyenne (Llewelyn and Hoebel 1941:110-111), Arapaho (Hilger 1952:187-189), Teton (Hassrick 1944:338), Crow (Lowie 1956:4-5), Gros Ventre (Kroeber 1908:147), Assiniboine (Dorsey 1897:222-223). Blackfoot (Ewers 1958:96), Plains Cree (Mandelbaum 1940:221), Plains Ojibwa (Skinner 1914:481), Shoshone (Lowie 1909a:206), Mandan (Lowie 1954:87), Pawnee (Murie 1914:549), and possibly other village tribes, particularly if the village could be considered analogous to the band. Of all these tribes, the band was the chief component unit that in winter was an absolute economic necessity if the people were not going to starve. Lowie cites a case in point from the Cheyenne who attempted to stay together during the winter and "nearly perished" (Lowie 1954:87).

The band, then, represented the smallest necessary unit on the Plains, witness the Comanche who had nothing more. As such, the tendency toward

disintegration of the tribal society was greatly increased. Indeed, contrary to the "rebellion" of an Eastern Dakota band that was crushed by the police (cited below), a Teton from Standing Rock Reservation and now a psychologist in Berkeley, told me that once his great grandmother's band stayed away from the rest of the tribe during an entire summer. This is certainly tribal disintegration when one considers summer to be the time of the tribal conclave. Even when the tribal government was able to function strongly in the summer, the economic necessity of band segmentation in the winter would militate against the continuing functioning of a strong tribal polity in the winter, due to lack of easy communication with the governed, component units. In short, the band organization was a definite, disintegrative factor in Plains tribal society.

Factionalism

The differential reaction to white influence, particularly during the period of the Indian wars and somewhat before and after, was probably the strongest factor tending toward the disintegration of Plains Indian societies. Around the time of the beginning of the Indian wars, the reaction of the tribes to white settlers was one of peaceful, though begrudged coexistence, members of tribes joining the whites as scouts and auxiliaries in the suppression of hostiles. Perhaps concomitant with this reaction was intra-tribal factionalism due to various segments of the tribe wanting peace or war with the incoming whites. Because the area to be covered in Indian-white relations is so vast, I shall briefly discuss only the more salient points.

The data suggest that peaceful coexistence with whites usually constituted a fiction of tribal policy, because warriors would often serve with United States troops for a small amount of money or trade goods, a uniform, and perhaps most important, a chance to get back at traditional enemies of the tribe. Grinnell (1956), Vestal (1948), Wellman (1947), and Stewart (1955) cite the following tribes as providing U.S. Army scouts: Arikara, Crow, Osage, Pawnee, and Shoshone. In reality, the policy of providing scouts for the army constituted an actual, though not necessarily formal policy in interaction with whites.[4]

Peaceful coexistence with whites was strained and difficult. So far as my sources show, it seems that only the Omaha were able to withstand white pressure without any overt reaction (Fletcher and LaFlesche 1911:611-642). Even among those tribes generally friendly toward whites, however, there was a certain amount of factionalism.

Factionalism in the sense of pro- and anti-white factions cleaving the tribe and thus disrupting tribal unity occurred probably among all Plains groups. Ernest Thompson Seton notes a Crow Council, for example, that seriously considered an uprising until silenced by the negative reaction of Plenty Coups (1921:485-488). In the brief and relatively unimportant Blackfoot war (Ewers 1958:236-253) and the period immediately preceding and following it, factionalism was such that whole bands were either pro- or anti-white, and the tribal head chief was murdered for his white sympathies by some of the conservatives (Ewers 1958:242).

From 1878 to 1890 and perhaps earlier and overlapping the flight of Dull Knife and Little Wolf in 1879, Cheyenne served as scouts, even against their own people (Grinnell 1956:398-436). Even in the Dull Knife faction, the last Cheyenne "hostile" group, there was a split exemplified by the suppression of the pro-white chief Tangle Hair of the Dog Soldier band whom the whites attempted to bribe in order for him to surrender his following (because of the peculiar structure of band and men's association here being coterminous, the association leader with rather autocratic power could legally surrender the band). Indeed it was the threat of death only that kept Tangle Hair from surrendering (Llewelyn and Hoebel 1941:105-106).

Teton reservation farmers were regarded by other Teton ". . . as weaklings and traitors who had deserted their people and the old way of life and were trying to imitate the ways of white people" (Hyde 1956:24). As my Teton informant pointed out, each member of the arresting party sent to get Sitting Bull had a personal grievance against someone in the "hostile" group. And according to him, on Standing Rock Reservation today there is still the dichotomy between "Sitting Bull" Sioux and "Hang-Around-the-Fort" Sioux. Concerning the Eastern Dakota, Riggs says, "When [Little Crow's] outbreak of 1862 occurred . . . the whole camp of hostile Indians removed up to [Haglewood Mission] country, and they forced the Christian Indians to leave their houses, which were all afterwards burned" (Riggs 1893:222).

In short, factionalism did occur and played an important part in the disintegration of tribal unity on the Plains.

In summary, rivalry of men's societies, individualism in war and hunting, band organization during most of the year, and differential reaction to whites producing intra-tribal factionalism were among the chief disintegrative factors in Plains Indian society. Of these, the last, that is factionalism, was probably the greatest factor contributing to the final breakdown of Plains Indian political structure, and so strong was its' hold that it exists even today (see for instance Vogt 1952:88-93: Goldfrank 1952:74-79).

Integrative Factors

The chief political, integrative factors of Plains Indian society were probably the chiefs, council, and police. Integrative, but in a non-political way, were the tribal ceremony, the communal buffalo hunt, and the necessity for banding together for defense against enemies. The data show two predominant types of Plains political structure which correlate rather closely with the nomadic and the semi-sedentary peoples. The first type, which is characteristic of the nomads, is a representational, achieved status chieftainship, that is neither religiously nor kin group oriented. The second type, characteristic of the semi-sedentary tribes, is a semi-hereditary, almost ascribed status chieftainship, that is religiously oriented. In either case, the political unit, whether a chief "who just got that way" or a bundle owning "priest," strove toward attaining such collective societal goals as group defense. He always had the aid of legitimized force in the form of the police function performed by "soldiers" in camp, on the march, and on the hunt.

Of the nomadic type system, the following tribes can be considered representative: Arapaho, Assiniboine, Blackfoot, Cheyenne; to the extent of band chiefs, the Comanche, Plains Cree, Crow, Gros Ventre, Kiowa, Kiowa-Apache, Plains Ojibwa, Omaha,? Sarsi, Shoshone and Teton. The complexity of political organization in this group varied from the Comanche band chief who was given no formal recognition beyond being the most influential of the family heads composing the band (Wallace and Hoebel 1952:210) to the highly organized summer government of the Cheyenne embodied in the Council of Forty-four with the adjunct of a men's association as a police force (Llewelyn and Hoebel 1941; Hoebel 1936; Grinnell 1923 Vol. I). For each tribe listed the criteria for the selection of a chief were similar, although the mode of selection might be quite different. The requirements for chiefship generally were that the aspiring chief should be an elder, willing to give freely to the poor, aged, or any who asked for some article of his. He must have had a fine war record, must be wise, and should be influential in the group (inter alii Ewers 1955:246-247; Llewelyn and Hoebel 1941:73; Vestal 1957:83-84; Richardson 1940:7, 15; Mandelbaum 1940:221-222).

There were both band and tribal chiefs in most of the nomadic tribes. For example the Blackfoot tribal chief gained his office through rising to prominence as the foremost band chief (Ewers 1955:249). The well known Cheyenne had the Council of Forty-four composed of four chiefs from each of ten bands plus four tribal chiefs all of whom served ten years, chose their own successor, and retired (Llewelyn and Hoebel 1941:67-98). The Kiowa band chief was the highest ranking man, belonging to the onde or ondegupa rank, in camp; while the Kiowa tribal chief at the great summer camp was the keeper of the sun dance doll (Richardson 1940:6-12). Among the Omaha an aspiring chief had to give ceremonial gifts and by so doing advance through two large, inclusive associations of "chiefs" before he could gain a position on the Council of Seven, the governing body of the tribe (Fletcher and LaFlesche 1911:206-216). Finally, among the Teton, at least for the Red Cloud Oglala, the chief's society elected seven chiefs for a lifetime term. Those seven, in turn appointed four younger men as councilors to govern actively, also for life. However, the chiefs society, Council of Seven, and the four Councilors elected four other men for about one year to serve as the actual camp executive (Wissler 1912:7-8). In short, Plains Indian government with the chief having an achieved status characterizes the nomadic type government.

The tribes that characterize the semi-sedentary type of Plains government are the Arikara (?), Hidatsa (?), Iowa, Kansa, Mandan, Osage, Pawnee and Ponca. Here chieftainship is semi-hereditary in certain kin groups and/or is connected with certain medicine bundles. As with the nomads, the chiefly ideal of altruism, wisdom, influence, and war ability was considered essential. Among the Pawnee, tribal and village authority was vested in hereditary, bundle-keeping chiefs. The four tribal priests in charge of the most powerful bundles rotated so that each year a different bundle priest was in charge of the tribe (Murie 1914:549, 554-557; Fletcher 1912:215, 590; Densmore 1929:3). From the Mandan council of bundle owners, two chiefs were chosen--one for war and one for peace. It seems that sons of chiefs were usually selected to fill the office of their dead fathers (Bowers 1950:33-36). The Iowa had the chief of the leading patriclan in one moiety serve for the winter and the corresponding chief in the other moiety for the summer. Lesser chiefs were the heads of less

powerful patriclans (Skinner 1915:685-686; 1926:201-207). The Osage had two hereditary chiefs, one from each moiety, and they would daily alternate leadership when on the march. The chieftainship was hereditary in a certain patriclan in each moiety (LaFlesche 1921:67-68; 1932:45; Dorsey 1897:235-238). In summary, then, among most of the village dwelling tribes, government was usually vested in kin groups holding special medicine bundles.

The police function of Plain's government was carried out by either one or two men's associations acting as a whole, a certain age group in age-graded societies, men from special kin groups, or from the society at large. Men's associations acting as police are noted for the Cheyenne (Llewelyn and Hoebel 1941:99-131, Crow (Lowie 1956:5), Kiowa (Richardson 1940:9), Kiowa-Apache (McAllister 1955:166), Pawnee hunt police (Murie 1914:557), to a certain extent the Ponca (Skinner 1915:794-795), Sarsi (Goddard 1914:465), Shoshone (Lowie 1915a:814-815), and the Teton (Wissler 1912:10). One or more of the age-graded societies acting as police are found among the Blackfoot (Wissler 1913:370), Mandan (Bowers 1950:89), Hidatsa (Lowie 1913b:277), Arikara (Lowie 1915b:654-656, 664),[6] and probably the Arapaho and Gros Ventre. Police coming from certain kin groups are noted only for the Osage (LaFlesche 1921:68; Dorsey 1897:235). Police chosen from the tribe at large (or more accurately from the tribal body of accredited warriors) are found among the Omaha (Fletcher and LaFlesche 1911:209-212), Plains Cree (Mandelbaum, 1940:224-232; Skinner 1914: 518-524), Plains-Ojibwa (Skinner 1914:482-499), Pawnee camp police (Murie 1914: 557), Iowa (Skinner 1926:205-206), Eastern Dakota (Lowie 1913b:132; Eastman 1902:258-259), and Kansa (Skinner 1915:746).

The duties of the police included maintenance of camp order, control of the group on the march, control of the buffalo hunt, patroling the camp during ceremonies, night sentry duty when needed, and any other chore deemed necessary by the chief or council in order to preserve the public welfare, even going so far as to make laws (for example, see Llewelyn and Hoebel 1941: 127-218). Although the chief function of the police was thought by Lowie and Wissler to be the policing of the buffalo hunt, Sarsi police were used only on the march and in the sun dance encampment (Goddard 1914:465). For this and other reasons, Provinse considers the policing of the buffalo hunt to be only a necessary adjunct to the camp policing powers (1955). Basically this same conclusion was reached by MacLeod (1937). However, as brought out by Murphy (1959b) and as evidenced by my examination of the data, perhaps the chief function of the police was the control of a large number of people in a large camp and on the march.

The usual mode of punishment by the police was flogging or "soldier killing" accompanied by the destruction and confiscation of the miscreant's property. Punishment might lead in extreme cases to the killing of the individual or group in error. For example, among the Eastern Dakota an entire band was annihilated for refusing to stay with the tribe (Eastman 1902:261-262). The police, then, were the arm of legitimized force usually called upon by the chiefs and in theory subordinate to them, who made tribal law and tribal unity a matter of concern to all members of the tribe.

The collective goals of the Plains tribes, chiefly the tribal ceremonies and tribal buffalo hunt, were the rallying points to which the common

defense group, the tribe, clustered. Normally, one did not war with those with whom one yearly hunted and danced. Since these communal activities were of a tribal nature and required tribal attendance, the political unit of each tribe strived to prevent the disintegrative forces from taking the upper hand by punishing those who acted in a manner antithetical to tribal interests. For example, the disintegrative factors listed above, particularly the raiding of unauthorized war parties and the segmentation of the tribe into bands, would be considered antitheses to public well-being, and as such must be punished. The Eastern Dakota case cited above is one in which the disintegrative factors were in a position to take the upper hand until stifled by the political unit through the arm of the police.

If the functional necessity for a large group were for defense, as has been suggested, then this large, tribal group, made up of small bands of individualistic people and cross cut by rival men's societies, might tend to fall apart unless held together more or less rigidly by an interrelated system of political, economic and religious ties. That economic motives were not enough to hold a large group of people together is shown by the fact that a few families could adequately satisfy subsistence needs over the year with few minor hunts (Hoebel 1954:150). Tribal consciousness, then, was promulgated by not only the hunt, but also by the various tribal religious ceremonies such as the sun dance, Hedewachi, or sacrifice to the Morning Star. The result of this tribal consciousness was a solidary group, which under the direction of its political leaders, could mobilize for defense and offense against members of other such groups.

Conclusion

In summary then, the political institutions of the Plains tribes served to integrate the various disintegrative factors by stressing collective activities. The end result was a feeling of tribal consciousness that acted as the mechanism by which a common defense group was established. Where there was lack of stress on collective goals, there was a lack of a centralized polity and vice versa. This, in short, is the situation found among the Comanche.

Since the correlation between authority and complexity of political structure exists vis à vis recentness of arrival on the Plains and the place of the original homeland, I would suggest that the nomads who had engaged in communal activity longest needed the least authority to improvise them. This would follow with the Comanche and, if Murphy is correct in assuming the lateness of police here, with the Shoshone. For nomadic groups on the eastern Plains, much stronger political authority was necessary due to the recentness in acquiring a collective way of life and the concomitant lack of traditionalization in communal activity. Because the earliest reference to hunt police is by Hennepin in 1680 among some Minnesota Dakota, and because the word for police is generally similar to the Dakota word wherever it is found, I would agree with Lowie and guess that camp and hunt police were originated by one of the Dakota groups in Minnesota (Lowie 1916a:910). I would suggest that the nomadic type of achieved status chief arose among the old settlers in the foothills of the Rockies, because it is here that political structure does not seem to change as it does for eastern groups. The Omaha, for instance, formerly had hereditary chiefs (Fletcher and LaFlesche 1911:73-74, 202-216).

The semi-sedentary type of political structure, I would suggest, was a carry over from the type of political structure prevalent in parts of the northeast woodland area, as for example among the Menomini (Skinner 1913:22-26) or perhaps even the Penobscot (Speck 1940:237-238).

In conclusion, the disintegrative factors mentioned above were a threat to the tribal solidarity which was necessary if a common defense group was to be maintained. In order to maintain solidarity the political unit probably shifted its emphasis to the stressing of collective activity once a year and this collective activity did not necessarily have to do with economic requirements.

ENDNOTES

(1) In its original form this paper was presented as a seminar report under Dr. Robert F. Murphy in the spring of 1959 in Anthropology 237 at the University of California, Berkeley.

(2) This article is an unrevised reprinting from the 1937 edition of Eggan.

(3) Underhill (1953) ascribes age societies to the Assiniboine, but neither Denig (1930) nor Lowie (1909b) bear this out.

(4) Stewart (1955:105-110) tells of the difficulties of getting formal approval from the Crow chiefs for Crow warriors to serve as army scouts.

(5) The Omaha formerly had hereditary chiefs, but soon acquired their nomadic systems from the Cheyenne (Fletcher and LaFlesche 1911:73-74, 202-216).

(6) Although the Arikara did not have graded societies, their police were solely restricted to the Black Mouths, which is the same name given to the age set having police functions among the Mandan and Hidatsa.

PERIODICAL ABBREVIATIONS USED

AA	American Anthropologist
AAAM	American Anthropological Association Memoirs
AMNH-AP	American Museum of Natural History--Anthropological Papers
AMNH-B	American Museum . . . Bulletin
BAEAR	Bureau of American Ethnology Annual Report
BAEB	Bureau . . . Bulletin
CNAE	Contributions to North American Ethnology
ICA	International Congress of Americanists
JCLC	Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology
M-AES	Memoirs American Ethnological Society
M-AFLS	Memoirs American Folklore Society
PMM-B	Public Museum of the City of Milwaukee--Bulletin
TAPS	Transactions, American Philosophical Society
UNSo.s.	University of Nebraska Studies--old series

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