

## Testing Culture

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## Tylor's & Morgan's Model

• SAVAGERY	• BARBARISM	• CIVILIZATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• nomadism</li><li>• hunting &amp; gathering</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• seasonal relocation</li><li>• slash and burn agriculture</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• urban settlement</li><li>• industrialization</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• discovery of fire, use of bow and arrow</li><li>• totemism and animism</li><li>• anarchy</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• pottery and smelting of iron</li><li>• polytheism and "magic"</li><li>• tribalism</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• writing and the phonetic alphabet</li><li>• Protestant Christianity</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• raiding</li><li>• matriarchy</li><li>• fertility cults &amp; sexual magic</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• barter</li><li>• polygamy</li><li>• harems &amp; promiscuity</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• nation-states (constitutional)</li><li>• currency and credit</li><li>• patriarchy</li><li>• chastity unions</li></ul>

## Testing the Civilization Model: The Roman Empire

- Some background information regarding the Roman Empire:
- [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman\\_Empire](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Empire)
- <http://www.pbs.org/empires/romans/>

## Reading for Comprehension

- Three common modes of academic writing:
- Monograph
  - ideas of a single author, making a single point.
- Synthesis
  - pulling together the ideas of many scholars to make multiple points.
- Narrative
  - telling a story, either monographically or synthetically.

## Reading a Monograph

- Imagine the monographic text as a fleshy animal of indeterminate identity. Is it a horse? A cow? A cat?
- Beneath its thick folds of skin, the animal has a skull and a skeleton that will tell you what kind of animal it is.
- Reading is the process of pushing back that skin to reveal the skeletal structure underneath it.

## Reading the Skeleton

- The author's thesis is the "skull" of the animal; it will tell you a lot about the shape of the animal inside.
- The author's argument is the "skeleton" of the animal; it supports the "skull" and also has things to tell you about the shape of the animal inside.

## Skeleton and Skin

- Once you have found the skeleton, you will be able to sort the key elements of the “skin” from the trivial ones.
- This allows you to gain greater comprehension when reading.



A pangolin

## Gerald Weiss, "A Scientific Concept of Culture"

- Author's Thesis
- What is the “problem” the author has identified?
- What is the proof that that problem exists?
- What is the author's proposed solution?
- Material culture: does culture create things, or do things create culture?
- What is Tylor's definition of culture? Why have social scientists not adhered to it?

## Weiss's argument

- Only the discipline of anthropology can deal with culture successfully
- The concept of culture can be made clear, precise, and empirical
- Terms using “culture” can be exactly defined (“cultural phenomenon,” “cultural trait,” “cultural feature,” “cultural system.”)

Only the discipline of anthropology can deal with culture successfully

- What is a “human phenomenon”? What is a “human nongenetic phenomenon”?
- What is the difference between a “society” and a “culture”?
- The cultural system
  - made up of members and artifacts
  - organizational network binding it together
  - set of modifications to make it all work as a system

The concept of culture can be made clear, precise, and empirical

- Cultural Phenomenon
- Culture trait or cultural trait
- Cultural feature
- Cultural system
- Human society (subsociety, subculture)
- Material Culture
- Enculturation