

Offer 4 different examples of how social groups maintain order.

Explain how these methods maintain social order.

Sponsel in his article 'The Anthropology of Peace and Nonviolence' writes 'For any society to survive there are indispensable attributes like sociability, cooperation, reciprocity, altruism, and empathy that dissuade people from regularly engaging in violence including warfare' (2017: p41). To understand and explain a society's maintenance of order it is first beneficial to discover and appreciate its culture and how violence and nonviolence are perceived. What are the beliefs? What are the learned behaviours? What are the repeated behaviours? Establishing what is normal for a society, what it believes to be acceptable and what the groups traditional beginnings and backgrounds are will assist in identifying and understanding methods used to maintain order and harmony. Physical landscape and environment can and often do have great impact on how a society finds methods to maintain order and the need for social cohesion. How a society views those within their communities also has a bearing on how social structure will be created and maintained, for example dichotomy of female and male roles. It is difficult not to compare other cultures and societies with that we know and understand, this often makes it difficult to comprehend the actions, beliefs and method of order and control.

We take this social order for granted to the extent that we tend to assume that there is anarchy and perpetual warfare in tribal societies..... what we do not realise is that such societies are acutely conscious of the fragility of the social order and of the constant effort needed to maintain it (Maybury-Lewis, 2006, p.397)

The following seeks to explore the cultures of certain groups to show how humans, defined by their environment and cultures, discover ways to maintain their social order and although these may seem very different to our own experiences and perceived culture these methods appear to have the desired effect.

The Ju/hoansi are a nomadic and egalitarian people living in the Kalahari Desert. The Ju/hoansi are a society of hunter/gatherers and their subsistence method is referred to as 'immediate-return' (Woodburn, 1982). Food is gathered and hunted daily and thus shared by the social group daily, individuals are not compelled to hunt or forage, there is no hierarchy insisting that everyone plays a role, it is knowledge of their environment that has been passed down through generations and traditions that sees members of the social group go out and cooperate, forage and hunt. This method of subsistence can be argued to have a strong element of social maintenance and behaviours. Peters-Golden, H. writes 'by pooling their [the ju/hoansi] resources at the end of the day, all people not only have enough, they also have variety' (2002: p99) she further adds 'the killing of a large animal is followed by commensurately large feast, enjoyed by all' (2002: p100) It can therefore be argued that sharing can be contributory to social cohesion. The nomadic form of hunter gathering requires

no storage for foods, there are no gardens, no boundaries, no property rights and therefore no requirement to put in place rules, regulations and leaders on how food should be grown, harvested, stored, and who should administer the rules. However, it is not to say that further social maintenance methods are not in place regarding the hunting and gathering practices. In most social groups throughout the world it is human nature for people to rise and attempt to dominate through ego and pride. This can be problematic, the Ju/hoansi are aware that with dominance can come disputes and discord. The Ju/hoansi have a method of control that serves to quash displays of pride particularly after a successful hunt, known as 'insulting the meat' a method of cooling pride amongst hunters. Rather than celebrating an individual's success and feeding his ego, the others within the group will belittle the hunted game, suggesting it is far from good and worthy, teasing and insulting the hunter. Lee, R. discovered how this 'insulting the meat' can feel when he gifted the Khoisan a cow in gratitude for their hospitality. Far from showing a way of thanking you as the northern hemisphere and other societies may understand thank you, Lee was treated in the same way as any of hunter, reducing the opportunity for higher status and prestige. What may be acknowledged by the Ju/hoansi is the quality of the arrow that made a kill, a not so successful hunter may use this arrow for future hunts. By playing down the fact that a hunter has had a good hunt the group are able to avoid the rise of any one person who may then begin to dominate and have higher status or create inferiority in those less successful. As previously noted, the Ju/hoansi are egalitarian. Although they have no chief or indeed any formal leader, they do rely on elders to mediate when problems do arise.

In the ju/hoansi society males and females are together in their group, working alongside each other foraging and socialising. The same cannot be said of the Sambia. They are an acephalous culture whose subsistence is found through horticulture, hunting and raising pigs. The environment that surrounds them has a volatile climate and the terrain upon which they live is volcanic and harsh. This description of their environment begins to give a flavour of what the Sambia culture is. The methods of control and division of males and female may not necessarily be easy to understand and indeed explain but what is very clear is there is segregation, secrecy and fear. Masculinity is very important to the Sambia male, femaleness is feared and throughout a male's life the importance of avoiding becoming female is all consuming. Males and females throughout their daily routines remain separate, they traverse different pathways, the male path being elevated to that of the females. Avoidance of females is paramount particularly for uninitiated males. Both secrecy and fear are found in the initiation of boys to men. Children in the Sambia society are unpunished and live with their mothers, that is until the day at around 7 years old when boys are taken from their mothers in an organised and brutal ritual. To this point the boys know nothing of the events that will take them from their mothers and through a series of rituals aimed at making them into men and teaching them the importance of gaining and retaining their masculinity. There is much to discuss with regards to the actual rituals but for this work the essence and result of the rituals and secrecy that creates control is of more relevance. 'Ritual secrecy surrounds this entire system, entry and exit' (Herdt, G. 2003, p71). The men and women do not live together,

this further creates secrecy. Sambia men live in club houses, where secret knowledge is shared, warfare is discussed, training for warfare action, warrior stores are shared men's knowledge. Women are not a party to this knowledge; the initiation rituals and homosexual acts are hidden from the women. The secrecy amongst the males is a control mechanism, to not keep the secrets could lead to becoming female, weak and even lead to death. The rituals and masculinity are based on around the giving and receiving of semen. Of the boys going through initiation rituals Creed writes 'They can acquire the prerequisite for domination only by subordinating themselves to those who already have semen and following their ritual dictates' (1984, p167). Women are owned by men, traded with neighbouring groups and it is expected of men to marry. The rituals men go through and the initiation of boys to men teaches the Sambia males not only how to become masculine but how to survive being with a woman, how to further top up their maleness.

Social order and methods are complex as in the Sambia culture and appear to be far simpler in the Ju/hoansi culture. Social order and maintenance are prevalent in all societies but the reasoning behind those methods and the cultural needs and beliefs are very dependent on subsistence, male and female roles, sexuality and cultural norms. Each culture has a variety of mechanisms and not one overriding methodology. It can be difficult to comprehend a cultures social control and maintenance, but it can be concluded that they have a place and relevance even if they seem alien to others.

Word count 1396

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