ANTHROPOLOGY · STUDY GUIDE

Exam 5 Study Guide

This guide covers chapters 9 and 10. You will see how societies without governments still make decisions and keep order, how power differs from authority, how disputes and wars are fought and settled, and how states defend inequality. Then you will learn how anthropologists define religion, tell shamans from priests, read a ritual in three phases and understand magic and witchcraft as ways of explaining misfortune. Read the “what to know” paragraphs, copy the tables by hand and try each worked case with the steps covered. Finish each chapter with its ten self-test items, then use the cram sheet.

WHAT THIS GUIDE COVERS

- Chapter 9 · Service and Fried, band, tribe, chiefdom and state, Weber on power and authority, big man and chief, sanctions and law, feud, raid and war, mediation, arbitration, adjudication and the moot, stratification, hegemony and resistance.
- Chapter 10 · Tylor, Marett, Durkheim, Wallace and Geertz on religion, shamans and priests, Wallace’s cult institutions, ritual, van Gennep and Turner, Frazer’s sympathetic magic, Malinowski on magic, Azande witchcraft and sorcery, myth, cosmology, taboo and worldview.

CHAPTER 9

Political Organization

Read it in full: **Chapter 9 in the textbook**. Practice it in the lab: **From Band to State** and **Power and Authority**.

What to know

For anthropologists, **political organization** is any means a society uses to make collective decisions, allocate authority and keep the peace. Every society has it, including those that never built a government. Thirty Ju/’hoansi deciding where to camp, or a Nuer cattle camp sorting out pasture, are doing politics.

Elman Service (*Primitive Social Organization*, 1962) sorted political systems into **band, tribe, chiefdom and state**. Morton Fried (*The Evolution of Political Society*, 1967) keyed a parallel scheme to inequality: **egalitarian, ranked, stratified and state**. Service tells you how big and organized a system is; Fried tells you who gets more.

A **band** is a few dozen kin-linked foragers with situational, persuasive leadership and decisions by consensus. Its strongest political tool is **fission**: dissenters move away. Lee found no chief among the Ju/'hoansi; a so-called headman said all people were headmen over themselves. A **tribe** is larger, usually horticultural or pastoral, knit by **pantribal sodalities** such as clans, age sets and men's societies (the Maasai age-set system) but still without central authority. Evans-Pritchard's *The Nuer* (1940) described a **segmentary lineage system**: groups merge against a more distant enemy and split again afterward.

A **chiefdom** adds a permanent, inherited office that outranks everyone even when its holder is unimpressive. Lineages are ranked by closeness to the chiefly line, and the chief practices **redistribution** at feasts. Polynesia is the classic case (Hawai'i, Tonga, Samoa), where chiefs held *mana* hedged by *tapu*; Mississippian centers, the Natchez, the Timucua and Northwest Coast societies were chiefdoms too. A **state** adds centralized administration, permanent institutions and, in Max Weber's phrase, a claimed **monopoly on the legitimate use of force**. States appear with intensive agriculture, dense population, records, armies and taxation; the Inca ran a labor tax (*mit'a*) and kept *quipu* records.

The types are a filing cabinet, not a staircase. Societies straddle and move between them, colonial administrators created "tribes" to have someone sign treaties, and Pierre Clastres (*Society Against the State*, 1974) argued some Amazonian peoples actively organized to prevent a state. Ranking the boxes revives unilineal evolutionism.

Weber separated **power**, the ability to make people act against their will, from **authority**, power accepted as rightful. The difference is **legitimacy**, which rests on one of three bases: **traditional** (inherited custom), **charismatic** (extraordinary personal qualities) and **rational-legal** (impersonal rules, where the office carries the power). The Nuer **leopard-skin chief** mediated feuds and offered sanctuary to killers with no army, jail or power to compel: authority without coercion.

Marshall Sahlins (“Poor Man, Rich Man, Big-Man, Chief,” 1963) contrasted the Melanesian **big man**, whose **achieved** status rests on work, marriages, pigs and competitive giving such as the *moka* of Mount Hagen (Andrew Strathern), and dies with him, with the Polynesian **chief**, whose **ascribed** status comes with title, genealogy and tribute. A lazy big man is nobody; a lazy chief is still the chief. Geertz’s *Negara* (1980) called nineteenth-century Bali a **theater state**, where mass ritual made the ruler the exemplary center. Egalitarian groups enforce humility with **leveling mechanisms**, like the insulting of Lee’s Christmas ox.

Social control gets people to conform. Sumner’s **folkways** (courtesy) and **mores** (moral weight) are enforced by **sanctions** that are positive or negative and formal or informal. Gossip, ridicule, shaming, avoidance and withdrawal of cooperation carry most of the load in small communities. Azande witchcraft accusations, in Evans-Pritchard’s 1937 study, made it dangerous to be stingy, envious or antisocial. The masked Duk-Duk society of the Tolai of New Britain collected debts and fines, and Inuit song duels settled grievances by audience laughter.

Malinowski’s *Crime and Custom in Savage Society* (1926) located Trobriand law in **reciprocity**: a coastal fisherman delivers because he needs garden produce back. Karl Llewellyn and E. Adamson Hoebel’s *The Cheyenne Way* (1941) rebuilt law from remembered cases, and Hoebel (*The Law of Primitive Man*, 1954) defined a legal norm as one whose breach meets the socially recognized use of force by someone with the recognized privilege to apply it. **Customary law** is unwritten and precedent based; **codified law** is written and enforced by officials. **Legal pluralism**, many legal orders over the same people, is the modern norm.

A **feud** is lasting revenge-driven hostility between kin groups within one society; a **raid** is a short expedition for livestock, goods or captives; **warfare** is organized armed conflict between political communities and intensifies with complexity. A Nuer killer took refuge with the leopard-skin chief, who brokered **blood wealth**, historically about forty head of cattle, which became bridewealth for a wife whose sons would carry the dead man’s name. Karl Heider described Dani ritualized battles owed to the ghosts of the slain; Mervyn Meggitt’s *Blood Is Their Argument* (1977) tied Enga clan fighting to land pressure, closed by compensation in pigs and valuables.

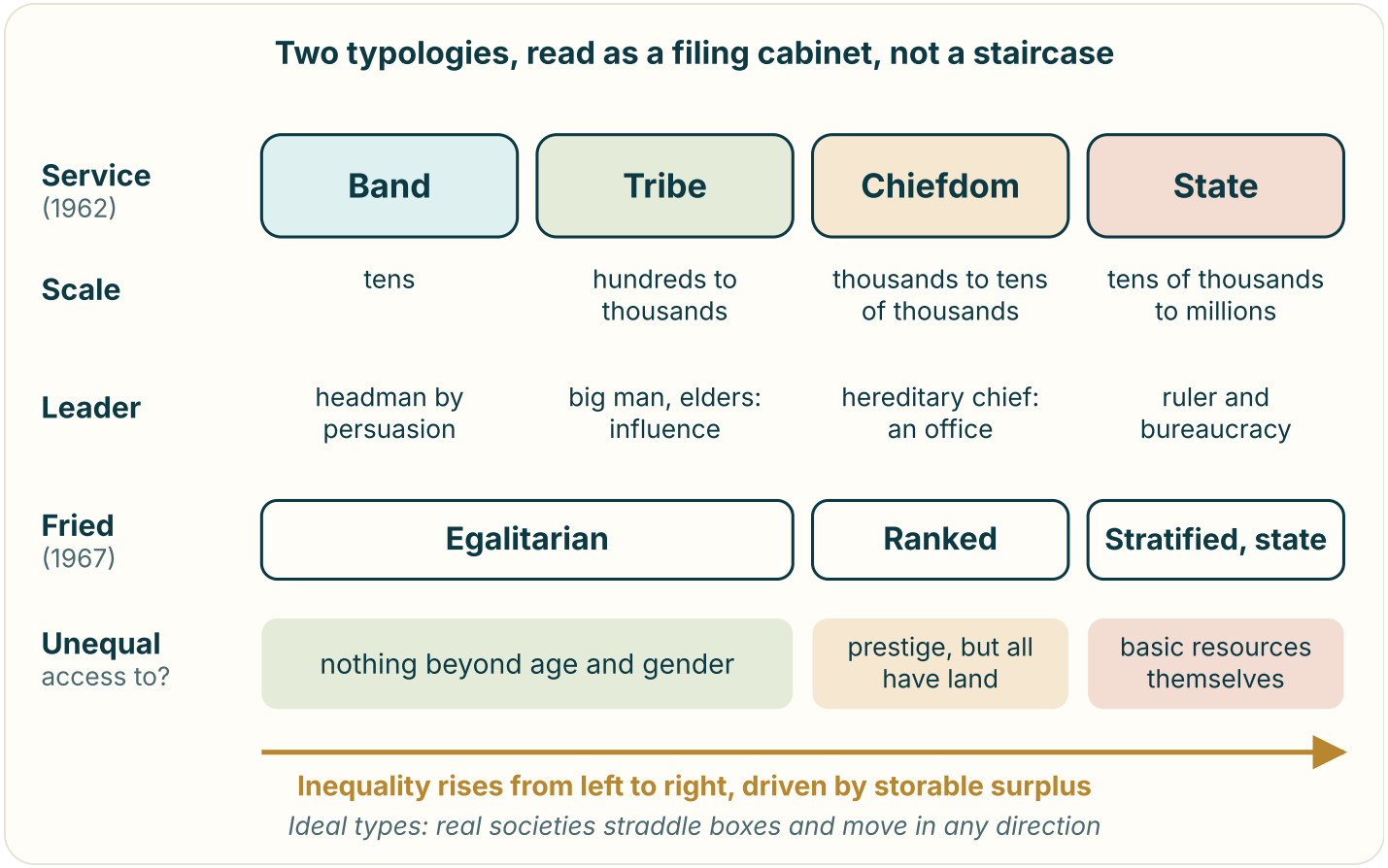
Chagnon’s *Yãnomamö: The Fierce People* (1968) presented raiding as central to Yanomami life, and his disputed 1988 study claimed killers left more offspring. R. Brian Ferguson (1995) argued

much of that fighting was intensified by contact (steel tools, missions, trade goods). Yanomami people object to being called “fierce.” Robert Dentan described the nonaggressive Semai of Malaysia, and Douglas Fry argues the true universal is dispute-resolution machinery. Peacemaking forms: **mediation** (a neutral helper cannot impose), **arbitration** (sides agree in advance to accept a decision), **adjudication** (an authority imposes a binding judgment) and the **moot**, such as the Kpelle house palaver James Gibbs called therapeutic, ancestor of restorative justice.

Fried’s key point: in a **ranked** society prestige is scarce but everyone has access to the means of living; in a **stratified** society access itself is unequal, and the state arises to defend it. States hold stratification in place through **coercion, extraction, law, ideology and classification**; monumental architecture turns an argument about who rules into a fact. **Class** is relatively open; **caste** is closed (Louis Dumont’s *Homo Hierarchicus*, 1966, on purity and pollution; Nicholas Dirks on colonial hardening). Gramsci’s **hegemony** is rule by consent; Galtung coined **structural violence** in 1969 and Farmer made it central. James C. Scott documented **everyday resistance** (*Weapons of the Weak*, 1985), the **hidden transcript** (1990) and upland peoples avoiding states (*The Art of Not Being Governed*, 2009).

LOCK THESE IN

- Service: band, tribe, chiefdom, state. Fried: egalitarian, ranked, stratified, state. Ideal types, not a ladder.
- Band: consensus and fission. Tribe: sodalities, segmentary lineages. Chiefdom: inherited office, redistribution. State: monopoly on legitimate force.
- Power compels; authority is legitimate. Weber: traditional, charismatic, rational-legal.
- Big man: achieved, dies with him. Chief: ascribed office that outlasts its holder.
- Sanctions: positive or negative, formal or informal. Gossip does most of the work in small groups.
- Malinowski (reciprocity), Llewellyn and Hoebel (cases), Hoebel (legitimate force); legal pluralism.
- Feud, raid, warfare; blood wealth; mediation, arbitration, adjudication, moot.
- Ranked restricts prestige; stratified restricts access. Hegemony, structural violence, hidden transcript.



Service and Fried side by side. Read down a column to see how scale, leadership and inequality go together. The boxes are equal on purpose: they sort cases, they do not rank them.

The four political types

Type	Leadership and order	Examples
Band	Informal, situational; consensus; talk, ridicule or moving away	Ju/'hoansi, Hadza, Inuit, Mbuti
Tribe	Big man, headman, elders; sodalities, age sets, lineages	Nuer, Yanomami, Enga, Maasai, Hopi
Chiefdom	Hereditary office; ranked lineages; redistribution	Polynesia, Natchez, Timucua, Northwest Coast
State	Bureaucracy, codified law, courts, army, taxes	Inca, Egypt, Shang, Dahomey, nation-states

Power, authority and control

Term	Meaning	Example
Traditional authority	Legitimacy from inherited custom	A line that has always led
Charismatic authority	Legitimacy from extraordinary personal qualities	Prophets, founders
Rational-legal authority	Legitimacy from impersonal rules	A bureaucrat bound by procedure
Leopard-skin chief	Ritual mediator with no coercive power	Nuer
Theater state	Rule through spectacle and ritual	Geertz, *Negara*, Bali
Leveling mechanism	Practices that cut down would-be big shots	Insulting the meat
Negative informal sanction	Gossip, ridicule, ostracism	Small communities
Song duel	Composed insults judged by audience laughter	Inuit
Hoebel's test	Breach met by legitimate, recognized force	*The Law of Primitive Man* (1954)

Conflict, peacemaking and inequality

Term	Meaning	Example
Feud	Revenge between kin groups within a society	Nuer; ended with blood wealth
Raid	Short expedition for something specific	Livestock, goods, captives
Warfare	Organized conflict between political communities	Dani ritual battles; Enga clan fighting
Mediation	Neutral party helps; cannot impose	Leopard-skin chief
Arbitration	Sides agree in advance to accept a ruling	A chosen third party
Adjudication	Authority imposes a binding judgment	A state court
Moot	Hearing to repair a relationship	Kpelle house palaver (Gibbs)
Hegemony	Domination through consent and common sense	Gramsci
Hidden transcript	Offstage critique among the subordinated	Scott (1990)

Worked cases

WORKED CASE 1 · CLASSIFY A POLITICAL SYSTEM

In the fictional Lorun islands, about 6,000 people farm taro intensively and fish. A paramount chief inherits his title through a senior line said to descend from the gods. Every family has garden land, but lineages are ranked by closeness to the chief. At harvest, families bring food to the chief, who hosts great feasts. There is no army or written law. Classify Lorun with Service and Fried.

STEP 1 · LEADERSHIP

An inherited office that outranks everyone: not a band or tribe.

STEP 2 · ECONOMY OF RULE

Food flows to the chief and back out at feasts: **redistribution**.

STEP 3 · SERVICE

No bureaucracy, army or codified law, so not a state: a **chiefdom**, like the Polynesian cases.

STEP 4 · FRIED

Prestige is unequal but every family has land: **ranked**, not stratified.

CAUTION

This places Lorun in a box; it says nothing about Lorun being “behind” any state.

WORKED CASE 2 · WHICH KIND OF AUTHORITY?

Identify the basis of legitimacy: (a) a tax officer follows a written rulebook and loses his job when he breaks it; (b) a young prophet gathers thousands after a vision; (c) a ruler holds power because her family has always ruled.

STEP 1

(a) is **rational-legal**: the office carries the power, the holder is temporary.

STEP 2

(b) is **charismatic**: extraordinary personal qualities.

STEP 3

(c) is **traditional**: inherited custom.

EXTENSION

If the prophet’s movement writes rules and offices after his death, charisma is turning into rational-legal authority.

WORKED CASE 3 · FOLLOWING A FEUD TO SETTLEMENT

In a fictional pastoral society organized like the Nuer, a young man from lineage A kills a man from lineage B. Trace what happens next.

STEP 1 · OBLIGATION

Lineage B is obligated to retaliate: a **feud** threatens.

STEP 2 · SANCTUARY

The killer takes refuge with a ritual mediator like the leopard-skin chief.

STEP 3 · MEDIATION

The mediator shuttles between the groups; he cannot impose a settlement.

STEP 4 · BLOOD WEALTH

Lineage B accepts cattle, historically about forty head.

STEP 5 · WHAT THE CATTLE DO

They become bridewealth for a wife whose sons carry the dead man’s name. The settlement fills the social position the death emptied and restores exchange.

WORKED CASE 4 · READING RESISTANCE

On a fictional plantation, workers bow and thank the owner at every inspection. Among themselves they mock him, work slowly when unwatched and “lose” tools. A visitor concludes the workers accept their position. Evaluate.

STEP 1 · THE PUBLIC TRANSCRIPT

Bowing is a required performance in front of power.

STEP 2 · THE HIDDEN TRANSCRIPT

Mockery among equals is Scott’s offstage critique.

STEP 3 · EVERYDAY RESISTANCE

Slow work and lost tools are foot-dragging and pilfering, low-risk tactics when revolt would be suicidal.

STEP 4 · VERDICT

The visitor mistook a performance for a conviction. Long fieldwork is how the researcher reaches the second transcript.

TRAPS PEOPLE FALL INTO

- **Treating band to state as progress.** They are ideal types; Clastres argued some peoples resisted the state on purpose.
- **Thinking stateless means lawless.** Order comes from sanctions, reciprocity, mediation and kinship.
- **Confusing power and authority.** Authority is power accepted as legitimate.
- **Swapping big man and chief.** Big man achieved and mortal; chief ascribed and enduring.
- **Calling ranked and stratified the same.** Ranked limits prestige; stratified limits access to basic resources.
- **Reading blood wealth as a price on a life.** It fills the social position and restores exchange.
- **Taking Chagnon’s fierceness as timeless.** Ferguson argued contact intensified the fighting.
- **Mixing up mediation and arbitration.** A mediator cannot impose; in arbitration both sides agree beforehand to accept the decision.

Chapter 9 self-test · ten items

1. What is a band’s most powerful political tool when disagreement cannot be settled?

A. Fission: dissenters move away
B. A ruling by the hereditary chief
C. A court with appointed judges
D. Taxation of the dissenters

A. Fission: dissenters move away Bands decide by consensus, and splitting up is always available.

2. Institutions such as clans and age sets that cut across local groups in a tribe are called

A. pantribal sodalities
B. ranked lineages
C. rational-legal offices
D. spheres of exchange

A. pantribal sodalities Sodalities knit a tribe together without a central ruler.

3. Nuer lineages that feud with each other unite against a more distant lineage. This is a

A. theater state run by ritual
B. stratified society with classes
C. tributary mode of production
D. segmentary lineage system

D. segmentary lineage system Order comes from balanced opposition, not a ruler.

4. Which feature most clearly separates a chiefdom from a tribe?

A. Leaders who must earn their influence by giving
B. A permanent, inherited office of leadership
C. Decisions made by consensus of all adults
D. The absence of any redistribution

B. A permanent, inherited office of leadership The chiefly office outranks everyone even when its holder is unimpressive.

5. Weber’s phrase for what distinguishes a state is a claim to

A. the right to hold great feasts for loyal followers
B. descent from a sacred ancestor
C. a monopoly on the legitimate use of force
D. a council of elders with influence

C. a monopoly on the legitimate use of force States add centralized administration and that claim.

6. The Nuer leopard-skin chief is the chapter’s example of

A. charismatic rule over an army
B. a bureaucrat applying codified law
C. a big man building a following
D. authority without coercive power

D. authority without coercive power He mediated with no army, no jail and no power to compel.

7. A Melanesian big man’s influence typically

A. passes to his eldest son by right
B. is fixed by his genealogy
C. ends with his death
D. depends on written law

C. ends with his death It is achieved, personal and mortal.

8. Under Hoebel’s definition, a norm counts as law when its breach is met by

A. gossip and ridicule spread among close neighbors
B. recognized force from someone entitled to use it
C. a majority vote taken by the whole community
D. a rule written into a code by a legislature

B. recognized force from someone entitled to use it Hoebel defined law by the legitimate application of force.

9. Both sides agree in advance to accept a third party’s decision. This is

A. mediation
B. adjudication
C. a moot
D. arbitration

D. arbitration A mediator cannot impose; an adjudicator imposes by authority.

10. Scott's "hidden transcript" refers to

A. secret laws drafted by state officials for later use
B. critique of the powerful voiced among the subordinated
C. tax records kept by the Inca in knotted cords
D. the rules for trading insults in an Inuit song duel

B. critique of the powerful voiced among the subordinated It is what people say when the powerful are not listening.

CHAPTER 10

Religion, Magic and Ritual

Read it in full: **Chapter 10 in the textbook**. Practice it in the lab: **Magic, Misfortune & Witchcraft** and **What Counts as Religion?**.

What to know

The anthropology of religion begins with an unsettled definition. The English word carries congregations, scriptures, creeds and clergy; carried into a Ju/'hoansi camp or a Tsembaga Maring settlement, it does not fit. So anthropologists build definitions that travel.

Edward Burnett Tylor (*Primitive Culture*, 1871) defined religion as "the belief in spiritual beings" and named the idea **animism**: spirit in persons, animals, plants and landscape. It is portable but thin: it ignores practice and impersonal power such as Polynesian and Melanesian **mana**, which R. R. Marett called **animatism** (*The Threshold of Religion*, 1909).

Émile Durkheim (*The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, 1912), working from reports of Aboriginal Australian totemism, divided the world into the **sacred** (set apart, protected by prohibition) and the **profane** (ordinary). Religion unites adherents into a single moral community; what people worship is society in symbolic dress, felt as **collective effervescence**. Malinowski saw religion as a response to anxiety and existential need.

Anthony F. C. Wallace defined religion as rituals, rationalized by myth, that mobilize supernatural powers to achieve or prevent transformations of state; it puts ritual first. Clifford Geertz ("Religion as a Cultural System," 1966) defined it as a system of symbols that creates powerful, lasting moods and motivations by formulating a general order of existence with an **aura of factuality**. Method stays constant: participant observation, emic and etic accounts together, and **methodological agnosticism**, since whether spirits exist is not an anthropological question. Relativism is a method, not a verdict.

The word **shaman** comes from Evenki *šaman* (Siberia), via Russian accounts in the seventeenth century. Shamans are part-time specialists with **charismatic** authority from personal spirit contact, often called by an illness, seizure or vision and then apprenticed. They work in altered states for individual clients: curing, recovering lost souls, finding game. Eliade called these "archaic techniques of ecstasy." Ju/'hoansi healers activate *n/um* in an all-night trance dance; Korean *mudang*, mostly women, perform the *kut*. Calling a Mongolian *böö*, a *mudang* and a Yanomami *shabori* all "shamans" risks flattening differences.

A **priest** holds a full-time office entered by training and appointment; authority belongs to the office, so an uninspired priest can still perform a valid rite. Priests run a calendrical cycle for the whole community from liturgy, inside a hierarchy, and they appear where surplus supports non-producers: Vedic Brahmins, Classic Maya priests, Catholic clergy. Wallace's cumulative **cult institutions**: individualistic (a vision quest), shamanic, communal (lineage, age set, the Tolai Duk-Duk society) and ecclesiastical (a full-time priesthood). Larger societies add forms without replacing the old ones. Shaman and priest are Weberian ideal types.

A **ritual** is patterned, repeated, formal action, prescribed rather than improvised, understood to do more than its practical effect. Roy Rappaport (*Pigs for the Ancestors*, 1968) showed Tsembaga Maring ritual cycles regulating pigs, warfare and land, and argued that performing a ritual publicly accepts the order it encodes, whatever one privately believes. **Rites of intensification** renew a group on a calendar or in crisis (harvest festivals, rain ceremonies); **rites of passage** transform an individual's status.

Van Gennep (1909): **separation** (preliminal), **transition** (liminal, from *limen*, threshold) and **incorporation** (postliminal). Victor Turner, working among the Ndembu of northwestern Zambia

(*The Forest of Symbols*, 1967; *The Ritual Process*, 1969), described the liminal person as "betwixt and between," stripped of status, and the bond among initiates as **communitas**, an **antistructure** that renews structure. Ritual symbols are **multivocal**: the Ndembu *mudyi* (milk tree) evokes breast milk, motherhood, matrilineal descent and Ndembu unity at once. Turner separated obligatory **liminal** phenomena from optional, leisure-based **liminoid** ones such as theater and sport. Boot camp has the same structure, and suspended protections can be abused.

Frazer's *The Golden Bough* (1890) claimed a ladder from magic to religion to science, now rejected, but his **sympathetic magic** survives. The **law of similarity** (like produces like) drives **imitative** or homeopathic magic: effigies, pouring water for rain, miming the hunt. The **law of contagion** (things once joined stay joined) drives **contagious** magic: hair, nail parings, clothing, footprints. Malinowski found Trobriand fishermen using little magic in the safe lagoon but elaborate canoe, weather and kula magic on the dangerous open sea: magic clusters where control runs out and turns anxiety into action. Radcliffe-Brown countered that ritual can also create anxiety.

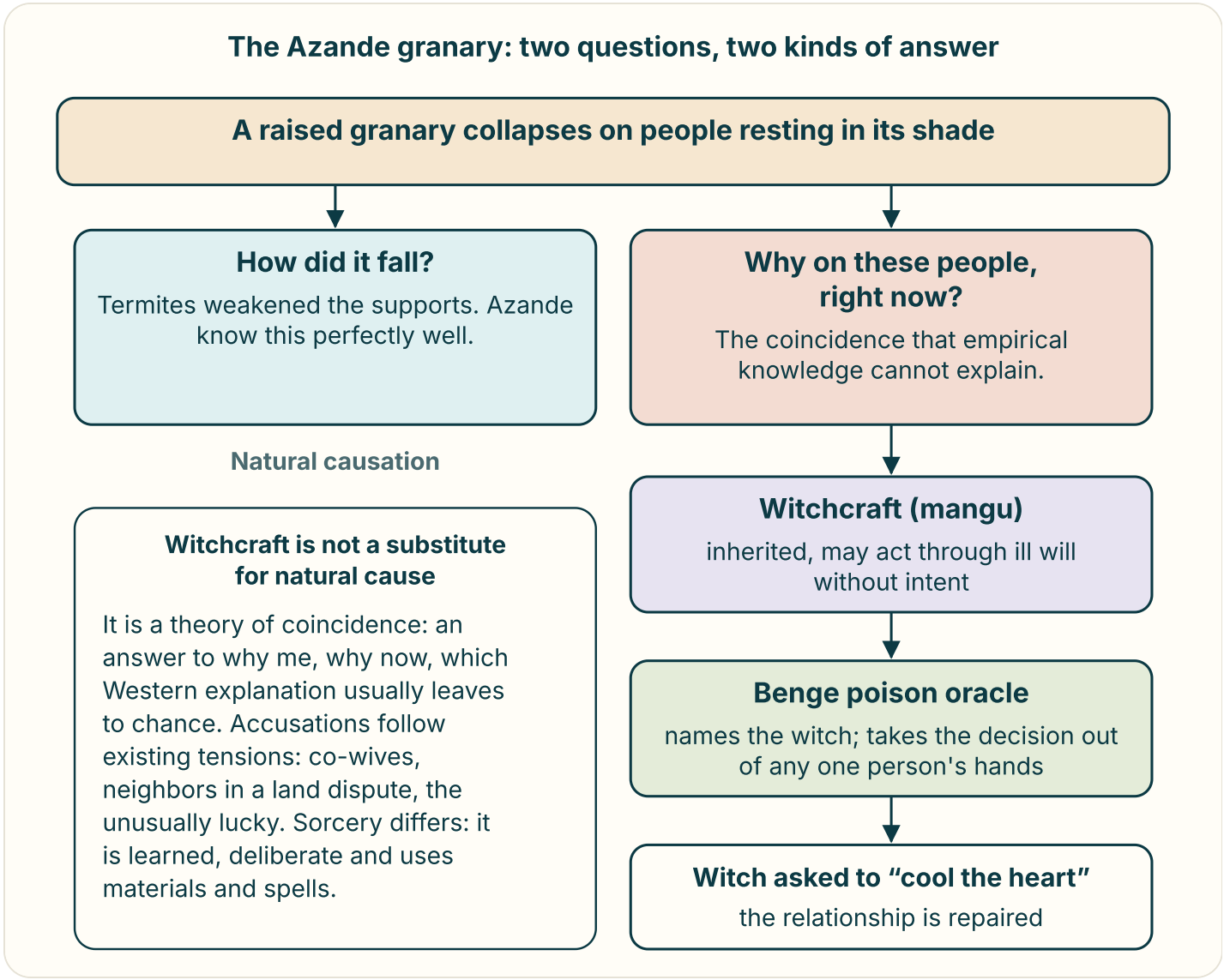
Evans-Pritchard's *Witchcraft, Oracles and Magic among the Azande* (1937; fieldwork 1926 to 1930) separated **witchcraft**, an inherited bodily substance (*mangu*) passed along same-sex lines that can harm through ill will even without intent, from **sorcery**, a learned, deliberate technique with materials and spells. Witchcraft explains the particular: termites explain why a granary falls; witchcraft explains why it fell on those people at that moment. The **benge** poison oracle, read from whether a fowl lives or dies, removes decisions from any one person's hands. Accusations follow existing fault lines; Monica Wilson called witch beliefs "the standardized nightmares of a group." Accusations still cause exile, injury and killing today, most often of women, older people and children.

A **myth** is a sacred, authoritative narrative, with no judgment of truth; **legends** are set in remembered historical time and **folktales** entertain and instruct. Malinowski read myth as a **charter**: Trobriand clan emergence stories legitimate land and rank. Lévi-Strauss (*Structural Anthropology*, 1958; *The Raw and the Cooked*, 1964) read myth as logic working through **binary oppositions**, with mediators like the trickster (coyote, raven). Boas recorded Northwest Coast narratives verbatim in the original languages.

A **cosmology** models the universe, often around an **axis mundi** (Eliade). The Diné cosmos is anchored by four sacred mountains and the ideal of **hózhó**; ceremonies such as the Blessingway restore it, and a sandpainting is made and swept away the same day. Mary Douglas (*Purity and Danger*, 1966): dirt is **matter out of place**; taboo follows classification, as in her reading of Leviticus. **Worldview** (Redfield) is the encompassing outlook; Geertz's symbols are a **model of** and a **model for** reality, and **ethos** is a people's moral and aesthetic style. Change comes through **syncretism** (Vodou, Lucumí, Día de los Muertos) and **revitalization** (Handsome Lake's Longhouse Religion from 1799; the Ghost Dance, 1889 to 1890; cargo movements).

LOCK THESE IN

- Tylor: belief in spiritual beings (animism). Marett: mana (animatism). Durkheim: sacred and profane, moral community.
- Wallace: ritual rationalized by myth. Geertz: symbols, moods, aura of factuality. Methodological agnosticism.
- Shaman: part-time, charismatic, trance, clients (from Evenki). Priest: full-time office, liturgy, congregation.
- Wallace's cults: individualistic, shamanic, communal, ecclesiastical; cumulative.
- Intensification renews a group; passage transforms a person. Separation, transition, incorporation.
- Turner: liminality, communitas, antistructure, multivocal symbols (Ndembu mudyi), liminoid.
- Frazer: similarity (imitative) and contagion (contagious). Malinowski: magic where control runs out.
- Witchcraft inherited, sorcery learned; the granary explains the particular. Douglas: matter out of place.



The granary that fell. Azande hold two answers at once: termites explain how the granary fell, and witchcraft explains why it fell on those people at that moment. The oracle and the request to cool the heart turn the explanation into a way of repairing relationships.

Definitions of religion

Theorist	Religion is	Strength and limit
Tylor (1871)	Belief in spiritual beings (animism)	Portable; ignores practice and impersonal power
Marett (1909)	Sense of impersonal sacred force (animatism, mana)	Captures mana; hard to observe
Durkheim (1912)	Practices around the sacred that bind a moral community	Explains solidarity; reduces the divine to society
Malinowski (1925; 1948)	A response to anxiety and existential need	Fieldwork based; understates social power
Wallace (1966)	Ritual rationalized by myth, mobilizing supernatural power	Observable; inelegant
Geertz (1966)	Symbols producing moods, motivations and an order of existence	Explains meaning; hard to measure

Shaman and priest

Dimension	Shaman	Priest
Employment	Part-time; also a producer	Full-time specialist
Authority	Charismatic: personal spirit contact	Institutional: the office
Recruitment	Call, crisis, vision; apprenticeship	Training, examination, appointment
Technique	Altered state, trance, soul journey	Prescribed liturgy
Timing	On demand	Calendrical
Clients	Individual or household	Whole congregation or polity
Typical society	Bands and tribes	Chiefdoms and states

Magic, witchcraft and belief

Term	Meaning	Example
Imitative magic	Law of similarity: like produces like	Effigy; pouring water for rain
Contagious magic	Law of contagion: once joined, always joined	Hair, nails, clothing, relics
Witchcraft	Inherited capacity; can act without intent	Azande *mangu*
Sorcery	Learned, deliberate technique	Spells and medicines
Divination	Procedure that removes the answer from any one person	Benge poison oracle
Myth as charter	Story legitimating present claims	Trobriand clan emergence
Binary oppositions	Myth mediating contradictions	Lévi-Strauss; the trickster
Matter out of place	Pollution follows classification	Douglas, Leviticus
Model of / model for	Symbols describe and prescribe	Geertz
Revitalization	Organized effort to build a more satisfying culture	Handsome Lake (1799); Ghost Dance

Worked cases

WORKED CASE 1 · SHAMAN OR PRIEST?

In the fictional Kaveri valley: (a) a farmer who fell gravely ill as a youth and saw visions now enters trance with a drum to find lost souls for families who ask; (b) a temple official, trained for ten years and appointed by a council, performs the same planting rite every spring for the whole valley. Classify each and name the source of authority.

STEP 1 · (A)

Part-time, called by crisis and vision, altered state, individual clients: a **shaman** with **charismatic** authority.

STEP 2 · (B)

Full-time, trained and appointed, calendrical rite for the community: a **priest** with authority from the **office**.

STEP 3 · WALLACE'S LEVELS

The valley has at least shamanic and ecclesiastical cults; they coexist rather than replace each other.

STEP 4 · THE DIAGNOSTIC QUESTION

Ask what authority rests on and how the specialist was recruited, not just which label sounds right.

WORKED CASE 2 · MAPPING A RITE OF PASSAGE WITH TURNER

In the fictional town of Ilbec, new nurses spend twelve weeks in a residential course. They hand in their own clothes, wear identical gray uniforms, are called by number, follow every order and sleep in one dormitory. At the end, each receives a cap and a new title at a public ceremony with families watching.

STEP 1 · SEPARATION

Leaving home and handing in clothes detach them from their former status.

STEP 2 · LIMINALITY

Uniforms, numbers and obedience mark the betwixt-and-between phase.

STEP 3 · COMMUNITAS

A cohort of equals who bond closely: Turner’s antistructure.

STEP 4 · INCORPORATION

The cap, title and public ceremony mark return with a new status.

CAUTION

Because ordinary protections are suspended in liminality, institutions must guard against abuse.

WORKED CASE 3 · WHICH LAW OF MAGIC?

Classify: (a) a fisher carves a small wooden fish and floats it before the season so real fish will come; (b) a person buries a rival’s hair to harm him; (c) a fan keeps a ticket stub from a famous game because it “holds” the player’s luck.

STEP 1

(a) like produces like: **imitative** magic, law of similarity.

STEP 2

(b) a part once joined to the person affects the whole: **contagious** magic.

STEP 3

(c) a keepsake that carries presence through contact: also **contagion**.

CONTEXT

Frazer’s laws survive; his ladder from magic to religion to science does not. Magic and science coexist everywhere.

WORKED CASE 4 · EXPLAINING MISFORTUNE AZANDE STYLE

A fictional farmer, Ruti, is bitten by a snake on the one day he skipped his usual path. He knows snakes bite and that he walked through tall grass. His family asks why it happened to him today. Analyze with Evans-Pritchard.

STEP 1 · HOW

Natural causation is understood: snakes bite in tall grass.

STEP 2 · WHY NOW

The coincidence of Ruti, this snake and this day is what witchcraft would explain.

STEP 3 · PROCEDURE

An oracle, like the benge, would name a source, removing the decision from any one person.

STEP 4 · SOCIAL PATTERN

Suspicion would likely fall along existing tensions, such as a neighbor in a land dispute: Wilson's "standardized nightmares."

TRAPS PEOPLE FALL INTO

- **Defining religion as belief in God.** Durkheim, Wallace and Geertz each define it without requiring gods.
- **Confusing animism and animatism.** Animism is spirit beings; animatism is impersonal force such as mana.
- **Treating shaman as a neutral global label.** It comes from Evenki and can flatten real differences.
- **Ranking Wallace's cults as progress.** They are cumulative layers, not a ladder.
- **Swapping intensification and passage.** Intensification renews a group; passage moves a person between statuses.
- **Saying witchcraft replaces natural cause.** It answers why me, why now; Azande know about termites.
- **Swapping witchcraft and sorcery.** Witchcraft is inherited and may be unintended; sorcery is learned and deliberate.
- **Reading "myth" as "false."** In anthropology a myth is a sacred, authoritative narrative.

Chapter 10 self-test · ten items

1. Tylor’s minimal definition of religion was

A. a system of symbols creating moods
B. the belief in spiritual beings
C. practices around the sacred that unite a community
D. rituals rationalized by myth

B. the belief in spiritual beings Tylor named the underlying idea animism.

2. Durkheim argued that what people worship is ultimately

A. society itself in symbolic form
B. the forces of nature that they fear most
C. their personal anxieties
D. the spirits of animals

A. society itself in symbolic form The gathered congregation’s collective effervescence is society made perceptible.

3. What does methodological agnosticism mean?

A. Anthropologists must reject all religious claims as false
B. Anthropologists must accept all religious claims as true
C. Only observable rituals count as religion
D. Whether spirits exist is not an anthropological question

D. Whether spirits exist is not an anthropological question What can be studied is how people organize life around such claims.

4. Which description fits a shaman best?

A. Full-time, trained and appointed to a permanent office
B. Reads a fixed liturgy on a yearly calendar for all
C. Part-time, called by experience, works in trance for clients
D. Ranks inside a hierarchy of clergy under a high priest

C. Part-time, called by experience, works in trance for clients Shamans hold charismatic authority from personal spirit contact.

5. A lineage group tending its ancestors without any specialist belongs to which of Wallace's cult institutions?

A. Communal
B. Individualistic
C. Shamanic
D. Ecclesiastical

A. Communal Communal cults are rites performed by non-specialist groups.

6. A rain ceremony held by a whole village during drought is a

A. rite of passage
B. liminoid event
C. case of contagious magic
D. rite of intensification

D. rite of intensification It renews the group in a shared crisis.

7. Turner called the Ndembu milk tree symbol multivocal because it

A. is spoken aloud by many people
B. changes meaning every year
C. has no meaning outside ritual
D. carries many meanings at once

D. carries many meanings at once It evokes breast milk, motherhood, matrilineal descent and Ndembu unity together.

8. Malinowski found Trobriand fishermen used the most magic

A. in the safe, predictable inner lagoon
B. on dangerous open-ocean voyages
C. only in their yam gardens
D. when trading with close kin

B. on dangerous open-ocean voyages Magic clusters where technique and control run out.

9. Among the Azande, witchcraft differs from sorcery because witchcraft is

A. learned from a teacher for a fee
B. always deliberate and uses spells and medicines
C. inherited and can act without intent
D. practiced only by priests

C. inherited and can act without intent Mangu is a bodily substance; sorcery is a learned, deliberate technique.

10. Mary Douglas’s phrase “matter out of place” explains taboo as a result of

A. early scientific ideas about hygiene
B. a natural fear of particular animals
C. a culture’s system of classification
D. repeated shortages of food in winter

C. a culture’s system of classification Things that violate a society’s categories become polluting.

ONE PAGE

Cram sheet

Everything from chapters 9 and 10 in one place. Cover the right column and see if you can rebuild each row.

Works and dates

Date	Work or event
1871	Tylor, *Primitive Culture*
1890	Frazer, *The Golden Bough*
1909	Van Gennep, *Les rites de passage*; Marett, *The Threshold of Religion*
1912	Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*
1926	Malinowski, *Crime and Custom in Savage Society*
1937	Evans-Pritchard, *Witchcraft, Oracles and Magic among the Azande*
1940	Evans-Pritchard, *The Nuer*
1941 / 1954	Llewellyn and Hoebel, *The Cheyenne Way* / Hoebel, *The Law of Primitive Man*
1962 / 1967	Service / Fried typologies
1963	Sahlins, “Poor Man, Rich Man, Big-Man, Chief”
1966	Geertz, “Religion as a Cultural System”; Douglas, *Purity and Danger*; Dumont
1967 / 1969	Turner, *The Forest of Symbols* / *The Ritual Process*
1968	Rappaport, *Pigs for the Ancestors*; Chagnon, *The Fierce People*
1974	Clastres, *Society Against the State*
1985 / 1990	Scott, *Weapons of the Weak* / hidden transcript

Lists and contrasts

Item	Contents
Service	Band, tribe, chiefdom, state
Fried	Egalitarian, ranked, stratified, state
Weber’s authority	Traditional, charismatic, rational-legal
Sanctions	Positive or negative; formal or informal
Conflict	Dispute, feud, raid, warfare
Peacemaking	Mediation, arbitration, adjudication, moot
State levers	Coercion, extraction, law, ideology, classification
Wallace’s cults	Individualistic, shamanic, communal, ecclesiastical
Rite of passage	Separation, transition (liminal), incorporation
Sympathetic magic	Similarity (imitative), contagion (contagious)
Story types	Myth (sacred), legend (historical), folktale (instructive)

Key terms

Term	One-line meaning
Big man / chief	Achieved and mortal / ascribed and enduring
Leopard-skin chief	Nuer mediator without coercive power
Blood wealth	About forty cattle; becomes bridewealth
Communitas	Leveling bond among liminal initiates
Mangu	Azande witchcraft substance, inherited
Benge	Azande poison oracle
Hózhó	Diné ideal of beauty, balance and right relation
Matter out of place	Douglas's definition of dirt

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