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• Environmental Ethics and Land Management  
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ENVR E-120

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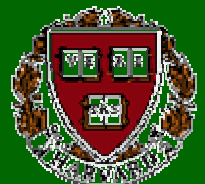
Our Historical Context: Colonialism,  
Imperialism and Sprawl

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Session 5 – Part 1  
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Harvard University Extension School  
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## Problems with 4 “Ps”

You were to identify:

A Problem

The Parties

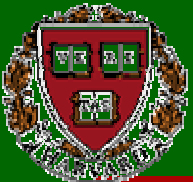
The Principles

The Policies

**Problem** and **parties** seemed easy enough.

The **policies** were readily suggested by some of the statements of the parties.

BUT some of you had difficulty formulating the “**principles**” at stake in the problems you chose to discuss.

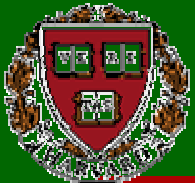


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## How to Locate (an implicit) Principle

Principles are often not stated. They are simply assumed by those advocating particular courses of action. They can usually be identified – whether or not they are explicitly stated – by thinking about a particular policy or the perspective of one of the parties concerned and then completing the following sentence:

*“I think we/you/I should do ....[such and such],...  
because, in **principle**, ...[fill in the **principle**...]”*



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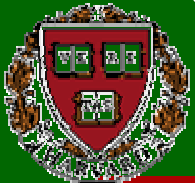
## Principles are Drawn from an overall Worldview

Principles are used explicitly or implicitly in arguments in order to persuade others that something *ought to be done* or *ought not to be done*.

Principles evoked or implied are themselves drawn from the worldview of an individual.

When principles differ this may be because there is an underlying clash of worldviews.

Since a worldview is based upon underlying implicit theories of **community, system, authority, agency, change** and **time**, you can analyze the conflict of differing worldviews by examining the contrasts that in these underlying implicit theories.



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## Contrasting Worldviews...

Remember, we often need to look beneath the “surface utterances” or “content” of the statements by the different parties to discern the deeper structural components of the arguments concerned.

Let’s turn, for example, to contrast the structure of difference between the worldview of “foragers” and that of neolithic and peasant agricultural societies.

It is instructive to learn about the ways in which the changes in “realized econiche” between these two types of societies altered their respective worldviews by changing their underlying implicit theories.



# The Foraging Worldview

## *Implicit theories*

## *Foraging Societies*

### **Community**

Those people are part of my moral community with whom I share common access to resources, language and ties of marriage and descent

### **System**

The wider natural world is made one moral community of humans divided into two – those I am descended from and those I can marry. All groups acquire their material needs from a wondrously varied and continuously bountiful ecosystem. Original affluent society. “Wide” realized econiche

### **Authority**

Authority is derived by descent and mediated through the recollection of elders. Disputes settled by council of elders acting to (re-)establish limits on individual actions appropriate to the needs of group.

### **Change**

Change is constant, driven by rhythmic and seasonal change – estuaries/tides, migrations, summer/winter – and longer term variations – drought years, flood years. Social structure designed to accommodate and buffer change – sharing mechanisms, fictive kinship,

### **Agency**

Spirits linked to specific resources (animals, fruit/nut trees), sometimes places (springs, rivers, etc), or large natural phenomena (Moon, Sun) engender change.

### **Time**

Normal experience of time is that of “life cycle.” Different things have different life-cycles, all nested within one another. One acts in reference to the time appropriate in the relevant life cycle.



What is the 'Neolithic Outlook' in these structural categories of perception?

*Implicit theories*

*Neolithic and Peasant Cultures*

**Community**

Those people are part of my moral community with whom I share common access to land, language and symbols of belief, e.g. the book.

**System**

The wider natural world is made up of many (competing) moral communities, mostly engaged in agriculture as well. – all subject hierarchically to vicissitudes of nature (floods, drought, epidemics, epizootics etc.) perceived as “acts of God” -- “ours” or “theirs”

**Authority**

Disputes settled at appropriate level of hierarchy within land-based state/religious system. Ultimately God or gods have authority and express themselves through natural processes. Priestly class vs. King

**Change**

No change but cyclical change. Putatively changeless and eternal. Norm is to resist change. Ritual effort is to rehearse system and cycle in hierarchically arranged repetitive cycles – “There is nothing new under the sun” Innovation is not rewarded. Change thought subversive.

**Agency**

God(s) is(are) agents of change – sometimes through privileged revelations to faithful followers. Prophets and “chosen people.”

**Time**

Normal experience of time is as a series of cycles within a larger structure of “interval” -- a time between a “creation” moment and a “redemption” sometime in the future..



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While ideology seeks to deny change, much change occurs over time in peasant societies.

Change occurs because of the interaction of the different elements *within* the system:

- members of different moral communities (ie. “foreigners,” “strangers in the land”) dispute access to arable land, water and resources;
- conflicts arise between specialized priestly classes and land owners or between city-based land owners and permanent peasant class;
- conflicts arise between wealth based on agricultural production and wealth derived from trade.



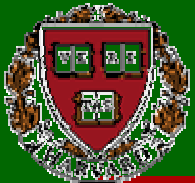


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Ultimately internal dynamic of conflicting elements in system push it “outwards.”

In Europe, the loose confederations of competing landed gentry and the royalty they support focus their competition “outwards” to obtain new raw materials useful in their intra-European struggles for domination.

Because of the *lack* of hegemony and effective political power in Europe, competing feudal structures look abroad for resources to fuel and arm their intra-European struggles for power.



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