

**ECOLOGY AND CULTURAL CONTINUITY  
AS CONTRIBUTING FACTORS  
IN THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION  
OF THE PLAINS INDIANS**

**BY  
SYMMES C. OLIVER**

**UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA PUBLICATIONS IN AMERICAN  
ARCHAEOLOGY AND ETHNOLOGY**

**Volume 48, No. 1, pp. 1-90, 1 map**

**UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA PRESS  
BERKELEY AND LOS ANGELES  
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EDITORS (LOS ANGELES): W. R. GOLDSCHMIDT, J. M. BIRDSELL, W. A. LESSA

Volume 48, No. 1, pp. 1-90, 1 map

Submitted by editors June 8, 1961

Issued August 1, 1962

Price, \$1.75

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA PRESS  
BERKELEY AND LOS ANGELES  
CALIFORNIA



CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS  
LONDON, ENGLAND

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I WISH to acknowledge an enduring indebtedness to Professor Walter Goldschmidt. He not only supervised this study, but provided the encouragement and stimulation that made it possible. My intellectual debt to him can be seen in the fact that it has not been possible to footnote all of his ideas that have found their way into this work; much of whatever value this study may possess is owing to his influence.

Professor Ralph Beals has been of great assistance and has offered consistent encouragement. Professor William A. Lessa also has helped in many ways.

I offer my heartfelt thanks to my colleagues at the University of Texas. Professor J. Gilbert McAllister has contributed freely in time, knowledge, and un-failing assistance. I wish to thank also Dr. E. Mott Davis for many ideas and unending patience, and Dr. William W. Newcomb, Jr., for help generously given. Professor T. N. Campbell has offered assistance and encouragement at many points.

In a larger sense, this study owes its existence to the work of others. It is an attempt to construct a comparative synthesis and analysis of the data provided by many research scholars. I believe that such broad comparative studies are essential to the continued development of a scientific anthropology, but it must be admitted that the procedure is fraught with peril. It is doubtless too much to expect that individual authorities on the tribes concerned will be uniformly pleased with my interpretations of their materials. Specialists in Plains ethnology will unquestionably take issue with me on many points. Nevertheless, I offer my sincere thanks to all of them. It goes without saying that this study would not have been possible without the detailed foundation which they have provided.

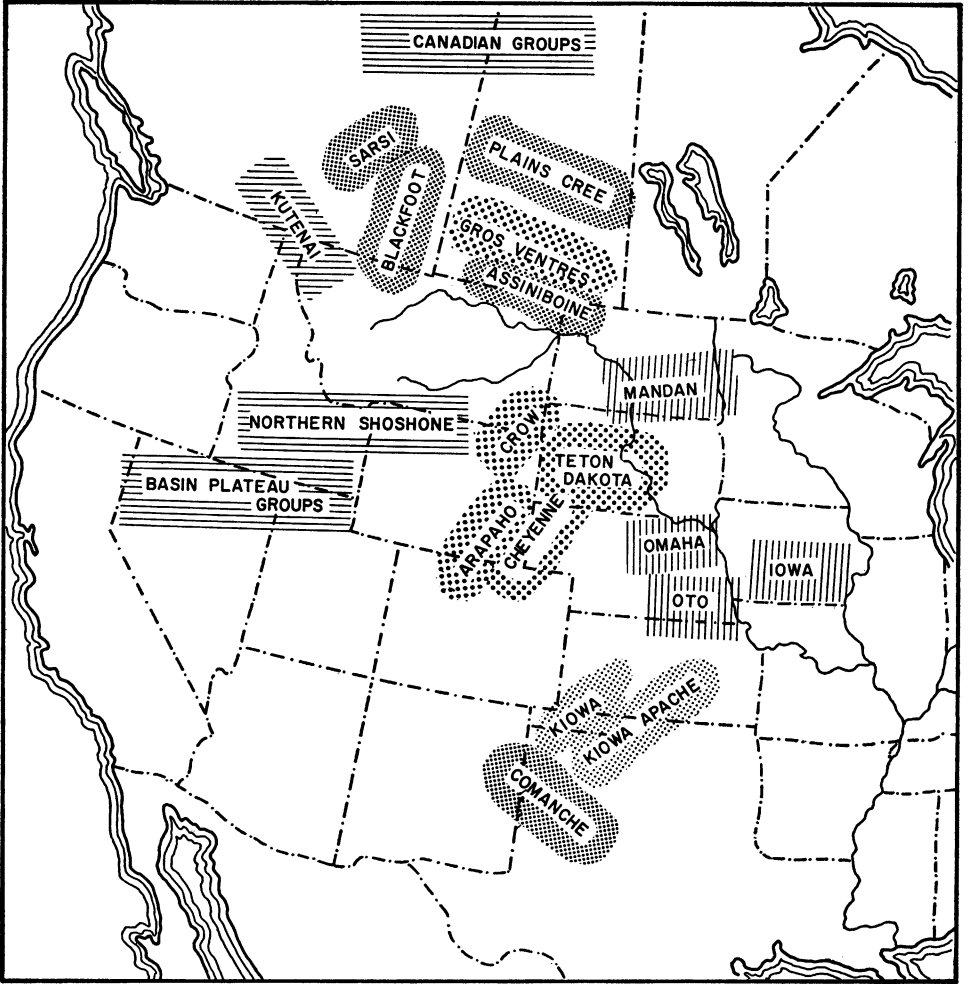
My wife, Betty Jane, has made many sacrifices to provide the time needed to complete this work. I am grateful to her, as always.

Finally, thanks are due the Clark Foundation of Dallas, Texas, for a grant that made possible much of the library research upon which this study is based.

S. C. O.






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TRIBAL LOCATIONS APPROXIMATE ONLY

TRUE PLAINS AND SELECTED PERIPHERAL TRIBES

-  TRUE PLAINS, ORIGINALLY FARMING
-  TRUE PLAINS, ORIGINALLY HUNTING AND GATHERING
-  TRUE PLAINS, ORIGIN UNKNOWN
-  PERIPHERAL FARMING
-  PERIPHERAL HUNTING AND GATHERING

Approximate location of True Plains and selected peripheral tribes.

## CHAPTER I

# INTRODUCTION

THE SITUATION ON THE American Plains, where a relatively recent lifeway was crystallizing around the horse and the buffalo in the years between 1600 and 1880, offers a useful natural laboratory in which a number of modern anthropological ideas can be tested. Ruth Underhill has provided a neat summary statement of the basic Plains picture:

For the Plains way of life is actually the most recent of all those followed by American Indians. It hinged on the possession of horses, which were not ridden by Indians until some time after 1600. But, when once this magnificent new find came into use, it was like the discovery of gold in modern days, drawing people from every language and every background. The buffalo Plains became a melting pot where the most diverse tribes joined together in pursuit of the new wealth. The way of life which they evolved was compounded of customs drawn from the east, west, north, and south.<sup>1</sup>

It is certainly true that the Indians utilized the Plains to some extent long before the introduction of the horse. Evidence indicates that both nomadic hunting peoples and horticultural groups were present on the Plains in prehorse times.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, the fact remains that most of the historic Plains tribes moved into the area from other regions, arriving after the appearance of the horse. The Plains tribes known to ethnologists were for the most part recent arrivals on the Plains scene, and these tribes were of diverse cultural origins.

The classic Plains cultures, as delineated by the various culture area formulations, offer unique opportunities for investigation because the typical Plains lifeway was of brief duration, with a definite beginning and a definite end. Less than three hundred years separates the introduction of the horse and the virtual extinction of the buffalo, and many Plains tribes had an even shorter history on the Plains.

When the historic Plains tribes moved into the Plains, they moved also into a shared ecological situation which was based on the conjunction of two animals, the horse and the buffalo. All of the true Plains tribes had to adapt to the fundamental horse-buffalo complex, and hence became similar in some aspects of their sociocultural organizations. These similarities, of course, have been emphasized by the culture area approach to American ethnology. However, this is by no means the whole story. The tribes that came into the Plains, axiomatically enough, brought their cultures with them, and these cultures were of two distinctively different types. Some of the True Plains tribes, such as the Comanche, had been hunters and gatherers before their emergence on the Plains. Others, like the Cheyenne, had been settled farmers. Culture, by its very nature, has continuity. In part, this means that "the new forms a social organization may take are always limited by the habit patterns set by old forms."<sup>3</sup> In the Plains situation, in spite of the requirements posed by the necessity of adapting to a shared ecological system, it would be surprising indeed to find that the True Plains tribes had somehow managed to erase all vestiges of their former lifeways. Moreover, it would be almost equally surprising to discover, for example, that the historic Comanche

had a more highly organized social system than the historic Cheyenne. Culturally speaking, it is essential to remember that there was diversity as well as similarity on the Plains. Fundamentally, this study attempts to account for the differences between the historic Plains tribes as well as their points of convergence.

The method of investigation used here may be expressed in terms of a series of basic propositions or postulates, each of which can be tested against the available ethnological data. These propositions are as follows:

1. The True Plains cultures known to ethnology—that is to say, Plains cultures based on mounted buffalo hunting—were a product of recent development. They necessarily postdated the introduction of the horse into the Plains.

2. The True Plains tribes came into the Plains out of two fundamentally different economic backgrounds and from several distinct culture areas. Some of the Plains tribes had been hunters and gatherers before their arrival on the Plains, but others had been horticultural peoples. These tribes came from areas as diverse as the Basin-Plateau region and the Eastern Woodlands.

3. The ecological demands of the Plains situation created certain exigencies which went beyond material culture and involved the organization of social action. As Goldschmidt has noted, the historic Plains situation is a prime example of ecological adaptation.<sup>4</sup> There is no clearer example of the dynamic interrelationships between man and the environment in which he lives. It is not only that the heavy reliance on the buffalo required the presence of common exploitative techniques and equipment, but also that there was a link between the technological base of the society and the rest of the culture. This, of course, is simply a statement of the basic functionalist position, but it is well to make the functionalist theory explicit. Goldschmidt has expressed the two key points as follows: “(1) Institutions are mechanisms of social interaction which serve the continued life of the society, and (2) all parts of the social system must form an integrated whole so that changes in one part require adjustments in others.”<sup>5</sup> If the technology changes, as it demonstrably did when the tribes moved into the Plains, then these changes require adjustments in the social system.<sup>6</sup> Julian Steward has made clear that in any specific case the problem is to determine “the extent to which the behavior patterns entailed in exploiting the environment affect other aspects of culture.”<sup>7</sup> It must be emphasized that the ecological equation is not a simple one; it must take into account not only culture, of which technology is one part, but also environment in its broadest sense. An important part of the environment in which any human society exists is made up of *other* human societies, and the interaction among these societies was of considerable importance on the Plains. The Plains tribes had to adjust to the presence of other Plains tribes as well as to the horse-buffalo complex, and they were likewise influenced by powers outside the Plains proper. This latter point is particularly clear in the case of a tribe like the Plains Cree, whose very existence as a tribal group was due in large part to the European demand for furs.<sup>8</sup>

4. By examining tribes of known historical provenience, it should be possible to analyze the evidence for the persistence of old cultural patterns on the Plains, as well as to discover to what extent these old patterns were modified. Thus, to take an obvious example, the presence of clans among the Crow may be related



to the horticultural background of this tribe, and the modifications in the Crow clan system can be related to the changed requirements of Plains life.<sup>9</sup>

5. There was considerable diversity in social organization among the tribes that lived in the regions surrounding the Plains; hence demonstrable similarities among the True Plains tribes in social organization constitute a remarkable example of convergence. Though the Western Shoshoni and the Omaha, for instance, were organized in radically different ways, all True Plains tribes shared a number of features of social organization. The basic pattern of large social clusters in the summer months and a dispersal into smaller groups the rest of the year was common to all True Plains tribes, with the possible exception of the Comanche. This raises important questions concerning the Comanche, but far more importantly this type of convergence throws into bold relief the entire question of the ecological demands made upon systems of social organization. It offers strong support for the view that sociocultural systems are indeed *adaptive* systems.<sup>10</sup>

6. These postulates, taken together, serve to outline two problems. First, it is possible to suggest that the areas of commonality in the social organizations of the True Plains tribes may be related to the demands of a shared ecological situation. By comparing the various True Plains tribes and isolating these areas of commonality, we are then in a position to ask whether or not these similar organizational devices can reasonably be related to specific aspects of the shared ecological system. Again, it is possible to suggest that the differences among the True Plains tribes can be accounted for to some extent by their differing cultural backgrounds. A comparison of the True Plains tribes should reveal important differences as well as similarities, and the problem then becomes one of accounting for these differences. Culture has continuity. It follows from this that the social institutions of the True Plains tribes will have been influenced to some degree by the type of culture they had before they moved into the Plains. It has already been suggested that the True Plains tribes fall into two distinct groups in terms of their origins. This poses an additional question. Are there reasonably consistent differences between those True Plains tribes which were of hunting and gathering origin as opposed to those Plains tribes which were of horticultural origin? And, if so, do these differences fit in with what we know of the two types of tribes in the areas peripheral to the Plains? In order to examine this problem empirically, peripheral farming and hunting and gathering tribes will be investigated.

7. This study thus has certain implications in terms of the processes of cultural evolution. Indeed, it is an evolutionary thesis that is being propounded. The orientation of the study is quite close to the point of view presented by Julian Steward:

Multilinear evolution is essentially a methodology based on the assumption that significant regularities in cultural change occur, and it is concerned with the determination of cultural laws. Its method is empirical rather than deductive. It is inevitably concerned also with historical reconstruction, but it does not expect that historical data can be classified in universal stages. It is interested in particular cultures, but instead of finding local variations and diversity troublesome facts which force the frame of reference from the particular to the general, it deals only with those limited parallels of form, function, and sequence which have empirical validity.<sup>11</sup>

In other words, the problems with which we are concerned are primarily in the area of what Sahlins has called specific evolution, dealing with adaptive modifications.<sup>12</sup> However, as Sahlins points out, “. . . specific and general evolution are not different concrete realities; they are rather aspects of the same total process, which is also to say, two contexts in which we may place the same evolutionary things and events.”<sup>13</sup> The distinction between the “universal” evolution of Leslie White and the “multilineal” evolution of Julian Steward is a useful one, but each type of study has implications for the other. Goldschmidt has expressed this idea persuasively, stating:

If we consider that the development of technology is the prime mover in social evolution and that it operates on the social level through changing population density, settlement patterns, economic well-being, and the like, then it follows that this evolution is not simply a matter of stages of set character. Rather, there are infinite degrees of development, and these in turn are subjected to factors external to the sociocultural system which here and there alter the underlying regularity. Yet, a taxonomy of societies based upon the manner in which a people exploit their environment to obtain their basic needs is not entirely off the mark, for, broadly speaking and with these reservations in mind, these productive techniques fulfill the basic needs of human sustenance and set the conditions to which a host of secondary circumstances must conform . . . In short, evolutionary stages must be seen as a first approximation to a taxonomy of cultures based upon the development of economic resources.<sup>14</sup>

If it can be demonstrated that the True Plains tribes did indeed develop similar sociocultural systems in the context of a shared ecological situation, this would indicate that cultural adaptation is a key process in cultural evolution. Certainly, one of the basic premises in the concept of cultural evolution is that sociocultural changes do not just happen, but are rather the products of regular underlying forces.<sup>15</sup> In the historic Plains, there was a definite technological change with the coming of the horse. Some tribes abandoned horticulture in favor of mounted buffalo hunting, and others gave up a pedestrian hunting and gathering way of life. The demands of the new ecology, involving dynamic interrelationships between the total Plains environment and the cultures of the peoples living on the Plains, shaped a characteristic and distinctive Plains lifeway. Although this is only one example, it does suggest that basic technological innovations probably always carry with them the seeds of social change. It must be noted, however, that technology is not all that is involved. The principle of cultural continuity has already been mentioned, and on the Plains it is clear that competition between the various tribes was an important factor, acting as a selective device which favored one type of society over another. Secoy, for example, has traced the decline in Apache power on the Plains to the acquisition by the Comanche of both horses and guns, at a time when the Apache largely lacked guns.<sup>16</sup> An even more telling example is provided by George Hyde. In discussing the Pawnee and Caddoan tribes, he points out that the sedentary villages of the horticulturists became death traps when the nomadic Plains tribes attacked.<sup>17</sup>

It is hoped that this work will contribute to our understanding of the Plains as a culture area, stressing differences between tribes as well as similarities among them. Also, it can provide a test of certain basic ideas concerning the development of social systems.

No attempt has been made here to compare the total cultures of the tribes con-

cerned. Further, no claim is made that all pertinent aspects of social organization have been covered. Rather, the tribes have been compared in a number of selected features, chosen on the basis of what was likely to prove significant in the problem being investigated. As Steward has noted, questions such as those with which we are here concerned may "involve salient features of whole cultures, or they may involve only special features, such as clans, men's societies, social classes of various kinds, priesthoods, military patterns, and the like."<sup>8</sup>

## CHAPTER II

# ECOLOGY AND CULTURAL CONTINUITY ON THE PLAINS

FRED EGGAN, in suggesting an integration of the structural-functional approach of the British social anthropologists with the traditional American interest in culture process, has written: "Not one single region in North America has had adequate treatment."<sup>1</sup> In view of the sheer bulk of available literature on the Plains Indians, this would seem to be a surprising statement but what Eggan has to say may be correct. What is the source of the inadequacy in the existing literature?

The problem goes deeper than questioning the merit of the work that has been done on the Plains cultures. As a matter of fact, a strong case can be made that the quality of anthropological work on the Plains has been very high. The difficulty lies in the changing character of anthropology itself; anthropologists have become involved with a new set of problems, which necessarily have shifted the emphasis to different kinds of questions. Thus, for example, Lowie's famous article on the age-societies of the Plains Indians<sup>2</sup> is a masterful essay in diffusion and historical reconstruction, but it does not answer basic questions about the functioning of these societies. The use of the concept of diffusion as a fundamental technique of historical reconstruction is not without value, but it does serve to obscure a number of important issues. In a very valuable paper, Eggan has drawn attention to this problem with regard to the Plains lifeways:

It is important to note that tribes coming into the Plains with more complex formal social structures were in the process of giving them up in favor of the more flexible band and camp organization, and, conversely, the more simply organized Great Basin groups developed a more complex organization. To explain such uniformities in terms of borrowing is an oversimplification; the Crow, for example, in modifying their clan organization and kinship system in the direction of Plains patterns, were adapting their own more complex organization to new requirements. They had not borrowed Plains social institutions outright in these cases but had modified their own in the direction of a more efficient adjustment to the exigencies of Plains life.<sup>3</sup>

The culture area concept, pioneered by Clark Wissler and developed further by A. L. Kroeber, has not only contributed to our understanding of the Plains, but has, to an appreciable extent, shaped our thinking about the kinds of problems that were to be investigated among the Plains Indians. For this reason, it is fitting that any interpretation of the Plains cultures should begin with the ideas of these two men.

Wissler's interpretations of the Plains were guided by several central ideas which were not always in harmony with one another. As he himself noted,<sup>4</sup> much of his work on the American Indian was based on museum experience. This is reflected in one of his approaches to the subject. He defines culture: "The anthropological conception of the term is that it is the trait-complex manifested by a separate social unit of mankind."<sup>5</sup> He goes on to state:

In the preceding chapters we saw that the natives of the New World could be grouped according to single culture traits, giving us food areas, textile areas, ceramic areas, etc. If, however, we take all traits into simultaneous consideration and shift our point of view to the social, or tribal

units, we are able to form fairly definite groups. This will give us culture areas, or a classification of social groups according to their culture traits.<sup>8</sup>

Wissler did not stop there, however. In asking why it was that culture traits could be grouped into geographical areas, he found: "The cause is ecological. They have geography because they are adjusted to external conditions." With specific reference to the Plains, he argued as follows:

The method usually followed in ecological studies is to seek correlations between the characters of life forms and specific characters of the environment and, if it be found that these usually happen together, it is assumed that some causal relation exists between them. . . . What this means, then, is that the richest cultures will be found where the bison herds were the thickest, where the grass and climatic conditions were the most favorable. . . . So the reason why every culture area has a center is that the organic life of the corresponding ecological area is richer at the center and so the conditions for human adjustment best, or, to put the matter in another way, it is in the nucleus of the ecological center that a type of aboriginal cultures is at its best.<sup>9</sup>

Thus we have an essentially static grouping based on culture traits and a rather mechanical appeal to ecological principles as a cause.

In Wissler's view, there were eleven typical Plains tribes. These were the Assiniboine, Arapaho, Blackfoot, Cheyenne, Comanche, Crow, Gros Ventre, Kiowa, Kiowa-Apache, Sarsi, and Teton Dakota. In defining this typical culture, he provides a list of traits:

The chief traits of this culture are the dependence upon the buffalo or bison, and the very limited use of roots and berries; absence of fishing; lack of agriculture; the tipi as a movable dwelling; transportation by land only, with the dog and travois (in historic times with the horse); want of basketry and pottery; no true weaving; clothing of buffalo and deerskins; a special bead technique; high development of work in skins; special rawhide work (parfleche, cylindrical bag, etc.); use of a circular shield; weak development of work in wood, stone, and bone. Their art is strongly geometric, but as a whole, not symbolic; social organization tends to the simple band; a camp circle organization; a series of societies for men; sun dance ceremony; sweat house observances, scalp dances, etc.<sup>9</sup>

Possibly Wissler's best-known essay on the Plains concerns the influence of the horse on Plains culture. His argument need not be detailed here, but his conclusions are important to any understanding of Wissler's views. His essential point is that the bulk of the Plains lifeway antedates the horse. "In other words," he states, "from a qualitative point of view the culture of the Plains would have been much the same without the horse."<sup>10</sup>

Again, Wissler writes: "As an intensifier of original Plains traits, the horse presents its strongest claim. . . . To such a culture the horse would most surely be a new and superior dog; he would, like any greatly improved appliance, enrich and intensify development in certain established directions."<sup>11</sup>

Useful as they are, it must be said that Wissler's views have certain inherent limitations. His static picture of the Plains precludes any real consideration of the actualities of the culture process. The lumping together of diverse tribes prevents the formulation of many important questions. For example, why did the Crow have clans, though most True Plains tribes had none? Why, if the Comanche are a typical Plains tribe, did they lack men's societies and the Sun Dance?

Wissler's appreciation of ecological factors is important, but it is overly simple.

Surely, the horse as well as the buffalo was a vital ecological fact. It is one thing to hunt the buffalo on foot; it is quite another to hunt the buffalo on horseback. The basic difficulty here, as Bernard Mishkin has pointed out,<sup>12</sup> stems from Wissler's atomistic conception of culture. In order to evaluate properly the influence of the horse in the total Plains situation, it is necessary to have a conception of culture that goes beyond mere aggregates of culture traits.

When we move from Wissler to Kroeber, we move into a more sophisticated world. Kroeber's views on culture, culture areas, and the Plains reflect considerable progress in theoretical anthropology. It is significant that he differs from Wissler on the central issues.

#### Kroeber's study of culture areas

deals with culture wholes, and not, except incidentally, with culture elements or "traits," nor with those associations of elements which are sometimes called "culture complexes" but which always constitute only a fraction . . . of any one culture. Culture wholes as a concept correspond in many ways to regional floras and faunas, which are accumulations of species but can also be viewed as summation entities.<sup>13</sup>

#### Kroeber further states:

The whole subject of cultural climax is evidently related to that of the culture area. Since ethnologists normally deal with relatively timeless data they have been cautious and slow to approach problems of time climax. They have, however, evolved a spatial substitute: the culture center, or district of greatest cultural productivity and richness. This obviously is the regional expression of a culmination whose temporal manifestation is the climax. As so often, Wissler has pioneered the way. He makes the point that the center is the integral thing about an area. . . . It is clear that he has perceived the significance of focal points of growth, resulting in culminations definable in spatial and presumably temporal terms; but his working out of these has remained summary and indefinite.<sup>14</sup>

Like Wissler, Kroeber is alive to the relationship between the culture area and ecological factors.

We can accept Wissler's findings on the relation of culture areas to environment. He concludes that environment does not produce a culture, but stabilizes it. Because at many points the culture must be adapted to the environment, the latter tends to hold it fast. Cultures therefore incline to change slowly once they have fitted themselves to a setting, and to enter a new environment with more difficulty than to spread over the whole of the natural area in which their form was worked out.<sup>15</sup>

In seeking correlations between cultural and environmental classifications, Kroeber finds the closest relationship between culture and vegetation areas.<sup>16</sup>

Kroeber, however, adds an important point. Part of his emphasis is placed on a concept that is quite close to what we have previously referred to as cultural continuity. He states:

While it is true that cultures are rooted in nature, and can therefore never be completely understood except with reference to that piece of nature in which they occur, they are no more produced by that nature than a plant is produced or caused by the soil in which it is rooted. The immediate causes of cultural phenomena are other cultural phenomena.<sup>17</sup>

Kroeber is diametrically opposed to Wissler in his interpretation of the Plains. The principal difference concerns his evaluation of the horse and his appreciation of its crucial ecological role. Far from seeing the Plains in static terms and main-

taining that the Plains lifeway was much the same before and after the coming of the horse, Kroeber argues as follows:

Essentially the view held is that the Plains culture has been one of the well developed and characterized cultures of North America only since the taking over of the horse from Europeans, and that previously there was no important Plains culture, the chief phases in the area being marginal to richer cultures outside. In brief, the historic Plains culture was a late high-pressure center of culture in a region which previously had been rather conspicuously low-pressure. . . .<sup>18</sup>

What it is suggested happened is that not only ritual complexes, but indeed all sorts of cultural patterns, quickly blossomed out in the plains after the introduction of the horse had converted a strugglingly precarious or seasonal mode of subsistence into one normally assured, abundant, and productive of wealth and leisure. This development was strongest where the effect of the horse was greatest, in the true or western short-grass plains.<sup>19</sup>

In listing the tribes of the True Plains area, Kroeber is in essential agreement with Wissler. After rejecting the Assiniboine because their territory was as much Prairie as Plains, he accepts the Comanche, Kiowa, and Kiowa-Apache of the Southern Plains, and the Arapaho, Cheyenne, Teton Dakota, Crow, Atsina (Gros Ventre), Blackfoot, and Sarsi of the Northern Plains.<sup>20</sup>

Although admitting the basic soundness of Kroeber's views, there are still several observations that may be made. They are largely, though not entirely, matters of emphasis.

In the first place, a focus on cultural wholes, however laudable it may be as a scientific objective, is extremely difficult in practice, as Beals has pointed out.<sup>21</sup> In the formulation of certain types of problems, it is important to specify what aspects of a cultural system one is talking about. Thus, details of social structure have a way of getting lost in generalizations about total cultures. Many of the crucial questions are not readily asked in these terms.

The role of the environment is also open to modification. It is certainly true that the environment does not "produce" a culture in any strict sense of the term. However, it may be suggested that ecological considerations have a greater influence than merely stabilizing culture. There is a relatively definite range of variation for any given ecological situation. That is, certain cultural arrangements are possible in one set of ecological circumstances, but not at all likely in others. Steward, in setting forth the concept of the culture core, has argued that some sociocultural patterns are more closely related to subsistence activities than others.<sup>22</sup> Indeed, he has gone still further, stating: "The environment is not only permissive or prohibitive with respect to these technologies, but special local features may require social adaptations which have far-reaching consequences."<sup>23</sup>

In addition to Wissler and Kroeber, many other anthropologists have, of course, contributed to an understanding of the Plains problem. Several of these viewpoints may be indicated briefly.

Robert H. Lowie rejects Kroeber's geographical limitations of the Plains culture area, pointing out that the distinction between the Plains and the Prairie regions is not an absolute one.<sup>24</sup> He classifies the Plains Indians on the basis of linguistics, including a number of horticultural groups, such as the Iowa and the Mandan.<sup>25</sup> He states:

These tribes share a sufficiently large number of cultural traits to be classed together as representing a distinctive mode of life. Inasmuch as they inhabit a continuous territory, it is proper

to speak of a "Plains" culture area, using the geographical term in its wider sense. In characterizing such an area we must keep in mind neighboring areas, for only by comparison can a type of culture stand out clearly. This means that lacks as well as positive occurrences must be noted.<sup>26</sup>

Lowie notes the extensive reliance on the buffalo as a Plains trait, and recognizes that Plains culture was significantly altered by the introduction of the horse.<sup>27</sup>

William Duncan Strong has suggested a revision of Plains theory in the light of "archaeological fact." He rejects the characterization of the Plains as "a barren region influenced on all sides by adjacent cultures, in other words, 'a series of vanishing peripheries around a vacuum.'"<sup>28</sup> He goes on to observe:

In the light of objective time perspective, revealed by recent scientific excavations, the late nomadic and hunting life of the central Plains appears merely as a thin overlay associated with the acquisition of the horse. It was preceded by a period of considerable but as yet undetermined duration characterized by small, undefended villages of earth lodges, whose occupants derived a considerable portion of their subsistence from horticulture. Ceramic remains are abundant at such prehistoric sites and they extend far to the west of the historic range of the semi-horticultural tribes. Analysis of the prehistoric, protohistoric, and early historic horizons tends to connect these prehistoric sedentary peoples with the historic agricultural tribes of the eastern border. Thus it appears demonstrable that the semihorticultural ancestors of the Pawnee, for example, preceded the historic hunting tribes of the central Plains and that their settled mode of life was typical of that area in late prehistoric times. This fact throws new light on such problems as the highly accretionary nature of the sun dance and other historic Plains ceremonials and helps to explain the differential rate of survival of the late nomadic tribes as compared to the earlier sedentary peoples.<sup>29</sup>

In a very important article that explicitly deals with ecological problems on the Central Plains, Waldo R. Wedel has made the sound point that the late Plains culture was adapted to the requirements of both the horse and the buffalo.

During the 1800's the short grass plains were the range of the great bison herds. Closely dependent on these was a group of roving tribes which may be designated the migratory bison hunters. These included the Comanche, Kiowa, Cheyenne, Arapaho, Dakota, and others beyond our immediate area. From the spring of each year until fall these Indians followed the herds, subsisting principally on the flesh of the bison and drying great quantities of meat for winter consumption. Hunting practices included cooperative methods—grass-firing, the surround, and presumably also impounding and driving over cliffs. Winters were spent in sheltered spots where water, wood, and forage for the horses were available. . . . These people, for the most part comparatively late arrivals in the region, were the "typical" plains Indians of the historic period.<sup>30</sup>

Wedel suggests that the horticultural village tribes, such as the Omaha and the Pawnee, had their permanent settlement east of the ninety-ninth meridian, and that "once or twice each year the entire able-bodied manpower of the village departed on a lengthy communal bison hunt."<sup>31</sup> He goes on to state: "In short, the peoples among whom food-producing was of considerable or primary importance had their regular residence in the agriculturally dependable region; those who were primarily food collectors occupied the agriculturally unsafe lands."<sup>32</sup>

In summarizing the prehistory of the Western Plains, Wedel takes the position that the Plains were inhabited long before the coming of the horse. Before the introduction of the horse, however, the Plains lifeway was relatively uncertain and impoverished. After reviewing the evidence, he continues:



All of this seems like good evidence that, long before the coming of the Europeans and the horse, man had developed basic subsistence techniques that enabled him to survive and function in the creek valleys and around the water-holes of the short-grass plains. So far as the intermittently watered upland portions of the High Plains were concerned, the indicated occupations could hardly have been on a year round basis. . . . Cold weather and dry season movements to valley bottoms and to broken, hilly, or mountainous localities offering shelter, water, and wood were probably customary, as they were for the historic bison-hunters of the region.<sup>33</sup>

Wedel also indicates that in spite of the fact that the gap between the geologically dated Early Man sites and the later archeologically dated cultural horizons is narrowing, it does not yet follow that there were no periods in this span of time when the Western Plains were deserted.<sup>34</sup>

In a recent (1959) work on the archeology of Kansas, Wedel has a number of interesting observations to make. He states: "Some time after circa A.D. 1000, but still several centuries before the arrival of the first White men in the Central Plains region, the Middle Woodland-Hopewellian complexes were succeeded by a group of semihorticultural pottery-making cultures implying a much more stable pattern of settlement."<sup>35</sup> However, the earth lodges in which these people lived were not clustered closely together. Wedel observes: "The highly diffuse pattern of settlement found at village sites of the Central Plains phase was ill adapted to fortification; nowhere has any evidence of defensive works been noted; and relative freedom from enemy raids seems to be generally indicated."<sup>36</sup>

In later times, from the end of the eighteenth century onward, there was a tendency for the Indians of Kansas to live in a different type of settlement. Wedel writes:

So far as the Kansas data are concerned, the known Pawnee and Kansa sites in the State indicate that here, as elsewhere throughout the eastern Plains, the historic native populations were concentrated in a very few large towns, compactly arranged and sometimes fortified, and situated on the banks of the larger streams. Under constant pressure from the west by the footloose Comanche and, later, by the Kiowa, Cheyenne, Arapaho, and Sioux, and from the east by Whites with trade goods, whiskey, and new diseases, the Village tribes were attempting with indifferent success to combine their older horticulture heritage with the newer equestrian bison-hunting economy. Their failure and the resultant cultural collapse in the 19th century, reflected also in the archeological record, are matters of history.<sup>37</sup>

This is a graphic picture of some of the basic forces at work in the dynamic historic Plains situation, and in particular shows quite clearly the handicaps of the horticultural lifeways in competition with more mobile cultures. Wedel emphasizes the progressive reduction in the territory occupied by the farming peoples before the white man arrived, and the continuation of this process in historic times.

Further work may show more clearly to what extent the climatic factor, as contrasted to the historical and cultural, was instrumental in bringing about the observed historic grouping. . . . There can be little doubt, however, that a technologically retarded society attempting to subsist in any significant degree on maize growing in the western Plains would have found its economic basis gravely imperiled by the recurrent and often devastating droughts that have probably always been a characteristic of the region.<sup>38</sup>

John C. Ewers, in making a detailed study of the role of the horse in Blackfoot culture, has clarified a number of points about Plains culture in general. His work will stand, I believe, as a landmark in the investigation of Plains ethnology.

Ewers takes the position that the culture of the Plains after the introduction of the horse was qualitatively as well as quantitatively different from Plains culture in the days before the coming of the horse. Moreover, he suggests that the greatest change was social rather than material in nature.

The adaptation of the horses to the Plains Indian economy brought about a change from a relatively classless society to a society composed of three classes, which graded almost imperceptibly into one another, and in which membership was determined largely upon the basis of horse ownership—a privileged but responsible upper class, a relatively independent middle class, and an underprivileged and dependent lower class.<sup>39</sup>

He goes on to draw an important conclusion: "I find closest analogies to this class system not among the pre-horse cultures of the Great Plains, but among horse-using nomadic peoples of other continents."<sup>40</sup>

With regard to the movement of peoples into the Plains, Ewers states:

I should prefer to look upon the conversion of all those formerly horticultural tribes to nomadism as part of the great movement leading to the concentration of many hunting tribes in the formerly lightly populated High Plains, where buffalo were most numerous, in the 18th century. This movement of tribes proceeded from both east and west, into the High Plains.<sup>41</sup>

Ewers also notes that the horse radically changed the balance of power on the Plains. Before the introduction of the horse, the horticultural tribes in their sedentary villages had been more secure than the pedestrian hunters. With the mobility gained from the horse, however, the nomadic tribes had the advantage in warfare. Moreover, the compact villages of the horticultural tribes made them very vulnerable to new diseases, such as smallpox.<sup>42</sup>

Fred Eggan, as we have previously noted, has suggested an approach to Plains ethnology that is quite similar to the basic point of view of this study. From the viewpoint of modern social anthropology, he has outlined a number of the key problems in the area:

We have noted that there is a limited number of forms of social organization and that these are adjusted to social and ecological factors. . . . I have suggested elsewhere that the basic features of Plains local organization and kinship represented adjustments to the conditions of Plains life. These conditions are both social and ecological, involving not only the need for protection against hostile raids but also the necessity for adjusting to the annual cycle of the buffalo. The uncertainties of Plains existence were great, compared with those of the village dwellers, and a flexible type of social structure was required.<sup>43</sup>

Eggan has also noted the fact that all of the tribes of the Prairie areas, despite their differing historical backgrounds, developed a complex social organization built around the village and a formal clan system. He has further suggested that the clan gives a greater degree of stability in such a situation, but that its lack of flexibility hampers its ready adaptability to new situations.<sup>44</sup>

Eggan has summarized his views in this manner:

But from the standpoint of the Plains area it is perhaps more significant that tribes coming into the Plains with *different* backgrounds and social systems ended up with *similar* kinship systems. It seems probable that the conditions of Plains life favored a rather amorphous and mobile type of social organization which could vary to meet changing conditions.<sup>45</sup>

Frank Raymond Secoy, in addition to providing a wealth of detailed historical information, has produced an analysis of changing military patterns on the Plains

that explicitly rejects the traditional culture area approach as too static for a functional-historical type of study.<sup>46</sup> More than any other writer on the subject, Secoy has emphasized the dynamic nature of the Plains situation. In discussing the successive developments in military techniques, which he refers to as the Post-horse-Pre-gun Pattern, the Post-gun-Pre-horse Pattern, and the Horse and Gun Pattern, he has drawn attention to the fact that all of the Plains tribes had to contend with *other* Plains tribes, and that they were all influenced by factors outside the Plains proper, such as the differing policies of Spain, on the one hand, and France and England, on the other.<sup>47</sup>

Secoy makes the interesting point that in the initial stages of the Post-horse-Pre-gun complex the horse actually stimulated the success of the horticultural peoples. He states that as long as this pattern "was the exclusive possession of a single people whose subdivisions were at peace with one another (such as was the case with the Plains Apache), it gave them a great military advantage over their enemies, and hence, a considerable security."<sup>48</sup> He suggests that the Apache did very well on the Plains until their military pattern was copied by the Comanche and others, whereupon the horticultural aspect of Apache life became a military liability.<sup>49</sup>

The competition between the Plains cultures, Secoy notes, was a struggle for survival. He writes:

This produces a condition more than superficially analogous to that of natural selection in the biological world. Individual variation is produced by diffusion as well as local invention and development. The struggle for sheer survival, as well as varying degrees of prosperity, is provided by war among a number of societies, each with its own culture. In this situation a new military technique pattern will compete with the previously existing pattern of the area, and the more efficient will spread at the expense of the less efficient. . . . If, for any reason, due either to circumstances external to the particular society and culture or to the internal organizing influence of other parts of the culture on the military technique patterns, it is not possible to respond to the externally generated forces by a substitution of the new and more efficient pattern for the original pattern, the society with its particular culture will either be destroyed or forced into a territorial retreat. This process is vividly illustrated in the case of the Northern Plains Shoshoneans and the Southern Plains Apache who were unable to shift from the Post-horse-Pre-gun pattern to the Horse *and* Gun pattern until very late, and who consequently were nearly completely driven out of the Plains area.<sup>50</sup>

Needless to say, the foregoing discussion makes no pretense of dealing with all the important materials relating to the Plains Indians. However, it will serve to indicate the ideas that have guided anthropological investigations into the cultures of the Plains and to provide a basis for a general interpretation of the Plains upon this foundation.

The theoretical ideas with which we are operating make it mandatory to have a distinction between the horticultural tribes and the hunting tribes. Therefore, going back in part to Wissler, we may define a "True" Plains tribe as one that carried on no horticulture, relied on the buffalo as its principal means of subsistence, and possessed the horse. Though it is certain that there were peoples on the Plains before the introduction of the horse, the period of Plains culture to which virtually all ethnological literature applies did include the horse; its inclusion is

therefore necessary to a meaningful definition. All other contiguous or near-by tribes will be designated as "peripheral" tribes. It should be understood, of course, that this label has reference only to the purposes of this study; no implication is intended that the peripheral tribes were in any way less important than the True Plains tribes. It is only contended that the True Plains tribes form a distinct group with some unique characteristics.

Perhaps the central fact about the True Plains tribes is that most of them are relatively recent immigrants into the Plains. This is obvious enough for such tribes as the Comanche and the Cheyenne, and it can be demonstrated for most other True Plains tribes as well. It is a fact that some tribes were on the Plains a great deal longer than other tribes, and this is an important point to remember, but the fact remains that most of the tribes were newcomers. It can further be demonstrated that some of these tribes were hunters and gatherers before moving into the Plains, whereas others were horticulturists. If culture does indeed come from culture, and if new sociocultural forms are built upon the base of the old, it is reasonable to expect that some of these differences in social structure would have persisted on the Plains.

What really seems to have happened on the Plains was that tribes of different cultural backgrounds moved into a similar or shared ecological situation. This seems to be a reasonable interpretation of the historic Plains situation. The fact that there were Folsom or other Early Man horizons on the Plains, and that they had a considerable time depth, does not alter the basic facts for the historic Plains tribes who were relative newcomers to the region. It may be granted that there were *resemblances* between the pre-horse Plains hunters and the later Plains tribes, or between the pre-horse and post-horse cultures of the same tribe. Both, after all, were hunting the same animal. But this is certainly not to say that these cultures were the *same*. The introduction of the horse created a different ecological situation which required new sociocultural arrangements.

No one questions the demonstrated facts of cultural diffusion on the Plains. The Plains tribes obviously borrowed heavily from one another. But diffusion cannot explain everything. And when one asks *what* diffused and *why*, it is difficult to avoid taking ecology into account.

The crucial investigations into the role of the horse in Plains culture have been very important, but they do not tell the whole story. To some extent, they shift the emphasis from the buffalo to the horse, which is misleading. Ecological studies must take into account the interrelationships between man and his culture and the environment in which he lives. The horse is one factor in the ecological equation, but it is not the only one. Horses have certain requirements which are in some ways similar to those of the buffalo. But there is a key distinction that perhaps has not been properly appreciated. For the most part, the horses that counted in the ecological situation on the Plains were not wild herds of mustangs but were the horses under the control of the Indians. Within limits, such as the condition of the grass and the need for shelter at certain times of the year, the horses adapted to the requirements of the Indians rather than the other way around.

Fundamentally, the horse was a means to an end. The horse was used to exploit the buffalo efficiently. And the buffalo was emphatically not under the control of

the Indians. The Indians had to adjust themselves to the habits of the bison, or do without. The tie between the Plains Indians and the buffalo was an unusually close one. Their reliance on this animal for food and skins and sinews is too well known to require comment. The simple fact is that the Plains cultures could not have survived without the buffalo. In this situation, it is imperative that we examine the habits of the buffalo. Surely, any understanding of the Plains requires something more than the usual vague statement that Plains life was conditioned by the "movements" of the bison. What *was* the annual bison cycle?

In view of the recognized importance of the buffalo to Plains life, it is rather curious that anthropologists have not concerned themselves more with the habits of these animals. A great deal of folklore has insinuated itself into anthropological thinking about the buffalo, and in particular about the supposed vast annual migrations of the buffalo.

The popular notion that there was one organized herd of buffalo (*Bison bison*) on the Plains, and that millions of these animals charged south every winter into Texas and north every summer into Canada, has very little foundation in fact. Furthermore, the idea that the movements of the buffalo were precisely regular, following definite trails every year, is open to serious question. If this were true, it would mean two things. All the Indians would have to do would be to intercept the migrating herds as they galloped through their territories, on their way to Canada or Texas. Again, they would always know exactly where to find the animals; they could simply camp on the trail. As Frank Gilbert Roe has noted,<sup>51</sup> this was not the case. The Indians are described as "following the cows around" even before the coming of the horse. They did not "intercept" the migrating herds in any real sense. And if one thing is clear from the literature, it is that the Indians did not know exactly where the herds would be; they had to send out scouts to look for them, and the scouts were frequently gone for many days.

Virtually the first serious scientific study of the buffalo, made by J. A. Allen in 1877, clearly states the facts of the situation:

Doubtless the same individuals never moved more than a few hundred miles in a north and south direction, the annual migration being doubtless merely a moderate swaying northward and southward of the whole mass with the changes of the seasons. We certainly know that buffaloes have been accustomed to remain in winter as far north as their habitat extends. North of the Saskatchewan they are described as merely leaving the most exposed portions of the plains during the deepest snows and severest periods of cold to take shelter in the open woods that border the plains.<sup>52</sup>

A moment's reflection will show that if the same animals only moved a few hundred miles north or south, then these movements could have affected seriously only the two extremes of the buffalo range. More to the point, perhaps, is the fact that for the bulk of the buffalo range the animals were present all year around. This seems to have been generally true. It is for the southern end of the buffalo range that we have the best evidence for significant movements of this type. Allen states: "That there are local migrations of an annual character seems in fact to be well established, especially at the southward, where the buffaloes are reported to have formerly, in great measure, abandoned the plains of Texas in the summer for those further north, revisiting them again in winter."<sup>53</sup>

William T. Hornaday, whose classic study of the buffalo was published in 1887, has suggested that: "The movement north began with the return of mild weather in the early spring. Undoubtedly this northward migration was to escape the heat of their southern winter range."<sup>54</sup>

In this connection, Martin B. Garretson has offered the following summary statement:

The buffalo is classed as a migratory animal. At certain seasons of the year there was a slight general movement north, east, south, and west. Many accounts of these movements are entirely misleading, because greatly exaggerated. There is no reason to believe that the buffalo which spent the summer on the Saskatchewan wintered in Texas. In one portion of the northern country bordering on the mountains there was a decided seasonal migration east and west, the herds tending in the spring away from the mountains while in the autumn they would work back again, no doubt seeking shelter in the rough broken country of the foothills from the cold west winds of winter. The correct explanation of this movement was best given by Dr. William T. Hornaday, who pointed out that the buffalo had settled migratory habits and that at the approach of winter, the whole great system of herds which ranged from the Peace River to Texas and the Indian Territory (Oklahoma), moved south from two to four hundred miles and wintered under more favorable circumstances than each herd would have experienced at the farthest north. This explains why buffalo were found on the range at all times of the year.<sup>55</sup>

Roe takes a more extreme position on the question of regular migrations among the species as a whole. "The one resultant factor that emerges from our inquiry," he states, "is the direct antithesis of any conception of regularity; an imponderable, incalculable, wholly erratic and unreliable caprice."<sup>56</sup>

We need not go this far; Roe overstates the case to prove a point. It is nevertheless true that the famous regular mass migrations of the buffalo are open to serious question. If we are to get at the heart of the matter we must look elsewhere.

Bearing in mind the fact that the buffalo were present in most of the range all year round, I believe that Hornaday has supplied us with the correct key to the situation. It relates not to the problem of migrations but to other features of the annual cycle of the buffalo.

Hornaday writes:

The history of the buffalo's daily life and habits should begin with the "running season." This period occupied the months of August and September, and was characterized by a degree of excitement and activity throughout the entire herd quite foreign to the ease-loving and even slothful nature which was so noticeable a feature of the bison's character at all other times. The mating season occurred when the herd was on its summer range. . . . During the "running season" . . . the whole nature of the herd was completely changed. Instead of being broken up into countless small groups and dispersed over a vast extent of territory, the herd came together in a dense and confused mass of many thousand individuals, so closely congregated as to actually blacken the face of the landscape. As if by a general and irresistible impulse, every straggler would be drawn to the common center, and for miles on every side of the great herd the country would be found entirely deserted. At the close of the breeding season the herd quickly settles down to its normal condition. The mass gradually resolves itself into the numerous bands or herdlets of from twenty to a hundred individuals, so characteristic of bison on their feeding grounds, and these gradually scatter in search of the best grass until the herd covers many square miles of country.<sup>57</sup>

There are several points here which merit emphasis. Despite questions of detail, it is important to remember that the buffalo only congregated into really large

herds in the late summer and autumn. Moreover, at this time the surrounding country was virtually deserted as far as the buffalo were concerned. During the rest of the year, the buffalo were scattered into small groups that were spread out over a considerable expanse of territory. To put the matter simply, this means that the hunting methods that were appropriate for one time of the year were not appropriate for others, and that the dispersal or concentration of the Indians might be expected to follow seasonal patterns. When it is borne in mind that the buffalo sought shelter away from the open plains in the winter months, the picture becomes even clearer.

Garretson notes that buffalo calves were born from April to June, and that the "running season" lasted from the first of July to the first of October.<sup>58</sup> The buffalo sheds its coat in the spring, and is almost naked for a few weeks in early summer.<sup>59</sup> Finally, as Roe notes, the late summer and autumn months were the ones when the grass was most plentiful and the buffalo coats had grown out sufficiently to protect the animals to some extent from insect pests.<sup>60</sup>

If the life of the Plains Indians was indeed adapted to the habits of the buffalo, then it is to this cycle that we must look for understanding. The essential fact does not concern vast annual migrations, but rather concerns cyclical patterns of concentration and dispersal.

Of course the buffalo was not the only animal available to the Plains Indians. Both rabbits and the pronghorn antelope lived on the Plains. But it must be understood that the Plains cultures were completely dependent on the buffalo; the other animals could not have supported either the population concentrations or the lifeways of the Plains Indians. As Walter Prescott Webb puts it, "In the Plains area lived one animal that came nearer to dominating the life and shaping the institutions of a human race than any other in all the land, if not in the world—the buffalo."<sup>61</sup> More specifically, he writes: "They depended for their existence on the wild cattle or buffalo, and were often called buffalo Indians. The buffalo furnished them with all the necessities and luxuries of life."<sup>62</sup>

How, then, were the socio-cultural systems of the Plains tribes influenced by the total ecological situation? (1) The Indian tribes had to be dispersed in winter and concentrated in the summer. The buffalo were too scattered in the winter months to permit large numbers of people to band together, and the opportunities provided by the dense herds in the summer months were too good to miss, since food was stored at this time for the rest of the year. Moreover, the compact summer herds drew the Indians together for the simple reason that large parts of the buffalo range were without buffalo at this time. (2) The alternating patterns of concentration and dispersal made for a certain fluidity in social organization. A tribe that lives together in a unit requires a different sort of organization from one that is fragmented into wandering bands. Flexibility is required. It may be suggested that clans are less congenial to such a system than some less rigid principle of organization.<sup>63</sup> (3) The communal type of buffalo hunting in the summer months would seem to demand a different kind of organization than the individual hunting of the winter months; we would expect to find more systematic controls in the large group situation. (4) Mobility was necessary for at least three reasons. The sedentary village was at a great disadvantage in military

terms; frequent movements were required to hunt the buffalo; and the acquisition of horses by raiding put a premium on rapid mobility. (5) The presence of competing human societies put a premium on military skills. The tribes *had* to develop and reward warriors, since the very existence of the tribe depended on their skills. Finally, (6) the crucial role of the horse emphasized the value of raiding, as a means of getting horses, and tied in with the status system in two vital ways: the successful warrior who could steal horses was a man of high prestige, and the horse was a portable form of wealth particularly important in a nomadic society in which other types of wealth could not readily be transported.

In the problem of cultural continuity we have noted the recency of the historic Plains cultures, as well as the fact that the tribes that moved into the Plains came out of two contrasting backgrounds: some had been hunting and gathering peoples, whereas others had been horticulturalists. It would have been remarkable, indeed, if all of these tribes had erased all vestiges of their former lifeways in a scant few hundred years. The problem is to identify instances of cultural persistence in the flux of the dynamic Plains situation.

Clearly, there are certain expectancies here. To put the matter simply, we would expect that horticultural tribes would be in general more highly organized than hunting and gathering tribes, and therefore we would expect to find that the True Plains tribes of horticultural origin would be more highly organized in some respects than True Plains tribes of hunting and gathering origin. No contention is made that *all* horticultural tribes are more highly organized than *all* hunting and gathering tribes; rather, we are asserting only that certain types of social systems are more appropriate to one category than to another. Although there are exceptions, it is possible to speak of the general characteristics of hunting and gathering societies as opposed to horticultural societies. Goldschmidt has done this in considerable detail.<sup>64</sup>

To be more specific, let us consider three aspects of sociocultural systems that should prove revealing. In the general area of authority and leadership, we would expect to find that the leaders of horticultural groups are more formally selected than the leaders of hunting and gathering groups, and that they have somewhat more authority. This may be expressed as the distinction between the charismatic headman and the chief who holds a well-defined office. In terms of formal social structure, we would expect to find clans frequently present in horticultural groups and rare in nomadic hunting and gathering groups. Finally, we would expect that status would often have hereditary implications in sedentary horticultural societies, though it would rest primarily on personal skills related to subsistence among hunting and gathering peoples. If these ideas have validity, it should be possible to identify these tendencies among the True Plains tribes.

It must be emphasized that we are dealing here with expectancies, not with infallible rules. In terms of the sample with which we are dealing, we would expect that most of the True Plains tribes would be similar in some respects owing to their shared ecological situation. We would also expect that the True Plains tribes that were formerly horticultural would resemble the horticultural tribes to some degree, and the True Plains tribes that were formerly hunters and gatherers would resemble the hunting and gathering tribes to some degree.



## THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION OF TRUE PLAINS AND PERIPHERAL TRIBES

THE TRIBES are here divided into five categories and their specific sociocultural features compared. This plan is designed to provide the basic information upon which an analysis must rest. Wherever possible, the following questions will be answered for each tribe and the data for each tribe will be presented in the same order.

1. For True Plains tribes, were they formerly horticultural or formerly hunters and gatherers?

2. Did the entire tribe ever get together in one place? If so, when? If not united in this sense, how was the tribe divided?

3. What was the pattern of leadership? Were the leaders formally selected or elected, or were they informal headmen? What did they do, and over whom did their influence extend?

4. Was there a council? How were the members selected, and over whom did their influence extend?

5. Was there any person or group of persons with authority to enforce discipline? If so, when?

6. Were there societies (associations not primarily based on kinship or territory) present?

7. Were clans present or absent?

8. What were the principal determinants of status?

Miscellaneous material will be included whenever it seems useful to do so. It should be noted that there are other questions that might be asked with equal justification in this study. Values form one such category, and supernatural involvements another. Both, I believe, would prove revealing. It is contended, however, that the questions outlined above are sufficient to resolve the problems under investigation. They can provide a reasonable answer, and it is hoped that they may provide a base upon which others can build.

With regard to the tribes to be included in the sample, it was of course desirable to include as many True Plains tribes as possible. Therefore, all eleven of Wissler's typical Plains tribes have been represented. The Assiniboine have been included, in spite of Kroeber's objections, because they fit the requirements of our definition of a True Plains tribe. One additional tribe, the Plains Cree, has been included for the same reason, together with the fact that unusually complete data are available for this tribe.

With respect to peripheral tribes, an effort has been made to include fairly representative groups of both horticultural and hunting and gathering tribes. Thus, the Northern Shoshone and the Kutenai have been included as hunters and gatherers, together with summary statements concerning Great Basin and Canadian tribes of this category. For horticultural tribes, we have included the Omaha, the Mandan, the Iowa, and the Oto. These tribes have been chosen on the basis of ready availability and reasonable completeness of information.

The tribes in the sample are divided into five categories. These are, in the order in which they will be presented: (1) True Plains Tribes Originally Hunters and Gatherers, (2) True Plains Tribes Originally Horticulturists, (3) True Plains Tribes of Uncertain Origin, (4) Peripheral Hunting and Gathering Tribes, and (5) Peripheral Horticultural Tribes. The data follow.

#### TRUE PLAINS TRIBES OF HUNTING AND GATHERING ORIGIN

*The Blackfoot.*—The ultimate origins of the Blackfoot are uncertain, and in view of their linguistic affiliation (Algonkian) it is not impossible that they were at one time horticultural. However, according to Wissler, they “have no traditions of agriculture and seem to have been a hunting people for many generations, depending chiefly upon the buffalo and other large mammals.”<sup>1</sup> It is definitely clear that the Blackfoot were on the Plains before the introduction of the horse.<sup>2</sup> The Blackfoot language is sufficiently distinct from that of other Algonkian speakers so that Kroeber regards the Blackfoot as “ancient occupants of the northern true plains, or rather of the foothills of the Rockies and the plains tributary thereto.”<sup>3</sup> Therefore, since there is no reason to believe that the Blackfoot were horticultural within recent times, and since it is known that they were on the Plains before the coming of the horse and in a locality north of the known range of maize horticulture,<sup>4</sup> they may reasonably be regarded as originally a hunting and gathering tribe.

There was one time during the year when the Blackfoot tribe came together in one place. This was in late summer, before the Sun Dance, at the time of the communal buffalo hunt.<sup>5</sup> According to Ewers, “. . . this summer season was the only time of the year when all the bands of the tribe camped together in one great village.”<sup>6</sup>

During the rest of the year, the Blackfoot tribe was divided into a number of bands.<sup>7</sup> These bands were sufficiently scattered so that members of different bands “might not even see each other from one summer to the next.”<sup>8</sup> As Steward puts it, The real economic and social unit of the Blackfoot is the band. These are groups centering around men and their male descendants and others who desire especially to join them. The band winters together, hunts together, and is entirely autonomous except for such special occasions as the Sun Dance or communal hunts when higher authority was instituted. To a slight degree, the band regulated marriage in that it was preferably though not necessarily exogamous and patrilocal. . . . The idea of descent from a common ancestor, kinship, and totemism are lacking among the Blackfoot, making it entirely incorrect to speak of their groups as gentes.<sup>9</sup>

Wissler pertinently observes:

We believe the facts indicate these bands to be social groups, or units, frequently formed and even now taking shape by division, segregation, and union, in the main a physical grouping of individuals in adjustment to sociological and economic conditions. The readiness with which a Blackfoot changes his band and the unstable character of the band name and above all the band's obvious function as a social and political unit, make it appear that its somewhat uncertain exogamous character is a mere coincidence.<sup>10</sup>

Ewers also notes that the band organization was very fluid.<sup>11</sup>

Apparently, the Blackfoot had a tribal chief. He was informally selected and had little actual authority. Ewers puts it this way:

The most influential band chief became recognized as the head chief of the tribe. However, his rank was of little significance except during the period of the tribal encampment in summer. Even then his role was more that of chairman of the council of chiefs than of ruler of his people. . . . The chiefs exercised little disciplinary power over their followers.<sup>12</sup>

The role of the chief will be outlined further in a discussion of authority. In effect, the tribal chief was of no importance as such except when the tribe came together in the summer months. During the rest of the year, the bands, as we have noted, were independent. Each band had its own leaders, who might properly be termed headmen rather than chiefs. There was no tribal discipline at this time.<sup>13</sup> These band headmen were charismatic leaders who had no authority beyond that given to them by their personal influence.<sup>14</sup> They were not formally selected; they just "got to be that way," as the phrase has it. Aside from a vague responsibility for the welfare of his band, the principal task of the band headman lay in directing the movements of the band and in selecting sites for camping.<sup>15</sup>

The Blackfoot had an informal council.<sup>16</sup> The council was most in evidence during the summer when the tribe was united. It was composed of the chiefs and headmen of the various bands, and acted as a check on the power of the tribal chief.<sup>17</sup> At this time, "the chiefs and headmen of the tribe met in council to discuss the economic, political, and military problems of the entire tribe and to make plans for the future."<sup>18</sup>

Actual authority to enforce discipline, as opposed to persuasive influence without formal power, existed only during the summer months when the tribe functioned as a unit. Ewers states:

In summer, when all the bands of the tribe gathered prior to the sun dance, the head chief, through his announcer, declared the hunting regulation in force. All the Indians fully understood that this meant that anyone who sought to kill buffalo on his own before the tribal hunt was organized would be severely punished by members of the men's societies chosen to police the camp. Anyone caught disturbing the buffalo herds upon which the whole camp relied for their subsistence had his meat taken from him, his weapons broken, his clothing torn, and perhaps his riding gear destroyed by the police.<sup>19</sup> This power did not exist at other times of the year.<sup>20</sup>

Among the Blackfoot, there were seven age-graded men's societies, collectively known as the All-Comrades. The members of these societies belonged to different bands, and the societies only functioned when the whole tribe came together. Each society performed its own ceremony at the time of the Sun Dance, and one or two of the societies were chosen by the tribal chief to police the camp and the communal hunt.<sup>21</sup>

Following Goldschmidt, we may define a clan as "a large, named, unilinear, exogamic kin group, not limited to any one location but extending the sentiments of familial ties to persons over a wide area."<sup>22</sup> As we have already indicated in our discussion of Blackfoot band organization, the Blackfoot had no clans. The Blackfoot bands, which offer the only indications of anything resembling clans, were not necessarily exogamous, and membership in these groups could be acquired on a non-kinship basis. Lowie regards the Blackfoot as a borderline case<sup>23</sup> but Wissler states that "it is difficult to see in it the ear marks of a broken-down clan organization."<sup>24</sup>

Status among the Blackfoot was primarily a function of horse ownership. Indi-

viduals of high status were those who controlled large numbers of horses, and individuals of low status were those who lacked good horses and had to rely on the charity of the wealthy.<sup>25</sup> The horses, of course, were largely acquired by raiding, and thus success as a warrior was also important.<sup>26</sup> Ewers notes that "many of the most active Blackfoot horse raiders were members of poor families who were ambitious to better their lot."<sup>27</sup> In addition, the ownership of medicine bundles conferred high status.<sup>28</sup>

It may be noted that the Blackfoot can be regarded as the earliest group of Algonkian speakers to live on the Plains.<sup>29</sup> They saw their first horse in 1730,<sup>30</sup> and "a Blackfoot Indian, born *ca.* 1725, could have witnessed the acquisition of the first horse by his people and lived to see the relative stabilization of tribal horse holdings among them by *ca.* 1800."<sup>31</sup>

*The Comanche.*—The case of the Comanche is relatively clear. There is no suggestion at all that they were ever horticultural before moving into the Plains. Everything about the Comanches points to a Basin-Plateau origin for the tribe, and it is reasonable to assume that they were at one time similar to other Shoshoneans of that area.<sup>32</sup> They were a nomadic people before they acquired the horse,<sup>33</sup> and there is no sign of horticulture in their background.<sup>34</sup> They acquired the horse early, and are known to have been raiding in New Mexico by 1705.<sup>35</sup> As Wallace and Hoebel put it, the Comanches "were true warrior nomads. To them a sedentary existence was intolerable."<sup>36</sup>

The Comanches never united in one place in the old days. Wallace and Hoebel state:

"Tribe" when applied to the Comanches is a word of sociological but not political significance. The Comanches had a strong consciousness of kind. A Comanche, whatever his band, was a Comanche. . . . The tribe consisted of people who had a common way of life. But that way of life did not include political institutions or social mechanisms by which they could act as a tribal unit. There was, in the old days, no ceremonial occasion or economic enterprise that pulled all the far-flung bands together for a spell, be it ever so brief. . . . The first time the bands with all their men, women, and children came together was in the dying moments of the old, free culture at the time of the first Comanche Sun Dance in 1874.<sup>37</sup>

The Comanches lived in scattered bands. According to Wallace and Hoebel, The bands were autonomous units, each loosely organized and each centering its activities in a vaguely defined territory within the Comanche country. . . . The Comanche band was strikingly similar in organization to the aboriginal Shoshonean groups of the Great Basin in the days preceding white contact. It ranged in size from a single family camping alone to the small camp of related individuals forming a composite extended family to a large group of several hundred people. But the band was not organized around a family group, nor was it the basis for the regulation of marriage.<sup>38</sup>

There were at least five large Comanche bands. It should be noted that the northern Comanches relied heavily on the buffalo, but the southern Comanches depended more on smaller game and horses.<sup>39</sup> The location of the various bands will be discussed in the Appendix. However, Richardson states that the sociocultural differences between the bands were minor.<sup>40</sup>

There was no tribal chief. Rather, each "family encampment" had a headman, who was also known as a peace chief. When the large band was functioning as a

unit, the band contained several of these headmen. One of the headmen was recognized as the band chief. These men were not elected, and there was no hereditary rule of succession. It was a matter of general influence. "The man made the office, and not the office the man." It was a pattern of charismatic leadership.<sup>41</sup> In addition to the peace chiefs, each band had a war chief who won his position on the basis of skill and bravery. This man seems to have been selected in council, but the council simply followed public opinion on the matter.<sup>42</sup> The only real power the peace chief had was that of deciding when and where to move the camp.<sup>43</sup> The war chiefs were responsible for organizing raids and making truces with other tribes.<sup>44</sup>

There was no tribal council. Each band, however, had an informal council. There was no formal procedure for admission to the council; it was composed of the influential older men. Upon occasion, if the band headmen agreed, councils were held in which several bands participated.<sup>45</sup>

With regard to discipline and authority, Wallace and Hoebel state that "Comanche government was at a minimum, legal precepts were rudimentary, and the enforcement of the simple substantive law remained the responsibility of individuals rather than of officials."<sup>46</sup> Elsewhere, Hoebel has noted that "there were no public officials endowed with law-speaking or law-enforcing authority."<sup>47</sup> It is interesting to note that the Comanches had no trace of the familiar "police" who functioned at the times of the communal hunts. Upon such occasions, "group discipline prevailed and all worked for the common good. The rules of the game were known and respected."<sup>48</sup> There was a hunt leader who gave directions for the hunt, but he was not backed up by any body of hunt police.<sup>49</sup> It is true that the war chiefs had a good deal of authority while conducting a raid. Yet even here, any man had the right to "pick up his arrows and go home."<sup>50</sup> It should be noted, however, that discipline could be enforced on an individual basis when the occasion demanded it. Richardson has discussed an incident reported by a Comanche captive in which warriors threatened death to anyone who stole water from the weaker members of the band.<sup>51</sup>

The problem of societies among the Comanches suffers from a lack of precise information. There seem to have been some small, loosely organized medicine societies.<sup>52</sup> There is no evidence of any age grades. Wallace and Hoebel state that there were no military societies.<sup>53</sup> Richardson, on the other hand, states that "there is some evidence to indicate the existence of military societies among the Comanches, but there is not much information on this subject."<sup>54</sup> It is probably safe to say that if such societies existed they "did not become a developed and integrated part of Comanche culture."<sup>55</sup> The Comanche had no clans.<sup>56</sup>

According to Wallace and Hoebel, "war honors provided the basis of the whole system of rank and social status in Comanche society."<sup>57</sup> The Comanches were very rich in horses, and owing to the fact that "taking them under difficult conditions had a sociopsychological value, the acquisition of a large herd added greatly to the prestige of the owner."<sup>58</sup>

It may be noted that the Comanches were probably the richest of all Plains tribes in the number of horses they possessed. One band of Comanches, the Kwahadies, is reported to have had some 15,000 horses in addition to several

hundred mules.<sup>59</sup> As Richardson puts it, "It took the horse to make the Comanches great as savages measure greatness. The achievements of the tribe are modern, and were accomplished on horseback."<sup>60</sup>

The account of the first Comanche Sun Dance in 1874 is particularly instructive. In a time of crisis, a messiah appeared. At his instigation, the Comanches put on a tribal Sun Dance, at which all of the scattered bands were present. The Sun Dance was borrowed from other Plains tribes, and was a simplified version put together on a "make-do" basis. It provides a striking illustration of the influence of existing cultural forms on the development of new institutions. Wallace and Hoebel state:

Certain features of the social structure that supported the Cheyenne and Kiowa dances were lacking in the cultural equipment of the Comanches, but this did not bother them. They were always a highly adaptable people and not in the least form-bound. If they had no military societies to police the camp and the dance, as did their neighbors, that was quite all right with them. They did not use police on the buffalo hunt—and they could do without them here. The fact that a little fetish doll was essential to the Kiowas in their form of the dance did not worry the Comanches, who had no such doll; they simply did without one. That the Cheyennes possessed trained Sun Dance priests, each of whom owned an inherited Sun Dance Medicine Bundle, without which no man could direct a Sun Dance, was of no moment. A respected shaman could direct the ceremony. . . .<sup>61</sup>

It may also be noted that the Comanche Sun Dance was a conscious attempt at dramatizing tribal solidarity.<sup>62</sup>

*The Sarsi*.—"From the subarctic Athabaskan region," states Lowie, "came the Sarsi, linguistically an offshoot of the Beaver Indians. . . ." <sup>63</sup> There is no reason to believe that the Sarsi were ever horticultural.

The data on the Sarsi are not entirely clear. However, the entire tribe did customarily get together at certain times of the year. Jenness states: "With the coming of summer the scattered camps reunited, pitched their tents in a circle around the lodge of the chief, and directed all their energies to the buffalo hunt."<sup>64</sup> Elsewhere, Jenness speaks of the whole tribe coming together to drive herds of buffalo into pounds or over cliffs.<sup>65</sup> The structure of these bands will be reviewed when the problem of clans is discussed. However, it may be noted that the bands are described as being "very fluid, constant neither in number nor composition."<sup>67</sup> Jenness goes on to indicate that the bands did not always function as units.

Because the Sarcee lived entirely by hunting, their movements conformed very closely to those of their principal game animal, the buffalo. Comparatively few herds of buffalo remained about the headwaters of the Saskatchewan River during the winter months; most of them migrated south in the autumn, and did not return until the spring. During the great part of the year, therefore, the Sarcee moved about in small groups, generally subdivisions of their bands, consisting of from one to a dozen families. These groups rarely travelled more than a day's journey apart through fear of the Cree and other enemies; and they frequently united, either in summer or in winter, to organize a buffalo drive for their common benefit. Toward the end of summer, when the berries were ripe, they always amalgamated that they might celebrate together the dances of their "societies" and in certain years the festival of the Sun Dance. One other factor influenced their movements, the necessity for abundant fuel and shelter during the winter months. In summer they could gather on the open prairies all the low brush and buffalo dung they required to cook their food, but in winter these were covered beneath the snow. At that season, therefore, they retreated to the edge of the woods, and made only such forays out into the open plains as were necessary to replenish their supply of meat.<sup>68</sup>

Each band [according to Jenness] had its leader, who was not elected, but recognized by common consent because of his prestige. . . . Similarly, there was no elected chief for the entire tribe, but always one or more band leaders who through their greater influence could generally sway the people to their views and, therefore, tacitly ranked as chiefs.<sup>69</sup>

The band chief had no formal authority.

There were both tribal and band councils, both of an informal, advisory nature. "The Indians discussed all matters of importance at informal councils composed of the band leaders, the older and more experienced men, and noted warriors."<sup>70</sup>

Formal authority existed only on certain specific occasions. The Sarsi were divided into five societies or clubs. Every year, each society held a dance which lasted four days; the dance was attended by all members of the tribe. During this four-day period, "the leader of the society enjoyed complete control of the camp and all its activities. One society . . . served also as a police force at every Sun Dance festival."<sup>71</sup> It may be noted that these four-day dances were always held in summer, before the Sun Dance. Moreover, it is stated that one of the societies directed the buffalo hunting that took place while that society was in charge; at other times, individuals could hunt without restrictions.<sup>72</sup> Elsewhere, Jenness notes that "failure in the hunt spelled starvation and death" and that therefore "it was generally conducted as a cooperative enterprise." Since individual hunting for buffalo was not very effective, "the great majority were destroyed by the united efforts of a number of men, and often of the entire tribe."<sup>73</sup> Thus it seems reasonable to assume that the large communal hunts were usually policed, although this is not specifically stated in these terms.

As already noted, the Sarsi possessed five societies. Jenness observes that these societies "possessed the germs of an age-grading system" but they never "developed it or established any precise order of rank."<sup>74</sup>

The Sarsi probably had no clans; Jenness makes no mention of them. The problem hinges on the structure of the bands. The available information is somewhat confusing. Each band, as we have noted, contained a number of closely related families. Jenness states:

The child, whether boy or girl, remained inseparable from its mother until it attained the age of 9 or 10. At the age of 9 or 10 the boy's life changed. Hitherto he had remained at his mother's side, and counted as a member of her band. Now his father undertook his education, and he was enrolled in his father's band. In later life he could revert, if he wished, to his mother's band, or attach himself to any other, but during the years of adolescence his status was determined for him.<sup>75</sup>

It seems that there is some confusion here between territorial and kin groups. There is some evidence that residence was patrilocal, in that the new tipi was pitched by the girl's parents-in-law,<sup>76</sup> and Jenness states that a new band could arise "whenever a man had several sons."<sup>77</sup> In view of the fluid nature of the bands, however, and because of the fact that a family could change its permanent band allegiance at will, it is impossible to see any clan arrangement in this system. It may also be noted that the bands "freely intermarried."<sup>78</sup>

Among the Sarsi, there were no hereditary distinctions of caste or rank.<sup>79</sup> Success in warfare conferred status,<sup>80</sup> and the primary aim of raids was to obtain horses, scalps, and guns.<sup>81</sup> Ownership of medicine bundles was also important.<sup>82</sup>

The Sarsi were closely associated with the Blackfoot in their life on the Plains. They are described by Jenness as being "constantly on the move."<sup>83</sup> It may be mentioned that they "looked forward to their Sun Dance as the brightest episode in their year."<sup>84</sup>

*The Plains Cree.*—Before their appearance on the Plains, the Plains Cree were a hunting and gathering people. When they were first contacted around 1640, they were nomadic hunters living near Hudson Bay. They grew no crops.<sup>85</sup> Between 1640 and 1690, they are known to have collected large quantities of wild rice.<sup>86</sup> After a period of fur trapping and shifting between the forest and the Plains, the Plains Cree were a full-fledged Plains tribe by 1845.<sup>87</sup>

It is not wholly clear whether or not the entire tribe ever got together in one place. Mandelbaum's evidence indicates that several bands might join together in the summer months, but not the whole tribe.<sup>88</sup> Skinner, however, suggests that sometimes the whole tribe camped together.<sup>89</sup> In any event, the Plains Cree were primarily a band-organized people. They were divided into at least eight bands.<sup>90</sup> "The bands of the Plains Cree were loose, shifting units usually named for the territory they occupied. . . . Acceptance into band membership was a simple matter. Any person who lived in the encampment for some time and who traveled with the group soon came to be known as one of its members."<sup>91</sup>

Mandelbaum states:

Throughout the year the Plains Cree looked forward to the annual Sun Dance encampment. Messengers bearing tobacco and invitations were sent out in the spring. Late in June or early in July the scattered sections of a band, or even several bands, converged to the preappointed places where the ceremony was to be held. The great encampment might hold together for two weeks or even longer, if there were buffalo herds in the vicinity. When the food supply ran low, the bands drifted apart, each slowly moving toward its own territory. Concerted buffalo hunts were made at this time.<sup>92</sup>

The movements of the bands were dictated by the movements of the buffalo herds. In the summer months, the Plains Cree gathered in large camps on the Plains. "In late winter the buffalo were scattered in small groups. So were the Plains Cree."<sup>93</sup>

It is not clear whether or not the Plains Cree had a tribal chief. Mandelbaum makes no mention of one, but Skinner has a reference to a tribal chief.<sup>94</sup> The bands did have chiefs, and sometimes more than one per band. One such chief "would be recognized as outranking the others because of seniority in age or, more important, because of his outstanding superiority. When several bands gathered in a large encampment, the chiefs would meet in one of the Warrior lodges. The hierarchy of rank among the chiefs would be tacitly recognized. . . ."<sup>95</sup> According to Mandelbaum, "the number of chiefs was not fixed, nor was there any prescribed procedure for attaining the rank. A man became a chief by virtue of his accomplishments in battle, his ability as a hunter, his liberality, his capacities as an orator and executive. . . . The chief was more a recognized leader or headman than he was an official."<sup>96</sup> The succession to chieftainship was sometimes hereditary, but not necessarily so.<sup>97</sup> It is stated that "the functions of chieftainship varied with the personalities who occupied the office."<sup>98</sup>



There was an informal band council composed of the "leading men" who were invited by the band chief to participate.<sup>99</sup>

Among the Plains Cree, the warriors were organized into societies. These societies functioned only in the summer except on rare occasions when conditions permitted large winter encampments. Each warrior society had a Warrior Chief, who might or might not be the same person as the band chief. Mandelbaum states, "His authority was confined to those activities performed by the Warriors as a group. He led the dances and directed policing operations. . . ."<sup>100</sup>

The one important function of the society beyond dancing, feasting, and providing for the needy, was policing the buffalo hunt. If a man evaded the Warriors and tried to make a kill before the proper time, they immediately advanced to the offender's tipi, slashed it to bits, and destroyed all his possessions.<sup>101</sup>

(Four days later, if the man had taken his punishment well, the Warriors replaced his property.)

As noted above, the Warriors were organized into societies. These were not age-graded.<sup>102</sup>

Mandelbaum makes no reference to clans. Skinner states: "They lack the totemic system of the Ojibway, or at least no evidence that they ever had such a system could be adduced."<sup>103</sup> Jenness observes that, with primary reference to the Woodland Cree, "some bands from the Albany river westward developed totemic clans on the analogy of the Ojibwa, but these never gained a firm foothold and are now practically forgotten."<sup>104</sup> At any rate, it may be said that clans were not characteristic of the Plains Cree, if indeed they existed at all.

Status was primarily determined by skill as a warrior. Mandelbaum states: "Success in warfare was the high road to prestige. War exploits were the chief concern of the young men and constituted the stock topic of conversation among their elders. Women desired sons who would become famous warriors; girls despised the men who had never been on a war party. Raids netted the victorious warrior acclaim for his prowess and were the means for obtaining the wealth in horses which implemented his rise to high status."<sup>105</sup>

*The Assiniboine.*—To judge by their linguistic affiliation (Siouan), it is not beyond the realm of possibility that the Assiniboine may have farmed at some point in their history. However, there is no evidence that they ever did so. It is known that before they moved into the Plains they were hunters and gatherers of wild rice in southern Ontario.<sup>106</sup> It therefore seems reasonable to classify them, with reference to their known background, as a hunting and gathering people.

Apparently, the entire Assiniboine tribe did get together in the summer months. Lowie speaks of a "great tribal hunt"<sup>107</sup> and Jenness states that the "united tribe" took part in the Sun Dance.<sup>108</sup> Rodnick, however, indicates that all the bands did not always participate in the Sun Dance, stating that sometimes two or three Sun Dances were conducted at the same time by different bands in different parts of the Assiniboine territory.<sup>109</sup> At any rate, it is clear that the Assiniboine were primarily a band-organized people. "The band," Rodnick explains, "was the political unit in Assiniboine life. It was autonomous in nature and completely sovereign. Individual affiliation with the band was loose, since it was relatively simple to form new bands, or for an individual to leave one and join another."<sup>110</sup> Jenness puts it this way: "Thus they followed the wanderings of the buffalo herds, dis-

persing into small bands during the winter months when the buffalo were more scattered and hunting difficult, and reuniting in spring for the great sun-dance festival and the driving of herds into pounds."<sup>111</sup> Lowie states that there were seventeen bands.<sup>112</sup>

As far as can be determined, the Assiniboine had no tribal chief. Rodnick states that "no formal political organization existed for the Assiniboine as a tribe" and indicates that each band remained autonomous even when the various bands camped together.<sup>113</sup> "Each band," Rodnick states, "had its own chiefs, with one of the chiefs outstanding because of personality. . . . The pattern of behavior for the band chief formed the Assiniboine ideal of a 'good man.' . . . Popularity was a prerequisite for the acceptance of his authority."<sup>114</sup> Lowie also observes that "the authority of a chief, as among most of the Plains tribes, was dependent on his personal characteristics, such as bravery, liberality, or the possession of wakan power."<sup>115</sup> The role of the band chief, according to Rodnick, was that of a presiding officer; the band council made the decisions, not the chief.<sup>116</sup>

As noted above, there was a band council. There was also, upon occasion, an interband council.

The council was composed of those men within the band who had reached a high status through success in war and in the hunt. All men of family and all young warriors whose prestige was considered of sufficient importance by band opinion were eligible to join in council meetings, there being no election to the office of councilor. The council was the legislative body of the band, no decisions being final unless made by it.<sup>117</sup>

Among the Assiniboine, there was a military society composed of noted warriors. This society had the authority to enforce discipline at certain times. Lowie indicates that the authority of these "Soldiers" was limited to the march and the great communal hunts, where they prevented premature attacks on the buffalo.<sup>118</sup> Rodnick suggests that they also carried out the decisions of the band council, searched the camp for stolen goods if theft was committed, protected strangers, and arranged the preliminaries relating to trade or peace.<sup>119</sup> It is clear, however, that the principal duties of the Soldiers were to police the camp and regulate the communal hunts.

In addition to the military society of noted warriors, the Assiniboine also recognized several other groups: "two orders of medicine-men, the owners of painted tents, and the founders or leaders of various dancing societies."<sup>120</sup> The societies were not formally age graded.<sup>121</sup>

It is uncertain whether or not the Assiniboine had clans. As has been noted, band membership was quite fluid. Rodnick states that no distinction was made collaterally between the mother's and father's sides of the family.<sup>122</sup> Lowie states: "J. O. Dorsey, on Denig's authority, conceives the Assiniboine bands as exogamous clans. For this conception, I could not obtain any corroborative testimony."<sup>123</sup> Elsewhere, Lowie lists the Assiniboine as a doubtful case.<sup>124</sup> It may be stated that, in the absence of any real evidence to the contrary, the Assiniboine probably had no clans.

Rodnick states,

Warfare was the means of receiving status in the aboriginal culture.<sup>125</sup> . . . For an individual to be highly respected as the symbolized "ideal," certain prerequisites were necessary. These in-

cluded success in warfare . . . good fortune in hunting . . . procuring as many horses as possible . . . possession of certain "powers." . . . There was no guarantee that rank once gained would continue to be held, since status was a purely relative matter in the judgment of the band, rank being defined in terms of competition for the cultural stamp of superiority. Wealth of parents, however, was an important step in preparing a child for high status.<sup>128</sup>

The Assiniboine were not a wealthy tribe, and had few horses.<sup>127</sup> They seem to have gotten their first horses around 1750.<sup>128</sup> In historic times, they were closely allied with the Cree.<sup>129</sup> According to Rodnick, "the success or the failure in the hunting of the buffalo meant the difference between a prosperous economic life and that of dire poverty."<sup>130</sup> It may be noted that the directorship of the Sun Dance seems to have been hereditary. Jenness states: "The greatest religious event in the Assiniboine year was the sun-dance. . . . The leader was a man who had inherited the privilege and received the necessary instruction from his father."<sup>131</sup>

#### TRUE PLAINS TRIBES OF FARMING ORIGIN

*The Cheyenne.*—The case of the Cheyennes is refreshingly clear, thanks to the researches of the archeologists. During the eighteenth century and for the early years of the nineteenth, the Cheyennes were living in earth lodges and growing maize, beans, and squash. They first had the horse around 1760, and by 1830 they had become a typical nomadic Plains hunting tribe.<sup>132</sup> As Lowie puts it: "It would seem that within the space of fifty years the formerly semisedentary Cheyenne had completely given up farming and permanent dwellings in favor of buffalo hunting and tipis."<sup>133</sup>

The Cheyenne tribe was united during the summer months. Grinnell states, "After the tribal groups had coalesced, all the people of the whole Cheyenne camp usually met together at least once a year at certain important religious festivals."<sup>134</sup> Hoebel is more specific:

Cheyenne social organization goes through a semiannual cycle, for it is impossible with their type of economy for the Cheyennes to feed their total population during the fall, winter, and spring unless they disperse the tribe. In the summer, following the integration rites of the great tribal rituals, the tribe is together as a body during the period of the communal hunt, or on the infrequent occasions when it moves en masse against an enemy tribe. From October to June it is broken up into band camps that scatter to parts of the Cheyenne territory where adequate winter forage for the horses is available and hunters may cover a wider range in search of game.<sup>135</sup>

The economic necessity of such an arrangement is made clear by the fact that the Cheyenne once tried to stay together as a tribe all year long and "very nearly perished in consequence."<sup>136</sup> There were ten important Cheyenne bands. Hoebel states:

The core of a band consists of one or several closely related kindreds, although some families not directly related may choose to live with some particular band. The one great exception is the Dog Soldier band, the most powerful of the Cheyenne military societies. This group began living together as a unit at some time in the past and formed a band not at all based on kinship ties.<sup>137</sup>

The pattern of leadership in Cheyenne society reveals a sharp break with tribes discussed above. The difference was that the leaders were formally selected and they were typically tribal officials. As Hoebel puts it, "The keystone of the

Cheyenne social structure is the tribal council of forty-four peace chiefs.<sup>138</sup> There were four principal or head chiefs, and four chiefs from each of the ten bands.<sup>139</sup> The chiefs were picked for a definite term of office. Grinnell states: "Of the forty-four chiefs who held office for ten years, four, or sometimes more, were usually elected for a second term, and of these, four were likely to become head chiefs."<sup>140</sup> To some extent, a head chief could pick his own successor, who might be his son, and therefore the office was partly hereditary.<sup>141</sup> The peace chiefs were headmen of extended families and served as band representatives, but they were first and foremost tribal officials.<sup>142</sup> In addition to the peace chiefs, there were war chiefs, who were the officers of the military societies.<sup>143</sup>

The forty-four peace chiefs formed the tribal council. The council was "plainly the supreme official civil authority."<sup>144</sup> Hoebel sums up its functions:

In addition to treating of such matters as camp moving and tribal (as against individual raiding expeditions) war policy, the council also acts as a judicial body in cases involving a criminal act. In governmental affairs, it further serves as executive and legislative authority over the military societies, which act as the administrative police branch. In matters of war and peace, however, the warrior groups have an active say in the decision-making process. They can, in fact, ignore and thereby nullify the ruling of the council in matters in which they are vitally concerned. The council, although it has the constitutional authority to act on its own, takes realistic cognizance of this hard fact.<sup>145</sup>

Police powers were in the hands of the military societies. These police powers were most in evidence when the tribe was acting as a unit. Llewellyn and Hoebel state: "The occasions when some particular military society acted with explicitly delegated police authority fell at the times of the great tribal ceremonies, the communal hunts, and at such times as the tribe was on the march as a body."<sup>146</sup> However, even when the societies were dispersed among different bands, the members retained something of their disciplinary authority.<sup>147</sup> It will be remembered that one of the military societies, the Dog Soldiers, lived together as a band. This band was governed by the military chiefs of the society. "This extraordinary feature," state Llewellyn and Hoebel, "endowed the Dog Society with a unique cohesiveness and gave rise to a situation pregnant with great—but largely unrealized—possibilities of governmental formation."<sup>148</sup> Military societies were present but were ungraded.<sup>149</sup>

The problem of clans among the Cheyennes may be simply stated. They did not have clans at the time that they were studied by anthropologists; the kinship structure, in fact, was bilateral.<sup>150</sup> It is possible, however, that they had clans at one time. Grinnell's evidence indicates that "in old times" descent was matrilineal, and residence matrilocal. His evidence further suggests that these groups were "descendants of a common ancestor" and exogamous.<sup>151</sup> Eggan has perhaps summed up the matter best:

While Mooney and other investigators have denied that the Cheyenne have a clan system, it is probable that the earlier organization was less amorphous. The conditions of Plains life demanded a local group small enough to subsist by hunting and gathering, but large enough to furnish protection against hostile war parties and raids. The extended family was adequate for the first condition but was at the mercy of any war party; the tribe, on the other hand, was too unwieldy to act as an economic unit for very long. The band provided an adequate compromise; this is perhaps the most important reason for its almost universal presence in the Plains area.<sup>152</sup>

It is probable, then, that the Cheyenne were not clan organized in late times on the Plains, but possible that they had a clan system at one time.

There were three principal determinants of status among the Cheyennes. First, a man should be a skilled warrior. "The Cheyenne men were all warriors. War was regarded as the noblest of pursuits, the only one for a man to follow. . . ." <sup>158</sup> The possession of horses also gave status. Many men went to war solely to increase their wealth by capturing horses. <sup>154</sup> Finally, if a man desired to be a peace chief, he had to exhibit other qualities. All peace chiefs were proven warriors, but they must also show "even-tempered good nature, energy, wisdom, kindness, concern for the well-being of others, courage, generosity, and altruism." <sup>155</sup>

Hoebel states that there were also five "sacred chiefs" on the tribal council, and that one of these, Sweet Medicine Chief, served as presiding officer; he was the "head priest-chief of the tribe." <sup>156</sup>

*The Crow.*—The Crow are known to have split off from the Hidatsa, who were a farming people. <sup>157</sup> Lowie has stated that Crow history "broadly parallels that of the Cheyenne" with respect to a loss of farming. <sup>158</sup> Among others, White has referred to the Crow as being formerly horticultural. <sup>159</sup>

Upon occasion, the Crow did get together as a united tribe. Lowie speaks of a "tribal hunt" and also describes the Sun Dance as "a public spectacle in which the whole tribe took part." <sup>160</sup> The Crow were divided into three bands, which were politically independent. Two of these three bands, separate in the winter months, united in the spring. <sup>161</sup> Elsewhere, Lowie mentions that the tribe was together from spring "until the tribal breakup in the fall." <sup>162</sup>

Although the matter is not entirely clear, there seems to have been no Crow tribal chief. Each band contained a number of men who are referred to as chiefs. These were men who had performed a series of standardized war exploits: leading a successful raid, capturing a horse picketed within an enemy camp, being the first to touch an enemy, and taking an enemy's bow or gun away from him in battle. <sup>163</sup> The native term for chief, according to Lowie, "need not imply any governmental functions." <sup>164</sup> One of these military leaders became the "head of the camp"; he had no special title. <sup>165</sup> Lowie states: "He was neither a ruler nor a judge and in general had no power over life and death. He decided when and where his followers were to pitch and to move their lodges." <sup>166</sup> The Crow chiefs, in other words, are essentially charismatic leaders without formal authority. In addition to these band chiefs, "the clans had headmen, who became such because of their valor. . . ." <sup>167</sup>

The Crow had band councils. Apparently, the members of the band councils were primarily the members of the military aristocracy. <sup>168</sup>

Formal authority to enforce discipline was in the hands of the military societies. Lowie states that each spring the band chief appointed one of the military societies to serve as police. <sup>169</sup> "The foremost duty of the police was to regulate the communal buffalo hunt. . . . They also stopped a war party setting out at an inauspicious moment, directed the movements of the camp, tried to settle amicably any disputes within the band, and in general maintained order." <sup>170</sup> Elsewhere, Lowie indicates that the authority of the police society lasted "until the tribal breakup in the fall." <sup>171</sup>

The Crow had a number of societies. "In the old days," Lowie states, "virtually every man belonged to some club. . . ." <sup>172</sup> These societies were ungraded. <sup>173</sup>

The Crow were divided into thirteen exogamous matrilineal clans. <sup>174</sup> The clans "were grouped together in very loose nameless bodies." <sup>175</sup> The clans were important. "Fellow clansfolk recognized mutual obligations, which characteristically overrode their sense of duty to any larger group. Thus, a murder would readily precipitate a blood-feud. On the principle of 'one for all, and all for one' the victim's clansmen sought to kill either the murderer or one of *his* clansmen." <sup>176</sup> However, "under normal conditions the clans were *not* warring against each other, but expected to form a united front against hostile aliens." <sup>177</sup> The bands each contained representatives of all the clans. <sup>178</sup>

Status among the Crow was largely a matter of war honors. Not only were the four war exploits needed to become a chief, but "to lack all these standardized points was to be a nobody." <sup>179</sup> It may be noted that the desire for horses was a principal motive for warfare. <sup>180</sup>

Finally, it should be noted that the Sun Dance among the Crow was not an annual affair. The ceremony was "a prayer for vengeance" and required an individual pledge. The average interval between Sun Dances was three or four years. <sup>181</sup> However, Lowie states that the Sun Dance was "a public spectacle in which the whole tribe took part," so it may be assumed that the Sun Dance normally occurred in the summer months. <sup>182</sup>

*The Gros Ventre.*—The Gros Ventre were early residents on the Plains. <sup>183</sup> Their early history is not well known. However, it is known that they had separated from the Arapaho only in comparatively recent times, <sup>184</sup> and the Arapaho were in all probability originally a farming tribe. <sup>185</sup> Thus, it is a reasonable assumption that the Gros Ventre had a farming background at one time, but there is no real proof on this point.

The whole tribe got together in one place during part of the year. This seems to have been from April until early fall, beginning with a tribal hunt. <sup>186</sup> The tribal and band movements were regulated almost entirely by the movements of the buffalo. <sup>187</sup> After the middle of November, "the tribe . . . split into groups of several bands each to seek places along watercourses where they would be protected as much as possible from the rigors of the weather as well as from depredations by their enemies." <sup>188</sup> There were twelve "fairly autonomous" bands. <sup>189</sup> These bands tended to be patrilineal and exogamous, but residence was also a factor, in that some people claimed membership in bands other than those into which they had been born. <sup>190</sup>

Flannery states:

According to tradition . . . the Gros Ventres had had in the fairly remote past a formally selected chief or leader of the whole tribe. It was said that he functioned when the whole tribe was together and that his decisions in important matters were made in consultation with the chief men, including the leaders of all bands. There was no regular council and anyone present might express his opinion. . . . The last regularly selected leader of the whole tribe was said to have been White Eagle, who held this position in the last decade of the eighteenth century. <sup>191</sup>

Kroeber notes: "Each band seems to have had a recognized head or chief." <sup>192</sup> These band chiefs seem to have been informally selected. Flannery says further:

“The term ‘chief’ was employed to designate any man who had distinguished himself in war. Each band then might have several or many such ‘chiefs,’ but among them there would be one recognized as leader, ‘he who takes us around,’ that is, the one who directed the band when it moved from place to place.”<sup>198</sup> Flannery indicates, however, that the chief holds office for life.<sup>194</sup>

There is evidence to suggest that at one time there was an informal tribal council. The bands had similar councils, composed of the “band leaders.”<sup>195</sup>

Upon certain occasions, there was authority to enforce discipline. During a Sacred Dance, the society of the vower had police powers. These powers lasted only for the duration of the dance.<sup>196</sup> Flannery also notes that “soldiers” policed the communal hunts.<sup>197</sup> Murder and adultery were also “situations in which sanction through physical force was applicable.”<sup>198</sup>

The Gros Ventre also had a series of age-graded men’s societies.<sup>199</sup>

The Gros Ventre were likewise divided into a number of patrilineal, exogamous clans.<sup>200</sup> These clans averaged about one hundred members each in 1885.<sup>201</sup> Kroeber’s data seem to indicate that the clans were localized, being in effect equivalent to the bands.<sup>202</sup> If this is correct, it must be said that the existence of true clans among the Gros Ventres becomes questionable, since people could claim membership in bands on the basis of residence.

Status depended mainly on a reputation for valor. Among the war exploits, stealing horses was as important as killing, scalping, or counting coups.<sup>203</sup> It may be noted that the ownership of certain pipes was important.<sup>204</sup> Also, “horses were . . . the most valuable item in Gros Ventres economy.”<sup>205</sup>

*The Teton Dakota.*—The Teton Dakota were almost certainly originally a farming people. Lowie states: “The story of the Dakota runs parallel with that of the Cheyenne . . . the Dakota as a unit must have been an originally woodland people, a large branch of which became buffalo hunters to the exclusion of farming.”<sup>206</sup> This same point has been made by Hyde.<sup>207</sup> The Teton Dakota seem to have acquired horses around 1760.<sup>208</sup>

It is not certain whether or not the entire tribe ever got together in one place. It is known that in the summer months some of the bands came together. MacGregor states: “The bands customarily camped separately during the wintertime, but late each spring groups of bands joined in a camp circle or encampment for their annual religious ceremonial, the Sun Dance, and for the cooperative buffalo hunts. . . .”<sup>209</sup> Mirsky states that “two or three or even four of the component bands have met in the great camp circle, but never the whole tribe.”<sup>210</sup> The situation is not a simple one, involving as it does a certain terminological confusion. MacGregor states:

The subtribe was one of the traditional divisions of the Teton-Dakota. In their eastern homeland in Minnesota it is supposed that the seven subtribes of the Teton-Dakota (Oglala, Brule, Sans Arcs, Minneconjou, Two Kettles, Hunkpapa, Blackfeet) once lived together, possibly as seven gentes of an original tribe. By the time the Teton-Dakota became dominant on the plains of South Dakota and Wyoming, the seven subtribes were independent of each other.<sup>211</sup>

Hyde takes much the same position:

When the Tetons crossed the Missouri their seven divisions became seven separate tribes, and each of these seems to have attempted to organize itself into seven new divisions or bands, to form

a tribal camp circle. This seems to have been the goal set; but the wild, roving life the people led and the constant shifting about of the bands made such an organization difficult and even impossible to attain.<sup>212</sup>

At any rate, if these subtribes may be termed bands, the Teton Dakota lived during most of the year in bands and subdivisions of bands.<sup>213</sup> MacGregor indicates that the subdivisions of the bands were composed of from ten to twenty related families.<sup>214</sup> On the Plains, the bands seemed to be rather fluid. "Roaming bands and family groups changed their allegiances to the larger divisions at will; and, at the beginning of the reservation era, leaders sprang up to create new bands, adding confusion to the limited picture we have of the old social structure."<sup>215</sup>

Apparently, the Teton Dakota had no tribal chiefs; that is, they had no officials who had authority over *all* the people.<sup>216</sup> On the other hand, the pattern of leadership among the bands (subtribes) was quite formalized. MacGregor says:

The Teton had a governmental organization, which was developed only among the encampments. The political pattern of one Oglala group was organized in the following manner. The main political body was the Chiefs' Society composed of the heads and leaders, forty years of age or older, who elected their own members. This society elected the Seven Chiefs of the Tribe, who held office for life. The position was partly hereditary, as it was the practice to elect a son or younger relative to fill the vacancy of a deceased chief. These seven chiefs appointed the Four Shirt Wearers, the real councilors of the division, who also held office for life but could resign their position. Four executive officers of the encampment, the *wakicun*, were also appointed by the Seven Chiefs of the Tribe to hold office for a year. It was the particular function of this group to organize and control the camp.<sup>217</sup>

In this connection, Hyde has some interesting observations to make. He notes that the Shirt Wearers, who were prominent warriors rather than chiefs, were selected as *wakicunsa*.

The four *wakicunsa* had supreme authority over the people until the tribal circle was broken up in the autumn. They issued orders for the moving of camp from place to place and controlled all other activities. . . . The real chiefs had no authority except in settling small matters which concerned their own camps alone. . . . Such a form of organization naturally thrust the prominent warriors to the fore and, in tribal affairs, prevented the hereditary chiefs (unless they were men of very strong character) from playing an important part. . . . As early as 1730 we find evidence that the Tetons had thrown off the authority of the Sioux chiefs. In their wandering camps each man was the equal of any of his fellows, and the chiefs were merely the heads of kinship groups and generally had no authority outside of the little group of kinsmen who recognized them as their hereditary leaders.<sup>218</sup>

If Hyde is correct, this indicates that a shift was taking place, in which the hereditary chiefs were losing influence and the warriors were gaining more authority.

As has been indicated, each band had a council, which was elected.

Each band seems to have had its own "soldiers," or perhaps it would be more correct to say that each encampment had its own police whose authority was limited to that encampment.<sup>219</sup> When the bands (subtribes) came together in the summer months, the chiefs appointed several officials and one of the warrior societies to police the camp.<sup>220</sup> Among other things, the selected warrior society policed the communal hunt.<sup>221</sup>

The Teton Dakota had a series of men's societies, the members of which were elected.<sup>222</sup> These societies were not age-graded.<sup>223</sup>



The problem of clans among the Teton Dakota is a complex one. They were clearly not clan organized in late times on the Plains, since the bands or band subdivisions constituted essentially bilateral extended family groupings.<sup>224</sup> Mirsky states, "The important unit in the social structure was the *tiyospaye*, the extended bilateral family group. It was composed of individual families who were related by consanguineal ties."<sup>225</sup> However, MacGregor notes that: "In the old bands the families were usually related through the male line, for men commonly brought their wives from other bands to their family group."<sup>226</sup> Lowie believes that it is probable, but not certain, that the Dakota bands were clans.<sup>227</sup> Hyde states that "we find among the Oglalas and other Teton Sioux tribes many hints of a former organization into totemic groups of kindred. . . ."<sup>228</sup> Many of the Siouan-speaking tribes, of course, were clan organized, notably the "Central Siouans" of the Southern Prairie.<sup>229</sup> Scudder Mekeel states: "There seems to have been a tradition that all the Dakota tribes once lived about Spirit Lake, at which time there were seven 'gentes.' One by one these groups moved away to the west. The first band to go was the Teton."<sup>230</sup> Mekeel also notes, however, that there is no evidence of former gentes among the Teton Dakota. Ewers states: "The Teton had the gens type of organization; that is, descent was reckoned in the male line."<sup>231</sup> The bilateral emphasis in the social structure in historic times, together with the looseness of the band structure, makes it almost certain that the Teton Dakota did not have a clan system in late times on the Plains. However, the evidence suggests the possibility that in former times the Teton Dakota may have been organized into a patrilineal clan system.

With respect to status, Mirsky states: "Prestige can be achieved by individuals, but the ways are limited. For men there is only war and religion; for women, prestige can be accorded for skill in handicrafts, for participation in religion, and for adherence to a strict code of sex behavior."<sup>232</sup> The highest war honor was awarded for stealing horses.<sup>233</sup> Horses were also "the most important form of property."<sup>234</sup>

*The Arapaho.*—The early history of the Arapaho is not well known, but there is indirect evidence that they were once a horticultural people.<sup>235</sup> Wedel speaks of the Arapaho as giving up horticulture to become bison hunters.<sup>236</sup> Beals also states that at one time they were apparently agricultural.<sup>237</sup> Elkin writes: "According to their traditions, the Northern Arapaho had lived in settled communities where they practiced both agriculture and hunting. . . . At the beginning of our historic record, the Northern Arapaho had lost all direct traces of settled agricultural life. With the use of the horse they took on a completely nomadic existence based on hunting the buffalo. . . ."<sup>238</sup>

Kroeber states that the tribe did come together upon occasion.<sup>239</sup> Elkin is more specific:

The band system allowed the Arapaho to meet effectively the seasonal fluctuations in the game supply with corresponding changes in their social grouping. During the summer, buffalo were found in large herds and were generally hunted in tribal surrounds. . . . During the rest of the year, when game ran only singly or in small groups, the tribe as a whole was too large and unwieldy to function as a unit. The bands separated and most of the hunting was carried on by small groups of men. Even then, however, the bands did not live completely apart. They generally remained fairly close together and informed the "Quick Tempered" band, which contained the Sacred Pipe and most of the tribal chiefs, of their movements.<sup>240</sup>

The Arapaho, then, were divided into four bands.<sup>241</sup> The bands must have been fairly fluid, since a man could belong either to the band into which he had been born or to the band with which he happened to live.<sup>242</sup>

However, the Arapaho had no single tribal chief.<sup>243</sup> Rather, the four tribal chiefs "were formally and ceremonially inducted to their positions."<sup>244</sup> Beals notes the possibility that new chiefs may have been elected, but not all informants are in agreement on this point.<sup>245</sup> Apparently, these chiefs always came from the Dog Society.<sup>246</sup> According to Elkin, whenever matters of tribal concern arose, the chiefs first met in private to discuss them. "If they deemed the matter required little discussion, they called a general meeting of all the societies. One of them stated the problem and asked the assembled crowd for its opinion."<sup>247</sup> If more discussion was needed, the chiefs asked the societies to talk it over and reach a decision.<sup>248</sup>

Thus it seems that the tribal chiefs themselves formed a small council, with the members of the societies forming a kind of tribal council.

With respect to authority, Elkin states:

Although the tribal chiefs were ultimately concerned with these regulatory and disciplinary powers and duties, they themselves did not directly perform them, but gave over the responsibility for their execution to the "soldier-police" companies. . . . The tribal chiefs shifted control from one to another of these groups at indefinite times, and in no definite order, and gave the "older brothers" of the acting police complete authority for carrying out the plans. . . . In the control of the hunt, the soldier-police showed the greatest extent of their power.<sup>249</sup>

The Arapaho were organized into a series of age-graded societies.<sup>250</sup> They seem to have acquired these from contact with the Mandan and Hidatsa.<sup>251</sup>

According to Kroeber, "there are no clans, gentes, or totemic divisions among the Arapaho."<sup>252</sup>

According to Elkin, "Men acquired distinction within the framework of an intricate system of graded military deeds."<sup>253</sup> Horses were the most valuable form of property.<sup>254</sup> The horses were generally obtained by raiding, and Elkin states: "Four or five horses were the indispensable minimum for a man and wife; two for riding and the rest for packing. The average household had about ten head. The possession of twenty or more was an indication of wealth."<sup>255</sup>

A few additional points may be noted concerning the Arapaho. They were closely allied with the Cheyenne.<sup>256</sup> With reference to the Sun Dance, Elkin states: "The sun dance, the most elaborate of all the ceremonies, was held nearly every summer. In contrast to the other lodge dances which were organized by the individual societies, the sun dance was a tribal ceremony par excellence; in its preparation and ritual all the companies took part or were represented."<sup>257</sup> Elkin also notes that the vision quest had a more limited role than usual among the Arapaho; the power attained by visions had to be sanctioned "in the more thoroughly organized spheres of religious practice."<sup>258</sup> Finally, the failure to mention band headmen is due to a lack of information. As Eggan has noted, the Arapaho band organization has disappeared.<sup>259</sup> However, since Elkin indicates that the tribal chiefs were not evenly distributed in the four bands, it seems reasonable to infer that some such pattern must have existed.<sup>260</sup>

## TRUE PLAINS TRIBES OF UNCERTAIN ORIGIN

*The Kiowa.*—The Kiowa cannot be traced with any certainty outside the Plains area.<sup>261</sup> The Kiowa language is known to be related to Tanoan,<sup>262</sup> but the separation between the two seems to be an ancient one.<sup>263</sup>

Richardson states: "Once a year in the summer the entire Kiowa tribe gathered at the sundance. Tribal organization at this time was very different from the kin organization of the rest of the year. . . ."<sup>264</sup> During the rest of the year, the Kiowa were organized into bands, the size of which fluctuated with the seasons. There were between ten and twenty of these bands. The bands were considered to be kin groups by legal fiction, but nonrelatives were also included.<sup>265</sup>

During the time when the whole tribe gathered for the Sun Dance, "the Taime-keeper, owner of the Taime, or sundance doll, was the formal tribal head."<sup>266</sup> This, however, was a position that primarily had religious significance.<sup>267</sup> Each band had a headman, who "managed the affairs of the group through their voluntary cooperation and informal acknowledgment of his position."<sup>268</sup> This man's responsibilities "were primarily maintaining law and order without any 'police' assistance, directing the movements . . . , and protecting from enemy attack. . . . He might step in and personally stop any bickering or fighting."<sup>269</sup> The band headman was referred to as the "father" of the band.<sup>270</sup> There were also war leaders who had charge of raiding activities, and while on raids he "was in absolute control."<sup>271</sup>

There seems to have been an informal band council made up of "older and prominent men."<sup>272</sup> When the tribe was united, the band headmen formed a powerful advisory council for the Taime-keeper.<sup>273</sup>

The pattern of authority varied seasonally. When the tribe was together for the Sun Dance, the military societies enforced discipline.<sup>274</sup> Moreover, one of these societies "was designated to police the single tribal buffalo hunt."<sup>275</sup> During the rest of the year, peace was maintained by the band headmen, the war leaders, and the owners of the ten tribal medicine bundles.<sup>276</sup>

The Kiowa were organized into six men's societies and two women's societies. These were not age-graded.<sup>277</sup>

There is no evidence of clans among the Kiowa. Richardson states that the kindred included ego's parents and his mother's and father's brothers, which does not seem to indicate a clan system.<sup>278</sup>

Richardson has provided us with a perceptive discussion of Kiowa status. "There was no single criterion of status. . . . Each man had a niche in a number of separate systems. Effective status was determined by the totality of his roles with due regard to the heavily weighted factors of war record, wealth, and size of kindred."<sup>279</sup> However, she states that "the single most important determinant of status" was the war record.<sup>280</sup> "Wealth was correlated with war activities because it consisted of horses acquired primarily by raiding. . . ."<sup>281</sup> Ownership of one of the ten tribal medicine bundles also conferred status; these were passed from father to eldest son.<sup>282</sup> Richardson states that Kiowa society contained three semiformalized ranks into which a person was born.<sup>283</sup>

*The Kiowa-Apache.*—The problem of the origin of the Kiowa-Apache parallels that of the Kiowa. McAllister notes that: "For as long as the Kiowa-Apache have

any authentic tradition, they have been closely associated with the Kiowa. . . .<sup>284</sup> Lowie speaks of them as long-time residents on the Plains.<sup>285</sup> There is, of course, a possibility that the Kiowa-Apache were originally a marginal Southwestern group that moved out into the Plains,<sup>286</sup> but this remains hypothetical.

The Kiowa-Apache tribe, which was very small, is unusual in its close ties to the Kiowa. The entire tribe did get together in the summer months, at which time the tribe functioned as one band of the Kiowa.<sup>287</sup> This was the time of the Sun Dance and the communal buffalo hunt. During the winter months, the Kiowa-Apache were divided into local groups. "After coming together in the late spring for the annual Sun Dance with the Kiowa, the Apache split up into various groups which might align themselves differently each year. The same people might not remain together even for a winter."<sup>288</sup>

During the time of the Sun Dance, the Kiowa-Apache were under the jurisdiction of the Kiowa Taimé-keeper, who acted as a tribal chief in religious matters.<sup>289</sup> During the rest of the year, each local group had an informal headman who was essentially a charismatic leader.<sup>290</sup>

Each local group contained an informal group of "older men" who acted in an advisory capacity to the headman.<sup>291</sup> Since the Kiowa band headmen served as a council of advisors to the tribal chief when the tribe was together, and the Kiowa-Apache functioned as a band of the Kiowa at this time, it seems reasonable to suggest that the Kiowa-Apache headmen played a similar role.

Authority to enforce discipline rested with one of the men's societies, the *Manatidie*. This was a structured group, with four staff-bearers or chiefs who held office for life.<sup>292</sup> This society policed the camp when the camp was moving and policed the communal hunts.<sup>293</sup> Its authority was most in evidence during the summer months.<sup>294</sup>

The Kiowa-Apache had four societies. One was for children, two were for men, and one was for women. These societies were not age-grade associations.<sup>295</sup>

The Kiowa-Apache had no clans.<sup>296</sup>

The most important single criterion in determining status was bravery in warfare, although kindness and generosity were also important. The ownership of one of four bundles, hereditary within family lines, also conferred status.<sup>297</sup>

#### PERIPHERAL HUNTING AND GATHERING TRIBES

*The Northern Shoshone.*—It is not entirely clear whether all of the Northern Shoshone ever got together in one place. Lowie states: "The Shoshone sometimes gathered in villages, but isolated families, or small bands of families, were frequently encountered by the early explorers."<sup>298</sup> Lowie states that the larger villages contained "up to 150 lodges," which could not be enough to house the entire tribe.<sup>299</sup> He also observes:

The economic life of the Northern Shoshone differed fundamentally in the summer and the winter. From the middle of May to September they dwelt on the tributaries of the Columbia, subsisting mainly on salmon. When the fish perished or returned, the Lemhi Shoshone united with other Snake bands and, joining the Flathead, descended east of the Rocky Mountains in quest of buffalo. . . . Other bands of Shoshone are described as typical Plains peoples, permanently engaged in the pursuit of the buffalo.<sup>300</sup>

Shimkin states that the whole tribe of Wind River Shoshone took part in the fall buffalo hunt. After the hunt, the four bands of the tribe split up to travel to wintering areas; the tribe got together in the spring for a second buffalo hunt.<sup>301</sup> Shimkin observes that there were two types of leadership: war chiefs and the wise old man who could lead the group effectively, the latter serving as "principal chief."<sup>302</sup>

The chiefs were basically charismatic leaders. Lowie states:

From the accounts of early travelers, it is quite clear that the powers of the chiefs were advisory rather than dictatorial. "Little" chiefs attained their dignity by the performance of warlike deeds, and there were sometimes as many as ten in a single community. The head chief was general director of the camp, presided at councils, received visitors from other tribes, and conducted hunting and fishing excursions; but beyond this his power rested simply on his personal influence.<sup>303</sup>

The position was not hereditary, and "neither the chief nor any other member of the tribe exercised judicial functions."<sup>304</sup>

However, there were informal councils, presumably composed of the "little" chiefs.

It is stated that the chief was assisted at a dance or a hunt by "policemen, armed with quirts."<sup>305</sup>

"The ceremonial organization of the Shoshone," Lowie states, "so far as they were not directly influenced by their neighbors, was extremely simple. I could find no trace of age-societies. . . ." <sup>306</sup> In fact, Lowie does not mention any societies.

He is quite clear on the subject of clans. "The social organization of the Shoshone was marked by extreme simplicity. No trace of a totemic or other clan division has ever been found among them."<sup>307</sup>

It seems that the war record was the principal determinant of status; at any rate, this was how the "little chiefs" attained their positions.<sup>308</sup> Ability as an orator was also important.<sup>309</sup>

*The Kutenai.*—The Kutenai seem to have all gotten together once a year at the time of the Sun Dance, which was usually held in the spring. Turney-High states: "The Sun Dance was of great social importance to the Kutenai as the cult held the Upper and Lower Kutenai together as one people. It was a centralizing agency, as only one Sun Dance was held for all the Kutenai, bringing the bands together at the time and place dictated by the Sun Dance spirit."<sup>310</sup> The Kutenai were divided into two main divisions, Upper and Lower. Each division was further divided into a number of bands, which were "politically independent of each other."<sup>311</sup> The Upper Kutenai were primarily bison hunters, and the Lower Kutenai were primarily fishermen.<sup>312</sup>

The Kutenai had no tribal chief.<sup>313</sup> The Upper Kutenai had several types of chiefs. The head chief, a war chief, "was ideally never formally chosen or formally invested with his rank."<sup>314</sup> The choice of the head chief, however, actually rested with a council of honorary chiefs, termed courtesy chiefs by Turney-High. The courtesy chiefs were those warriors who had counted five standard coups.<sup>315</sup> The Lower Kutenai, the fishermen, had a somewhat more complex system. Their chiefs, in theory, were elected. However, the proper candidate was known to all; "he just had to be chief."<sup>316</sup> The real test was whether or not the people prospered

under him; if they did not, he was not "confirmed."<sup>317</sup> The Lower Kutenai had no honorary chiefs. They had a band chief, a war chief, a fish chief, a deer chief, and a duck chief. These chieftainships are stated to have rested on personal prestige rather than on any real power.<sup>318</sup>

Band councils are reported.<sup>319</sup>

Turney-High states: "The amount of formal social control in a Kutenai band seems to have been at a minimum. The chief relied upon precept and ridicule to keep his people in line. He needed no internal police. . . ." <sup>320</sup> There was a Crazy Dog Society, but the members did not act as camp police.<sup>321</sup> There seems to have been no policing of the hunt; the bison hunts were largely an individual matter.<sup>322</sup>

The Kutenai had three societies: a Crazy Dog Society, a Crazy Owl Society, and a Shamans' Society. These were not age-graded and were not secret societies.<sup>323</sup>

The Kutenai had no clans.<sup>324</sup>

The status system for the Upper Kutenai was bound up with the coup-counting system. Among the Lower Kutenai, "good families were those with fine manners, who produced able hunters and distinguished warriors consistently, whose members were hard workers, and who, in consequence were rich."<sup>325</sup>

It is of interest to note that the Kutenai lived in a very rich environment. "The Kutenai considered their land a fortunate one wherein any industrious man could get plenty to eat for himself and his family. Scarcity, need, and famine were so unusual that they were considered of supernatural origin."<sup>326</sup> It may also be noted that, as Turney-High puts it, "Kutenai unity was linguistic, cultural, and emotional. There was no actual political unity among them as a whole."<sup>327</sup>

#### STEWARD'S SUMMARY OF BASIN-PLATEAU GROUPS

In his important monograph, *Basin-Plateau Aboriginal Sociopolitical Groups*, Julian Steward has provided us with a penetrating summary of the nature of social organization among the peripheral hunting and gathering tribes in this area:

The type of sociopolitical groups in the Basin-Plateau area was conditioned to a definable extent by human ecology. . . . The subsistence habits required in each region largely determined the size, nature, and permanency of population aggregates. These, in turn, predetermined many, though not all, features of social structures and political controls. In some regions, as among Western Shoshoni, exigencies of existence permitted little variation in the general sociopolitical pattern. When, however, ecology allowed latitude in subsistence activities, noneconomic factors, such as warfare, festivals, ceremonies, etc., became determinants of the sociopolitical patterns.<sup>328</sup>

There were two basic sociopolitical units among the Western Shoshoni and many of their Northern and Southern Paiute neighbors. These were the biological family and the small winter village, the latter being composed of loose aggregates of families. "The village headman or 'talker' was little more than family leader or village adviser." Intervillage alliances were not unknown, but were "of limited scope and brief duration." There were no fixed political allegiances or controls. The families were bilateral.<sup>329</sup> There were no clans.

Steward states: "Basin-Plateau political groups and chiefs had no interest in disputes, criminal or civil, between individuals. These were settled by relatives, usually close kin."<sup>330</sup>

The headmen had no real authority, apart from their personal influence. There were no formal chiefs. They could "harangue" the people, asking them to behave, but they could not force them to do so.<sup>331</sup>

It does no violence to the facts to observe that social organization among these people was very simple. The critical point is that the erratic occurrence of wild seeds simply did not permit families to stay in one place for long periods of time, and it did not permit more than a few families to unite in permanent associations.<sup>332</sup>

#### JENNESS' SUMMARY OF CANADIAN GROUPS

In his *The Indians of Canada*, Diamond Jenness has presented an acute summary of the social organizations of a number of "primitive migratory tribes," including the Algonkians of the eastern woodlands, the Athapaskans of the Mackenzie basin, and the Eskimo along the Arctic and sub-Arctic coast.

The vagaries of the food supply in these regions caused frequent dispersals and reunions of the aborigines. Now they wandered in individual families, now in small groups of three or four families together. At another time all the families in a district would combine into a definite band at some favorite fishing or hunting ground, and several bands generally united for a few short days each year to trade and to hold festivities. These fluctuations in the social groupings occurred among all the tribes, but were particularly marked among the Eskimo. . . .<sup>333</sup>

The coming together of all the bands of a tribe was very rare, and of short duration.<sup>334</sup>

There were no tribal chiefs.<sup>335</sup> "Each family group and each band had a nominal leader, some man who through courage, force of character, or skill in hunting, had won for himself temporary pre-eminence."<sup>336</sup> These headmen had no formal authority.

There was "no central organization" for the entire tribe.<sup>337</sup>

Jenness states: "In the absence of chiefs and of any legislative or executive body within the tribes and bands, law and order depended solely on the strength of public opinion. . . . there was no organization for the submission of disputes to arbitration or for maintaining law and order within the communities. . . ."<sup>338</sup>

Clans were not characteristic of these people. As Jenness puts it,

Few of the more primitive tribes in eastern or northern Canada, however, stressed the male line of descent to the exclusion of the female, or the female to the exclusion of the male; they followed, that is to say, neither the patrilinear nor the matrilinear system of organization, although there was a tendency, natural perhaps among migratory hunting peoples where the wives nearly always went to live with their husbands, to pay rather more attention to the male line.<sup>339</sup>

Finally, it may be said that "the only clearly defined political unit was the band."<sup>340</sup> The people were not tribally organized, and the bands were quite fluid.<sup>341</sup>

#### PERIPHERAL FARMING TRIBES

*The Omaha.*—The Omaha tribe lived together in one village.<sup>342</sup> "The village was never wholly deserted, even when most of the tribe left for the annual buffalo hunt; for the sick, the infirm, and the very poor were forced to remain behind."<sup>343</sup> The buffalo hunt took place in the summer.<sup>344</sup>

The Omaha tribe was divided into "two exogamous grand divisions."<sup>345</sup> Each

division had one elected head chief.<sup>346</sup> At one time, the chieftainship seemed to have been hereditary.<sup>347</sup> There is one recorded instance in which the tribe was placed under the control of a single chief,<sup>348</sup> but there were also other chiefs. To become a chief, a man had to perform a series of graded acts. These included getting the materials needed to make an ornamented staff, giving a feast, making gifts of horses, giving four horses to the Sacred Pole, and making a variety of other gifts.<sup>349</sup> It took considerable wealth to become a chief.<sup>350</sup> The chiefs acted as peacemakers within the tribe, and had considerable authority.<sup>351</sup>

The Omaha had a central governing body, the Council of Seven Chiefs.

The institution of a small body representing the entire tribe, to have full control of the people, to settle all contentions, and to subordinate all factions to a central authority, was an important governmental movement. The credential of this authority both for the act of its creation and for the exercise of its functions was the presence and ceremonial use of the two Sacred Tribal Pipes. . . .<sup>352</sup> Among the duties of the Council of Seven besides that of maintaining peace and order within the tribe were making peace with other tribes, securing allies, determining the time of the annual buffalo hunt, and confirming the man who was to act as leader, on whom rested the responsibility of that important movement. . . .<sup>353</sup>

The council was originally composed of hereditary chiefs, but was becoming more competitive "several generations ago."<sup>354</sup> Aside from the seven council members, five other persons could attend council meetings. These were the Keeper of the Sacred Pole, the Keeper of the Sacred Buffalo Hide, the Keeper of the Two Sacred Tribal Pipes, the Keeper of the ritual used in filling them, and the Keeper of the Sacred Tent of War.<sup>355</sup>

To maintain law and order, the tribal council apparently could appoint "soldiers" to carry out their instructions.<sup>356</sup> Certainly "soldiers" were appointed by the council "to preserve order during the annual hunt, the office expiring with the hunt. Men who had once filled the office of 'soldier' were apt to be called on to assist the council in the preservation of order within the tribe."<sup>357</sup> The soldiers could punish unauthorized hunting by flogging.<sup>358</sup> The great tribal ceremonies took place at the time of the hunt, and so presumably the soldiers also policed the camp at this time.<sup>359</sup> (The Sun Dance was not practiced by the Omaha.)

There were both social and secret societies among the Omaha. The former category included the warrior societies.<sup>360</sup> These seem to have been age-graded.<sup>361</sup>

The Omaha were divided into ten patrilineal, named, exogamous clans, five in each moiety. The clans were subdivided into lineages, and residence was patrilineal.<sup>362</sup>

Status among the Omaha was in part hereditary, in part based on wealth, and in part based on war honors. Warfare, however, was not emphasized to the extent that it was among the True Plains tribes.<sup>363</sup>

According to Fletcher and La Flesche, the five "closely cognate" tribes—Omaha, Ponca, Osage, Kansa, and Quapaw—closely resembled one another.<sup>364</sup>

*The Mandan.*—The Mandan lived in a number of villages, the villages being several miles apart.<sup>365</sup>

Each village was an economic unit. It acted as a unit when leaving on the summer buffalo hunt, although there was a certain amount of co-operation among villages in the matter of protecting the old people left behind and in keeping enemy raiding parties from burning the lodges during their absence. Each village had its garden section which was separate from other village garden



areas, although my informants claimed that at one time . . . all the available corn grounds were planted and that it was necessary for the villages to meet in council to define the garden limits of each village.<sup>366</sup>

Elsewhere Bowers notes: "Although each permanent Mandan village was in large measure a separate economic, social, and ceremonial unit, the villages were not entirely independent."<sup>367</sup>

Each village had two principal chiefs. Bowers says:

Mandan village and tribal leadership was vested in the hierarchy of bundle-owners or priests who constituted a group of head men whose number varied from time to time depending on the status of the various bundles. From this group two leaders were selected whose war or peacemaking record exceeded that of all others or who, because of other practices, had acquired considerable popularity with the people. The one whose record in warfare was the greatest was selected in council to be war chief. . . . The Mandan informants thought that sons of chiefs were usually selected.<sup>368</sup>

The two head chiefs were generally of opposite moieties.<sup>369</sup> The clans also had elected leaders.<sup>370</sup> The chiefs seem to have had little formal authority. "A chief had little or no authority apart from the council of which he was a member. His principal authority was derived from his ability as an orator to persuade the council of older men to sanction his opinions."<sup>371</sup> There seems to have been no tribal chief.

Each village had a council. This seems to have been composed of bundle-owners and older men.

On the summer hunts, the men of the Black Mouth society acted as police.<sup>372</sup> Evidently, the police at this time were under the jurisdiction of the leader of the summer buffalo hunt. This man was selected in council a month before the hunt, and his appointment expired with its conclusion.<sup>373</sup> It is of interest to note, however, that the Black Mouths also functioned in a policing capacity throughout the year.

Men of middle age belonged to the Black Mouth Society, which was intrusted with the organization and protection of the village. This was the most highly organized men's society. It met every two or three days and received its instructions from the older men meeting in council. . . . Each member carried a club . . . and he was expected to use it if anyone was found violating the rules.<sup>374</sup>

The Mandan had a system of age-graded societies.<sup>375</sup>

They also had a system of matrilineal clans. There were formerly thirteen clans, divided into two moieties.<sup>376</sup> These clans were quite important. "The clans were organized groups and elected a leader who acted in an advisory capacity."<sup>377</sup> The clan was a property-holding group.<sup>378</sup>

Status among the Mandans was a complex affair. In part, it depended on wealth and the ownership of tribal bundles. Bowers describes it:

A man's social status at any one period varied greatly between individuals. It was in part determined by birth, those being born in households having important bundles and a well-balanced household economy and, particularly if there were many brothers and sisters, had a great advantage over those whose households had been broken up by death or divorce. Children of eminent parents were presumed to be better informed.<sup>379</sup> . . . There were in each of the Mandan villages a large number of families owning or controlling important tribal bundles. These families were considered the authorities on tribal lore and custom. They received, in addition to the produce

of their gardens and their share of meat and hides from animals taken on group hunts, a great deal of property and honors for officiating at the ceremonies. To preserve their status, they endeavored to have a considerable display of goods at the marriage of one of their children. Families with important related bundles endeavored to marry their children into families also having important bundles.<sup>380</sup>

The basic idea was that children who were born into families which possessed important medicine bundles had an impressive advantage in life, largely because they were in a position to learn the complex rites associated with the bundles.<sup>381</sup> These rites were one way of attaining wealth, since payments were made to those bundle owners who officiated at ceremonies. Success in warfare was also important, not only because it gave a man the opportunity for capturing horses, but also because it gave him the necessary wealth to purchase an important sacred bundle.<sup>382</sup> The war chief, as has been noted, was chosen from the group of bundle owners on the basis of his war record.<sup>383</sup> Thus, status was intimately bound up with the ownership of bundles, and children born into families which had such bundles possessed an important advantage. It was possible, however, to acquire one of the bundles by purchase, so that status was not entirely hereditary.

Instead of the Sun Dance, the most important ceremony of the Mandan was the Okipa, "a dramatization of the creation of the earth, its people, plants, and animals, together with the struggles the Mandan endured to attain their present position."<sup>384</sup>

*The Iowa.*—The Iowa tribe seems to have stayed pretty well together all year round. The whole tribe camped together under a single leader.<sup>385</sup>

The Iowa had two tribal chiefs, each of whom was in charge during half of the year. "The Bear gens rules half the year . . . and the Buffalo the remaining seasons. That is, the tribal chief during half the year is the eldest lineal descendant of the eldest Bear gens ancestor, and during the rest of the year, of the Buffalo."<sup>386</sup> Each clan had hereditary civil chiefs and war chiefs who were "those who have charge of the gens war bundle. Each chief had a staff or wand of office. . . ." <sup>387</sup> There was a system of rotating leadership on the march.

When on the march a leader was chosen each day by the chiefs of the gens leading during that part of the year. This man took charge of the people . . . and selected the camp spot at night. . . . When all was in order, and night had fallen, the officer of the day invited all the other chiefs of the tribe to his lodge, feasted them, and surrendered his office. . . . They then chose another leader for the next day.<sup>388</sup>

The council was composed of the tribal chiefs.<sup>389</sup>

The Iowa had warrior police, two of whom were assigned to each chief.<sup>390</sup> These men had considerable authority and were exempt from retaliation by those whom they injured while performing their duties.<sup>391</sup> They guarded the camp and prevented quarrels, kept order during ceremonies, kept order in battle, and "kept men in line when surrounding and charging the buffalo herd until the chief ordered the attack."<sup>392</sup>

Societies were present. These were ungraded.<sup>393</sup>

The Iowa had a system of patrilineal clans. "According to tradition each gens of the Ioway was founded by four animals, brothers, who became human beings. In consequence, each gens is composed of four subgentes, the members of each of

which claim descent from one of these four ancestors. . . . The gentes are exogamic and patrilineal, and the subgentes seem to be without functions."<sup>384</sup>

Status was largely hereditary. "The social system of the Ioway was founded firmly on caste, rank being according to birth or, quite secondarily, according to achievement. Probably nowhere in North America, unless it may have been among the Natchez or on the Northwest Coast, were social classes more strongly emphasized."<sup>385</sup> They recognized three "grades" of marriage: chiefs or royalty, braves or nobility, and commoners.<sup>386</sup> However, the Ioway did have the coup system, which was of some importance.<sup>387</sup>

*The Oto.*—Whitman states:

Before the disintegration of the old culture, the Oto did not live together as a tribe, but they formed villages which were essentially voluntary groupings of families. . . . In distinction to the sedentary village life was the bi-annual buffalo hunt when, during the spring and fall, the Oto wandered over the plains in search of buffalo, each family with its own skin tipi. . . . Village life outranked the life of the buffalo hunt in importance. A village might be made up of from forty to seventy mud lodges.<sup>388</sup>

It may be observed that the Oto were a very small tribe, and if the villages contained as many as seventy lodges there could not have been very many villages.

The Oto seem to have had a system of hereditary chiefs. They had patrilineal clans, and each clan had its own hereditary chief.<sup>389</sup> There seems also to have been an hereditary tribal chief. "Bear gens is the largest, and perhaps the most powerful of the Oto gentes. From one of the Bear subgentes came the original hereditary chief of the whole tribe."<sup>390</sup> According to Whitman, "several such hereditary chiefs would be resident in any village, and . . . they represented the supreme authority."<sup>391</sup> However, "the chiefs were not much superior to men of rank, and there were few mechanisms through which they might assert their authority."<sup>392</sup> The chiefs seem to have been formally inducted into office.<sup>393</sup>

Apparently, the chiefs constituted the council.<sup>394</sup>

"Next to the chief," Whitman states, "the warrior or brave had political power. The sign of that power was the whip. He and his fellow warriors carried out and executed the orders of the chiefs, interfered in intravillage conflicts, and had the right to punish individual offenders through institutionalized 'soldier killing.'"<sup>395</sup> Each chief could select two warriors to help him in maintaining order.<sup>396</sup> The role of the police was most explicit on the communal hunts.

During the buffalo hunt while under the leadership of one man, who was not a chief but rather a priest. . . . social control was maintained by "soldiers" selected by the leader, who were answerable during their term of office only to the leader. In selecting camping sites and in the ritual of the hunt the leader was supreme. Tribal discipline was maintained by the leader and his soldiers and also within each gens by the gens chief and his soldiers.<sup>397</sup>

The police whipped anyone who hunted before the signal was given.<sup>398</sup> The spring hunt was under the control of the Buffalo gens, and the fall hunt was under the control of the Bear gens.<sup>399</sup>

The Oto had a series of secret societies, benevolent societies, and dance societies, "places in which were essentially controlled by families."<sup>400</sup> There were also warrior societies at one time.<sup>401</sup> The societies do not seem to have been age-graded.

The Oto were grouped into a series of patrilineal clans. "These gentes were divided into sub-gentes and then into families. The gens were conceived to be

a blood grouping. Each gens had its own hereditary chief and warrior class and its priests who were in charge of the gens rituals; each gens had its commoners, its poor."<sup>412</sup> Whitman also states: "It is possible that still other divisions existed and that the Oto had moieties or phratries."<sup>413</sup>

Status was largely hereditary.

The Oto say that there are three classes, the chiefs, the people invested with secular or supernatural power, and the common people, and it is in terms of rank that the Oto acknowledge this social stratification. Moreover it is rank in its truest sense since we shall see that these powers are hereditary, and therefore that it is not easy for a man to move from one group to another.<sup>414</sup>

Coup counting was present, but not elaborated.<sup>415</sup>

It may be noted that there was one time during the year when the entire tribe seems to have gotten together. One of Whitman's informants stated: "In the spring of the year the Oto all got together and the different gentes began to talk of putting the crops in."<sup>416</sup> The Sun Dance has not been reported for the Oto.<sup>417</sup>

#### SUMMARY

Any set of tables or series of correlations can but dimly reflect the richness and complexity of the changing lifeways on the Plains; they can only provide the tell-tale signs of the results of such changes, and direct our attention toward understanding the processes that produced these end products. The basic rationale for the attempted correlations in the tables that follow is a simple one. Whenever the True Plains tribes tended to share a pattern, the pattern has been referred to the shared ecological situation. When there was a break between the True Plains tribes of different origins, an explanation was sought by turning to the peripheral groups. If the True Plains tribes of hunting and gathering origin had the same pattern as peripheral hunting and gathering tribes, cultural continuity was assumed to be operative. Similarly, if the True Plains tribes of farming origin had the same pattern as peripheral farming tribes, cultural continuity was assumed to be operative. No claim is made that these are the only possible explanations for these phenomena. The only claim is that these correlations make sense in terms of the hypotheses with which we are working, and that they should provide valuable clues concerning the processes at work in the Plains situation.

The True Plains tribes share a basic pattern of tribes or linked bands in the summer months and dispersed bands the rest of the year. The only real exception to this statement would be the Comanche. (Most of the Teton Dakota bands came together in the summer, but apparently not all of them.) As a group, the True Plains tribes are distinct from either of the peripheral groups. It seems reasonable to relate this pattern to the shared ecological situation on the Plains.

The leadership pattern among the True Plains tribes shows a rather distinct break. All True Plains tribes of hunting and gathering origin shared a pattern of informal leadership. Four of the five True Plains tribes of farming origin had a formal or semiformal leadership pattern. The fifth tribe, the Crow, is an exception. This situation correlates neatly with the peripheral groups: the peripheral hunting and gathering tribes generally had an informal pattern, whereas the peripheral farming tribes all had a formal leadership pattern. There-

TABLE 1  
TRIBAL DIVISIONS

Type	Dispersed bands	Summer united; winter dispersed	All year unity
Hunting and gathering	N. Shoshone Basin-Plateau Canadian	Kutenai	
True Plains, originally hunting and gathering	Comanche	Blackfoot Sarsi Cree (?) Assiniboine (?)	
True Plains, uncertain origin		Kiowa Kiowa-Apache	
True Plains, originally farming	Teton Dakota (?)	Cheyenne Crow Gros Ventres Arapaho	
Farming			Omaha Mandan (?) Iowa Oto (?)

TABLE 2  
LEADERSHIP PATTERNS

Type	Informal	Formal
Hunting and gathering	N. Shoshone Basin-Plateau Canadian	Kutenai
True Plains, originally hunting and gathering	Blackfoot Comanche Sarsi Cree Assiniboine	
True Plains, uncertain origin		Kiowa Kiowa-Apache
True Plains, originally farming	Crow	Gros Ventres Teton Dakota Cheyenne Arapaho
Farming		Omaha Mandan Iowa Oto

TABLE 3  
COUNCILS

Type	Informal	Formal
Hunting and gathering	N. Shoshone Basin-Plateau (?)	Kutenai
True Plains, originally hunting and gathering	Blackfoot Comanche Sarsi Cree Assiniboine	
True Plains, uncertain origin	Kiowa Kiowa-Apache	
True Plains, originally farming	Gros Ventres	Crow  Cheyenne Teton Dakota Arapaho
Farming		Mandan  Omaha Iowa Oto

TABLE 4  
POLICE

Type	Primarily summer	Important all year round	None
Hunting and gathering		N. Shoshone (?)	Kutenai Basin-Plateau (?) Canadian (?)
True Plains, originally hunting and gathering	Blackfoot Sarsi Cree Assiniboine		Comanche
True Plains, uncertain origin	Kiowa Kiowa-Apache		
True Plains, originally farming	Crow Gros Ventres Arapaho (?)	Cheyenne Teton Dakota	
Farming		Omaha Mandan Iowa Oto	

fore, the difference in the leadership patterns among the True Plains tribes can be related to cultural continuity. (It must be noted that we are here speaking of *types* of societies—not continuity from one specific society to another specific society.)

In general terms, the council pattern follows the same lines as the leadership pattern. Again, we may relate the differences in council systems among the True Plains tribes to cultural continuity.

All True Plains tribes except one (the Comanche again are the exception) had police societies. Since this institution is nearly universal on the Plains, an ecological explanation seems to be called for. Moreover, among most of the True Plains tribes, the police functioned primarily in the summer months. The two partial exceptions to this, where the police were of some importance all year round, were both True Plains tribes of horticultural origin—the Cheyenne and the Teton Dakota. Most of the peripheral hunting and gathering tribes seem to have had no police at all; all of the peripheral farming tribes had police who were important all year round. Therefore, the differences within the police pattern may be tentatively correlated with cultural continuity.

All of the True Plains tribes had societies of some sort, with the exception again of the Comanche. There is no clear break within the True Plains group with regard to age-grades. It may be assumed that there is an indirect ecological explanation for the presence of societies among the True Plains tribes, just as there is for the peripheral farming tribes, all of which had societies. The data on peripheral hunting and gathering tribes are too fragmentary to be useful.

Most (10 out of 12) True Plains tribes had no clans. Therefore, the presence of clans cannot be attributed to the shared ecological situation. Moreover, there is a clear break between True Plains tribes of hunting and gathering origin and True Plains tribes of farming origin. None of the former had clans or evidence of the existence of clans in earlier times. With the exception of the Arapaho, all True Plains tribes of farming origin had either clans (Crow and possibly Gros Ventres) or some indication that clans had formerly been present (Cheyenne and Teton Dakota). This break correlates well with the pattern found in peripheral tribes. The peripheral hunting and gathering tribes had no clans, whereas all of the peripheral farming tribes did have clans. Cultural continuity would seem to be an important explanatory factor here.

With the partial exception of the Kiowa, all of the True Plains tribes determined status primarily on the basis of war honors, horses, and personal influence. An ecological explanation would seem to be called for here, bearing in mind that "ecological" is being used in a very broad sense. It should also be pointed out that hereditary factors were very important among the peripheral farming tribes, but not among the peripheral hunting and gathering tribes.

Finally, it may be useful to separate the two categories in a summary form.

*Related to ecology.*—The basic pattern of large tribal units in the summer months, and a dispersed band organization the rest of the year. Police societies for the summer tribal hunt. Societies. Status acquired by means of war honors, horses, and personal influence.

*Related to cultural continuity.*—The pattern of leadership. Formal or informal councils. The importance of police all year round. Clans.

TABLE 5

## SOCIETIES

Type	Age-graded	Not age-graded	None
Hunting and gathering		Kutenai	N. Shoshone (?) Basin-Plateau (?) Canadian (?)
True Plains, originally hunting and gathering	Blackfoot	Sarsi Cree Assiniboine	Comanche (?)
True Plains, uncertain origin		Kiowa Kiowa-Apache	
True Plains, originally farming	Gros Ventres Arapaho	Cheyenne Crow Teton Dakota	
Farming	Omaha Mandan	Iowa Oto	

TABLE 6

## CLANS

Type	Absent	Present	Absent but may have been present formerly
Hunting and gathering	N. Shoshone Kutenai Basin-Plateau Canadian (?)		
True Plains, originally hunting and gathering	Blackfoot Comanche Sarsi Cree (?) Assiniboine		
True Plains, uncertain origin	Kiowa Kiowa-Apache		
True Plains, originally farming	Arapaho	Crow Gros Ventres (?)	Cheyenne Teton Dakota
Farming		Omaha Mandan Iowa Oto	



TABLE 7  
STATUS DETERMINANTS

Type	Basically nonhereditary: war honors, horses, charisma, etc.	Basically hereditary: wealth, social class, titles, etc.
Hunting and gathering	N. Shoshone Basin-Plateau Canadian	Kutenai
True Plains, originally hunting and gathering	Blackfoot Comanche Sarsi Cree Assiniboine	
True Plains, uncertain origin	Kiowa-Apache	Kiowa
True Plains, originally farming	Cheyenne Crow Gros Ventres Teton Dakota Arapaho	
Farming		Omaha Mandan Iowa Oto

## CULTURAL DYNAMICS OF THE PLAINS SITUATION

THE STORY OF MAN on the Plains of North America is a story of change. The story begins with men who managed a precarious existence by hunting the buffalo on foot. It continues through a phase of mixed horticulture and hunting. Its most dramatic chapter tells of the explosive development of the Plains cultures built around mounted buffalo hunting.

Throughout the story of the Plains, the influence of technological change is clear. It is a long step from the wandering pedestrian bands of the Paleo-Indians to the earth-lodge settlements of the horticulturists. It is another long step that converted the Plains Indians into hunters on horseback, and hunters with guns. Each successive technological development made possible a different kind of exploitation of the Plains environment.

Moreover, the story of the Plains is a story in which many different peoples have participated and interacted with one another. Tribes have moved into the Plains and out of the Plains. Tribes have made seasonal forays into the Plains. And the nature of life on the Plains has been influenced strongly by factors outside the Plains proper: the Spanish colonial policies, the English and French fur trade, the population pressure from displaced Indian tribes.

What really happened on the Plains in historic times? At first, the introduction of the horse seems to have stimulated the spread of horticultural peoples; this was certainly true of the Apache.<sup>1</sup> But when the horse reached people who did not practice horticulture, the newly mounted tribes of nomadic hunters were too much for the farming peoples; the Ute and the Comanche virtually swept the Apache from the Plains. Secoy points out that

the sedentary spring and summer phase of Apache life proved to be a great military liability when they were pitted against a foe always on the move. The Comanche quickly learned the location of the Apache horticultural rancherias and, at the appropriate seasons, could be almost certain of finding their foe there. With the element of uncertainty as to the location of the enemy ruled out, the Comanche could make telling use of the element of surprise, and thereby render the Apache war equipment and organization ineffective. This situation also allowed them to concentrate overwhelming numbers against the isolated rancherias and eliminate them one by one.<sup>2</sup>

The introduction of the gun, largely in conjunction with the fur trade, greatly altered the balance of power among tribes. The Cree and the Assiniboine forced many of the Dakota out of northern Minnesota; this was the direct cause of the abandonment of horticulture by the Teton Dakota.<sup>3</sup> Then, when the Dakota in turn got guns, they were in a position to apply pressure to such tribes as the Iowa and the Cheyenne—sedentary horticulturists at this time (1680 to 1760) who lacked firearms.<sup>4</sup> Ultimately, when tribes acquired both the horse and the gun, this changed the picture again, stimulating both raiding for horses and trading for guns and ammunition.<sup>5</sup> Changes in military patterns are not the whole story, of course. People do not fight all the time, and people must eat. Whatever the ultimate causes, tribes of significantly different backgrounds found themselves on the Plains in historic times. Some, like the Cheyenne, had been

horticulturists; they left their fields behind them and lived by hunting the buffalo. Others, like the Cree and the Comanche, had been hunting and gathering peoples; they too now lived by mounted buffalo hunting. Still others, as diverse as the Omaha and the Shoshone, made seasonal hunting forays into the Plains; they were "part-time" Plains tribes. All of these tribes, and particularly the True Plains groups, had to adapt to the varied aspects of the Plains situation: the crucial reliance on the buffalo, the mobility given by the horse and the nature of the treeless terrain, the competition with other tribes for horses, guns, land, and survival itself. It is in terms of such a dynamic situation that we must seek an interpretation of what happened to the social organizations of the Plains Indians.

It is generally true that all aspects of a sociocultural system tend to be inter-related; indeed, this is what is meant by the very word *system*. Still, it is both useful and necessary to isolate certain categories for purposes of analysis. In terms of this study, the basic categories are three in number: Groups, including the structure of groups; Authority and Leadership; and Status. Each will be considered in turn.

#### GROUPS

One basic key to the nature of the Plains groupings is that the True Plains tribes could not stay together as a unit all year round, and they could not stay in the same place. The Cheyenne are a classic example of this. They once tried to stay together as a tribe throughout the year and nearly perished as a result.<sup>6</sup> The Cree were able to hold large encampments together for less than a month, after which the bands had to separate in order to find food.<sup>7</sup> We have previously indicated the severe problems faced by the Apache which were caused by the exposure of their horticultural settlements to the attack of the mounted nomads; the same dilemma was encountered by the farming tribes on the Missouri.<sup>8</sup> As Newcomb puts it, the True Plains tribes had to be "constantly on the move following or seeking bison herds, and thus increasingly colliding with one another, amalgamating, allying, and above all fighting."<sup>9</sup>

Two important factors are at work here. Both of them, in broad terms, fall under the heading of ecology. First, there was the extremely heavy reliance of the Plains tribes on the buffalo. Without the buffalo, the Plains cultures could not have survived. Of necessity, the True Plains tribes had to adjust their life-ways to the cycle of the buffalo. Essentially, the buffalo were dispersed in small groups during the winter months, and they concentrated in large herds in the summer months. To hunt the buffalo effectively the Plains tribes had to be in a position to attack the large herds with concerted manpower in the summer months, and they had to break up into smaller units to hunt the dispersed groups the rest of the year. Moreover, the need for shelter and food for the horses led to much the same pattern.<sup>10</sup> Also, the endemic raiding warfare of the Plains area put a premium on flexibility and mobility, for both offense and defense. A group that was tied down in one place was a sitting duck; what was needed was a reasonably large group that could move in a hurry and react quickly. There is also the possibility of a more direct environmental factor at work here: the aridity of the

Plains may have in itself inhibited the persistence of sedentary horticultural groups.<sup>11</sup>

The characteristic band organization of the True Plains tribes was a logical outgrowth of the ecological circumstances within which the tribes lived. The band organization did not "just happen." As Eggan states,

The conditions of Plains life demanded a local group small enough to subsist by hunting and gathering, but large enough to furnish protection against hostile war parties and raids. The extended family was adequate for the first condition but was at the mercy of any war party; the tribe, on the other hand, was too unwieldy to act as an economic unit for very long. The band provided an adequate compromise; this is perhaps the most important reason for its almost universal presence in the Plains area.<sup>12</sup>

Still, there was one time during the year when the tribe *could* function as an economic unit: in the summer when the buffalo congregated in large herds. This was what happened; the True Plains tribes as a rule were tribally organized in the great camp circles during the summer months. The scattered bands came together and acted as a unit. This fact is of supreme importance in understanding the phenomenon of the Sun Dance. The Sun Dance characteristically was a *tribal* ceremony, and it emphasized tribal solidarity. It may be recalled that the first Comanche Sun Dance was a conscious attempt at demonstrating tribal unity among a people who had never before functioned as a united tribe.<sup>13</sup> The Plains Cree are described as looking forward all year to the annual Sun Dance encampment.<sup>14</sup> Lowie states: "to the Crow, the Sun Dance was precisely *not* an occasion for righting a private wrong but a public spectacle in which the whole tribe took part, as performer or spectator. . . ."<sup>15</sup> Wissler has a perceptive comment to make on this. After noting the dispersal of the Plains bands in the winter, he states that in the summer

the bands of each tribe came together and went upon a grand hunt. Then food was plentiful, feasting and social activities became the rule, as the great cavalcade shifted hither and thither with the bison. It is in the nature of things that such a grand picnic should culminate in a great ceremony, or religious festival, in which the whole group might function. This ceremony was the sun dance.<sup>16</sup>

Leslie Spier has traced the diffusion of the Sun Dance on the Plains, pointing out that the complex seems to have spread from a nucleus of three tribes: the Arapaho, the Cheyenne, and the Teton Dakota.<sup>17</sup> (It may be noted that all three of these tribes are of horticultural origin.) Spier also has noted that the Sun Dance usually occurred in the summer months when the whole tribe was united. The Sun Dance, he says, "stands alone at the focus of heightened ceremonial interest. Under such conditions the variations leading to elaboration may well develop."<sup>18</sup> John Collier, I believe, has put the matter perfectly:

Viewed socially, the Sun Dance was the integrative and structuring institution of the Plains tribes. . . . The Sun Dance appears as an invention—an exquisitely perfect one—at the social level. With the acquisition of the horse, the life of the Plains tribes . . . became profoundly modified. No longer could the sub-groups composing a tribe stay in continuous physical contact with one another. . . . Yet the significant and valued flow of life was tribal. The Sun Dance was the invention which met this dilemma. In the summer, at breeding season, the buffalo gathered in large herds; and in the summer, the grasses were lush, so that the concentration of the thousands of

horses was possible. Therefore, at that time the scattered sub-groups all drew together; and the Sun Dance was the celebration. The whole tribe camped in one immense circle; the circle of tepees symbolized tribal unity.<sup>19</sup>

In other words, the Sun Dance was a rite of intensification; it "restored equilibrium for a group after a disturbance affecting all or most of its members."<sup>20</sup>

In approaching the problem of clans among the True Plains tribes, it may be useful to compare briefly the types of social groupings that are characteristic of nomadic hunting and gathering peoples with the typical social groupings of horticultural peoples. Generally speaking, nomadic hunting and gathering peoples are organized into small (20 to 50 persons) bands. Neighboring bands interact with one another to some extent, and each band is part of what may be termed a "felt" tribe; that is, they share a feeling of belonging together but do not function as a unified tribe with a tribal system of organization. The band sometimes splits up into nuclear or extended family groups in search of widely dispersed food supplies.<sup>21</sup> These bands may be either patrilineal or composite in type.<sup>22</sup> As a rule, a person can change his band affiliation readily, even in the patrilineal type of band.<sup>23</sup> Horticultural peoples, as well as such sedentary hunters and food-gatherers as those of the northwest coast of North America, have different types of groups. Such societies are customarily divided into villages with relatively large (several hundred persons) populations. The villages are linked to one another by means of clans and/or secret societies. Generally, but not always, horticultural peoples lack true political unity. On the other hand, chiefs and councils frequently exist.<sup>24</sup> Moreover, the tribe is a more important entity here than is usually the case among hunting and gathering peoples. The "felt" tribe of the Andamanese, for example, is a far more amorphous type of social grouping than the tribe among the Hopi, where the clan chiefs of the various pueblos met together occasionally to talk things over. The Iroquois tribes are also a case in point.

On the Plains, as we have noted, the basic pattern was one of dispersed bands throughout most of the year, with the bands coming together in the summer months. The data on the bands of most True Plains tribes emphasize the fact that the bands were extremely fluid; a person could switch bands without undue difficulty. Certainly, the band type of organization on the Plains was of value precisely because of its flexibility, and we have already indicated at some length the necessity for flexibility and mobility in the Plains situation.

Where, after all, do we usually find clans? They are most common and most important in the "middle range of social systems"; that is, between the hunters and gatherers and the state-organized agriculturists.<sup>25</sup> Obviously, the clan is a very useful organizational device in certain kinds of relatively sedentary societies. As Goldschmidt states,

A fully functioning clan forms a kind of corporate group sharing territorial lands; it makes demands on the loyalty of its constituent members, each member being responsible to and for the whole. It may also be specially useful as a landholding entity, serving a broad basis for recognizing and protecting land rights. The clan in fact has some of the legal attributes of a modern corporation.<sup>26</sup>

The clan is a technique for introducing continuity and stability into a social system. With specific reference to the peripheral farming tribes around the Plains, Eggan writes:

The increased density of population requisite for village life was made possible by the increased food supply resulting from combining maize agriculture with hunting and gathering. The utilization of fertile bottomlands along the Missouri and its tributaries made it possible for these villages to be both large and relatively permanent; the problems of integrating the population around common activities in connection with agriculture and hunting, with regard to both subsistence and rituals, made the development of a segmentary clan organization highly probable. Wherever it is essential to hold property in trust or to maintain rituals from generation to generation, unilateral organizations or "corporations" are far more efficient than bilateral ones. The clan gives a greater degree of stability and permanence but has in turn a limited flexibility and adaptability to new situations.<sup>27</sup>

Elizabeth Bacon has made much the same point about the rigidity and lack of adaptability of clan systems.<sup>28</sup>

The very essence of the Plains situation was that it demanded flexibility, adaptability, and mobility. People were constantly on the move; individuals who belonged to one band might not see individuals who belonged to another band but once a year. People shifted from one band to another. Land was not owned in the same sense as land was owned among farming peoples. Corporate responsibility would have been very difficult to maintain among people as dispersed as were those on the Plains. In short, the clan does not seem to be well suited to the necessities of Plains life.

We have noted that there are indications that two tribes, the Cheyenne and the Teton Dakota, seem to have abandoned their former clan systems as a response to the Plains situation. The Crow, who retained a matrilineal clan system on the Plains, seem to have been "in the process of changing from a more highly organized kinship system to a more diffuse type represented by the Cheyenne and Arapaho systems."<sup>29</sup> Both the Pawnee and the Crow were "shifting from a clan toward a band type of organization and becoming more 'bilateral' in their kinship practices."<sup>30</sup> Lowie has also noted the probability that the Crow abandoned a moiety system on the Plains.<sup>31</sup> The case of the Gros Ventres is more puzzling. If they indeed had patrilineal clans, as reported, this may have been owing in part to the fact that the Gros Ventres groups were quite small and their hunting territories were fairly restricted. As Eggan has said, "the increase in band solidarity brought about by these factors may well have tended toward a more formal organization of the bands."<sup>32</sup> (It is possible, of course, that the Gros Ventres did not have true clans at all. Kroeber states that "all the members of both the father's and mother's clan" were considered to be relatives.<sup>33</sup> Flannery's evidence seems to indicate that residence was almost as important as descent in determining band affiliation,<sup>34</sup> and it is the band that Kroeber equates with the clan. The definition of the clan with which we are operating, emphasizing descent in a unilineal line rather than residence, makes the existence of the Gros Ventres clans problematical.)

Still more revealing, perhaps, is the fact that no tribe of hunting and gathering origin developed clans on the Plains. The conclusion seems clear that most

of the tribes with clans or traces of former clans had clans in their backgrounds before they moved into the Plains. The clan was not impossible in the Plains situation, but it certainly was not appropriate. As Eggan has noted, the tribes that moved into the Plains tended to develop similar types of kinship systems, and the Plains situation seemed to favor a flexible type of social organization that could adapt easily to changing conditions.<sup>35</sup>

All of the True Plains tribes, with the apparent exception of the Comanche, had societies. We have defined societies as associations that are not based primarily on either territory or kinship. Among the True Plains tribes, most of the societies were not age-graded, but three tribes (Blackfoot, Gros Ventres, and Arapaho) had age-graded societies. Lowie has argued persuasively that the age-graded type of society spread by diffusion; this type of society originated among the Mandan and Hidatsa, both horticultural village peoples, and spread to the Arapaho and Gros Ventres and, later, to the Blackfoot. He concludes: "The graded system is not the original form from which ungraded military organizations have developed, but arose through the grading of originally ungraded societies."<sup>36</sup> Clearly, the age-graded type of society was useful on the Plains, and perhaps more efficient than the ungraded type of society, since it was adopted by tribes who seemingly already had nongraded societies. On the other hand, both types of societies must have functioned effectively in view of their almost universal presence among the True Plains tribes. The problem thus is one of accounting for societies in general.

Societies, like clans, are characteristic of the "middle ranges" of cultural systems. They are one technique of organizing such societies for action.<sup>37</sup> We have already seen how the Plains situation tended to inhibit the development of large kinship units such as clans. In view of this, societies would seem to be an ideal alternative device for structuring the Plains tribes on a nonkinship basis.

There are also more specific factors at work here. Two of them are of crucial importance. First, the men's societies were intimately bound up with the military system. Characteristically, they are referred to almost always as *military* societies. Hoebel has presented an analysis of these societies that is very illuminating. With reference to the Cheyenne, he states that the societies are "social and civic organizations mainly centered on the common experience of the members as warriors, with rituals glorifying and enhancing that experience, and with duties and services performed on behalf of the community at large."<sup>38</sup> Moreover, "Each club has four officers or leaders. The leaders are the main war chiefs of the tribe. . . ." <sup>39</sup> Likewise, the societies were an important means of integrating the Plains tribes. As a rule, the societies only functioned fully when the tribe came together in the summer months.<sup>40</sup> At this time, the societies were responsible for putting on *tribal* ceremonies. As Eggan has noted:

The larger tribal organization is reflected in the camp circle but finds its integration primarily in ceremonial and symbolic terms. The band system, which was primarily an economic organization, dominated most of the year, but when the tribes came together, the society organization, composed of males, was pre-eminent and overshadowed the band organization. The importance of tribal ceremonies in social integration can hardly be overestimated.<sup>41</sup>

Finally, the military societies played an important role in maintaining order in the tribal assemblies and in policing the critically important communal buffalo hunts. These functions will be discussed under the heading of Authority and Leadership.

#### AUTHORITY AND LEADERSHIP

The use of such rubrics as "formal leadership" versus "informal leadership" doubtless makes for an oversimplification of the actual leadership patterns. It must also be admitted that the use of such opposed categories tends to mask certain similarities between them. However, the categories are not meaningless: they do point to some genuine differences in social organization.

What, precisely, do we mean by informal leadership and formal leadership? This can best be seen in terms of polar examples. The Blackfoot had a system of informal leadership. The "chiefs" were "leaders only by the consent and will of their people."<sup>43</sup> They had no power except that of personal influence. A head "chief" was not formally selected; he "attained his position simply by a growing unanimity on the part of the head men of the bands as to who should hold the position."<sup>44</sup> If the band headman opposed the desires of the members of his band, the band simply deserted him and got another headman.<sup>45</sup> The tribal councils were likewise informal; they were just gatherings of the band headmen.<sup>46</sup> It may be noted that warriors were supposed to get the permission of the band headman before going out on a raid. But if the warriors had reason to believe that the headman might object, they solved the problem by neglecting to tell the headman anything about it.<sup>47</sup> Contrast this with the Cheyenne, who had a formal leadership pattern. A Cheyenne chief was an elected official.<sup>48</sup> He was "chosen for a definite term of office—ten years—and ritually inducted as a member of the council."<sup>49</sup> The formal tribal council of forty-four chiefs acted "as a judicial body in cases involving a criminal act."<sup>50</sup> If a chief were still alive at the end of his term of office, he could pick his own successor from the members of his own band; each band as a rule had at least four representatives on the tribal council.<sup>51</sup>

There are real differences here; the problem is to account for them. They cannot be attributed to ecology, since both of these True Plains tribes shared essentially the same ecological situation. The break in the data among the True Plains tribes of different backgrounds provides the clue: the tribes with formal leadership patterns were originally horticultural tribes, and the tribes with informal leadership patterns were originally hunting and gathering tribes. This correlates closely with the information from peripheral tribes. Most of the peripheral hunting and gathering tribes had a system of informal leadership, whereas all of the peripheral farming tribes had a system of formal leadership. The generalization may be broadened; it seems to be generally true that leadership patterns become more precise and formalized as one moves from nomadic hunting and gathering peoples to sedentary horticultural societies.<sup>52</sup> The conclusion seems inescapable that the *differences* in leadership patterns among the True Plains tribes reflect differences in the types of leadership that they had when they first moved into the Plains. They certainly had to adapt to the new Plains situation, but they did this by modifying existing institutions.



How about the similarities in leadership patterns among the True Plains tribes? How did they adjust their institutions to the shared Plains situation, and what stresses appeared in the leadership patterns as a result? Here again we must turn to the two key points about the True Plains tribes: the basic pattern of a dispersal of the population in mobile bands for most of the year and the gathering of the bands in the summer months, and the crucial importance of warfare. The bands, after all, were the functioning social units most of the time. They had to be flexible, mobile, and rather loosely organized. A band, to put the matter simply, has to be organized as a *band*—not as a tribe. As a rule among the True Plains tribes, the band leaders were headmen, not chiefs. Even among the Cheyenne, who had what was probably the most formally organized leadership pattern on the Plains, a band leader was “a headman in exactly the same sense as the Comanche peace chief.”<sup>52</sup> Hoebel, the source of the above quotation, discusses the Comanche peace chief as follows:

The headman was a magnet at the core of the band, but his influence was so subtle that it almost defies explicit description. He worked through precept, advice, and good humor, expressing his wisdom through well-chosen words and persuasive common sense. He was not elected to the office or even chosen. “He just got that way.” His role and status were only slightly more institutionalized than were those of the Eskimo headman. . . . Anyone who did not like his decision simply ignored it. If in time a good many people ignored his announcements . . . the chief had then lost his following. He was no longer chief, and another had quietly superseded him.<sup>53</sup>

The point is that the band leader had to function as a headman while leading the band. Among the Cheyenne, though, the band headman was *also* a tribal official and functioned as such when the tribe came together in the summer. The Blackfoot had a similar pattern, although it was less formalized. As Ewers states, “The most influential band chief became recognized as the head chief of the tribe. However, his rank was of little significance except during the period of the tribal encampment in summer. Even then his role was more that of chairman of the council of chiefs than of ruler of his people.”<sup>54</sup> The True Plains tribes, in other words, tended to be band organized during most of the year and tribally organized during the summer months. This meant that among tribes with relatively formal patterns of leadership, the formal patterns could be largely retained in the tribal encampments but were displaced by the more fluid band leadership patterns the rest of the year. Tribes that came into the Plains with a less formal system, on the other hand, adapted to the Plains situation by developing a kind of tribal leadership during the summer months but retained a somewhat modified band system the rest of the year.

The True Plains tribes depended on military skills for their very survival. It would be surprising indeed to find that their leadership patterns were divorced from military considerations, and quite the contrary was actually the case. A Plains leader had to be more than a hunter, and more than just a personable individual. He had to be a successful warrior—a tried and true military leader. To be sure, tribes frequently had “peace chiefs,” known for their restraint and eloquence, in addition to war chiefs. But in order to *become* a peace chief, a man had to have an outstanding war record. Consider again the case of the Cheyenne. Hoebel states: “All the peace chiefs are proven warriors, but when a chief of

a military organization is raised to the rank of peace chief, he must resign his post in the military society. He retains his membership, but not his position as war chief."<sup>55</sup> Thomas Battey, who lived among the Kiowa, tells a most revealing story. Speaking of a man named Kicking Bird, he writes:

He might be considered the first chief of the tribe: although no chief is amenable to another, still there are, at the present time, no less than twelve chiefs who look to him for counsel in all matters of importance. His long-continued attachment to the whites at one time brought him into disrepute with his tribe, and they charged his friendship to cowardice, called him a woman, and refused to listen to his counsels. Finding his influence in the tribe nearly gone, he raised a force, conducted a raid into Texas, and had a severe engagement with the white soldiers. . . . The tribe, thoroughly convinced of his bravery, no more attribute his desire for peace to cowardice, and listen to his eloquent arguments. . . .<sup>56</sup>

In some tribes, the connection between chieftainship and military prowess is quite explicit. What, for example, was a Crow chief? The native term for chief, according to Lowie, "denotes the standing that goes with military achievement, but need not imply any governmental functions. There were four normal types of creditable exploit: leadership of a successful raid; capturing a horse picketed within a hostile camp; being first to touch an enemy (the 'coup' in the narrower sense); and snatching a foeman's bow or gun." Any man who had performed each of these exploits ranked as a chief. "Such men formed a body of social leaders; on the other hand, to lack all these standardized points was to be a nobody."<sup>57</sup> Among all the True Plains tribes, skill in military matters was an important factor in becoming a leader. The case of the Teton Dakota is particularly instructive, because it indicates a shift away from hereditary chiefs toward a leadership pattern based on military prowess as a result of the conditions of Plains life. When the tribe came together in the spring, four men termed *wakicunsa* were selected to take charge of the camp. Hyde states:

Not chiefs but prominent warriors were selected as *wakicunsa*. . . . The four *wakicunsa* had supreme authority over the people until the tribal circle was broken up in the autumn. . . . The real chiefs had no authority except in settling small matters which concerned their own camps alone. . . . Such a form of organization naturally thrust the prominent warriors to the fore and, in tribal affairs, prevented the hereditary chiefs (unless they were men of very strong character) from playing an important part.<sup>58</sup>

In another revealing passage, Hyde writes:

When, about the year 1700, the Oglalas and other Teton turned their backs on their old homeland along the Mississippi and started their long migration across the coteau toward the Missouri, they gradually lost touch with the Sioux of the East. . . . These wild Teton of the coteau, constantly on the move, gaining a hard living by following the buffalo herds, had little in common with the Sioux bands settled along the Mississippi and the Lower Minnesota River, who spent much of their time in fixed villages and gained at least a portion of their support from the cultivation of the soil. As early as 1730 we find evidence that the Teton had thrown off the authority of the Sioux chiefs. In their wandering camps each man was the equal of any of his fellows, and the chiefs were merely the heads of kinship groups and generally had no authority outside of the little group of kinsmen who recognized them as hereditary leaders.<sup>59</sup>

There is a clear implication here that life on the Plains tended to decrease the importance of hereditary leaders. It is not only that "each man was the equal of any of his fellows," but more importantly that each man had to attain leader-

ship on the basis of his personal ability. How could he become a leader? Horses were the most important form of property, and horses usually were stolen, not inherited.<sup>60</sup> "The whole point of the war game was that a warrior took a long chance and risked his life that he might achieve status among his people."<sup>61</sup> The most honored form of war exploit was stealing horses, and, significantly, "war insignia were standardized so that it was easy to tell what a man had achieved in war. . . ."<sup>62</sup>

In the problem of authority and control, we must again take note of the basic ecological situation on the Plains. During most of the year, for reasons already noted, the True Plains tribes lived in fluid, scattered bands. As a rule, the band headman had very little actual authority; that is, he could not *compel* obedience to his wishes. This point has previously been noted with reference to such tribes as the Blackfoot, the Comanche, and the Cheyenne. The crucial question concerns *why* the band headmen had such limited authority. It may be suggested that there was only one time when strong social controls were needed within the band: on military raids. Generally speaking, the entire band did not participate in a raid, for obvious reasons. The usual pattern was for a group of warriors to detach themselves from the band, go out on a raid, and then return to the band after the raid was over. Therefore, it was not the *band* that had need of strong social controls, but rather the part of the band that actually made the raid. We would expect to find effective authority operable within the raiding party itself, and that is where we do find it. Among the Kiowa, for example, regardless of the size of the war party, "the war-leader was in absolute control, and far greater discipline was enforced here than elsewhere in Kiowa life."<sup>63</sup> Even among the Comanche, who were probably the most determinedly individualistic of all the Plains tribes, the leader of a raiding party had a great deal of authority. Hoebel states:

On the raid the leader of the war party—the man who had organized it—had temporary dictatorial powers such as a peace chief never enjoyed. He determined the objectives of the raid; he appointed scouts, cooks, and water carriers; he set the camping places and the route of march; he divided the booty, if booty there was. In all his directives he was implicitly obeyed. If anyone seriously objected, he was free to leave the party and go his own way. Success on the raid demanded tough leadership, and the followers of a war chief submitted to it.<sup>64</sup>

The other crucial band enterprise—hunting—was not communal hunting as a rule. It was a matter of small groups of hunters going after widely dispersed buffalo. In such a situation, there was no need for strong social controls, since the band was not hunting as a unit, and individualistic enterprise was what was required.

In the summer months, however, when the whole tribe came together, the entire situation was different. Many people were together in one place, and these were people who owed allegiance to different bands. There were important ceremonies to be organized. And, above all, there was the communal buffalo hunt to be undertaken, upon which so much depended. Order was necessary in the tribal encampment, to prevent disputes. Strict discipline was necessary on the hunt, because individual hunting was inefficient. (A single hunter who jumped the gun might get a few buffalo for himself, but he would alarm and scatter the herd in such a

way that communal hunting techniques were not effective.) It was at this time that the police societies always functioned. Over and over again, the point is made that the most important job the police societies had was in policing the communal hunts. For most of the True Plains tribes, this was the only time when formal social controls were instituted. As long ago as 1927, Lowie pointed out the importance of the police societies as integrative mechanisms in the Plains tribes. He argued that associations could overcome the separatism of kin groups by bringing together men of different families, but that associations in themselves were not enough, since they could divide the community along associational lines.<sup>85</sup> "Associational particularism can evidently be overcome," he notes, "if the several organizations are subject to the control of a single authority."<sup>86</sup> (That is, if one of the societies was delegated to take charge in the summer, which was the customary pattern.) He states: "No other feature of Plains Indian life approached the buffalo police as an effective territorial unifier."<sup>87</sup> It may be noted that the role of the police societies was integrative in another way. They not only were responsible for *punishing* offenders but also tried to *rehabilitate* the guilty persons by bringing them back within the tribal structure. As Provinse put it, "Conformity, not revenge, was sought, and immediately after a promise to conform was secured from the delinquent, steps were taken to reincorporate him into the society."<sup>88</sup> For example, among the Plains Cree, "if a man evaded the Warriors and tried to make a kill before the proper time, they immediately advanced to the offender's tipi, slashed it to bits, and destroyed all his possessions."<sup>89</sup> This sounds rather formidable. However, if the offender took his punishment well, the Warriors *replaced* all his property four days later.

The differences among the peripheral Plains tribes are instructive here. As a rule, the peripheral hunting and gathering tribes had no police at all. The peripheral farming tribes, on the other hand, had police who functioned all year round, both in the villages and on the hunts. The tendency for two of the True Plains tribes (Cheyenne and Teton Dakota) of horticultural origins to use police to some extent all year round may be a reflection of this former pattern. Certainly, however, the powers of the police were slight except in the summer encampments.

#### STATUS

It is a striking fact that, whatever the original differences among them may have been, almost all True Plains tribes ended up with a very similar method of determining status. In view of the marked differences between peripheral hunting and gathering tribes and peripheral farming tribes in this respect, the status systems of the True Plains tribes would seem to represent a classic example of the adjustment of social institutions to a shared ecological situation.

Three interrelated factors in the Plains situation directly affected status. First, there was the fluidity and mobility of the bands. As we have seen, this tended to reduce the importance of kinship as an organizing device; a status system based on kinship considerations was not well suited to the facts of Plains life. This point has been amply demonstrated in the preceding discussion. Other means of determining status were apparently necessary on the Plains. It is not suggested that kinship ties can never be a basic organizational device among herding peoples.

Indeed, the *Obok* type of segmented lineage seems to be characteristic of many herding societies. The Plains situation, however, is virtually unique. Although the Plains tribes resemble herders in many ways, the buffalo themselves were not herded. The constant movement of the Plains tribes, together with the fluid military situation partly induced by outside factors, prevented the development of precise patterns of land ownership. In any event, it is important to bear in mind the brief duration of the historic Plains cultures; on the Plains, "the opportunity for a final pattern to emerge was never fulfilled because new factors (traders, guns, settlers) were continuously introduced and constantly altered the balance of power and the character of opportunity."<sup>70</sup>

Second, there was the military situation on the Plains. It is necessary to stress the point that the True Plains tribes were quite literally fighting for their lives. They were engaged in a fierce competition with other tribes and with outside powers for territory and for horses; both land to hunt in and horses to hunt with were crucial to survival. As Newcomb has pointed out, the "gaming" aspect of Plains warfare has been exaggerated or misinterpreted. The Plains cultures were warlike because they had to be, and the granting of high social status to warriors was a necessary part of the system.<sup>71</sup> After all, a warrior must be rewarded somehow; he must have an incentive to fight. This does not mean, of course, that we must disregard the less directly utilitarian aspects of warfare altogether. Mishkin has discussed this problem perceptively, stating:

The formalized deeds have a significant place in the practice of warfare and are prerequisites in the attainment of rank so far as the individual is concerned. In short, within the economic framework of war there functioned a system of warrior etiquette and formal accomplishment the successful performance of which was essential to rank.<sup>72</sup>

Third, there was the crucial importance of horses in the Plains situation. A Blackfoot hunter on a good horse could kill four or five buffalo in a single chase, but a man on a poor horse couldn't kill any at all.<sup>73</sup> Horses were quite clearly necessary in efficient buffalo hunting.<sup>74</sup> In addition, it was the horse that made possible the rapid mobility of the Plains tribes, and this mobility was essential in Plains warfare. In a nomadic society, property has to be portable. The most important form of property was the horse which was ideally suited to these conditions: it could transport itself. It may also be noted that the horse was eight times more efficient than a dog as a bearer of burdens.<sup>75</sup> The number of horses a man owned was a basic determinant of status. Among the Blackfoot, the introduction of the horse brought about a change from a relatively classless society to a society with three loosely defined social classes, and membership in one class or another was largely determined by horse ownership.<sup>76</sup> Among the Comanche, as has been noted, the prestige of an individual was directly proportional to the size of his herd of horses.<sup>77</sup> Similar examples could be cited for all of the True Plains tribes. Horses were bred and occasionally captured wild by some True Plains tribes,<sup>78</sup> but the main way of getting horses was by raiding. Mishkin has stated:

But the supposition that wild horses ever constituted a primary source of the Indians' herds is unfounded. According to all the evidence, raiding was everywhere the principal method of acquiring horses. There is no reason to suspect that Indian horses bred poorly; nevertheless natural increase of the herds apparently did not satisfy the Indian's needs and he was ever impatient to replenish stock.<sup>79</sup>

A Plains entrepreneur was essentially a horse thief; Grinnell notes that "there were many brave and successful warriors of the Cheyennes . . . who on their war journeys tried to avoid coming in close contact with enemies, and had no wish to kill enemies. Such men went to war for the sole purpose of increasing their possessions by capturing horses; that is, they carried on war as a business—for profit."<sup>80</sup> Horses could be inherited, of course, and this gave a man valuable headstart in life. But the horse had to be used as well as owned; status had to be validated by performance as a warrior, generosity in giving horses away, and the like. This was true even among the Kiowa.<sup>81</sup> And a fixed status system based on the inheritance of horses would have been difficult, in view of the fact that any man could acquire horses for himself by raiding. There were other factors which entered into the situation as well. As Elkin states concerning the Arapaho:

The possession of wealth, other than it permitted one to gain a reputation for liberality, was thus not in itself a criterion for the ascription of prestige. The horse, however, under proper circumstances, might have allowed for social stratification on a property basis. Unlike other forms of property, it was the essential means of procuring a livelihood, was differentiated into relative values, and deteriorated slowly. Nevertheless, any development along this line was precluded by constant warfare. The frequency with which whole herds were won or lost served to prevent property ownership from becoming personally concentrated. The spoils of a successful raid, moreover, were equally divided among all participants, though those who acted most effectively received first choice.<sup>82</sup>

It may also be noted that horses were frequently distributed outside the immediate family upon the death of the owner. Among the Teton Dakota, for example, a young man was expected to get his start in life by stealing horses, since he could not expect to inherit any horses from his father.<sup>83</sup> Finally, the concentration of horses within family lines would have been difficult because a man who had a lot of horses was supposed to give horses away to less fortunate persons. Among the Teton Dakota, where horses were the most important form of property, "the only prestige attached to property was in giving it away."<sup>84</sup> Among the Plains Cree, Mandelbaum states: "The possession of horses facilitated a rise in social status. Prestige could be acquired through the bountiful bestowal of gifts. A horse was the very best and most praiseworthy gift that could be given."<sup>85</sup> Among the Kiowa, Richardson writes: "Generosity in giving horses was vastly more important than the possession of horses itself."<sup>86</sup> It can be argued that both the custom of giving horses away and the custom of acquiring horses by raiding were effective techniques in Plains societies. In a culture so dependent on horses for efficient hunting, it was of obvious desirability to have all the hunters as well equipped with horses as possible. And the technique of stealing horses from other tribes offered a dual advantage: it increased the tribal horse holdings of the successful raider at the same time that it reduced the effectiveness of the competing society.

An obvious point, but still an important one, is that the True Plains cultures were decisively male-oriented. The ways of attaining status were involved primarily with male activities: hunting, raiding, and fighting. Rodnick states with regard to the Assiniboine: "Women had no rank or social status except the respect due them by relatives; the prerequisites of rank applied only to men. . . . As in all Plains societies, patterns of status were definitely masculine in form, with tend-

encies toward feminine traits being held in derision.”<sup>87</sup> Speaking of the Plains Cree, Mandelbaum notes: “Men who had not participated in warfare were derided and ridiculed. Their names might be given feminine endings and young warriors might summarily tell them to join ‘their fellow-women.’”<sup>88</sup> In other words, sex was one determinant of status. However, a man had to live up to his expected role as a warrior; his only real alternative was to become a transvestite.

To be sure, there were other ways of acquiring status in addition to those already enumerated. The ownership of medicine bundles was frequently important. Eloquence, ability as a shaman, and level-headed judgment were sometimes factors in the status system. Unquestionably, however, the crucial status determinants on the Plains were military skills and the possession of horses, and both of these were intimately related to the basic ecological patterns of Plains life.

## CONCLUSIONS

THIS WORK has had two basic aims, which were interrelated. First, it has sought to clarify certain problems in Plains ethnology. It has related basic similarities in the social organizations of the True Plains tribes to their shared ecological situation, while relating basic differences between the social systems of these tribes to differences in their cultural backgrounds. Again, it has attempted to provide a test of a number of modern anthropological ideas concerning the development of social systems.

Let us now return to the specific propositions which we have tried to test. These propositions were outlined in the Introduction to this study.

1. It has been demonstrated that the True Plains cultures were a late development. Such cultures, based on the mounted hunting of the buffalo, necessarily post-dated the introduction of the horse into the Plains.

2. The True Plains tribes came into the Plains out of two fundamentally different economic backgrounds and from several distinct culture areas. It has been shown that a people like the Comanche had at one time been hunters and gatherers in the Basin-Plateau area, while a tribe such as the Cheyenne had at one time been a farming people in Minnesota.

3. The ecological situation on the Plains necessitated not only changes in material culture but also basic changes in social organization. It has been abundantly demonstrated, I believe, that the annual cycle of the buffalo necessitated common exploitative techniques. Moreover, the buffalo cycle necessitated a basic pattern of fragmented bands in the winter months and concentrated tribal units in the summer months. This in turn led to far-reaching adjustments in the social systems of the Plains tribes. The technological change which initiated the development of the True Plains cultures led to basic changes in the social organizations of these tribes. The ecological situation, involving the dynamic interrelationships between culture and environment, was a complex one on the Plains. An important part of the environment within which any Plains tribe lived was made up of *other* competing Plains tribes, as well as powers outside the Plains. The ecological situation, involving adaptations to the buffalo cycle and the existence of competing societies, influenced every aspect of Plains social organization: the patterns of leadership, the nature of social groupings, the determinants of status, and so forth.

4. There are abundant evidences of cultural persistence on the Plains. The exigencies of the changing Plains situation modified older cultural institutions, but these aspects of former lifeways did not vanish entirely. The tribal organization of the Cheyenne is only intelligible in these terms, as in the matrilineal clan system of the Crow. I believe also that the *absence* of certain institutions in some cases reflects cultural persistence or continuity. For example, the account of the first Comanche Sun Dance clearly reflects the influence of their loosely organized Great Basin heritage.

5. Despite their differing backgrounds, the ultimate similarities among the True Plains tribes in social organization are remarkable, and as a group they differ from



peripheral tribes. They tended to share basic patterns of band systems during most of the year and tribal systems in the summer months. They tended to share the institution of the police societies on the communal buffalo hunts. They tended to share the high valuation of military skills as a determinant of status. There are many apparent similarities in the organization of their sociocultural systems. The data provide strong support for the idea that sociocultural systems are indeed adaptive systems; systems of social organization do not "just happen" without rhyme or reason.

6. The comparison of the True Plains tribes of different backgrounds with peripheral Plains tribes offers a strong evidence for the fact that the *differences* among the True Plains tribes can indeed be related to what kinds of tribes they were before moving into the Plains. Wherever important differences in social structure have been found among the True Plains tribes, these differences have correlated with differences between peripheral hunters and gatherers as opposed to peripheral horticulturalists. That is, the True Plains tribes which were originally hunters and gatherers tend to resemble peripheral hunting and gathering tribes in some respects, whereas the True Plains tribes which were originally farmers tend to resemble the peripheral horticultural tribes. In addition to shedding light on some of the diversity among the True Plains tribes, the distinctiveness of the two groups of peripheral tribes lends support to the idea that hunters and gatherers are characteristically different from horticultural peoples in terms of social organization.

7. This work has been phrased in evolutionary terms. To the extent that it has been successful, it serves to emphasize the importance of the idea of cultural evolution in anthropology. The results indicate the validity of both multilinear and universal evolution as systems of explanation. We have demonstrated significant regularities in the process of culture change within a specific area. We have also tried to show, by means of a comparison of peripheral Plains tribes, that a taxonomy of cultures based upon the development of economic resources can yield rewarding results. Exceptions do occur, of course, but it is still broadly true that societies with different technological bases tend to have different types of social systems. In view of the known archeological sequence of cultural types, this fact supports the view that it is meaningful to speak of an evolutionary development of human culture, with increasing complexity through time.

This analysis of the Plains situation has suggested three basic conclusions. First, it has stressed the importance of viewing the Plains situation in dynamic rather than static terms. The story of man on the Plains is clearly a story of constant change. The movements of tribes, the interactions between tribes, the shifts in the balance of power, the influence of outside factors, the introduction of new cultural elements—the story of life on the Plains is unintelligible without an appreciation of these processes of change. The traditional trait-distribution approach to the concept of the culture area is grossly unsuited to the facts of the Plains situation and has led to a masking of many of the real problems posed by the Plains cultures. This point has been made by others, but it deserves restatement.

Second, the materials with which we have been dealing have underscored the crucial role of technology as a prime mover in cultural change. It was a technological change, the introduction of the horse, that made the historic Plains cultures

possible. This basic technological change triggered a whole series of cultural modifications. However, it is not technology alone that is so important—it is rather the role played by technology in the total ecological system. The complex interrelationships between the technological systems and the environment of other men, other animals, and other societies were certainly key factors in the developing Plains situation.

Third, this work has emphasized the basic idea that sociocultural systems are indeed adaptive in nature. The “fit” of the Plains social systems to the character of the Plains situation is striking. Despite the differing backgrounds of the True Plains tribes, and despite the fact that the phenomenon of cultural persistence led to continuing differences among the Plains tribes, virtually every aspect of Plains culture adjusted efficiently to the requirements of the Plains situation. Indeed, it would be difficult to design a culture type that would be better suited to the exigencies of Plains life than the cultures which actually developed on the Plains. There was clearly a process of natural selection at work on the Plains: cultures adapted both by means of internal selection, by which institutions were brought into harmony with one another, and by external selection, by which the competition with other societies produced far-reaching changes in sociocultural institutions as the price for survival.

This study does not pretend to explain everything about the Plains Indians. It has been oriented toward a specific set of problems, and has perforce neglected many important aspects of Plains life. No claim is made that this type of work can serve as a substitute for other approaches to the complex Plains situation; rather, it is hoped that it will supplement investigations that have proceeded and will proceed from different points of view.

However, the interpretation herein presented has shown that there are important differences among the sociocultural systems of peoples who live in different ecological situations, and it does offer a reasonable explanation for the similarities among the Plains tribes, as well as the differences which persisted between them to the end.

## APPENDIX

## APPENDIX

### THE PROBLEM OF THE COMANCHE

THE COMANCHE have often been referred to as a determinedly individualistic people.<sup>1</sup> Certainly, the frequency with which the Comanche stand out as exceptions to generalizations about the True Plains tribes lends a degree of far-reaching ethnographic support to this view. The Comanche *were* different from the other True Plains tribes, and this fact demands explanation.

It is not sufficient, however, to say that the Comanche were different. It is important to pinpoint the *kinds* of difference which they exhibit. So far as our analysis is concerned, the crucial areas of difference between the Comanche and the other True Plains tribes were these: (1) they do not show the characteristic pattern of fragmented bands in the winter months and concentrated tribal units in the summer months, although there is evidence that indicates that individual bands tended to unite for summer hunts and subdivide the rest of the time;<sup>2</sup> (2) they lack the otherwise universal institution of the communal hunt police; (3) as far as can be determined, they either lacked societies (associations) in general, or else the societies were weak and relatively unimportant.<sup>3</sup>

We have attempted to relate similarities among the True Plains tribes to the participation of these tribes in a shared ecological situation, while relating differences among them to differences in cultural background. In terms of this hypothesis, what can be said about the Comanche?

The absence of the communal hunt police provides a crucial test case. Two different explanations have been advanced for this lack, one stressing cultural background as a causal factor and the other stressing a difference in ecology between the Comanche and other True Plains tribes.

Wallace and Hoebel take the position that the lack of the communal hunt police can be attributed to the cultural background of the Comanche. They state that "it is quite evident that the Comanches felt no need to make a crime of violation of the rules of the communal hunt. Furthermore, unlike the other Plains tribes, who felt the need and also had an admirably suited mechanism at hand for the fulfillment of the need, the Comanches with their Shoshonean background possessed no military societies. They let the matter ride."<sup>4</sup> Elsewhere, Wallace and Hoebel relate the lack of interest in tribal integration to their background of "Shoshonean atomism."<sup>5</sup> Moreover, they state: "The Comanche band was strikingly similar in organization to the aboriginal Shoshonean groups of the Great Basin in the days preceding white contact."<sup>6</sup>

On the other hand, Elizabeth Colson has challenged this interpretation. She argues that the severity of the winters in the Northern Plains made the summer hunts of crucial importance, and that the buffalo herds were more concentrated in the Northern Plains, providing a "focus" for the efforts of combined bands.<sup>7</sup> She continues: "The Comanche lived in the best buffalo country. . . . The herds were more widely spread, some hunting was possible right through the year. The summer hunt was not of the same crucial importance. Winter conditions were not so severe. The bands, the permanent local units, seem to have been larger than on the North-

ern Plains. In these circumstances, there was little need for tribal summer mobilization, and there was none. Since the communal hunt was the activity of the band, and not of a collection of bands, the normal organization of the band could operate to maintain order during the hunt."<sup>8</sup>

Colson's argument is an impressive one. Before it can be properly evaluated, however, the Comanche situation must be explained in some detail. The Comanche were divided into at least five large bands, in addition to many smaller ones.<sup>9</sup> The five most important bands were as follows:<sup>10</sup>

1. The Penatekas, or Honey-eaters. These were the southernmost Comanches. They were largely independent of the other Comanches, and for long periods of time had no contact whatever with them.

2. The Yamparikas, or Root-eaters. These were the northernmost Comanches, living in Colorado north of the Arkansas River, though also ranging south of the Arkansas.

3. The Kotsotekas, or Buffalo-eaters. These people were centered around the valley of the Canadian River.

4. The Nokoni, or Detsanayuka, known as the Wanderers. These were the Middle Comanches, living just to the north of the Penatekas.

5. The Kwahadi, or Antelopes. This band was located on the Staked Plains.

It is readily apparent from the distribution of the Comanche bands that they were not living under identical ecological conditions. In particular, the Penatekas, the most southern of the Comanches, living in Central Texas, were largely outside the range of the buffalo in historic times. By 1849, there were very few buffalo south of the Colorado River in Texas.<sup>11</sup> Richardson explicitly states that the southern Comanches "were obliged to depend largely on smaller game and horse flesh."<sup>12</sup> The buffalo were only of real importance in the northern and western parts of the Comanche range. With this in mind, we may turn to Colson's interpretations.

She notes that some buffalo hunting was possible all year round. In the first place, this is also true for the northern Plains. The northern Plains tribes characteristically did *some* buffalo hunting in the winter months. (Even the Sarsi hunted the buffalo in winter.<sup>13</sup>) As a matter of fact, as we have seen, the seasonal north-south shifts of the buffalo herds primarily affected only the two extremes of the buffalo range, with the Comanche territory at the southern end. Curiously enough, the Texas plains were one of the few areas in which a case can be made out for the idea that buffalo hunting was *not* possible all year round. There is clear evidence that the plains of Texas were abandoned by the buffalo in the summer months.<sup>14</sup> By 1854, both the Kiowa and the Comanche had to move north as far as the Arkansas River to hunt buffalo.<sup>15</sup>

In spite of the generally favorable situation of the Comanche with respect to food resources, there is plenty of evidence that they knew times of great hardship. The southern Comanches, by 1838, are described as being half starved.<sup>16</sup> Between 1830 and 1860, the buffalo were becoming scarce for many of the Comanche bands, and many Comanches were unable to secure a reliable supply.<sup>17</sup> In view of all this, it would seem that the communal buffalo hunts were indeed important to the Comanche bands that relied on the buffalo.

Wallace and Hoebel indicate that the size of the Comanche bands was quite

variable.<sup>18</sup> They may indeed have tended to be larger than the bands of some other Plains tribes, but this is not known for certain. In any event, the customary band organization of the Comanche was not ideally suited to the operation of a *communal* hunt. The whole point about the band organization of the Comanche is that it was extremely loose and unstructured. If the other Plains tribes found a police society a useful adjunct of communal hunts, including band hunts, there is no reason why the Comanches could not have employed this institution profitably.

It seems to me that this is not necessarily an either/or problem. It is quite possible that both ecology and cultural background were important factors in producing the anomalies of the Comanche organization. On the one hand, all of the differences between the Comanche and the other True Plains tribes imply some sort of an ecological difference. (If all of the other True Plains tribes developed these institutions in response to a shared ecological situation, then there is the clear implication that the Comanche did not share precisely the same situation, or else that they developed different techniques for coping with the situation.) On the other hand, it is also true that the Comanche cultural background was extremely meager: the Great Basin groups were the least complex of any in North America in terms of social organization.

The following interpretation is offered in the hope that it will serve to clarify the Comanche situation. It seems that there are four key points to bear in mind. First, the Comanches were a widely scattered people. They occupied a vast expanse of territory, including parts of Texas, New Mexico, Colorado, Kansas, and Oklahoma.<sup>19</sup> Moreover, not all Comanches lived on the Plains proper; many of them were not seriously involved with the buffalo. Therefore, it is only proper to speak of *some* Comanches as True Plains people, not all of them. In this light, the fact that the whole tribe or a large part of it failed to get together for the communal hunts does not loom as a serious problem. The idea of twenty thousand Indians in one camp circle boggles the imagination.

Second, some of the Comanche bands were more deeply involved with horses than were any of the other Plains tribes. It was the horse that had enabled them to sweep the Apache from the Plains. Because of their position close to the source of supply, the Comanches became the middlemen in the Plains horse trade.<sup>20</sup> They were the richest of all Plains tribes in terms of horses.<sup>21</sup> (The Kwahadies, around 1867, had 15,000 horses and 300 to 400 mules.<sup>22</sup>) In addition to being a medium of exchange, as well as a medium by which more horses and cattle could be acquired by raiding, the horse was also eaten. It was customary for a Comanche raiding party to take along extra horses for food.<sup>23</sup> Hoebel has noted that the Comanche had so many horses that they might properly be regarded as a pastoral people.<sup>24</sup> This plethora of horses may well have ameliorated the demands of the Plains situation for the Comanche.

Third, the ecological situation of the Comanche bands varied. Among the Plains Comanche, there were some ecological differences as compared to other True Plains tribes. The most important difference, in addition to the numbers of horses, was in the comparative mildness of the winter months and the heat of the summer, which drove out the buffalo. (It may be observed, however, that a winter on the Staked Plains was not exactly an euphoric experience.) The ecological situation,

nevertheless, does not in itself seem to be sufficient to account for the differences in social organization. As a case in point, it may be argued that the communal hunt was even more important for the Comanche than for other True Plains tribes: the buffalo were not there during part of the year. It must be admitted, on the other hand, that ecological differences did exist between the Comanches and other Plains tribes; these differences must have been contributing factors to the anomalies in terms of social organization. It may be correct to say that the ecological demands made upon the Comanche were not as stringent as those made upon most other True Plains tribes, and this may have made it possible for the Comanche to get by with an alternative system of organization.

Fourth, the Comanche never completely shed their Shoshonian heritage; they remained heavily influenced by the type of social organization they possessed when they moved into the Plains. Indeed, the Comanche are a prime example of cultural persistence. Hoebel has written: "It is not understatement to say that the Comanches represented Plains culture in its rudest form and that where it was most rude it was most Shoshonean."<sup>25</sup> It was not so much that the Comanche were resistant to change, although this was a factor, but rather that they tended to "make do" with what they had. In conjunction with the less stringent ecological demands made upon them, this probably is the primary reason for the differences between the Comanches and the other True Plains tribes. The differences cannot be attributed solely or even mainly to ecology. Consider, for example, the case of the Kiowa. After 1790, the Comanche shared their territory south of the Arkansas with the Kiowa.<sup>26</sup> If the absence of the police society among the Comanche is to be attributed to ecology, then the Kiowas, too, should have lacked the police society. This was demonstrably not the case. The idea that the communal hunt police would have been of no value to the Comanche is open to serious question. Rather, it seems that, lacking the proper societies, they had no readily available institution that could serve this function. Therefore, with their extreme individualism, they simply did without it. It is of great interest to note that the Ute, who likewise had a Shoshonean heritage, also did without the communal hunt police on the Plains.<sup>27</sup> Evidences of the strength of the influence of the Comanche cultural heritage are not lacking. One group of Comanches, the Jupe, largely as the result of a decisive military defeat by the Spanish, actually tried to establish a horticultural pueblo on the Arkansas River in Colorado. They asked the assistance of the governor of New Mexico, and the assistance was granted. By September, the Jupe were living in new houses at a settlement called San Carlos. "However, the conditioning factors of Comanche culture soon returned to their normal balance and the Jupe abandoned San Carlos and horticulture for good in the following January."<sup>28</sup> The first Comanche Sun Dance, which has been previously referred to in some detail, is an outstanding example. In 1874, under the influence of a messiah, they put on a Sun Dance in an effort to unite the tribe. There could hardly be a more instructive instance of how cultural adaptations among the Comanche were molded by preëxisting elements in the culture. Wallace and Hoebel write:

The Sun Dance, as it was worked out for the occasion by the Comanches, was a much simplified version of the elaborate complex that existed among the Cheyennes, Arapahos, and Kiowas.

The Comanches had been interested spectators of Kiowa Sun Dances for some seventy-five years, and they had from time to time watched the Cheyenne spectacle in the years following the making of the peace of 1840. They were familiar enough with the external forms of the dance. Certain features of the social structure that supported the Cheyenne and Kiowa dances were lacking in the cultural equipment of the Comanches, but this did not bother them. . . .<sup>29</sup>

It has even been suggested that the basic personality structure of the Comanches was derived from their former way of life.<sup>30</sup> Returning to our fundamental hypothesis, then, we may say that the evidence strongly suggests that the differences between the Comanche and the other True Plains tribes were primarily due to the cultural background of the Comanche, although ecological considerations were also factors in the sense that they *permitted* these variations to survive.

There is, of course, another problem involved here. The Comanche did in fact have communal hunts. It may be assumed that these hunts were of some economic importance to the Comanche. If they lacked the police society, always employed by the other True Plains tribes in this situation, how did they control the hunt? Or, to state the problem in broader terms, how did they reconcile their emphasis on individualism with their need for discipline and unanimity of action?

Apparently, the Comanche got along very well without the hunt police. Wallace and Hoebel state that "in spite of their fierce individualism they seem not to have had the need for police when it came to hunting. Here the unruly Comanche behaved himself very well. Group discipline prevailed, and all worked for the common good."<sup>31</sup> More precisely, Hoebel has reported a case in which a Comanche did get out of line on a communal hunt:

While the others were still dreaming of shooting buffalo by the hundreds, he was out shooting those he could get, not stopping to butcher them, eagerly pushing on while the game was good. The band rose early too. The hunters were soon in the field. It was not long before they stalked upon the carcasses. Indignation was high. They moved to drastic action. The hunters pulled their skinning knives and slashed the hides to shreds. The chiseller would have no robes. Then they vindictively scooped sand and dirt from the ground, rubbing it soundly into the flesh. That fixed the sneaker. He knew what they thought of him. The hunt leader pointed the finger at him and told the people to keep an eye on him thereafter. He suffered no physical chastisement, as he would have among the Cheyennes. But the incident and the reputation it left must have dogged him. Beyond this, however, the Comanches did not go.<sup>32</sup>

It is known that the Comanche exhibited strong discipline on raiding parties; the leader of the war party had "temporary dictatorial powers."<sup>33</sup> Richardson relates an account given by Clinton Smith, a boy captive of the Comanches, which tells of warriors threatening death to anyone who stole water from the weaker members of the band.<sup>34</sup>

In his valuable analysis of Comanche law, Hoebel discusses the problem of adultery. He indicates that the technique for prosecuting a legal case involving a threat to marriage might involve a powerful warrior acting as an individual. Hoebel states:

At this point the Comanches met the social need for a check on aggression and the provision of redress by means of a simple utilization of the materials at hand. They held no constitutional convention to devise new instruments of government. Personal power was the recognized basis of social relations between men. Power out of control was the threat. Controlled power was the countercheck naturally hit upon. The weak-kneed victim of aggression who had no kin to back



him turned to some great warrior to press his cause for him. "A brave, well-known warrior," runs the stock phrase. The brave, well-known warrior simply took over the case on behalf of the injured party and prosecuted it as his own. It gave him a neat chance to face down an upstart warrior, to serve his own ends of self-glorification while acting in the interest of the general social welfare—not against it. He could add to the luster of his status while upholding the law of marriage, instead of flouting it. Vanity and social altruism were wedded in one act and both were exploited for the social good. Their gratification was the sole reward, for the warrior champion received no compensation nor any share of the damages collected.<sup>85</sup>

The communal hunt, like the war party, was under the direction of a warrior.<sup>86</sup> It may be assumed that an important undertaking like a communal hunt would not be entrusted to anyone but a very powerful and influential warrior. One of the tasks of the hunt leader was to tell the people to keep an eye on anyone he thought might jump the gun.<sup>87</sup> If any hunter got out of line, he might not have to face a police society—but he would certainly have to reckon with the disapproval of his fellow hunters and the director of the hunt. It seems unlikely that a hunt leader would allow such a violation to go completely unchallenged. Here again, I believe, we see a revealing example of how the Comanches "made do" with what they had.

In sum, as Hoebel puts it, "Comanche law expressed individualism checked at critical points by social use of other individuals."<sup>88</sup>

## NOTES

## NOTES

(Full Bibliographical Citations Are Given in the Bibliography)

### CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

- <sup>1</sup> Underhill, 1953, p. 144.  
<sup>2</sup> Wedel, 1940, p. 342.  
<sup>3</sup> Goldschmidt, 1959, p. 133.  
<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 215.  
<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 107.  
<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 116.  
<sup>7</sup> Steward, 1955, p. 41.  
<sup>8</sup> Mandelbaum, 1940, p. 187.  
<sup>9</sup> Cf. Eggan, 1952, p. 40.  
<sup>10</sup> Cf. Harding, 1960, pp. 47-48.  
<sup>11</sup> Steward, *op. cit.*, pp. 18-19.  
<sup>12</sup> Sahlins, 1960, pp. 12-13.  
<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13.  
<sup>14</sup> Goldschmidt, *op. cit.*, pp. 182-183.  
<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 109.  
<sup>16</sup> Secoy, 1953, p. 82.  
<sup>17</sup> Hyde, 1951, p. 1.  
<sup>18</sup> Steward, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

### CHAPTER II: ECOLOGY AND CULTURAL CONTINUITY

- <sup>1</sup> Eggan, 1954, p. 757.  
<sup>2</sup> Lowie, 1916.  
<sup>3</sup> Eggan, 1952, p. 40.  
<sup>4</sup> Wissler, 1938, p. v.  
<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 219.  
<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 219-220.  
<sup>7</sup> Wissler, 1926, pp. 221-222.  
<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 212-219.  
<sup>9</sup> Wissler, 1938, pp. 220-222.  
<sup>10</sup> Wissler, 1914, p. 165.  
<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 167.  
<sup>12</sup> Mishkin, 1940, pp. 7-8.  
<sup>13</sup> Kroeber, 1947, p. 2.  
<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5.  
<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6.  
<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13.  
<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1.  
<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 76.  
<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 78.  
<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 83-84.  
<sup>21</sup> Beals, 1953, p. 634.  
<sup>22</sup> Steward, 1955, p. 37.  
<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 38.  
<sup>24</sup> Lowie, 1954, p. 1.  
<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4.  
<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5.  
<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 5-6.  
<sup>28</sup> Strong, 1936, p. 362.  
<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 362-363.  
<sup>30</sup> Wedel, 1953, pp. 501-502.  
<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 503.  
<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 504.  
<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 505.  
<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 512.  
<sup>35</sup> Wedel, 1959, pp. 626-627.  
<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 627.  
<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 637.  
<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 640-641.  
<sup>39</sup> Ewers, 1955, p. 338.  
<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 339.  
<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 334.  
<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 335.  
<sup>43</sup> Eggan, 1952, p. 40.  
<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 42.  
<sup>45</sup> Eggan, 1955, p. 93.  
<sup>46</sup> Secoy, 1953, p. 86.  
<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 2-5.  
<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 88.  
<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 89.  
<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 94.  
<sup>51</sup> Roe, 1951, pp. 628-629.  
<sup>52</sup> Allen, 1877, p. 466.  
<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 465.  
<sup>54</sup> Hornaday, 1887, p. 424.  
<sup>55</sup> Garretson, 1938, pp. 52-53.  
<sup>56</sup> Roe, *op. cit.*, p. 594.  
<sup>57</sup> Hornaday, *op. cit.*, pp. 415-416.  
<sup>58</sup> Garretson, *op. cit.*, p. 38.  
<sup>59</sup> Roe, *op. cit.*, p. 100.  
<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 118.  
<sup>61</sup> Webb, 1931, p. 33.  
<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 52.  
<sup>63</sup> Cf. Bacon, 1958, pp. 184-185.  
<sup>64</sup> Goldschmidt, 1959, pp. 185-196.

### CHAPTER III: THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

- <sup>1</sup> Wissler, 1910, p. 20.  
<sup>2</sup> Ewers, 1958, p. 7.  
<sup>3</sup> Kroeber, 1947, p. 82.  
<sup>4</sup> Ewers, 1955, p. 300.  
<sup>5</sup> Ewers, 1958, pp. 82-90.  
<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 90.  
<sup>7</sup> Steward, 1934, p. 7.  
<sup>8</sup> Ewers, 1958, p. 91.  
<sup>9</sup> Steward, *op. cit.*, p. 7.  
<sup>10</sup> Wissler, 1911, p. 3.  
<sup>11</sup> Ewers, 1955, p. 247.  
<sup>12</sup> Ewers, 1958, p. 97.  
<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 97.  
<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 39.  
<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 88-97.  
<sup>16</sup> Steward, 1934, pp. 8-9.  
<sup>17</sup> Ewers, *op. cit.*, p. 97.  
<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 90.  
<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 82.  
<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 97.

- <sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 105.  
<sup>22</sup> Goldschmidt, 1959, p. 134.  
<sup>23</sup> Lowie, 1954, p. 91.  
<sup>24</sup> Wissler, 1911, p. 4.  
<sup>25</sup> Ewers, 1955, p. 338.  
<sup>26</sup> Ewers, 1958, p. 96.  
<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 126.  
<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 167–172.  
<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6.  
<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 21.  
<sup>31</sup> Ewers, 1955, p. 332.  
<sup>32</sup> Wallace and Hoebel, 1952, p. 6.  
<sup>33</sup> Richardson, 1933, p. 25.  
<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 53.  
<sup>35</sup> Wallace and Hoebel, *op. cit.*, p. 39.  
<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 14.  
<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 22.  
<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 22–23.  
<sup>39</sup> Richardson, *op. cit.*, p. 30.  
<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 17.  
<sup>41</sup> Wallace and Hoebel, *op. cit.*, p. 211.  
<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 216.  
<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 212.  
<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 223.  
<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 214.  
<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 209.  
<sup>47</sup> Hoebel, 1954, p. 133.  
<sup>48</sup> Wallace and Hoebel, *op. cit.*, pp. 56–57.  
<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 57.  
<sup>50</sup> Hoebel, 1954, p. 133.  
<sup>51</sup> Richardson, *op. cit.*, p. 31.  
<sup>52</sup> Wallace and Hoebel, *op. cit.*, p. 165.  
<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 56.  
<sup>54</sup> Richardson, *op. cit.*, p. 36.  
<sup>55</sup> Wallace and Hoebel, *op. cit.*, p. 272.  
<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 23.  
<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 245.  
<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 36.  
<sup>59</sup> Richardson, *op. cit.*, p. 23.  
<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 25.  
<sup>61</sup> Wallace and Hoebel, *op. cit.*, p. 320.  
<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 322–323.  
<sup>63</sup> Lowie, 1954, p. 191.  
<sup>64</sup> Jenness, 1938, p. 49.  
<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 12.  
<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10.  
<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10.  
<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 11.  
<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 11.  
<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 11.  
<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 11.  
<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 41.  
<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 14.  
<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 41.  
<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 18–19.  
<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 23.  
<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10.  
<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10.  
<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10.  
<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 20.  
<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 33.  
<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 76.  
<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 27.  
<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 57.  
<sup>85</sup> Mandelbaum, 1940, p. 169.  
<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 171.  
<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 183.  
<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 203–204.  
<sup>89</sup> Skinner, 1914, p. 518.  
<sup>90</sup> Mandelbaum, *op. cit.*, p. 166.  
<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 221.  
<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 203–204.  
<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 189.  
<sup>94</sup> Skinner, *op. cit.*, p. 518.  
<sup>95</sup> Mandelbaum, *op. cit.*, p. 222.  
<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 221.  
<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 221.  
<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 223.  
<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 223.  
<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 225.  
<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 226–227.  
<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 230.  
<sup>103</sup> Skinner, *op. cit.*, p. 517.  
<sup>104</sup> Jenness, 1954, p. 286.  
<sup>105</sup> Mandelbaum, *op. cit.*, p. 295.  
<sup>106</sup> Jenness, 1934, p. 308.  
<sup>107</sup> Lowie, 1909a, p. 35.  
<sup>108</sup> Jenness, *op. cit.*, p. 315.  
<sup>109</sup> Rodnick, 1938, p. 33.  
<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 33.  
<sup>111</sup> Jenness, *op. cit.*, p. 310.  
<sup>112</sup> Lowie, *op. cit.*, pp. 33–34.  
<sup>113</sup> Rodnick, *op. cit.*, p. 33.  
<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 33–35.  
<sup>115</sup> Lowie, *op. cit.*, p. 35.  
<sup>116</sup> Rodnick, *op. cit.*, p. 35.  
<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 35.  
<sup>118</sup> Lowie, *op. cit.*, p. 35.  
<sup>119</sup> Rodnick, *op. cit.*, pp. 35–36.  
<sup>120</sup> Jenness, 1934, p. 314.  
<sup>121</sup> Rodnick, *op. cit.*, p. 39.  
<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 37.  
<sup>123</sup> Lowie, *op. cit.*, p. 34.  
<sup>124</sup> Lowie, 1954, p. 91.  
<sup>125</sup> Rodnick, *op. cit.*, p. 41.  
<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 36.  
<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2.  
<sup>128</sup> Jenness, *op. cit.*, p. 308.  
<sup>129</sup> Rodnick, *op. cit.*, p. 1.  
<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 23.  
<sup>131</sup> Jenness, 1934, p. 315.  
<sup>132</sup> Hoebel, 1960, pp. 1–2.  
<sup>133</sup> Lowie, 1954, p. 186.  
<sup>134</sup> Grinnell, 1923, p. 87.  
<sup>135</sup> Hoebel, *op. cit.*, p. 31.  
<sup>136</sup> Lowie, *op. cit.*, p. 87.  
<sup>137</sup> Hoebel, *op. cit.*, p. 31.  
<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 37.  
<sup>139</sup> Grinnell, *op. cit.*, p. 337.  
<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 340.  
<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 340–341.  
<sup>142</sup> Hoebel, *op. cit.*, p. 37.

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 145 Hoebel, 1960, p. 47.  
 146 Llewellyn and Hoebel, *op. cit.*, p. 111.  
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 148 Llewellyn and Hoebel, *op. cit.*, p. 100.  
 149 Hoebel, *op. cit.*, p. 33.  
 150 *Ibid.*, p. 22.  
 151 Grinnell, *op. cit.*, pp. 91-92.  
 152 Eggan, 1955, p. 85.  
 153 Grinnell, 1923*b*, p. 4.  
 154 *Ibid.*, p. 2.  
 155 Hoebel, *op. cit.*, p. 37.  
 156 Hoebel, *op. cit.*, pp. 44-45.  
 157 Lowie, 1935, pp. 3-4.  
 158 Lowie, 1954, p. 186.  
 159 White, 1959, p. 152.  
 160 Lowie, 1935, p. 298.  
 161 *Ibid.*, p. 4.  
 162 Lowie, 1954, p. 101.  
 163 Lowie, 1934, p. 5.  
 164 *Ibid.*, p. 5.  
 165 *Ibid.*, p. 5.  
 166 *Ibid.*, p. 5.  
 167 *Ibid.*, p. 11.  
 168 *Ibid.*, p. 5.  
 169 *Ibid.*, p. 5.  
 170 *Ibid.*, p. 5.  
 171 Lowie, 1954, p. 101.  
 172 Lowie, 1935, p. 172.  
 173 Lowie, 1954, p. 101.  
 174 Lowie, 1935, p. 9.  
 175 *Ibid.*, p. 9.  
 176 *Ibid.*, p. 9.  
 177 *Ibid.*, p. 10.  
 178 *Ibid.*, p. 8.  
 179 *Ibid.*, p. 5.  
 180 *Ibid.*, p. 219.  
 181 Lowie, 1935, p. 297.  
 182 *Ibid.*, p. 298.  
 183 Lowie, 1954, p. 193.  
 184 Kroeber, 1908, pp. 145-147.  
 185 Wedel, 1940, p. 327.  
 186 Flannery, 1953, pp. 53-55.  
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 189 *Ibid.*, p. 25.  
 190 *Ibid.*, p. 29.  
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<sup>275</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10.  
<sup>276</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 18.  
<sup>277</sup> Lowie, 1916, pp. 841-842.  
<sup>278</sup> Richardson, *op. cit.*, p. 6.  
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<sup>280</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 14.  
<sup>281</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 14.  
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<sup>284</sup> McAllister, 1955, p. 100.  
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<sup>325</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 151.  
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<sup>327</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 153.  
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<sup>379</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 85.  
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<sup>386</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 200.

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<sup>388</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 200.  
<sup>389</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 200.  
<sup>390</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 200.  
<sup>391</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 206.  
<sup>392</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 206–207.  
<sup>393</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 190, 242.  
<sup>394</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 193.  
<sup>395</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 190.  
<sup>396</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 251.  
<sup>397</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 204–205.  
<sup>398</sup> Whitman, 1937, pp. 1–2.  
<sup>399</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 15.  
<sup>400</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 20.  
<sup>401</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 35.  
<sup>402</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 35.  
<sup>403</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 37.  
<sup>404</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8.  
<sup>405</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 36.  
<sup>406</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 36.  
<sup>407</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8.  
<sup>408</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10.  
<sup>409</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7.  
<sup>410</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 15.  
<sup>411</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 12.  
<sup>412</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 15.  
<sup>413</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 15.  
<sup>414</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 36.  
<sup>415</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 11.  
<sup>416</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5.  
<sup>417</sup> Wissler, 1941, p. 124.

## CHAPTER IV: CULTURAL DYNAMICS

- <sup>1</sup> Secoy, 1953, p. 8.  
<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 31.  
<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 67.  
<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 71.  
<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 92.  
<sup>6</sup> Lowie, 1954, p. 87.  
<sup>7</sup> Mandelbaum, 1940, pp. 203–204.  
<sup>8</sup> Ewers, 1955, p. 335.  
<sup>9</sup> Newcomb, 1950, p. 328.  
<sup>10</sup> Roe, 1955, pp. 244–252.  
<sup>11</sup> Wedel, 1959, pp. 640–641.  
<sup>12</sup> Eggan, 1955, p. 85.  
<sup>13</sup> Wallace and Hoebel, 1952, pp. 319–323.  
<sup>14</sup> Mandelbaum, *op. cit.*, p. 203.  
<sup>15</sup> Lowie, 1935, p. 298.  
<sup>16</sup> Wissler, 1921, p. v.  
<sup>17</sup> Spier, 1921, p. 491.  
<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 520.  
<sup>19</sup> Collier, 1947, p. 231.  
<sup>20</sup> Chapple and Coon, 1942, p. 507.  
<sup>21</sup> Goldschmidt, 1959, p. 187.  
<sup>22</sup> Steward, 1955, p. 149.  
<sup>23</sup> Gillin, 1948, p. 406.  
<sup>24</sup> Goldschmidt, *op. cit.*, pp. 194–195.  
<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 154.  
<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 191.  
<sup>27</sup> Eggan, 1952, p. 42.  
<sup>28</sup> Bacon, 1958, pp. 184–185.  
<sup>29</sup> Eggan, 1955, p. 74.  
<sup>30</sup> Eggan, 1952, p. 42.  
<sup>31</sup> Lowie, 1917, p. 53.  
<sup>32</sup> Eggan, 1955, p. 74.  
<sup>33</sup> Kroeber, 1908, p. 147.  
<sup>34</sup> Flannery, 1953, p. 29.  
<sup>35</sup> Eggan, 1955, p. 93.  
<sup>36</sup> Lowie, 1916, p. 954.  
<sup>37</sup> Goldschmidt, *op. cit.*, p. 156.  
<sup>38</sup> Hoebel, 1960, p. 33.  
<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 34.  
<sup>40</sup> Wissler, 1921, p. vi.  
<sup>41</sup> Eggan, 1955, p. 88.  
<sup>42</sup> Ewers, 1958, p. 39.  
<sup>43</sup> Steward, 1934, p. 8.  
<sup>44</sup> Ewers, *op. cit.*, p. 96.  
<sup>45</sup> Steward, *op. cit.*, pp. 8–9.  
<sup>46</sup> Ewers, *op. cit.*, p. 128.  
<sup>47</sup> Grinnell, 1923a, p. 340.  
<sup>48</sup> Hoebel, 1960, p. 37.  
<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 47.  
<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 46.  
<sup>51</sup> *Cf.* Goldschmidt, *op. cit.*, pp. 170–173.  
<sup>52</sup> Hoebel, 1954, p. 144.  
<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 132.  
<sup>54</sup> Ewers, 1958, p. 97.  
<sup>55</sup> Hoebel, 1960, p. 37.  
<sup>56</sup> Battey, 1876, p. 103.  
<sup>57</sup> Lowie, 1935, p. 5.  
<sup>58</sup> Hyde, 1937, p. 310.  
<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 308–309.  
<sup>60</sup> Mirsky, 1937, p. 383.  
<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 404.  
<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 405.  
<sup>63</sup> Richardson, 1940, p. 8.  
<sup>64</sup> Hoebel, 1954, pp. 132–133.  
<sup>65</sup> Lowie, 1927, p. 101.  
<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 102.  
<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 105.  
<sup>68</sup> Provinse, 1955, p. 350.  
<sup>69</sup> Mandelbaum, 1940, p. 227.  
<sup>70</sup> Goldschmidt, *op. cit.*, p. 215.  
<sup>71</sup> Newcomb, *op. cit.*, pp. 328–329.  
<sup>72</sup> Mishkin, 1940, p. 61.  
<sup>73</sup> Ewers, 1955, p. 159.  
<sup>74</sup> *Cf.* Cottrell, 1955, p. 26.  
<sup>75</sup> Ewers, 1958, p. 94.  
<sup>76</sup> Ewers, 1955, p. 338.  
<sup>77</sup> Wallace and Hoebel, 1952, p. 36.  
<sup>78</sup> Ewers, 1955, pp. 53–59.  
<sup>79</sup> Mishkin, *op. cit.*, p. 6.  
<sup>80</sup> Grinnell, 1923b, p. 2.  
<sup>81</sup> Richardson, 1940, pp. 12–15.  
<sup>82</sup> Elkin, 1940, p. 224.  
<sup>83</sup> Mirsky, 1937, p. 383.  
<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 384–385.  
<sup>85</sup> Mandelbaum, *op. cit.*, p. 195.  
<sup>86</sup> Richardson, *op. cit.*, p. 14.  
<sup>87</sup> Rodnick, 1938, p. 37.  
<sup>88</sup> Mandelbaum, *op. cit.*, p. 296.

## APPENDIX: THE COMANCHE

- <sup>1</sup> Cf. Hoebel, 1954, p. 131.  
<sup>2</sup> Hoebel, 1940, p. 14.  
<sup>3</sup> Cf. *Ibid.*, pp. 37-44.  
<sup>4</sup> Wallace and Hoebel, 1952, p. 235.  
<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 33.  
<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 22.  
<sup>7</sup> Colson, 1954, p. 13.  
<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 14.  
<sup>9</sup> Wallace and Hoebel, *op. cit.*, p. 25.  
<sup>10</sup> Richardson, 1933, pp. 18-21.  
<sup>11</sup> Allen, 1877, p. 524.  
<sup>12</sup> Richardson, *op. cit.*, p. 30.  
<sup>13</sup> Jenness, 1938, p. 11.  
<sup>14</sup> Allen, *op. cit.*, p. 465.  
<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 525-527.  
<sup>16</sup> Richardson, *op. cit.*, pp. 100-101.  
<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 172-173.  
<sup>18</sup> Wallace and Hoebel, *op. cit.*, p. 23.  
<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7.  
<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 34.  
<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 34.  
<sup>22</sup> Richardson, *op. cit.*, p. 309.  
<sup>23</sup> Wallace and Hoebel, *op. cit.*, p. 68.  
<sup>24</sup> Hoebel, 1940, p. 14.  
<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 129.  
<sup>26</sup> Richardson, *op. cit.*, p. 48.  
<sup>27</sup> Beals, 1935, p. 15.  
<sup>28</sup> Secoy, 1953, p. 30.  
<sup>29</sup> Wallace and Hoebel, *op. cit.*, p. 320.  
<sup>30</sup> Gladwin, 1957, pp. 123-124.  
<sup>31</sup> Wallace and Hoebel, *op. cit.*, pp. 56-57.  
<sup>32</sup> Hoebel, 1940, p. 82.  
<sup>33</sup> Hoebel, 1954, p. 132.  
<sup>34</sup> Richardson, *op. cit.*, p. 31.  
<sup>35</sup> Hoebel, 1954, p. 137.  
<sup>36</sup> Wallace and Hoebel, *op. cit.*, p. 57.  
<sup>37</sup> Hoebel, 1940, p. 82.  
<sup>38</sup> Hoebel, 1954, p. 176.



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## ABBREVIATIONS

AA	American Anthropologist, Menasha, Wis.
AAA-M	American Anthropological Association, Memoirs, Menasha, Wis.
AES-M	American Ethnological Society, Monographs, New York
AMNH	American Museum of Natural History, New York
-AH	Anthropological Handbook
-AP	Anthropological Papers
-AR	Annual Report
-M	Memoirs
-AQ	Anthropological Quarterly
BAE-B	Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin, Washington
CU-CA	Columbia University, Contributions to Anthropology, New York
MPM-B	Milwaukee Public Museum, Bulletin, Milwaukee
NDHQ	North Dakota Historical Quarterly
NMC	National Museum of Canada, Ottawa
-AS	Anthropological Series
-B	Bulletin
SI-MC	Smithsonian Institution, Miscellaneous Collections, Washington
USDI	United States Department of the Interior
-NPS	National Park Service
USGS	United States Geological and Geographical Survey
-R	Report

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