

**Jan 20**

1. Nation states and societies
2. European colonialism
3. Theoretical tradition 1: structural functionalism

# Societal Transformation and Progress

# Societal transformation



# Societal transformation

## Problems with “progress” view

- Order not universal
- Some societal transitions have gone counter to assumed order  
!Kung San in Kalahari Desert in Southern Africa, e.g.
- Danger of “reading history sideways”  
Looking to current hunter-gatherers for insight into the lives of ancient hunter-gatherers
- Eurocentric categories

## Usefulness of “progress” view

- Synchronicity  
Human history is very long, but agrarianism and industrialization emerged across the globe at similar times
- Asymmetric effects of societal transition  
It may be “easier” to industrialize than to de-industrialize, e.g.

# Place and the Nation-state

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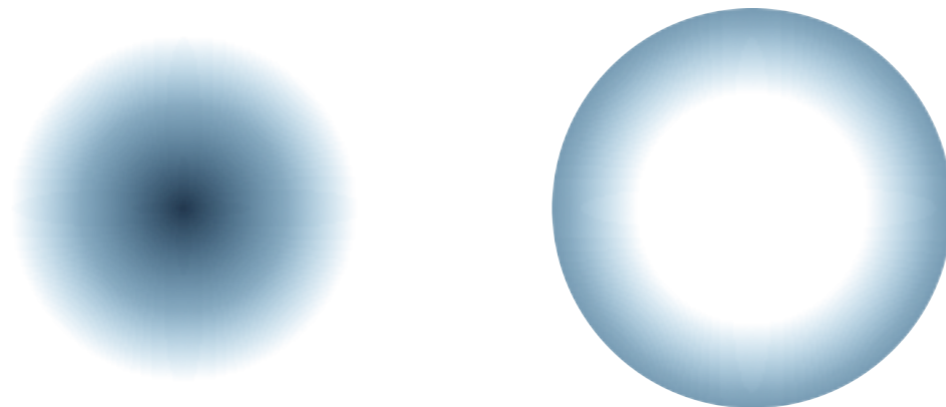
## What is a society?

- Tendency to use community or town as template

Relate to a group of people through shared trait: *place*

## Center versus border

- Two related ways to define a group
- Who am I like? What makes us similar?  
Idealized core of a group holding people together
- Who am I *not* like? What makes them different?  
Boundary of a group keeping non-members out
- Two sides of same concept, but emphasizing one or the other makes big difference



# Place and the nation-state

## The modern nation-state

- *Nation:*  
group of people sharing a cultural identity
- *State:*  
Territorial government
- Became de-facto political unit over the last 200+ years
- Currently seen as universal  
All land seen as territory

## Center versus border of the nation-state

- Sense of unified identity often invoked, and sought by governments
- Geographic boundary usually prevails

# Place and the nation-state



## Conflicting Schemas

- ∴ Multiple identities at odds within single country
  - Québec in Canada
  - Assamese in India
- ∴ Claims of unified identity used to question sovereignty
  - Russian annexation of Crimea
  - North and South Korean jurisdiction

## Nationalism

- ∴ National unity can become a tool for dominance and oppression
- ∴ Internally
  - Rwandan genocide
  - North American Indigenous genocide
- ∴ Externally
  - American exceptionalism
  - Nazi Germany





# Image credit



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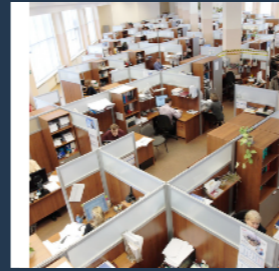
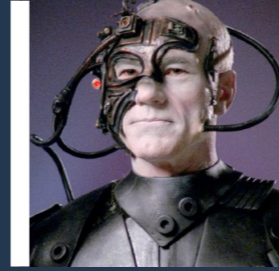


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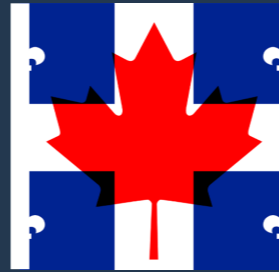
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