



CHAPTER 2

Types of Societies and Social Groups

SOCIOLOGY AND THE STUDY OF SOCIAL CHANGE

From its earliest days, sociology has studied social change. Auguste Comte perceived that the subject matter of sociology is the study of institutions that provide for stability and order in society, which he termed *social statics*, as well as the study of social change, which he termed *social dynamics*.

TABLE 2.1 SOCIOLOGICAL TYPOLOGIES OF TYPES OF SOCIETIES AND SOCIAL CHANGE

| Who? Name of Social Theorist | Social Change | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------|------------------|
| | "Good Old Days" | "Today" |
| Emile Durkheim | Mechanical | Organic |
| Ferdinand Toennies | Gemeinschaft | Gesellschaft |
| Charles Horton Cooley | Primary | Secondary |
| Robert Redfield | Folk, Urban-Agrarian | Urban Industrial |

Sociologists use the term **society** to refer to a group of people with a common culture who occupy a particular territorial area, who have a sense of solidarity ("we-ness"), and who regard themselves as different than non-members. Sociologists have many typologies of types of societies and of social change. See Table 2.1. We now introduce you to some of these typologies of social change that are useful in understanding our social worlds.



Mechanical and Organic (Durkheim)

In *The Division of Labor in Society* (1895), Emile Durkheim distinguishes between society in the past and society today. He perceives these as two fundamentally different types of societies held together by differing types of solidarity or “social glue.” He terms these mechanical and organic solidarity. Durkheim views mechanical solidarity as characteristic of what we will come to know as folk societies (Redfield, 1947) and organic solidarity as more prevalent in highly differentiated and heterogeneous social orders.

According to Durkheim, societies characterized by subsistence-level existence, nomadicism, little economic surplus, and considerable homogeneity—including considerable homogeneity on the variables of class, status, and power—tend to be held together by **mechanical solidarity**. It is in these types of societies that humans have spent most of their existence during the past ten thousand or so years. In this type of society, what you believe, I believe, we all believe. While there is a lot of variation across these societies, within each there is considerable homogeneity of beliefs, attitudes, and values. Durkheim phrased this by saying that such societies are characterized by a **common conscience**. In these societies, people are held together by their similarities, by things they have in common.

In contrast, modern industrial societies are characterized by considerable economic surplus and by considerable heterogeneity on the variables of class, status, and power; and by a division of labor based on more than age, sex and ritual. The division of labor is highly developed. Among the constituent groups that comprise such a society, there tends to be considerable variation in language, religion, occupation, values, attitudes, family forms, cultural beliefs, cultural content, and so forth.

Durkheim perceived that as societies move from mechanical to organic, that the norms that guide and that make predictable human behavior may be in flux and unclear. People tend to perceive this lack of clarity as an uncomfortable state of arousal, which Durkheim calls **anomie**.

Durkheim states that modern societies are held together by **organic solidarity**, that is, by the division of labor and the interdependence of their members. The members need each other; they are held together by their interdependencies (their complementary needs and interests).

Durkheim, like Toennies, argues that there has been a long-term trend whereby mechanical solidarity tends to give way to organic solidarity in modern society (Durkheim, 1895). A point that Durkheim was trying to make is not that industrialization and urbanization destroy solidarity but that new forms of solidarity develop.

Primary and Secondary Groups (Cooley)

Charles Horton Cooley makes a somewhat analogous distinction with the concepts primary and secondary groups. According to Charles Horton Cooley (1909/1962) who introduced the term, a **primary group** has common standards of behavior or values and direct, frequent contact among its members (Theodorson and Theodorson, 1969: 178). Relations among members of a primary group are ends in themselves, not means to ends. Members of a primary group are interested in and know about a wide range of aspects of each others' lives and they have a broad range of mutual rights and duties. In other words, the relationship is a diffuse one. The “family and the small, old-fashioned neighborhood” in large cities or in small towns are examples of a primary group (Theodorson and Theodorson, 1969: 178). These groups are considered as primary because they have both the earliest and most profound influence on a person's socialization and development.

Primary groups are important in our daily lives, even in advanced industrial societies. Primary group relationships are an important source of social solidarity and support (e.g., Humphries, Conrad, et. al., 2009).

If a group is not primary, it is a **secondary group**. Secondary group members know each other only in a limited number of roles, and they relate to each other as means to an end outside of the relationship. For example, in a big city, the sales associate at a grocery store has a secondary relationship with the customers who come to the store, and vice versa. The customer wants to be able to walk out of the store with the loaf of bread, say, and the sales associate wants the appropriate amount of money to put in the drawer for the transaction. The interaction between customer and sales associate is a means to an end outside of the relationship; it is a secondary relationship.

Primordial and Nonprimordial Groups (Edward Shils)

American sociologist *Edward Shils* makes a distinction between **primordial** and **nonprimordial groups** (1957). Primordial groups are those that come first in our experience. Examples include territorial groups; racial groups, ethnic groups, the community in which we are born; the family into which we are born (which sociologists term the **family of orientation**), and so forth. If a group is not primordial, it is nonprimordial. An example of a nonprimordial group is any class that I teach at the university. For the most part, students enrolled in these courses didn't know each other before they walked into the classes. These classes, then, are nonprimordial groups. Boot camp in the military is another example. People who go through boot camp together do not know each other beforehand. They are strangers before they find themselves together in boot camp. At the beginning of boot camp (as well as at the end of boot camp), they are a nonprimordial group. During the summer of 2013, when Michael Patterson, a 43-year old white husband and father, dove into the water to save from drowning a 4-year old black girl who was a total stranger to him in Georgia, in the United States, it was an act of altruism across primordial lines; and, as such, made the national news (Victorian, 2013; Caulfield, 2013). Even in a core country in the twenty-first century, it is newsworthy when helping behavior occurs across primordial lines, which is testimony both to the enduring power of primordial ties and to the problematic nature of establishing and maintaining solidarity with non-primordial others.

Sociologists use the term **identification** to refer to the extent that a social actor's sense of self is rooted in group membership. Many social actors in an open modern industrial society have numerous, as well as a wide range of, identities and identifications. Other social actors have few, as well as a narrow or short range of, identities and identifications. To the extent that segments of our identity are rooted in and stem from group membership, we tend to support and to protect those identity groups in order to protect and to enhance our sense of self. The more important a particular identity is to us, and the more strongly attached we feel to an identity group, the more likely we are to sacrifice ourselves and others for that collectivity. Thus, social identities such as American, Muslim, Rwandan, Serb, Croatian, and Slovenian, represent identities for which people are prepared to die (Gourevitch, 1995; Gusfield, 1996). In modern societies many identity groups are nonprimordial groups (Gusfield, 1996).

Creating and sustaining solidarity among non-primordial others is always problematic (Blau, 1987; Popielarz and McPherson, 1995; Holy, 1996). Identification is one source of attachment to nonprimordial groups. **Association**, the reaching beyond primordial ties to establish common cause with others, is another.

A social definition of who we are in terms of the groups in which our identity based--e.g., our race, religion, gender, academic major, occupation, political party affiliation, and so forth--implies a definition of who we are not. The circle that includes "us" excludes "them" (Lindeman, 1997; Gamson, 1995).



In-Group and the Out-Group

Sociologists capture this dimension of social life with the distinction between in-group and out-group. An **in-group** is any group “whose membership has a strong sense of identification and loyalty, and a feeling of exclusiveness toward nonmembers” (Theodorson and Theodorson, 1969: 203). **Loyalty** refers to an attachment to a group as a group (Mayhew, 1971). An **out-group** refers to (1) a group “whose members are considered to be in opposition, or to be in some way alien, to an IN-GROUP” and (2) all nonmembers of an in-group; and to (Theodorson and Theodorson, 1969: 289).

In-group bias refers to the tendency for people who belong to an in-group to favor their own group, to evaluate their group more highly than do people who are not members (Myers, 2002; Gamson, 1995; Roy, 1994; Mullen, Brown, and Smith, 1992). Thus, if you are a member of a particular sorority or fraternity at your university, or if you live in a particular dormitory, you probably hold that group in higher estimation than do those who are not members. In-group bias is found even in socially disparaged or stigmatized groups.

In-group bias also is more likely if the in-group is small relative to the out-group (Mullen, 1991). In comparison with those whose in-group is the majority, to be a female at a conference attended mostly by males, to be a Native-American or African-American student on a campus attended mainly by white students of Anglo-Saxon Protestant descent, or to be a sixty-year old freshman is to feel one’s social identity and in-group membership more keenly.

Because part of our sense of self is based on our group memberships, perceiving our own groups as superior or as better aids us in feeling good about ourselves (Turner, 1984). Having a sense of “we-ness” based on group memberships, then, “feels good” (Myers, 2002).

It is noteworthy how little it can take to create in-groups, out-groups, and in-group bias (e.g., Goode, 1963: 203-269; Morris, 1973: 218-248). Thus, Max Weber wrote about the formation of in-groups, out-groups, and in-group bias as resulting simply because people ate together at the same soup kitchen (1958). Once formed, these groups can have profound, if subtle, effects, one of which is the tendency for members to underestimate differences within categories and to overestimate differences between categories (Myers, 2002). The sentiment “Women (or Men, Whites, Gays, African Americans, Muslims, etc.) are all alike” expresses these tendencies. “Boys will be boys, and girls will be girls,” also expresses the sentiment or perception that meaningful differences within a group do not exist and neither does any overlap between the categories specified. A tendency in the media to refer to someone as a **prolocutor** (spokesperson) of, say, the Muslim-American community or of women’s groups likewise expresses a sentiment that Muslim-Americans (or women) are all alike.

Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft (Toennies)

German Sociologist Ferdinand Toennies (1855-1936), whose ideas heavily influenced American symbolic interactionism, introduced the term **Gesellschaft** to describe modern societies. He said that Gesellschaft (i.e. modern industrial society) is founded on **artificial will**, which means that human relationships are founded on rational calculation rather than on spontaneous attraction. Other social actors are seen not as ends in themselves, but as means to ends outside the relationship. You say hello to Pat because you want to borrow her textbook. These also are segmental relationships, wherein one relates just to part of a person rather than relating to the entire person.

In contrast, **Gemeinschaft** (e.g., the types of societies that existed in “the good old days,” in hunting-and-gathering society, in mechanical society) is founded on what Toennies calls **natural will**, which means that relationships are founded on spontaneous attraction. In Gemeinschaft, relationships are warm, personal, direct, and diffuse (in that they are founded on contact between whole people rather than on contact between just parts of people). That is, in a Gemeinschaft, you know people in all their different roles. In a Gemeinschaft, you also relate to people as ends in themselves, not as means to an end. Thus, you say hello to Pat because you like her, because she is a community member, and because you find such interaction inherently meaningful. The interaction is a positive end or purpose for you. You do not interact with her simply because you want to borrow her textbook, twenty dollars until payday, or a cup of sugar. Gemeinschaft frequently is translated into English as “community.”

Toennies goes on to argue that there has been an evolutionary trend, whereby urbanization and industrialization are tearing down the fabric of Gemeinschaft, and are turning the world into an emotionally bleak Gesellschaft. Toennies argues that society is becoming an entity founded on brute force and material interest, whereas in Gemeinschaft, society had been founded on warm personal fellow feeling.

Folk, Urban-Agrarian, and Urban Industrial Society (Redfield)

Robert Redfield (1947) developed the concept of **folk society** as an ideal type to describe the type of societies in which humans have lived for most of their existence on earth. Like Durkheim and Toennies, Redfield perceived that there has been an historical trend whereby urbanization and social change impinge on an earlier type of society and change it into a very different type of society. Redfield perceived that *urban-agrarian society*, also known as feudal society, had fundamentally changed the character of folk society, and that much later on, urban-industrial society changed the character of urban-agrarian society. We now introduce you to folk and urban-agrarian (feudal) societies (Sjoberg, 1947, 1952, 1955, 1960).

FOLK SOCIETY

Folk societies are small, isolated, non-literate, and homogeneous. Each folk society tends to be relatively culturally homogenous--in terms of beliefs and values; in terms of the structure of their major social institutions like the family and religion; in terms of the distribution of class, status, and power. Additionally, a strong sense of solidarity (“we-ness”) exists at the community-wide level, and kinship (the family) is the basic category of experience. Behavior is traditional, spontaneous, personal, and relatively uncritical. The sacred prevails over the profane. In terms of technology, tools and weapons are made of wood, stone, bone, and other materials taken directly from nature. Folk societies still exist to this day. Examples include the aborigines of Australia, the pygmies and Bushmen (San) of Africa, and a number of remote Indian tribes in the Amazon basin of South America (Coimbra, 2004; Hill, et. al., 1985; Hurtado, et. al., 1985).

Folk societies are nomadic or semi-nomadic, and their members experience a subsistence-level existence. The reasons for nomadicism are simple. In hunting-and-gathering society (which is another name for folk society), the food gathering techniques normally reduce the supply of edible plants and animals in a given area below the level needed to maintain the human population, and so the group is compelled to move on. A sample of more than 70 hunting and gathering societies from the Human Relations Area Files indicates

that about 10 percent were able to maintain a settled, non nomadic life due especially abundant ecological conditions.

Population density is the number of people per unit of an area—for instance, the number of persons per square mile. The average population density in hunting and gathering societies is low, about one person per square mile (Petersen, 1969: 347). It was only after the “invention” of farming and the domestication of animals in early horticultural societies that human population density reached 5.7 people per square mile, which seems to be the minimum population density necessary for the stable transmission of technological innovation to occur (Powell, Shennan, and Thomas, 2009; Jones, 2011; Flinn, 2009; Joyce, 2009).

Population density increases with the level of societal complexity. Sociologists might phrase this by saying that there is a positive relationship between population density and societal complexity. Thus, while the average population density of hunting and gathering societies is 1.0 persons per square mile, the average population density in simple agricultural societies is between 26-64 persons per square mile (Petersen, 1969: 348).

Sociologists use the term **stratification** to refer to the persistent and inheritable unequal access to scarce-yet-widely-valued goods and services. Stratification is found to a greater or lesser extent in all human societies. It is sometimes called structured social inequality. Let us now take a brief look at stratification in folk societies (Nolan and Lenski, 2004; Ackerman, 2003; Lenski, 1984) and, later on in the chapter, we will take a brief look at stratification in urban-agrarian societies,

Stratification in Folk Society

If any single feature of the life of folk societies impresses itself on social scientists, it is the relative equality of folk societies, the relative equality that exists among the members of each folk society. Folk societies are the least stratified societies known to sociologists and anthropologists. The stratification that exists within folk societies is radically different than that which is found in urban-agrarian or in modern urban-industrial societies.

THE ECONOMIC DIMENSION In terms of the economic dimension, there is very little property in a folk society, and there tends to be an ethic of sharing. Food, for example, tends to be shared among the members of the society. There is little or no surplus in folk society, and a nomadic way of life works against the accumulation of material possessions, particularly when everything needs to be carried on one's back. When the frequency of moves is reduced, it is much easier to accumulate possessions of every kind.

There often is some limited inequality in access to economic goods, with certain segments of the population faring a bit better than others. For example, in Andamanese society, the old men enjoy some advantage over the younger. Among the Siriono, the senior wife in a polygynous family and her children are reported to fare somewhat better than the junior wife and her dependent children; and in most folk societies, males fare better than females. These differences, however, represent little more than secondary variations on the basic theme of substantial equality.

POWER As with economic goods, so too with power. The headman's position tends to be part-time. The headman or chief tends to engage in the same daily activities as the other males, since productivity is at the subsistence level and the headman cannot be spared from the routine tasks of production. The limited power a headman has tends to be based on persuasion and consent.

Government by coercion is not an option in traditional folk societies. The leader of the group is not supported by a cadre of specialists trained in the arts of violence who are dependent on his favor and therefore motivated to follow his orders. Rather, all males tend to be trained and equipped for fighting and the same weapons and training are available to all. Dissatisfied followers may always desert their leader and attach themselves to another band.

Government in traditional folk societies is by persuasion. One manifestation of this is the practice of government by general council. Most ethnographic reports from traditional folk societies contain some reference to government by council.

Even in those traditional folk societies that are governed by a headman, his powers are usually quite limited. They seldom extend beyond the bounds of his or her own band. Time and again we read in the scholarly literature that the headman holds her/his place only so long as she/he gives satisfaction. If the people are dissatisfied, the headman is quickly replaced. The upshot is that power is relatively equitably distributed in folk societies.

PRESTIGE In contrast to the economic and status dimensions, prestige tends to be relatively unequally distributed in folk communities, particularly on the bases of age and sex. With regard to age, the old tend to have prestige because they are the receptacles of cultural tradition. With regard to sex, males tend to be more highly honored than females. Other bases of prestige include people viewed as endowed with supernatural powers and people with certain valued personal qualities—like skill in hunting and warfare, generosity and kindness, and freedom from bad temper.

Regarding the interrelationships among class, status, and power in traditional folk societies, it is worth noting that prestige tends to go hand in hand with political influence. Prestige leads to political influence in folk communities.

SOCIAL MOBILITY IN FOLK SOCIETIES We begin our inquiry into the amounts and types of social mobility possible in folk society by looking at case studies of two important positions in folk society generally—that of chief and that of shaman (priest).

Chieftainship One of the best descriptions of the position of a typical chief in folk society has been written by American anthropologist Allan Holmberg (1950: 59-60) over half a century ago when he was describing the Siriono, a South American Indian people living in the dense, tropical forests of eastern Bolivia. Holmberg tells us that presiding over every band of Siriono is a chief (ererékwa), who, nominally, is the highest official of the group. However, the extent of his authority depends almost entirely upon his qualities as a leader. There is no obligation to obey the orders of the chief, no punishment for failing to do so. Unless the chief is a member of one's immediate family, little attention is paid to what is said by a chief. To maintain prestige, a chief "must fulfill, in a superior fashion, those obligations required of everyone else" (Holmberg, 1950: 59-60).

Holmberg reminds us that the prerogatives of chieftainship are few. As a mark of status, a chief always has more than one wife. Additionally, he has the right to occupy, with his immediate family, the center of the house. Other than those prerogatives, the chief has to do all the things that other men of his tribe must do. For instance, he must make his own bows and arrows as well as his other tools; he must hunt, fish, plant gardens, and collect. He makes suggestions as to migrations, hunting trips, and so forth; but his suggestions are not always followed. Holmberg found that in general, chiefs fare better than other members of the band. Why? Because they are the best hunters; they know more about things and are able to do them better than

anyone else. From the point of view of exchange theory, then, chiefs are in a better position than most to reciprocate for any favors done them by members of the band.

The foregoing tells us that personal qualities are tremendously important in Siriono society, and the same is true of folk societies generally. If a chief is better than others at important tasks, he/she fares somewhat better than others, but not otherwise.

In some folk communities, the position of chief offers special advantage, though only for a person of special abilities. Spencer and Gillen (1927) report that the position of chief could provide the basis of considerable power among the Arunta of Australia, although they stress that this was true only for an able person. Special advantage, then, was contingent upon performance.

Shaman The position of shaman (priest, healer) tends to be associated with prestige, influence, and special perquisites in folk societies. Among the Northern Maidu Indians of California this office was not inherited, although in other folk societies it sometimes is. However, the point is that, inherited or not, the benefits of the position go only to those who can prove their rights to them. Shamans are constantly on trial, as it were, and those who are unable to demonstrate their competence are not likely to benefit greatly. In addition to the usual tests of their powers in the case of illness, some folk societies provide institutionalized tests that pit shaman against shaman to see whose powers are the greatest. For instance, the Northern Maidu or California held an annual dance to which all shamans were invited. At this dance, each shaman attempted to overcome the others by means of magic. The dance continued until only one shaman was left standing, and that person was declared the foremost shaman of all. Undoubtedly, those who were eliminated early suffered a loss of status, and with it, most of the benefits of their position.

Summary

In folk societies, class, status, and power are largely a function of personal abilities. Inheritance provides opportunity only. To be of value to the individual, confirming actions are required; and where these are lacking, the possession of an office is of little benefit. In other words, there is little transmission of advantage from one generation to the next, and lots of inter-generational social mobility is possible in folk societies.

Folk societies lack certain mechanisms that facilitate the transmission of advantage across generational lines. First, there is little wealth, little surplus, and wealth is one of the best means for passing advantage from one generation to the next. Second, there are no hereditary statuses with established prerogatives that accrue to the incumbent regardless of ability. Third, folk communities do not have class-differentiated subgroups. More highly differentiated societies, including urban-agrarian societies have well defined social classes, but folk societies do not.

Socialization is the process whereby we learn roles and norms, develop the capacity to conform to them, and develop a sense of self. The self consists of our answers to the question, "Who am I?" In folk societies, the opportunities for differential socialization on the basis of class are limited.

The foregoing discussion indicates that the rate of intergenerational mobility is high in folk societies. There is little to prevent the talented child of an untalented parent from rising to a position of influence and leadership. Similarly, there is little to prevent the untalented child of a talented parent from falling from a position of leadership. The rates of intra-generational mobility are also high in folk societies.

For thousands of years people lived in the kinds of communities that we have designated as folk society. We now examine the social forces that led to the demise of folk society and the emergence of a new kind of society.

THE DEATH OF FOLK SOCIETY: THE RISE OF THE CITY

There are folk societies, essentially folk societies that, because of the especially abundant ecological conditions in which they are situated, have surplus; but they do not develop urbanity as a result of that surplus. Rather, they consume the surplus, they use it up. A good example of this are the Indians on a narrow strip of the Pacific coast in the American Northwest, the Kwakiutl. Our knowledge of the Kwakiutl is fairly extensive and is largely derived from Ruth Benedict's classic work, *Patterns of Culture* (1934).

The Kwakiutl had a lot of surplus because the Northwest coast was an abundant land, full of fish, acorns, and other good things to eat. Their considerable surplus was expended in a massive system of status rivalry known as **potlatch**. Potlatch is a custom in which a ceremonial feast is held at which people gain prestige by giving away or destroying wealth or property. The more goods a person gave away or destroyed, the greater was her or his prestige. People competed, as it were, to outdo their rivals. At potlatch, one person might say, "I am so rich, I can burn up, right here in front of you, *five* Kwakiutl blankets." And that person would burn them up. Another person would say, "You think *that's* rich? I can burn up, right here in front of you, *ten* Kwakiutl blankets." And that person would burn them up. And so it would go. This was conspicuous consumption or "Keeping up with the Joneses" in the most literal sense.

Potlatch is not unique to the Kwakiutl. For instance, I have a Greek American friend who is married to an Italian-American. Each holiday season my friend has the extended family over for what she affectionately terms the family potlatch. Many other Americans, who may not use the term potlatch to describe their behaviors, do likewise on various occasions.

The point here is that among the Kwakiutl, the surplus was not socially mobilized so as to form urban settlement. Instead, it was expended, depleted. The more general point is that it takes social organization, social discipline, to mobilize and to harness the surplus to form urban settlement.

Features of Social Life That Emerge with the City

As a form of human settlement, the city is built on surplus. The city cannot exist without forms of social organization that first create and then harness enough surplus to support a non-agrarian population. Once surplus is achieved, social organization can turn that surplus into civilization, into a city. Standard twentieth-century sociological texts on the city (e.g., Sjoberg, 1960) cite as the characteristics of the city the same set of criteria developed by British archaeologist V. Gordon Childe (1952, 1956, 1957, 1972, 1983; Mayhew, 1970) as a definition of civilization.

The ten features of social life that emerge with the rise of the city, as suggested by V. Gordon Childe are these:

- (1) **FULL-TIME SPECIALISTS:** No longer is everybody tied directly to the land. Instead, you get full-time specialists in things other than making a living from agriculture.



- (2) **LARGE, DENSE POPULATIONS** Large numbers of persons can live in a small territorial area. By large I mean 5,000 people living on twenty acres. Folk societies could not support 5,000 people living on twenty acres, but pre-industrial cities can.
- (3) **ART PRODUCED BY FULL-TIME SPECIALISTS** One of the sorts of full-time specialization that develops are the arts.
- (4) **WRITING AND NUMERICAL NOTATION** Writing and numerical notation kept track, for instance, of how much of whose grain was being stored in which priestly granary.
- (5) **EXACT AND PREDICTIVE SCIENCES**
- (6) **TAXATION** The rise of an urban elite means the rise of taxation, the decline of folk society, the rise of the city. None of this would be possible without taxation.
- (7) **FORMATION OF THE STATE** The **state** is a territorial entity controlled by a government and inhabited by a population (Goldstein and Pevehouse, 2010: 10). The state, as Max Weber points out, is a form of political association and a rational institutional order that is the product of social evolution and it monopolizes the legitimate use of violence (Weber, 1968: 904-905). As such, it has certain characteristics, which include the following: the state (a) has a defined, organized government; (b) it has a defined territory—i.e., it has geographical boundaries; (c) it has a more or less permanent population; (d) it possesses **sovereignty**. Sovereignty is a state's right, at least in principle, to do whatever it wants within its own territory. According to the principle of sovereignty, states are separate, autonomous, and answer to no higher authority. The sovereignty principle means that states are not to interfere in the internal affairs of other states. (Goldstein and Pevehouse, 2010: 41). In short, the sovereignty principle means that states are free from external control. Also, (e), states are recognized by other governments.

Max Weber (1968:905) reminds us that the basic functions of the state are the following:

- the enactment of law (legislative function);
- the protection of personal safety and public order (the police function)—the police function is directed against disturbers of internal order;
- the protection of vested rights (the function of the administration of justice);
- the cultivation of hygienic, educational, social-welfare, and other cultural interests (the various branches of governmental administration); and
- organized and armed protection against outside attack (military administration function).

- (8) **ERECTION OF MONUMENTAL PUBLIC BUILDINGS**
- (9) **RISE OF FOREIGN TRADE**
- (10) **EMERGENCE OF A CLASS STRUCTURE**

Those ten things are the characteristics of social life that emerge with the city as a form of human habitation. The thrust of the list is that it is not just technology, it is not just surplus, that makes the city as a form of human habitation possible. The emergence of the city as a form of human settlement is a matter of re-organizing the social life of the community in fundamental ways.

We now look at the development of the earliest cities of which archaeologists have record, the birth of the cities in Mesopotamia and Sumer, in the Fertile Crescent formed by the flood plains of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, which presently is situated in the state of Iraq.

Rise of the Earliest Sumerian Cities

The earliest cities were built around 3,500 B.C. when people learned the techniques of irrigation, the techniques of plow-based agriculture on irrigated ground. Before the rise of the city along the banks of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, there were fairly sedentary folk societies located along those same banks, due to the annual floods of the great rivers which carried rich alluvial soil into the mighty valley, with the result that the soil did not wear out, even in the face of digging-stick food-growing technology.

The floods were not an unmixed blessing. Besides depositing the silt into the valley, the floods also deposited a lot of the new silt where residents did not want it—on the tops of their houses, for instance, and killed people and other life forms. After the flood waters abated and the land was dry enough to plow, people would plant their crops; but then, it was not likely to rain anymore, so the crops grow and the sun would continue to shine and a lot of the crops would wither from lack of water.

Realizing the potentialities of the rich alluvial soil, in short, meant *irrigation* and *flood control*. These could not be accomplished on an every-person-for-him/herself basis. Irrigation and flood control meant community tactics—the investment of a surplus in dams, conduits, ditches, floodgates, and so forth. Irrigation and flood control required a degree of community cooperation, social discipline, and coordination beyond that found in folk society.

The problem in getting community coordination, cooperation, and discipline going was precisely this: the way the average folk-society citizen wanted to utilize surplus time. If the average folk-society citizen living in a fairly abundant floodplain could get a big enough crop by working only, say, six hours a day on the crop, that's all she/he would work. The rest of the time would be spent chatting with neighbors, looking at the sunset. So, getting the irrigation and flood-control systems built and maintained required a fundamental transformation in community organization and this change in community organization was tantamount to the death of folk society.

This transformation of folk society into an urban-agrarian society, this change in community organization, this building of irrigation and flood-control systems, was conducted, as nearly as we can now reconstruct, under priestly aegis, under priestly discipline (Nolan and Lenski, 2004; Gluick, 1986; Childe, 1983; Lenski, 1966). The priests filled the role of social disciplinarians, and the role of social disciplinarian was crucial to the emergence of urban-agrarian society, to the emergence of the city, to the demise of folk society. It was the priests, as the representatives of the gods, who would say, “Hey, you can't just work six hours a day on your crops and then sit around and chat with family and neighbors. No, you need to work those six hours each day on your crops, like you're doing now, and then you must work six hours a day out there digging the ditches, putting up the dams, building the conduits, weeding the conduits, repairing the conduits, and so forth. And remember, this is not my idea; it's the gods' idea.” Priests, with priestly

authority, first created and then supervised the irrigation system. The earliest Sumerian cities were known as temple communities.

Once the priests had harnessed, had mobilized the surplus into dams, conduits, and flood control, productivity increased tremendously, as did the surplus. It was the priests who creamed the top off of this immensely increased agricultural surplus via taxation. Then the priests in turn used that surplus to support themselves as priests. They used the surplus to support a class of artisans who created luxuries, temples, jewelry and all the other frou-frou for the priestly urban elite. It was the priests who would say, “Hey, you cannot eat up all the grain right now. We must save some of it in the priestly granaries for the people working on the dams.” So, a generous portion of agricultural production went into the priestly granary to support the priests; and, as productivity increased, to support a large group of artisans for the priestly household as well as to support a myriad of other specialists, including literary, artistic, military, administrative, and scientific specialists.

This whole complex was supported by religion, by a complex religious belief system. Many religions have explanations of how the world got here and of how human beings got here. While these religious explanations have many names, one secular term for them is **creation myths**.

THE SUMERIAN CREATION MYTH The Sumerian creation myth goes like this (Gluck, 1986): Sumerian theology is built on the premise that human beings were created so that the gods might be relieved of the burden of working for a living. The gods were sitting around one day, working, and one god said to the other gods: “Golly, it’s tough to work. I hate to work, in fact. Don’t you?” The other gods concurred and said, “Work is burdensome, bad for the digestive system, hard on the back, and generally time consuming.” One of the gods had a better idea, a true flash of inspiration: “Hey, I have a better idea, a true flash of inspiration. Let’s create people, and people can do the work and we’ll just sit here. We’ll let some of the people be priests, and the priests will be the intermediaries between the people and us, the gods. The priests will collect all the yummys of life for us, on our behalf.” The other gods thought that was a swell idea. So, they made human beings, and they made some of the human beings priests, and then the priests proceed to collect the surplus, not on their own behalf, you see, but on behalf of the gods.

That’s one function of religion here, to legitimate the whole structure of social discipline, of social domination, to make this structure meaningful to the dominated. So, if a peasant is out there digging the conduits, weeding the irrigation system, pulling a plow, or paying over the lion’s share of their crop as taxes, and asks the question, “Why am I doing this? It’s awful. It’s burdensome, bad for the digestive system, hard on the back, and generally time consuming. Why am I doing this? Ah, yes! It’s my purpose for existence. The gods put me on earth to do this for them. I thank the gods that I can be alive so that I can do this for them.”

There is some evidence that religious beliefs serve this function of justifying authority and domination in societies generally and in Ancient Mesopotamia and Sumer specifically, whatever other functions they serve and whatever other meanings they also have for their participants. Marxian conflict theory would identify the justification of domination as one of the manifest functions of religion, and structural functionalism could view this as a latent function.

Later, in Sumer, secular kingship grew up alongside priestly rule. It is very important when that happens, because once secular kingship was created, it was possible for kings to develop sufficient military force to spread their domains outward from the central city—to spread their control and political domination over larger and larger territorial areas. Ecologically inclined sociologists might say, “Hey, that’s what in effect has been happening ever since: that cities, once born, have more surplus, more class, more clout, and it

extends its power and influence out over larger and larger territorial areas until there's no long such a thing left as folk society, really." Folk societies, as we have seen, were independent. But the representatives of urban dominance just have to enter a folk community and say, "Welcome to our kingdom. You're working for us now." At that point in time, a folk community is transformed into something different, a peasant society, because they have been transformed into dependent parts of a larger system, and that transforms the character of social life. The character of social life in the peasant village is different in some definable ways.

The foregoing analysis of the rise of the city as a form of human habitation is important because it demonstrates that, from a sociological perspective, the rise of the city is not just a matter of technology, it is not just a matter of "Oh, I know, the plow." It was a matter of transforming independent folk-society citizens into **peasants**, agricultural workers tied to and dominated by an urban elite. The priests were the first urban elites. The emergence of the city was a matter of developing and implementing systems of social discipline, of social control, and of creating a division of labor extending far beyond that based on age, sex, and ritual found in folk societies.

URBAN-AGRARIAN SOCIETY

Urban-agrarian society is not a folk society writ large. A folk society was populated entirely by folk, independent tribespersons, but in urban-agrarian society the folk have been transformed into peasants, agricultural laborers tied to and dominated by an urban elite. A prime difference between folk and urban-agrarian society (feudal society) is that an urban-agrarian society is characterized by the domination of a small urban elite over the peasant rural masses.

Urban-agrarian or feudal society consists of two main parts, the city, in which only a small percent of the total population lives, and the villages in the rural hinterland.

The Peasant Village

The major component of urban-agrarian society, besides the pre-industrial city, is the peasant village. The peasant village has similarities with folk community. First, the villages are small. Second, relations between villagers tend to be face-to-face, very personal, emotional in character, and traditional. Third, kinship is an extremely important organizing principle within the village.

THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE PEASANT VILLAGE AND FOLK SOCIETY The fundamental difference between the peasant village and the folk society is that the peasant village is not isolated. It is not independent; it is not autonomous. When we talking about differences between a peasant village and folk society, we are talking about the ways in which position in a larger network alters the conditions of life for the agricultural worker.

First, production is no longer just for local consumption.

In folk society, production was essentially for local consumption, but in peasant society, representatives of the urban center siphon off a large part of what the peasant agricultural village produces—be these representatives of the church, state, the landlords, the mortgage holders, or a variety of other elements of the larger society. So, that is the first difference—the siphoning off of a part of the product of the group to support urban life and all its paraphernalia. This is associated with the second thing, new attitudes towards work.



Work comes to mean a somewhat different thing to the agricultural laborer dominated by an urban elite than it had meant to the independent folk citizen. Similarities are still there, of course: There is still usually a love of the land. There is still an attitude toward work as worthwhile and as important element of the good life. And hard work is still valued for its own sake. The difference is that there is a rationalization in posture toward work, a rationalization in attitudes toward work. Part and parcel of the fact that you have to get by in face of the constant intrusion upon your world by the forces of the larger society that are coming in to siphon off their shares, is that you want to make sure that “their share” is as little as possible. One way that you can make sure that their share is as little as possible is through careful, precise accounting devices, i.e., through a careful rational calculation of your economic situation. The peasant community goes a long way—to many urban dwellers, a surprisingly long way—towards a rational, utilitarian, and calculating attitude toward work (Friedl, 1962).

A third factor setting off the peasant community from folk society is the limited scope of solidarity. It no longer is society-wide. Relations with the dominant urban center also mean another transformation of rural life, namely the lack of solidarity at the society-wide level. The solidarity of the urban-agrarian society tends to be limited to its subunits—to its constituent castes, guilds, families, occupational groups, ethnic groups, and villages.

The lack of solidarity at the society-wide level is a crucial feature of urban-agrarian society. The solidarity of the small peasant village remains; it has the same sort of solidarity that the folk society has. And the solidarity of the subsectors of the pre-industrial city, to be discussed shortly, remains. The small ethnically homogenous quarters of the city are little microcosms of folk community. But the solidarity of the urban-agrarian society as a whole is lacking. We might express this by saying that a sense of “nationhood” is lacking.

In feudal society, the sense of nationhood does not develop as rapidly as the growth of actual, factual, raw urban domination. In fact, there is more solidarity between the elites of neighboring feudal societies than there is between the peasants and the elites within a particular feudal society.

This is understandable if we keep in mind three things, the first of which is conquest. To a large extent, the boundaries of urban-agrarian society are drawn largely by raw conquest, and conquest, in and of itself, does not automatically create bonds of solidarity between the “conquered” and those who dominate them. Second, the urban center means that new local roles are created in the rural peasant village that did not exist before in the folk society—the tax collector, the local official of the central government, perhaps the traveling merchant or local priest. These functionaries do not usually live in your village; they come occasionally to see how things are going. These functionaries are *in* your community, but not *of* it. They are strangers who relate to the community from the outside. They may be necessary and the peasants may even accept them to a certain extent, but they still are not full-fledged members of the community. They are strangers who have a leg in each world. Thirdly, there is the bandit problem. One of the historic bases of treaties between local villages and the central urban government is that peasants feel that the central government does have a function, and that function is the protection of the village from piracy, protection from bandits. Because another feature of urban-agrarian society is that there is a high level of banditry, a level of banditry that is far higher than that characteristic even of the modern-day United States. The high level of banditry comes about as a consequence of the fact that the central governments in urban-agrarian societies are strong enough to collect the surplus (taxes) from the local villages but not strong enough thoroughly to control with raw power the entire territorial area. Bandits sweep down from the hills into the villages and take a big share of the surplus of the village. Banditry, predation on local villages by bandits, is common. So, an important basis for the loyalty of the village to the central government, then, is the capacity of the central government to protect the village from bandits. When that capacity breaks down, so too does the precarious

loyalty of the village to the urban center. These three considerations are important because they indicate the limited scope of peasant loyalty.

Until quite recently, the average person in the world lived in a peasant village (United Nations, 2004; World Population News Service POPLINE, May-June 2004: 1-2). Quite remarkably, the United Nations' Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific reports that in 2008, for the first time in human history, more people were living in cities than in rural areas (United Nations, 2004: 31).

In summary, the solidarity of urban-agrarian society tends to be limited to its subsectors—to its constituent castes, guilds, ethnic groups, tribes, and villages.

The Pre-Industrial City

As the attentive reader will recall, urban-agrarian society has two main parts, the pre-industrial city and the rural peasant masses who lived the rural hinterland in villages, and the pre-industrial city that dominated them. **Pre-industrial cities** are all cities existing within a non-industrial social order.

The pre-industrial city never contained more than a small percent of the total population of urban-agrarian society. Gideon Sjoberg (1960) indicates, for example, that in Russia from late seventeenth through the eighteenth century, not more than 3 percent of the population lived in cities; and for all the agrarian societies of the world, Sjoberg's estimates are that the urban sector never constituted more 10 percent of the population, and often it was much less.

WHO LIVED IN THE CITY? A variety of types of persons lived in the city, including the ruler and the ruling or governing class. The ruling or governing class was urban. To be part of the ruling class was to possess the right to share in the economic surplus produced by the peasant masses and urban artisans. The ruling and governing classes often included the upper ranks of the governmental, religious, and educational bureaucracies as well as some merchants and the highest military leaders. The nobility and other privileged classes in the cities often maintained auxiliary homes or estates in the countryside as symbols of high status, to which they repaired periodically, in an attempt to escape an outbreak of disease or, more frequently, for purposes of pleasure or simply to try to escape from the summer heat.

Some merchants also lived in the city, as did some artisans who made accoutrements for the elite, and a fairly large “retainer class”—household servants, a small army of literate clerks, petty officials and tax collectors, and even some professional soldiers who served the ruler and governing class.

Thus, not everyone who lived in the pre-industrial city was of the ruling class. In fact, the ruling class was only about two percent of the total population (Sjoberg, 1960), and they were urban. All those who lived in the city formed, at most, ten percent of the total population. This tiny urban sector, and especially the two percent that was the ruling class, dominated the other 90 percent of the population politically, economically, religiously, and culturally. These are the most highly stratified societies known to social scientists, and this is the case with regard to the dimensions of class, status, and power.

Characteristics that Pre-Industrial Cities Have in Common

The term “pre-industrial city” refers to cities past and present. They exist and have existed in a variety of forms. Not only are there cultural differences, there also are differences in their internal organization and in



the functions that pre-industrial cities have. Some were large trading centers, others were largely political centers; some had primarily religious and symbolic functions (e.g. Avignon in the 14th and 15th centuries). When we say “a variety of forms,” we also mean that colonialism, industrialization, and all the other effects of the modern world have affected many present-day pre-industrial cities. So, some pre-industrial cities today—perhaps most—are in a process of change to a modern industrial city. So, there is an enormous amount of variation between one pre-industrial city and another, or there can be.

But, despite the differences between trading centers, political capitals, religious centers, and cities in transition, there are certain basic similarities among pre-industrial cities. These similarities are to be understood in opposition to the character of urban life in a modern industrial city. We now turn to a discussion of the characteristics that pre-industrial cities have in common, which also are characteristics that distinguish them from modern industrial cities, and that underscore their traditional or “folk” character of the pre-industrial city. These are basically seven in number.

1. **RIGID SOCIAL SEGREGATION** In the pre-industrial city there is rigid social segregation. The diverse occupational and ethnic groups of the city have relatively little communication with each other. They live in their own separate quarters of the city, often have their own language, marry within their own groups, have their own institutions of education and socialization. There is no such thing, for example, as a national school system in which everybody gets a common education. A person living in a pre-industrial city tends not even to think of him/herself as a citizen of that particular city but rather as a member of an occupational group or ethnic solidary group which simply happens to be located in that urban location.
2. **CASTE** A **caste** is a type of group or collectivity that is defined by means of entrée and egress, by how one gets into the group and out of it. In a caste, one gets into it by being born into it and one gets out of it by death. Caste, then, refers to the tremendous importance of birth and kinship in making a person a member of one or another of the groups of the larger community. Caste is a very prominent feature of the pre-industrial city and of urban-agrarian society.
3. **SMALL LITERATE ELITE** At the top of the caste structure is a very small literate elite. The small literate elite is largely hereditary, and it controls all of the major social institutions in the society. They have their own norms, manners, and customs, and they often speak a different language, a language that is not the indigenous language of the populous. There is little communication between this group and the other sectors of the community.
4. **HANDICRAFT INDUSTRY** Within one’s occupational specialization, within one’s guild, one learns a craft. One learns to make a whole product from end to end. The name for this is handicraft industry, and it is the economic foundation of the pre-industrial city—apart from its living on the agricultural surplus that is skimmed off the peasants and used by the literate elite.
5. **NORMS ARE TRADITIONAL, CUSTOMARY, SACRED** The norms of the pre-industrial city tend to be traditional, customary, and sacred. Sacred doctrines and traditional codes of behavior define one’s place in life; they also legitimize authority. The norms and symbols of legitimacy of authority and power in society are encased in religious and sacred doctrines.

6. **RIGID DIVISION OF LABOR BY AGE, SEX, KINSHIP** There is a rigid division of labor by age, sex, and kinship which continues to be important within the subcommunities of the city. The bonds of kinship continue to be the primary focus of solidarity and loyalty within the subgroups of the city.
7. **RELATIVELY LOW STATUS OF SPECIALIZATION IN TRADE** The seventh feature of the pre-industrial city is the relatively low status of specialization in trade. The merchant's guild is of relatively low status, in comparison with the political and religious elites, and its activities tend to be firmly controlled by the political and economic elites. Traders are not, for the most part, members of the elite even if they are wealthy.

Innovation and the Pre-Industrial City

As mentioned, the pre-industrial city is not a larger folk society. In fact, the pre-industrial city has characteristics in common with the modern industrial city. We now turn to a discussion of four characteristics that pre-industrial cities tend to share with modern industrial cities.

1. **NEW IDEAS** No institutions of insulation—guilds, caste, language barriers—can prevent contact altogether; and from contact comes recognition of diversity and hence new ideas. People become aware that there are different ways of life. And, as we discuss immediately below, these new ideas come to take on a new, a critical, character.
2. **RISE OF CRITICAL THOUGHT** Initially, the role of the literate class was the formalization and elaboration of the sacred traditions, which in folk societies had been oral in character. Initially, the literate class of scribes had no critical function in society. But, once you have a specialized priesthood with generations of hard work at thinking, in a motley array of diverse peoples and groups all living together, one can find the rise of critical thought, and critical thought can produce demands for change. And, in the pre-industrial city there is a social use, a political use for critical philosophy, perhaps for the first time.
3. **STRUCTURED CONFLICT** Regular conflict is old—conflict of one person with another person, conflict of one tribe with another tribe. In “regular conflict” what we have is conflict between similar units over the rights to particular objects. For example, tribes fight with other tribes over which land belongs to whom; clan fights with clan over real or supposed injuries or insults that members of the clan gave to each other; boys fight with boys over who won a game.

In contrast, structured conflict within a community is new and it comes with the rise of urbanism. In cities, structures conflict, institutions conflict. You also get variable bases of power. Power rests on the control of resources. Once you have differentiated control over different types of resources, you have created different power bases in the society, fundamentally different power bases. So, it is no longer tribe against tribe. It's a new kind of conflict where the two sides are resting their power on fundamentally different resources. Various groups with different bases of power come



to fight over where they should fit in the status hierarchy—priestly power conflicts with secular power, the archbishop fights with the king, the emperor fights with the pope, the landed aristocracy fights with the military or with the rising merchant classes. Indeed, the history of urban-agrarian society is largely the history of structured conflict. As the differentiated groups struggle for position, they make alliances with other elements of the population—with the rising merchant guilds, the merchant classes, or with the emerging proletariat, for example. You get a new phenomenon in the world, political history, and that is the next point.

4. **POLITICAL HISTORY** Political history, in the sense of a set of changing alliances between the varying power bases in a society, is born. Hence, with the city also emerges one of the central concerns of sociology, depicting the structure of conflict. It is important to recognize that the urban agrarian social order and the pre-industrial city are not folk societies writ large. It is true that pre-industrial cities have some of the sacredness and some of the traditional characteristics of a folk society, and that in its separate sub-segments a remnant of the folk orientation to the world remains. At the same time it is not like the folk society because of high levels of diversity and heterogeneity in the cities and because of the conflict, both structural and ideological, that arise. It is also not like the folk society because of the distribution of class, status, and power.

Let us now take a brief look at stratification in urban-agrarian societies.

Stratification in Urban-Agrarian Societies

If any single feature of stratification in urban-agrarian impresses itself on social scientists, it is the great inequality that exists among the members of each urban-agrarian society on whatever dimension or aspect of stratification you choose to consider—e.g., stratification on the basis of sex, race, ethnicity, class, power, status, religion, or caste. Urban-agrarian societies are the most highly stratified societies known to sociologists, anthropologists, and archaeologists. They are the most unequal societies known to those who study human societies.

In urban-agrarian societies, ascription becomes an important mechanism for allocating people to social positions. Sociologists say that a position is attained by **ascription** and that a position is **ascribed** to the extent that one gets that position through no efforts of his or her own. Frequent bases of ascription include age, sex, social class, race, and ethnicity, and religious affiliation. See Box 2.1. Ascription is seen in stark form in caste societies, which are nearly purely ascriptive stratification systems.

DHIMMITUDE AND URBAN-AGRARIAN SOCIETY

BOX 2.1

In terms of the distribution of class, status, and power, urban agrarian societies are the most highly stratified societies known to social scientists. This stark and highly structured inequality has many manifestations, just one of which is dhimmitude. Let us briefly introduce several concepts, a basic understanding of which will help to make this exposition on dhimmitude in urban-agrarian society more understandable and will situate it within a larger landscape of intellectual thought and history.

The word dhimmitude comes from “dhimmi,” an Arabic word literally meaning “protected.” The Arabic noun “*dhimma*” translates into English as a treaty or pact of protection. The followers of Islam are called Muslims and their Prophet is Muhammad, who was born in Mecca in the year 570. Muhammad organized Muslims into a community, and the Muslim community is known as the *umma*. The Muslim holy book is the Qur’an. Islamic law is known as shari’a. The Islamic theological concept of *jihad*, the holy war against non-Muslims, is richly textured and multifaceted, and it establishes a single pattern of relations between Muslims and non-Muslims and is central to their relationship. Furthermore, jihad encapsulates the Islamic worldview of war and peace and is also a specialized domain of Islamic theology and religion.

“People of the book” is a theological term, primarily related to Islam, describing people who, according to the Qur’an, received scriptures revealed to them by God prior to the time of Muhammad. Jews and Christians are referred to as “people of the book.” In a state ruled by shari’a, dhimmi was the name applied by the Muslim conquerors to an indigenous non-Muslim (infidel) who was both “people of the book” and who, without fighting, submitted to the Islamic armies via a treaty or pact of protection and who paid the *jizya*, an annual poll tax or tribute. Dhimmis had fewer social and legal rights than Muslims, but more rights than other non-Muslim religious subjects who were treated more harshly (Stillman, 1979; Lewis, 1984).

For over a millennium (638-1683), Islamic conquests expanded over vast territories in Africa, Europe, and Asia. In this process, the Muslim empire incorporated numerous and varied peoples who had their own religion, culture, language and civilization. For centuries, “people of the book” were the great majority of the population in many of these Islamic lands. As such, they were an important source of tax revenue for the *umma*, as the amount of tax paid by dhimmis in the form of *jizya* was twice the amount of *zakat* tax paid by the Muslims (Ye’or, 2002). Although these peoples differed from each other and from their Muslim conquerors in many ways, they were ruled by the same type of laws based on shari’a. This similarity has created a civilization and a type of stratification that was developed and implemented over the centuries among the people of the book who lived in lands vanquished by jihad war and governed by shari’a law. It is this civilization and this system of stratification which is called dhimmitude (Ye’or, 2002b).

Characteristics of Dhimmitude

People of the book who submitted to the Islamic armies without fighting were granted a pledge of security for their life and possessions as well as relative self-autonomous administration and limited religious rights. These rights were subject to two conditions: the annual payment the *jizya*, a tribute or poll tax paid with humiliation by the dhimmi



and submission to the provisions of Islamic law. The jizya is a per capita tax levied on the state's able-bodied non-Muslim males of military age (Kennedy, 2004) who, as people of the book, submitted without fighting in a jihad war. Although the jizya was an annual tax, non-Muslims were allowed to pay it in monthly installments (Hunter and Malik, 2005). Failure to pay the jizya is considered by Islamic jurists to constitute a rupture of the dhimma, which automatically both restores to the dhimmi the status of being an unsubmitted infidel and to the umma its initial rights of war—to kill and to dispossess the dhimmi or to expel him (Ye'or, 2002). The pact of protection also is ruptured if the dhimmis rebel against Islamic law, entice a Muslim from his faith, harm a Muslim or his property, give allegiance to a non-Muslim state, or commit blasphemy (Al Mawardi, 2000). Blasphemy, whether by dhimmi or Muslim, was severely punished. In his classic treatise on the principles of Islamic governance, the 10th century Shaf'i scholar Al-Mawardi considered blasphemy a capital crime (Al Mawardi, 2000). The definition of blasphemy included denial of the prophethood of Muhammad, disrespectful references to Islam, and defamation of Muslim holy texts.

The rules governing the pact of protection between the umma and dhimmis were mostly established from the eighth to the ninth centuries by the founders of the four schools of Islamic law and these rules set the pattern of the Muslim community's relations with dhimmis (Ye'or, 2002). We now take a brief look at the political, legal, social, and religious aspects of dhimmitude.

Political Aspects

Dhimmis were prohibited from possessing or bearing weapons, and thereby dhimmis became prey to marauding, pillage, and massacre particularly during periods of insecurity, such as rebellions and invasions. Population transfer was another disability both in times of peace and in times of war. Dhimmi populations were deported for strategic reasons and for economic reasons. Departure had to take place on the same day or on very short notice—two to three days—making it impossible for the deportees to sell their possessions. Furthermore, billeting and provisioning soldiers and their horses and other animals were imposed by law on dhimmis. Soldiers and beasts alike had to be lodged in the best houses, or in churches or synagogues.

Legal Aspects

Dhimmis could not give testimony in court against a Muslim. However, Muslims could testify against dhimmis (Friedmann, 2003). This legal asymmetry put dhimmis in a precarious position wherein they could not defend themselves against false accusations leveled by Muslims. Moreover, quite generally, penalties for offenses were unequal between Muslims and non-Muslims. The penalty for murder was even much lighter if the victim was dhimmi. Furthermore, dhimmis were forbidden to defend themselves if attacked physically by a Muslim, or to raise a hand against a Muslim "on pain of having it amputated" (Ye'or, 2002b: 103). If physically assaulted by a Muslim, the dhimmi's only recourse was to beg for mercy. Then, too, dhimmis were forbidden to have authority over Muslims, to possess or to buy land, to marry Muslim women, to have Muslim slaves or servants, or even to use the Arabic alphabet (Ye'or, 2002).

With regard to legal aspects of inheritance, the general principle in Islamic law is that a difference in religion is an obstacle to inheritance (Friedmann, 2003; Lewis, 1984), such that dhimmis cannot inherit from Muslims and Muslims cannot inherit from dhimmis. However, some jurists argue that a dhimmi cannot inherit from a Muslim but that a Muslim can inherit from a dhimmi. Shi'a scholars have successfully argued that if a dhimmi dies and leaves even one Muslim heir, then all of the estate belongs to the Muslim heir at the expense of any dhimmi heirs (Friedmann, 2003; Lewis, 1984).

Social Aspects

A *corvée* is labor that people in power have the authority to compel their subjects to perform. Dhimmis were subjected to the most degrading *corvées*. For instance, Jews in North Africa and Yemen were forced to do the job of executioner, gravedigger, cleaner of public latrines, and the like, even on Saturdays and holy days (Ye'or, 2002).

Dhimmis could be visually differentiated from Muslims at first sight. Vestimentary regulations were laid down by the founders of the four juridical schools as early as the eighth century, and they assigned to the dhimmi coarse cloth and specific colors for each religion and special belts and head gear made of particular fabrics and color and in a specified shape. Thus, the shape, color, and texture of their clothing were prescribed from head to foot. Likewise, their houses (by their color and size) and location (separate living quarters in the city).

As to dwelling places, the separation of Muslim and dhimmis was a religious obligation aimed at protecting the faith of the true believers. The different dhimmi groups were confined to districts separate from those of each other and separate from those of Muslims. The houses of the dhimmis had to be smaller, and lower, than those of Muslims. The houses of dhimmis also had to be humble in appearance, often painted in dark colors. Dhimmis were banned from living in certain districts and from living within proximity to venerated mosques (Ye'or, 2002b:101).

As to modes of conveyance, dhimmis were forbidden to ride noble animals, such as a horse or a camel. They were restricted to donkeys or mules, and, at certain periods, were only allowed to ride them once they were outside of town. Dhimmis were forbidden to use iron stirrups and saddle. For dhimmis, the *ikaf* (pack-saddle) and wooden stirrups would have to suffice, and then only with the dhimmi sitting with both legs on one side, like a woman. The dhimmi had to dismount upon sight of a Muslim.

The law required from dhimmis a humble demeanor. The dhimmi had to hurry through the streets, eyes lowered, always passing to the left (impure) side of a Muslim. The dhimmi had to give way to Muslims on the street. The dhimmi had to remain silent in the presence of a Muslim, only speaking with them when given permission (Ye'or, 2002b: 103). The dhimmi had to accept insults from a Muslim without replying. In the everyday speech and in official communication, dhimmis were frequently referred to by derogatory names, animal names or references being conspicuous (Ye'or, 2002b; Stillman, 1979). In the Ottoman Empire, the official name for dhimmis was "*raya*," meaning "herd of cattle." In Muslim parlance, "apes" was a standard epithet for the Jews. Christians were frequently called "pigs." In countries where they were admitted to a public bath, male and female dhimmis were forbidden to look upon naked Muslims of their own sex (Ye'or, 200b: 100). If a dhimmi were admitted to a public bath, the dhimmi had to wear bells to signal his presence.



Religious Aspects

Although dhimmis were allowed to perform their religious rituals, they were obliged to do so in a manner not obvious to Muslims (Karsh, 2007). Thus, displaying of religious symbols or icons on clothing or buildings was prohibited. Loud prayers were forbidden, as were the ringing of church bells and the trumpeting of shofars. A shofar is a horn used for Jewish religious purposes. In Jewish religious practice, shofar blowing is incorporated in synagogue services on Yom Kippur and Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish high holy days. Other restrictions included the prohibition on publishing or selling non-Muslim literature. Dhimmis also were not allowed to build new churches or synagogues, or expand or repair existing ones, even if they fell into ruin (Ye'or, 2002). The closing, confiscation, and Islamization of synagogues and churches were common (Ye'or, 2002).

The comprehensive system of dhimmitude permeated Islamic civilizations in urban agrarian societies. It is being revived today through what some term an "Islamic resurgence" and the return to shari'a in some countries. Hence, this pattern is not transient. It is persistent.

CASTE

Caste is an important part of social life in urban agrarian society. About 3,000 years ago, the *Hindu caste system* developed in agrarian India. Society there became divided into *varnas*, which the British later called castes, and which were arranged in a hierarchy. At the top of the Hindu caste system are the *Brahmins* (priests, teachers, physicians). In a descending order are the *Kshatriya* (warriors, rulers, soldiers, civil servants, legislators), the *Vaisyas* (farmers, merchants, and artisans), and *Sudras* (peasants, laborers). A person born in a caste carries the name of the caste as part of his or her surname.

Outside of the caste system are the *Untouchables*, who are viewed as highly polluted and polluting persons by those in castes. Mahatma Gandhi termed the Untouchables "**Harijan**," which translates roughly into English as "Children of God." Today, the term *Dalit* has become synonymous with Untouchable in India. It means "oppressed." Dalits are estimated to number about 250 million people in India, which is about 1/6th (or 17 percent) of the Indian population (Dalit Solidarity, 2013; Antelava, 2012).

The caste system in India regulated social life extensively and minutely. Occupation was allocated on the basis of caste, and marriage occurred within, rather than between, castes. Rituals of purification were prescribed and utilized if one became "polluted" by contact with someone of a lower caste or of "outcaste" status. Even though the caste system was formally abolished in 1949, caste discrimination in India persists to this day.

The most extreme gender stratification is found in agrarian societies. Scholars are in disagreement about *why* gender inequality, as with all forms of inequality, increased so markedly in agrarian societies. Five practices found in agrarian societies illustrate and manifest the highly subordinate status of women and girls in these societies: purdah, footbinding, sati, coverture, and genital mutilation.

PURDAH

In India, the word “purdah,” from the Hindi “parda,” translates into English as “screen” or “veil.” **Purdah** refers to the seclusion of women from public observation, and it is accomplished by wearing concealing clothing from head to toe and by the use of high-walled enclosures, walls, curtains, and screens within the home. The practice of purdah is said to have originated in the Persian culture and to have been acquired in the seventh century by the Muslims during the Arab conquest of what is now Iraq (Ahmed, 1992). In turn, Muslim domination of northern India influenced the practice of Hinduism, which is an example of **cultural diffusion**. Cultural diffusion is the transmission of cultural traits or social practices from one culture or subculture to another through such mechanisms as exploration, military conquest, social interaction, tourism, immigration, the mass media, and so forth. Purdah became widely observed among upper caste Hindus in northern India.

Purdah flourished in ancient Babylon, where no woman could go outside the home unless she was masked and accompanied by a male from her family, and even parts of the household were separated as a practice of segregation. Ancient Assyrian women also practiced purdah. The Prophet Muhammad incorporated the practice of purdah as part of the Islamic tenets of faith. During British hegemony in India, purdah observance was widespread among both the Muslim minority and among upper caste and affluent Hindus. Since then, purdah has become far less widespread among Hindus in India, but the seclusion and veiling of women is still practiced to a greater or lesser degree in many Islamic countries today (Nanji, 1996; Paul, 1992; Mernissi, 1987). The limits imposed by purdah vary according to different countries and class levels.

FOOTBINDING

During a thousand-year period, the institution of footbinding pervaded China. **Footbinding** refers to “the thwarting of the growth of a female’s feet” (Kendall, 2005:364). Older women bound the feet of young girls, in a process that took many years and a great deal of pain and suffering. Without meticulous, constant attention, bound feet were malodorous. Women with bound feet were essentially crippled and housebound. Peasant women did not have their feet bound because they had to work in the fields.

The practice appeared in the Sung Dynasty (960-1279). The status of women declined in the Sung; *concubinage*, the acquisition of women without benefit of true marriage, expanded; upper-class dowries increased; and a neo-Confucian ideology with tenets of female seclusion, female chastity, and female subordination emerged and came to reign (Mackie, 1996; Ebrey, 1991). Footbinding was viewed as necessary for a proper marriage to be brokered and for family honor (Ebrey, 1990, 1991), and it continued into the early twentieth century.

SATI

Agrarian societies developed various solutions to “the widow” problem. One such solution is **sati**, also known as suttee, the immolation of a widow on her dead husband’s funeral pyre. This custom was more frequent among the priestly and noble families in parts of India, and it persisted into the twentieth century. This practice had the effect of keeping the dead husband’s resources in male line (Nielsen, 1990; Goode, 1963; Altek, 1956).



COVERTURE

Coverture is an English common-law concept. Derived, at least in part, from Roman and feudal Norman custom, it dictated a woman's legal subordination to her husband during marriage (Ferrone, 2003; Bailey, 2002). According to the doctrine of **coverture**, upon marriage the husband and wife become a single legal identity, that of the husband. Prior to marriage, an adult woman (*feme sole*, from the Norman French, meaning "single woman") could freely enter into contracts; she could sell or give away her real estate or personal property as she wished. In contrast, a married woman (*feme covert*), was under the protection or cover of the husband. Her legal existence as an individual was suspended. Coverture renders a married woman unable to own property in her own name, unable to enter into contracts without her husband's consent, unable to obtain a loan without her husband's consent, and she is unable to execute a will without her husband's consent. If she works for income, the income she earns belongs to her husband. Under coverture, marital assets were considered the property of the husband (Cavallo and Warner, 1999).

Even under coverture, however, women had some control over property (Ferrone, 2003). Thus, at the death of her husband, a widow was entitled to one-third of his property as her dower. Because of this entitlement, a husband could not transfer or sell property without his wife's consent. Were he to do so, after his death she could claim that the transfer or sale was illegal and demand return of the property. It is for this reason that wives usually signed their husband's deeds of sale or of transfer, to show their consent. Often a statement that the woman was signing of her own free will and was not being coerced by her husband accompanied her signature.

The doctrine of coverture was imported from England into Colonial America. In the United States, coverture began to be disassembled through legislation at the state level beginning in Mississippi in 1839.

GENITAL MUTILATION

The term female **genital mutilation** (FGM) refers to all procedures involving total or partial removal of the external female genitalia (World Health Organization, 2013; Mackie, 1996). Genital mutilation also is known as female genital cutting (FGC), female circumcision, clitoridectomy, or infibulation. It is an umbrella term that refers to several practices that are deeply embedded in the culture of various groups around the world (e.g., United Nations, UNICEF, 2005; Islam and Uddin, 2001; World Health Organization, 2013; Jones, Diop, Askew, and Kabore, 1999). One practice, common in Egypt, is *sunna circumcision*, after the Arabic word for tradition. In this procedure, the clitoral foreskin (or prepuce) is removed. Sometimes part or the entire clitoris is removed as well. A second practice involves the excision of the clitoris with partial or total excision of the labia minora. A third practice, called *infibulation* (or pharonic circumcision) is more severe. It involves the removal of the clitoris, the labia minora, and most of the labia majora, leaving only an opening large enough for the passage of urine and menses. Infibulation is most common in Africa.

The short-term, immediate health consequences of FGM vary according to the type, severity, and method of the procedure performed. In the short-term, the immediate health consequences include pain, shock, hemorrhage, infection, and death. Long-term consequences include recurring urinary tract infections, difficulties in menstruation, chronic reproductive tract infections, and painful sexual intercourse. The infibulated female must be cut open, so that she can have sexual relations with her husband. She may be sewn up again if he leaves home for an extended period of time, as for a business trip abroad. The infibulated female must be cut open further, if she is to give birth vaginally. Then, following childbirth, she will be again infibulated, only to have to be cut open again, to resume sexual relations with her husband. Over time, these repeated procedures can lead to a buildup of scar tissue, leading to menstrual and urinary-tract complications.

FGM is practiced in 28 African countries as well as in Asia (Indonesia) and the Middle East. It is increasingly common in the USA, Europe, Australia, and Canada, primarily among immigrants from these countries (Amnesty International, 2004). About 140 million girls and women worldwide are living with the consequences of FMG (World Health Organization, 2013). In Africa alone, some 101 million girls age 10 years and older are estimated to have undergone FGM and more than three million girls are estimated to be at risk for FGM annually (World Health Organization, 2013).

The great world conflicts and world transformations that we are seeing today are associated with the impact of urban-industrial society on urban-agrarian society, with the impact of urban-agrarian society on modern industrial states, and with the transformation of urban-agrarian societies into powerful modern industrial states (e.g., Kennedy, 2002; Lin, 2001; Wimmer 2002; Wu and Xie, 2003; Xhou, Zhao Li, and Cai, 2003; Ye'or, 2005).

VIOLENCE IN FOLK, URBAN-AGRARIAN, AND MODERN INDUSTRIAL STATES

Max Weber reminds us that violence is something absolutely primordial: every group, from the household to the largest forms of political association, always has resorted to physical violence when it had to protect the interests of its members and was capable of so doing (Weber, 1968: 904). Since scientists are interested in patterns of behavior, we may well ask whether those who study violence and war in the long sweep of human history and prehistory have discovered or observed a patterning with regard to the prevalence of violence, and, if so, what that pattern is.

Before exploring a large body of research bearing on these matters, let us first review two differing and influential visions of what that patterning might look like. These intellectual traditions or idea systems were given to us in 1754 by Enlightenment philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau in his “Discourse on the Origin and Foundations of Inequality Among Men” (Rousseau, 2011, 1754) and by the English philosopher Thomas Hobbes in his book *Leviathan*, which was published in 1651 (Hobbes, 1985, 1651).

A Conflict of Visions: Hobbes (1651) and Rousseau (1754)

The English philosopher Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679) reached his conclusions about the nature of folk or hunting-and-gathering society via a series of logical arguments in his great work, *Leviathan* (1985, 1651). He argues that, in practical terms, all men are equals because no one was so superior in strength or intelligence that he could not be overcome by stealth or the conspiracy of others (Keeley, 1996: 5). Hobbes sees humans as equally endowed with *will* (desires) and *prudence* (the capacity to learn from experience). When two such equals desire what only one could enjoy, one eventually subdued or destroyed the other in pursuit of it. Once this had happened, it was a game changer: the similar desires of others tempted them to engage in the successful approach of the winner. Moreover, their intelligence enticed them to guard themselves against the fate of the loser. In the absence of a power to “overawe” these equals, prudent self-preservation induced every individual to attempt to preserve his *liberty* (the absence of impediments to his will) by endeavoring to subdue others and by resisting their attempts to subdue him. In this way, Hobbes came to envision the original state of human existence (folk or hunting and gathering society) as being “the war of every man against every man.” In this kind of society, men lived in “continual feare, and danger of violent death”



(Hobbes, 1985, 1651: 186). In the state of nature, there was no peace anywhere. In short, life was “solitary, poore, nasty, brutish, and short” (Hobbes, 1985, 1651: 186).

Humans escape this state of war only by agreeing to *covenants* in which they surrender much of their liberty and accept rule by a central authority (which, for Hobbes, meant a monarch, a king). For Hobbes, “Covenants without the Sword, are but Words, and of no strength to secure a man at all” (Hobbes, 1985:1651: 223). Therefore, the state (the king) had to be granted monopoly over the legitimate use of force in order to punish criminals and to defend against external enemies; otherwise, anarchy reigns. Civilized countries returned to this condition when central authority was widely defied or deprived of its power, as during rebellions. All civilized “industry,” commerce, proliferation of the arts and literature depend on a peace maintained by central government; the “humanity” of humans is thus a product of civilization and of a civilizing process made possible by the state as a form of human organization.

For Hobbes, then, life has its tradeoffs, or, as sociologists might express it, life is an exchange order. One can have a perfectly “free” life—which is nasty, brutish and short; or, one can have life under a state. In this latter condition, one is constrained, some would say “oppressed” but more people live and are alive for more years. It’s a tradeoff, an exchange order. For Hobbes, violence and war could be constrained, reigned in, by social innovations, i.e., by what sociologists would call the social institution of the state with its coercive institutions of enforcement.

For the past two centuries the most influential critic of Hobbes’s view of folk or hunting-and-gathering society has been Jean-Jacque Rousseau (1712-1778). Rousseau’s perspective frames the world of the hunter-gatherers (“primitive man”) as innately peaceful and the nature of primitive man as innately good. Our ancestors are seen as living in a peaceful, even idyllic, world where “men were innocent and virtuous” (Rousseau, 2011, 1754, as quoted by Potts and Hayden, 2008: 18). It is corrupt and evil institutions (e.g., monarchy, marriage, monogamy, private property, education, religion) that cause violence and war in human societies, says Rousseau. If we want to do away with violence and war, we must eliminate these corrupt institutions and put others in their place.

Rousseau was no empiricist and he disdained the empiricism of the historian and of the scientist (Keeley, 1996: 6). He paints a portrait of the distant human past (hunter-gatherer or folk society) as one of equality and peace. The original condition of humankind was one of equality where humans were ruled by their passions. These passions could be easily and peaceably satisfied without the “unnatural” institutions of monogamy and private property. Any tendency toward aggression in this “natural condition” (of hunting and gathering or folk society) would be suppressed by humans’ innate pity or compassion. This natural compassion was extinguished only when envy was created by the origins of marriage, private property, social inequality, and “civil” society. Rousseau claims that “the savage,” *except when hungry*, was the friend of all creation and the enemy of none. Rousseau indeed waxed poetic about “the Noble Savage,” which he saw as the condition of human beings living in hunting and gathering societies. In short, the original state of human society is a peaceful combination of free love and communism.

Now that we’ve become familiar with the ideas of these two different intellectual traditions, let us ask the question as to which position is better supported by the empirical historical evidence. Or, stated somewhat differently, what pattern, if any, is observable in terms of violence and war in the long historical panorama of human existence?

Pattern of Violence Across Types of Societies?

There is an observable, documentable pattern of violence across types of societies, and it is that violence *decreases* from a high point in folk and hunting-and-gathering societies. Let us look at just a few examples.

MURDER RATES Murder rates were very high in hunting-gathering societies. Political scientist Azar Gat (Gat, 2006) and others (e.g., Keeley, 1996; Knauff, 1987; Eibl-Eibesfeldt, 1979: 125-161; Eibl-Eibesfeldt, 1974) document that quarrels were rife among hunter gatherers, resulting homicide rates that are much higher than in any modern industrial society. For example, the Kung San, also known as “Bushmen” of the Kalahari Desert, had a homicide rate from 1920 to 1955 that was four times that of the United States and twenty to eighty times that of major industrial nations during the 1950s and 1960s (Keeley, 1996: 29). The Copper Eskimo also experienced a high level of feuding and homicide before the Royal Canadian Mounted Police suppressed it (Keeley, 1996: 29). Similarly, the murder rate for the Netsilik Eskimo, *even after the Mounties had suppressed interband feuding*, is four times greater than that of the United States and some fifteen to forty times greater than that of modern European states (Keeley, 1996: 29). With regard to the Gebusi of New Guinea, calculations show that the military of the United States, in addition to its internal homicide rate, would have had to kill practically the *entire* population of South Vietnam during its nine-year involvement there, to equal the homicide rate among the Gebusi (Keeley, 1996: 30; Knauff, 1987:464).

FREQUENCY OF WARFARE As with homicide rates, so, too, with warfare. With regard to frequency of warfare in state and non-state societies, non-state societies are characterized by far greater frequency of warfare (e.g., Gat, 2013; Pinker, 2011; Gat, 2010; Gat, 2006; Keeley, 1999). The high frequencies of warfare in hunting and gathering societies stands in contrast to those of even the most aggressive ancient or modern states. The early Roman Republic (510-121 BC) was attacked or initiated war about once every twenty years (Keeley, 1996: 33). Most inhabitants of the Roman Empire were rarely directly involved in warfare. Most experienced the Pax Romana over many generations.

Historic data on the period from 1800 to 1945 indicate that the average nation-state goes to war about once in a generation (Keeley, 1996: 187-188). Compared that with the figures from an ethnographic sample of non-state societies, where 65 percent were at war *continuously*; 77 percent were at war once every five years, and 55 percent were at war *every year* (Keeley, 1996: 33). The reasonable conclusion is that wars were more frequent in pre-state societies than they are in state societies, particularly modern states.

DEATH RATE DUE TO WARFARE As with frequency of warfare, so, too, with the death rate due to warfare: it *decreases* as societies move from a pre-state (e.g., hunting and gathering) to state societies, just as Hobbes would have predicted. Steven Pinker, in *The Better Angels of Our Nature* (Pinker, 2011: 48-55) documents this long-term historical trend. Among skeletons that had been dug out of archeological sites from Asia, Africa, Europe, and the Americas and that date from 14,000 BC to 1770 AD (Bowles, 2009; Keeley, 1996), the death rate from violence averaged 15 percent (Pinker, 2011: 48). This rate is similar to that derived from eight contemporary or recent societies that also make their living primarily from hunting and gathering (Bowles, 2009). They come from the Australia, the Philippines, and Australia, and their average death rate from warfare is 14 percent (Pinker: 2011: 50). Among pre-state societies that engage in some mixture of hunting, gathering, and horticulture (farming) in New Guinea, the Amazon rain forest, and the Montenegro in Europe, the average rate of death from warfare is 24.5 percent (Pinker, 2011: 50).



Let us compare those rates with rates of death from warfare in state societies. In the cities and empires of pre-Columbian Mexico, 5 percent of the deaths were due to warfare, which is a rate that is a third to a fifth as violent as an average pre-state society. In other words, in an average pre-state society the rate of death due to warfare is three to five times *higher* than in the cities and empires of pre-Columbian Mexico.

The two most violent centuries of the past half millennium of European history have been the 17th with its wars of religion and the 20th with two World Wars. Historian Quincy Wright estimates that the rate of death in the wars of the 17th century at 2 percent and the rate of death in the first half of the 20th century at 3 percent (Pinker, 2011: 50; Harris, 1975). If we add in the remainder of the twentieth century and look at the entire 20th century, the percentage would be even lower (Pinker, 2011: 50). In summary, modern Western countries, even in their more war torn centuries, suffer no more than 25 percent of the average death rate due to war compared with nonstate societies (Pinker, 2011: 52).

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