CHAPTER 5

PLATEAU ETHNOGRAPHY THE CASE FOR SOCIAL COMPLEXITY

The use of ethnography and ethnographic analogy at some level in archaeology is unavoidable (Wylie 1985; Yellen 1977). Such use, however, need not be uncritical. Ethnography can provide a tool to enhance the development of realistic inferences and the construction of historically appropriate models (cf. Hofman 1986). It is with this intent that the following section is presented. Researchers on the Plateau are fortunate to have fairly extensive ethnohistoric and ethnographic writings on many of the area's Native cultures upon which to draw. The interiors of Washington and British Columbia were largely by-passed during the Maritime Fur Trade period of the eighteenth century; indeed, the Lytton-Lillooet area of British Columbia did not see a significant white presence until gold was discovered in the Fraser Canyon in the early 1860's. Thus much of traditional Native lifeways were essentially intact (though not unaffected by processes such as introduced disease—see below) or at least remembered up to the turn of the last century, by which time ethnographers like James A. Teit were already collecting their data. At the same time, access to Euroamerican trade goods escalated dramatically in the early nineteenth century. British and American fur trade companies began setting up a network of small trading posts or "forts" in the first decade of the nineteenth century. The first post within Salish territory on the Canadian Plateau was that built at Kamloops in 1812 (Akrigg and Akrigg 1975). Further north at McLeod Lake an even earlier post was established by Simon Fraser in 1805, and just west of the Rockies, north of Windermere Lake, David Thompson built Kootenay House in 1807 (Akrigg and Akrigg 1975). In the interior of what became Washington, Spokane House and what became to be known as Fort Okanogan were both established in 1811 (Akrigg and Akrigg 1975; Bouchard and Kennedy 1979). Further to the east, both Kalispell House and Salish House had already been established by David Thompson in 1809 (Akrigg and Akrigg 1975).

The missionary period began in the 1830's (Anastasio 1985; Curtis 1911a, b; Walker 1968), but the early influence of Christianity is difficult to assess. Missionaries first appeared among the Spokan, for example, in 1838, but their presence was intermittent for a number of years after this, and thus their influence was limited (Bouchard and Kennedy 1979; Parker 1844). During this early period it is likely that the natives adopted only those aspects of Christianity that appealed to them or that conferred an advantage in trade relationships with Euroamericans (cf. Walker 1968). The most obvious physical consequence of the adoption of Christianity as it relates to burial practices was the change to extended burials in wooden coffins. This is a defining characteristic of historic period burials (Sprague 1967), and as such will not be dealt with here.

Of course, there were considerable indirect effects on aboriginal society long before direct contact. The most significant of these involved introduced disease, the horse, and firearms. Given the problems involved in accurately estimating pre-contact aboriginal populations, it is difficult to address the effects of the earliest incidences of exposure to Euroamerican-introduced diseases (cf. Boyd 1985), and these effects may have been very early indeed—Campbell (1989) suggests, based on material evidence of abrupt settlement attrition, that the Columbia Plateau experienced population decline even in the first quarter of the sixteenth century. These effects seem in some cases to have been severe, particularly in those groups in more direct contact with the coast. It is estimated, for example, that up to one-third or even more of the population of the Wishram had succumbed to disease by the time first direct contact was made by the Lewis and Clark expedition in 1805-06 (see Spier and Sapir 1930). Even if such figures are only approximately accurate, one can postulate significant changes in the societies affected. As has been convincingly argued for Northwest Coast groups such as the Kwagiulth (see for example Ruyle 1973), the status system under these conditions may open up, as individuals and families compete more directly for social positions that previously tended to be inherited. The simultaneous introduction of vast new sources of wealth through the fur trade would have further encouraged this unsettled state (cf. Cannon 1989).

The horse was introduced via Great Basin Shoshonean-speakers probably sometime in the early eighteenth century (Haines 1970). The adoption of the horse in some cases, though not in all, no doubt dramatically affected thesocieties involved, enabling them to forage, trade, and raid far more extensively than would have ever been practicable before. Of direct relevance here, the horse also quickly became a very important indicator of wealth and prestige, as it was on the Plains (Anastasio 1985; Dawson 1891; Gibbs 1877; Haines 1970; Ray 1939; Secoy 1953; Teit 1900, 1928, 1930). Further effects would have been felt by the introduction of new types and sources of wealth, and slightly later and more dramatically by firearms. During the late eighteenth century the fur trade was in full swing; in many cases coastal groups acted as middlemen (and in fact jealously guarded this position) between the Euroamerican traders and the fur-supplying groups of the interior. Thus when Simon Fraser in 1808 descended the river today bearing his name, he found Natives far into the interior already in possession of large numbers of Euroamerican goods (Lamb 1960); this despite the fact that most of them had never before set eyes upon a European. A similar situation applies to the journey of Lewis and Clark on the Columbia River in 1805-06 (Thwaites 1904-05).

But, on the negative side, early ethnohistoric and ethnographic accounts leave much to be desired in terms of detail and completeness of coverage. One gets the impression, for example, that informants were almost invariably from families of relatively high social standing—something of a problem when the goal is to compare subgroups within a single society. This is often emphasised in archival photographs which overwhelmingly portray Plateau subjects in elaborate buckskin clothing and associated regalia (Tepper [1987] has compiled a collection of Teit's photographs). The accounts of Teit (1900, 1906, 1909) and others (Nastich 1954; Romanoff 1992a) make it clear that not everyone had access to such clothing (see Chapter 4), but such individuals are rarely visible either in the photographs or in the literature.

Despite these problems, the presence of ethnohistoric and ethnographic accounts is a very definite asset for the archaeological study of mortuary remains. The use of ethnography in this work will be threefold: 1) to provide an independent measure of social complexity or socioeconomic differentiation, and the "social distances" seen within various Plateau groups, 2) to document the range of recorded burial practices, and 3) to gain insight into the assigned relative value of artifact types, as well as any emic perceptions relating to spiritual significance, age and gender specificity, and so on.

A review of the ethnohistoric and ethnographic literature provides a general basis for inferring the nature of sociopolitical organisation in different Plateau groups at or just prior to contact. Information is often available on the bases of status and prestige, and particularly on the nature of the chieftaincy. The relative richness of different areas in terms of availability of important resources (i.e. salmon, roots, and ungulates for the most part) is another important variable, as it is argued that it is the nature of the resource base that largely determines the expression of status differences. A thorough treatment of this topic is beyond the scope of the present work. A related topic on which at least limited data is often available involves the degree to which various resources are considered to be "owned" and access to them controlled. Together, this information enables the formulation of a set of expectations regarding the relative complexity of the mortuary behaviour of different groups. Thus the ethnographic data serve as an independent line of inference of the conclusions reached through the mortuary data.

Since different mortuary regimes will often be reserved for different segments of society (Binford 1971), it is extremely important to be aware of the range of burial practices for particular ethnographic groups. The basic premise is that greater variability in mortuary practices is directly correlated with increased social complexity. It is expected that archaeological evidence will reveal much of this variability, but perhaps not all of it (especially at the socioeconomically poorer end of the spectrum, where grave preservation and visibility often tend to be lower), nor its significance. On the other hand, the archaeological record may demonstrate disposal practices not documented in the ethnographic literature, especially for the prehistoric period. It has been noted that, in small communities, death is a relatively rare event. Thus any given ethnographer is likely to obtain only a very limited glimpse of mortuary behaviour and not the full range. As far back as 1930, Griffin (cited in Hofman 1986:38) observed that ethnographic sources offer information on only a small percentage of the burials which took place and are often most concerned with the more important members of society as these are more likely to involve the entire community and thus to be worthy of note to the outsider. Furthermore, by its very nature the goal of early ethnography was to record the norms of a given society. Under these circumstances, the ethnographer is likely to emphasise what he or she perceives, with the aid of *selected* informants, to be the dominant, distinguishing features of a society, including its normative burial practices. The actual variability may be

downplayed or missed altogether. The sensitivity of the topic also contributes to limiting ethnographic knowledge of burial practices.

Finally, limited ethnographic information is available concerning the use of and value attributed to various specific artifact classes. Using this, it may be possible to achieve a rough scale of relative values for goods of both native and European origin (see Chapters 3 and 4). It must, of course, be recognised that value is a fluid concept, one which will change dramatically both through time and over space in response to supply and demand. Such fluctuations were clearly occurring at a very rapid rate in the protohistoric and early historic periods (see Cannon 1989 for an excellent cross-cultural discussion of this phenomenon and how it can effect mortuary remains), and great caution must be exercised in the use of such standards during this period. These fluctuations themselves, and more particularly a society's response to them, can also be a matter of interest, one which will be explored to some extent. It may also be possible in some instances to get some idea of the significance of artifact types in terms of spiritual and ritual meaning, gender and age specificity, and so on. In practice little information of this kind exists—the concepts involved, the language difficulties, and the personal nature of the Plateau guardian spirit complex often make it difficult for ethnographers to deal with such issues. Furthermore, ethnographers frequently display only limited interest in detailing aspects of material culture.

The main body of this section describes selected aspects of a number of specific Plateau ethnolinguistic groups. Not all groups are discussed. The criteria for inclusion are, first of all, the availability of relevant ethnohistoric and/or ethnographic data, and, secondly, the relationship of the group to the core study area as outlined in Chapter 3. Use of the commonly applied term "tribe", despite its application in modern contexts (e.g. the Confederated Colville Tribes), is avoided here because of its implications regarding a specific social and political structure, one which probably did not exist on the Plateau prehistorically. The specific term "band" does, on the other hand, refer to a sociopolitical structure which did exist, and as such it is used when appropriate. Larger social units commonly referred to as tribes (e.g. the Shuswap), are here called ethnolinguistic groups, or simply "groups" or "peoples". The discussion of each "group", then, focuses on their sociopolitical organisation and their mortuary practices. A more detailed summary of ethnohistorically and ethnographically known mortuary practices on the Plateau may be found in Sprague (1967), and so only brief descriptions are provided here. A discussion of the ethnographic information available on specific artifact classes commonly seen as mortuary inclusions on the Plateau was presented in Chapter 4. Locations of groups mentioned in the text are shown in Figure 5.1.

The Columbia Plateau
The Wishram

The Dalles-Deschutes region of the Lower Columbia boundary was by all accounts the most culturally complex area on the Plateau. Both archaeological (Strong *et al.* 1930; E. Strong 1959a, b; Butler 1957, 1959, 1963, 1965; Caldwell 1956) and ethnographic (Curtis 1911a; Spier & Sapir 1930) data support this. Warren (1968) and others have stated that the "cultural climax" seen at The Dalles was completely atypical of Plateau culture as a whole, and that it should be treated separately. Despite its unique characteristics, I believe that the groups inhabiting The Dalles can be recognised as participants in the general Plateau culture pattern. In any case, a discussion of The Dalles is included here, partly in order to represent one extreme of social complexity for subsequent comparison to other areas of the Plateau.

Ethnographically The Dalles area was occupied by the Chinookan-speaking Wishram (much of what is recounted in the following paragraphs likely applies equally to the Wasco of the south bank of the Columbia at The Dalles). There has been, however, some debate over which ethnolinguistic group occupied the area in prehistory and even in the protohistoric period. Some Plateau scholars have suggested that the area was occupied by Salish-speaking people as late as ca. A.D. 1750 (W. Strong *et al.* 1930; Teit 1928:96-100; Spier and Sapir 1930). Others have strongly denied that any firm evidence exists for such a proposal (Suttles and Elmendorf in Thomison 1987; Rigsby 1965; Pettigrew 1977). This debate may have little affect on the present analysis, since presumably the resource base was the same and a similarly complex social organisation can be postulated regardless of which language group was in residence. As documented in the next chapter, archaeological evidence, while not necessarily demonstrating either cultural continuity or discontinuity (at least not at the level of analysis possible here), does indicate the presence of considerable complexity in the area through thousands of years of prehistory.

Ethnographically, the Wishram were practically unique on the Plateau in that class feeling was strongly marked, the people recognising three classes in addition to slaves (Spier & Sapir 1930:211). The

first class was composed of the chiefs, who were for the most part strictly hereditary, and their families (see also Curtis 1911a:87). The power of the chief was both real and considerable. The second class included a variety of other families of good standing, including those of war chiefs and shamans. The final class was comprised of the poor, who owned no slaves and little of anything else. Slaves were considered to be outside of the social system altogether.

Figure 5.1: Map of Plateau Showing Locations of Ethnographic Groups
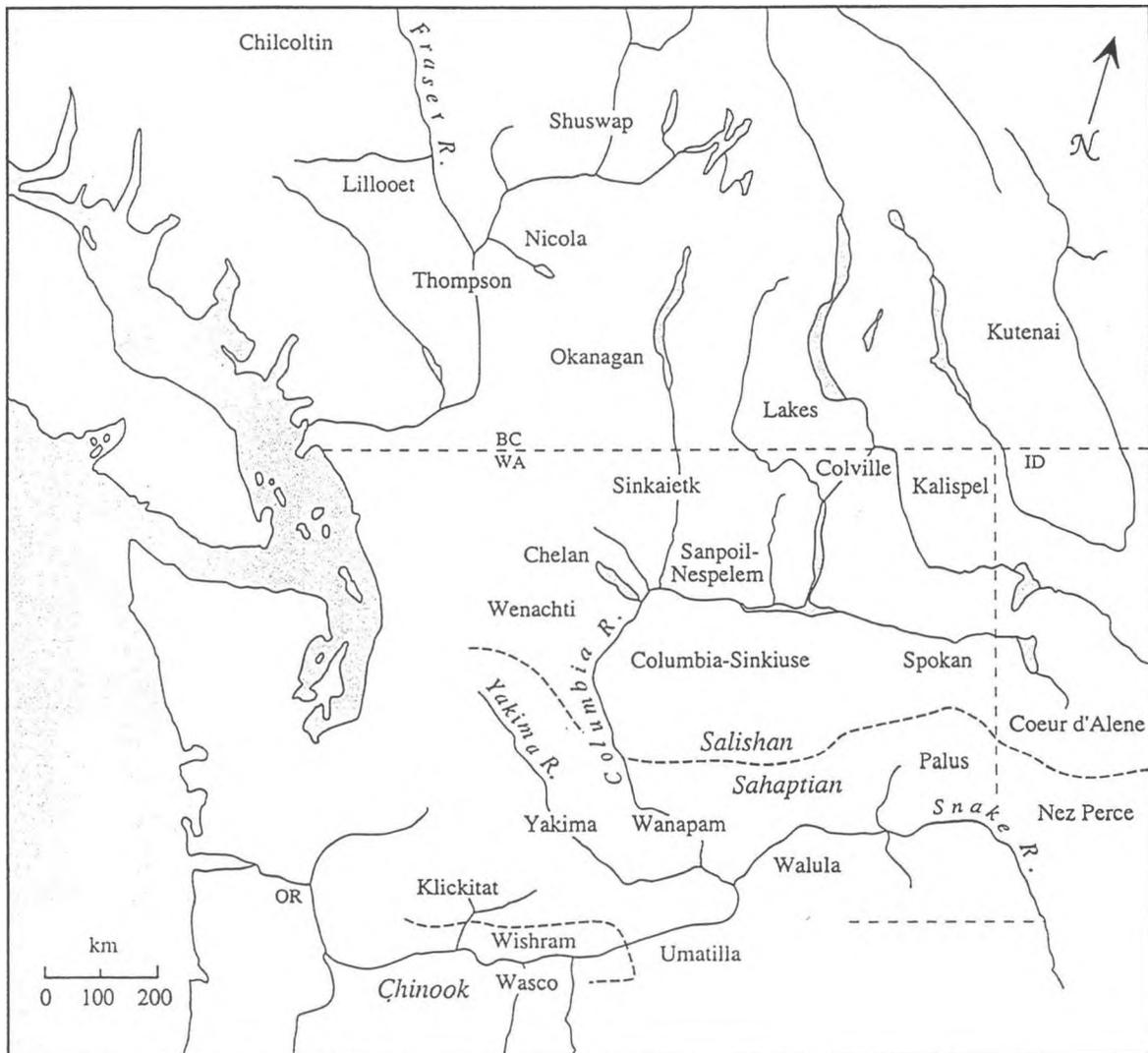
From these accounts it would appear that the Wishram fit the description of a stratified society. As Curtis (1911a:87) states: "... the individual could scarcely aspire to enter circles above that in which he was born". The emphasis on ascribed status is further apparent from the practices of cranial deformation and ear piercing. Cranial deformation was regarded as essential in the upper classes (Kane 1968:124), and of course could only be done in infancy. The ears of both sexes were pierced when only a few years old. Up to five holes were made in each ear for the suspension of valued dentalia beads and other ornaments. The number of holes gave prestige, but extra holes would never be added later in life (Spier and Sapir 1930); thus only ascribed status could be indicated in this way. Membership in the social classes primarily, though not solely, represented gradations of wealth (Spier & Sapir1930:211). Lesser chiefs, in fact, were simply the heads of wealthy families (Curtis 1911a:87). Attempts were made to arrange marriages, sometimes from infancy, between families of high rank from other villages (Curtis 1911a:89; Spier and Sapir 1930:217). Marriages were legitimised through gift exchange of approximately equal value (although more seems to have been given in bridewealth than was generally returned), with the value of the gifts conferring status to the union (Spier and Sapir 1930:217-218; see also Parker 1844:197). Polygyny was common among the upper classes, with wealthy men having as many as eight wives (Curtis 1911a:89; Spier and Sapir 1930: 218).

Wealth and prestige were measured in, among other things, slaves (Curtis 1911a:88; Spier & Sapir 1930). Not all households owned slaves; the wealthiest might own ten or so (Curtis 1911a:88). Both male and female slaves performed a number of useful economic and prestige-related activities, ranging from fishing to root digging to paddling the canoes of nobles (Curtis 1911a:87-88; Parker 1844:256). Slavery was hereditary, although, apparently contradicting this, slaves were encouraged to flatten the heads of their children (Curtis 1911a:88; Spier and Sapir [1930], on the other hand, seem to deny that this privilege was ever conferred upon the children of slaves). The keeping of slaves on a large scale may be seen as one indicator of social complexity, and is certainly not expected among egalitarian societies. In early historic times, significant numbers of slaves were bought and sold at The Dalles; in fact, Euroamerican traders even became involved in the lucrative trade. Whether, as Ray (1939) suggests, this pattern represents only a relatively recent one, influenced by the Northwest Coast via the Lower Columbia, remains to be seen. However, it seems unlikely based on the archaeological evidence for considerable complexity, to be discussed in Chapter 6.

The Wishram were apparently only rarely involved in intergroup hostilities (Spier and Sapir 1930:229). Slaves were purchased rather than acquired directly. When there was need for hostilities, the Wishram again relied on their great wealth, purchasing the services of Klickitat warriors, who acted as mercenaries for the highest bidder (Curtis 1911a:94, 1911b:38). The Wishram did have among themselves a class of men who acted as public assassins—sometimes slaves would act in this capacity for their owners (see Ruyle 1973 for a discussion of the similar uses to which slaves were put among the Nuu-chah-nulth of western Vancouver Island). It should be noted that Spier and Sapir (1930) do not mention the use of Klickitat mercenaries, although the possible existence of hired assassins could be implied in their discussion of blood retribution in cases of murder. Serious disputes between village members were brought before chiefs, whose decisions were final and implicitly obeyed. Chiefs did not deign to judge in cases involving the lower classes, but the "middle classes" were considered to be under their protection and cases involving them required the chiefs' attention (Spier and Sapir 1930:215).

The pre-eminent position of The Dalles was due both to its excellence for salmon fishing and its importance as a trading centre, probably the most active such centre, in terms of volume, on the entire Plateau if not in the whole of western North America (Anastasio 1985; Curtis 1911a; Ross 1969; Spier and Sapir 1930; Wood 1972). Gambling was another major activity at The Dalles, such that Butler (1957:160) refers to Wishram (frequently used as the name of the main Wishram village) as a "... gambling mecca and slave trading center second to none in the area".

The constrained rapids of the Long Narrows undoubtedly provided the most productive salmon runs on the Columbia Plateau. The best fishing stations, however, were limited and strictly family or individually owned and inherited (Curtis 1911a:95; Spier and Sapir 1930:175; E. Strong 1960a:45). Seaman (1946:74) relates a myth in which the Plateau culture hero Coyote built a race below Celilo Falls to give the poor people a place to fish, since "... all the good fishing places along the main stream were owned by the rich people". Wealthy families could apparently purchase rights in the fishing stations of others as well (Curtis 1911a:95). While The Dalles was known for the number of people of different groups that congregated there, those actually wishing to make use of the rich fisheries paid for the privilege (Curtis 1911a:95); others had to trade for the food they needed. Rock art is found mainly high on cliffs near good

fishing spots and occasionally further from the river on trails to the spots (E. Strong 1960a:104; Bergen 1989); possibly indicating that the images were being used at least partly to identify ownership of important fishing stations. This idea was expanded upon in some detail in Chapter 4.

Interestingly, Spier and Sapir (1930:185) state that acorn storage pits, consisting of pot-holes in boulders along the river bank, were also individually owned. They add that acorns required extensive preparation to render them fit for consumption (see T. Jackson [1991] for a description of acorn preparation among California Native groups), and were not considered a staple but rather a "leisure" food. This suggests that acorns may have been a high status food, possibly distributed at feasts.

The strategic position of the Wishram furthermore gave them control over river traffic moving in both directions, securing their position as middlemen (Curtis 1911a; Ross 1969; Spier and Sapir 1930). The Wishram themselves reportedly never felt the need to travel outside of their territory to conduct trade, since all groups came to them (Spier and Sapir 1930:224). Trade, even among the Wishram, was not open to everyone; rather, it was carried out through a system of inter-village "trading partners" (Cressman 1960) that may have been largely restricted to members of the elite, including chiefs and important shamans (cf. Spier and Sapir 1930:225). Containers of standard size were used to hold powdered dried salmon, as well as dried huckleberries, hazelnuts, and acorns. It is likely that this standardisation resulted from their frequent use as measures in the extensive trade that occurred at The Dalles (Spier and Sapir 1930:178, 185). A modified form of the language spoken by the Wishram—Chinook—became the trade jargon used over much of western North America (Ruby and Brown 1976).

The early nineteenth century upriver excursions of the American and British fur traders, bypassing the Wishram and neighbouring Sahaptian-speaking Wayampam, were greatly resented, making the Long Narrows one of the most dangerous parts of the journey (Ross 1956, 1969; see also accounts in Ruby and Brown 1976). Alexander Ross (1956:90-91) recounts that in the early nineteenth century the chiefs of the villages controlling The Dalles repeatedly accosted the traders and demanded payment in exchange for an undisturbed passage—they even tried to institute a permanent tribute system.

Lewis and Clark reached Wishram in October of 1805; at that time a village of 21 substantial plank houses (Thwaites 1904-05). Curtis (1911a:92) states that from four to six families typically occupied each house, with each family consisting of from 10 to 15 people. This would make the village a large one indeed, possibly holding over 1000 people, and presumably this does not include slaves. Even this was in the "off" season; during the summer thousands more camped in the area in mat lodges (Ross 1956, 1969). Spier and Sapir (1930:164-171) place the permanent population at Wishram village at about 400, although they record the presence of a number of almost equally large villages within a short distance of one another (they are also dealing with a later time, following the effects of further population loss through introduced disease). The door planks of a chief's house were carved and painted with animal representations (Curtis 1911a:91), most likely related to guardian spirit power and/or crest imagery as opposed to simple decoration. House planks themselves were sometimes individually owned and considered valuable property (E. Strong 1959a:87).

The Wishram, and the Chinookan-speaking peoples in general, were subjected to massive population decline from an early date. Demographic changes due to the effects of introduced disease may have first been felt as early as the sixteenth century (Campbell 1989), but it was the devastating smallpox and malaria epidemics of the late eighteenth and early to mid-nineteenth centuries that reduced the Wishram to a fraction of their former population. Malaria alone is estimated to have been responsible for an 87 percent population decline among the Lower Columbia River Chinookan and Kalapuyan peoples between 1830 and 1840 (Boyd 1992). Dobyns (1992) has reasonably argued that large Native North American trade centres were particularly susceptible to pandemic disease, and suffered a far higher mortality than nontraders. It is difficult with the data at hand to relate the effects of early population decline among the Wishram to sociopolitical organisation (and indeed this applies to all Plateau groups to some degree).

The burial practices of the Wishram as recorded by Spier and Sapir (1930) are representative of what were then relatively recent times. The dead were placed in family owned burial vaults or houses on islands, such as the Upper and Lower Memalooses ("*memaloose*" meaning "dead" or "death" in Chinook), in the Columbia. The vaults were made of boards and pieces of canoes, and considerable labour went into their construction (see accounts of Lewis and Clark in Thwaites 1904-05). Lewis (1905:171) writes: "Carved wooden images were frequently set up around the vaults, and the planks were often carved and painted to represent men or various animals". As with those found on house fronts, it is likely that these images represent spirit power and/or crest symbols (I would argue that there often exists an area of overlap

between the two). In fact, the decorated housefront planks themselves were sometimes deposited at the graves of their owners (Spier and Sapir 1930). The existing photographs (see for example Seaman 1946) of the collapsed remnants of these burial sheds do not give a good impression of how they must have appeared originally. Most or all of the carved pieces were likely stolen by Euroamericans at a very early date. As far as I have been able to find, only one photograph (Oregon Historical Society, OHSI 4227) retains carved images, those of four human faces on a plank forming the lintel of a mortuary vault on "Memaloose Island". Canoe fragments integrated into or placed near the mortuary houses were sometimes also elaborately carved (see Spier and Sapir 1930:299, Plate 13). The wood that was used in construction was itself a valued commodity in the largely treeless environment of the region. Lewis and Clark noted the presence of 13 such "sepulchres" on Lower Memaloose Island in 1805 (Thwaites 1904-05); the use of these islands continued up into the 1880's and even later in some cases (E. Strong 1959a:82; Cole 1958). Interestingly, despite the abundant archaeological evidence for late prehistoric, protohistoric and even early historic period cremations to be discussed in Chapter 6, Spier and Sapir's (1930:271) informants insisted that cremation was never practised by the Wishram or any neighbouring group.

During ethnographic times there was a marked distinction in the accompanying mortuary treatment accorded to chiefs. Their funerals were far more elaborate; horses and sometimes slaves would be killed to honour the deceased and to emphasise their wealth (Curtis 1911a:99; Spier and Sapir 1930:212, 271). Before the region was flooded, the bones of horses could be found strewn over Memaloose and Grave Islands (Cole 1958). (A large disinterment project removed as estimated 3000 individuals from these two islands, together with many elaborate grave inclusions [Cole 1958].) Much additional property of the deceased "...was distributed among his relatives and other chiefs as remembrances" (Spier & Sapir 1930:271). A year or less after death, the deceased's bones would be wrapped in a new skin and a feast held (Curtis 1911a:99).

The Umatilla

Little ethnographic information referring specifically to the Sahaptian-speaking Umatilla is available. Burial sheds similar to those already described for the Wishram were probably used. Lewis and Clark (Thwaites 1904-05) provide a detailed description of a shed on Blalock Island. Other members of the expedition (cited in Sprague 1967:171), however, provide accounts of burials not occurring in sheds. In these accounts, most or all of the deceased's property was interred in the grave, and a canoe was split and set up around the grave. This presents the possibility that one form of burial or the other may have been reserved for a high status social group. Fur trader Ross Cox (1957:77) in 1812 observed a burial site which Sprague (1967:172) believes must have been within Umatilla territory. Cox describes nine shallow excavations, covered with sloping pine and cedar boards, containing large numbers of bodies in various states of decomposition. All were carefully wrapped in mats and skins. Offerings, including robes, cloth, kettles, "trinkets", wooden bowls, and basketry, were suspended on poles. Finally, Cox (1957:77) observed: "Several of the boards are carved and painted with rude representation of men, bears, wolves, and animals unknown". This could suggest that the Umatilla had something along the lines of clan organisation, since it is typically clan crest figures that are thus depicted on graves.

The Nez Percé

The Nez Percé were the largest and most powerful Sahaptian-speaking group on the Plateau. While they are somewhat peripheral in terms of the study area as defined here, the availability of considerable ethnographic information and its relevance to neighbouring groups justifies at least a brief description. The sociopolitical organisation and material culture of the Nez Percé is sufficiently similar to that of neighbouring Sahaptian and Salish groups to give the discussion more general relevance. The main ethnographic source for the Nez Percé is Herbert Spinden (1964), who wrote at the turn of the last century, and it is his work that forms the basis of much of the following discussion.

Each Nez Percé band maintained at least one important permanent village, as well as a number of temporary fishing camps. Ownership of fishing locations was invested in the village as a whole. The band was the basis of sociopolitical organisation, each one recognising at least one chief (see also Curtis 1911a). During the ethnographic period chiefs were elected, but in practice the office was loosely hereditary, and a son would often succeed his father. The power of the chief, which Spinden (1964:242) states was considerable within the band, depended largely on the size of the following he was able to retain. Support was gathered through a combination of one's personal qualities (such as skill in war and in oratory) and the use of one's own resources together with those of kin ties to amass food and wealth for distribution to

followers (Walker 1968:16). Polygamy was reportedly common and was directly dependent on wealth (Farrand 1921:246; see also Curtis 1911a). Marriage involved the exchange of gifts of approximately equal value (Curtis 1911a:50), thus encouraging the alliance of socioeconomic equals.

As might be expected given their location on the eastern periphery of the Plateau, the Nez Percé were one of the groups strongly influenced by Plains culture during the protohistoric period. I am not aware of any studies addressing the intensity of this connection in prehistory, but with the introduction of the horse, sometime in the early eighteenth century (Haines 1970), most of the Nez Percé certainly adopted the Plains way of life to a large extent (Spinden 1964:183; Walker 1968). Horses became the main avenue to acquiring wealth and prestige, and chiefs and other leading men frequently owned large herds (Anastasio 1985). In addition, the position of the Nez Percé on both the hostile eastern and southern peripheries of the Plateau meant that warfare was developed to a far greater extent among them than any other Columbia Plateau group during the historic period. Prowess in war thus came to be an highly desirable quality in the leaders chosen. This pattern may differ substantially from that of the pre-horse era (Walker 1968:14).

Cemeteries among the Nez Percé were placed near enough to village sites for graves to be visible from them, usually on the first terrace above a river. Ground inhumation and talus burials were used (Curtis 1911a; Spinden 1964; Sprague 1959). In 1806, Lewis and Clark (Thwaites 1904-05) observed the use of burial sheds formed of boards and sometimes pieces of canoes. Sprague (1967:159, 166, 173) distinguishes these from the more formal mortuary structures used by the Wishram, calling them instead "low-lying sheds". Lewis and Clark (Thwaites 1904-05) and Curtis (1911a) note that horses were sometimes killed near the grave. Farrand (1921:246) adds that the killing of horses occurred especially when the deceased was a chief. Considerable property would be both buried with the deceased and given away at the funerary feast held some months (Spinden 1964:246) or up to a year later, when the family had gathered sufficient food (Farrand 1921:246).

The Spokan and Coeur d'Alêne

Immediately to the north of the Nez Percé were the Salish-speaking Spokan and Coeur d'Alêne. The sociopolitical organisation of both groups was very similar. The main sociopolitical unit was the band, which could be comprised of either a single village, or a number of small villages, one of which would be recognised as the principal village (Teit 1930:150). Each of these local bands had its own chief; once again this position can be described as loosely hereditary (Curtis 1911b). Among at least the Spokan the position was, in addition to lineage, based largely on wealth (Ruby and Brown 1970:13). After the introduction of the horse, the organisation of both groups changed rapidly, moving, as did that of the Nez Percé, towards more of a tribal chiefdom, with larger divisions comprised of many local bands (Ruby and Brown 1970; Teit 1930). The Coeur d'Alêne, located to the east of the Spokan, were especially influenced by Plains culture in the historic period, and presumably in the protohistoric period as well. When circumstances called for concerted action, both the Spokan and the Coeur d'Alêne could act as tribal units under the leadership of a single chief (Teit 1930). Among the Coeur d'Alêne, slaves were either taken as captives in war or purchased from other groups. Slaves were few, however, and well treated—there is no evidence that they performed a useful economic function (other than that provided by the sale of war captives back to their own people), nor would they be killed upon the death of their owners. Polygamy was practised among those of the Spokan who could afford it (Curtis 1911b:74; Ruby and Brown 1970:12) and probably by the Coeur d'Alêne as well.

Burial among the Spokan and the Coeur d'Alêne took place in sandy terraces and dunes, or talus slopes (Curtis 1911b; Teit 1930). Teit (1930) notes that, among the Coeur d'Alêne, very few goods were ever placed in graves, although informants state that "long ago" some items were interred with the deceased and blankets hung on poles around the grave (see also Curtis 1911b:76). Canoe fragments were occasionally hauled over the grave, and plain poles painted red might be erected. Fires were also sometimes built over graves. As is typical with ethnographic information of this sort, Teit does not specify the conditions under which these "sometimes" practices would occur. There is the potential for these behaviours to be related to status differences. Two practices can be explicitly linked with status differences. Referring specifically to the Coeur d'Alêne, Teit (1930) states that at burial the wealthy were wrapped in a good skin robe, while the poor would be wrapped only in mats. If someone died at a distance from the village, only rarely would an effort be made to return the body for burial in the family cemetery; such treatment was reserved for the bodies of chiefs and "prominent men". The Coeur d'Alêne were said to have had no custom of taking up the bones of the deceased and re-wrapping them before reinterment (Teit 1930).

Spokan graves around the turn of the nineteenth century were marked by horse hides, buffalo robes, weapons, kettles, and ornaments (Ruby and Brown 1970:30). During the historic period, log house structures were built for the dead, sometimes containing up to five or six bodies. A photograph of one such structure can be seen in Ruby and Brown (1970, following page 76).

The Yakima

The Yakima Valley is relatively poorly known both ethnographically and archaeologically. During the protohistoric period, many of the observations made concerning the Nez Percé are applicable to the Yakima. The Sahaptian-speaking Yakima are commonly divided into the Lower Yakima, or the Yakima proper, and the Upper Yakima, or the Kittitas. Chieftaincy was probably originally loosely hereditary in both (see Curtis 1911b:9). Curtis (1911b:14) states: "Pride of birth is still noticeable, and formerly a chief's son usually married the daughter of another chief...". The last part of the quote implies that marriages were arranged and exogamous, at least in the chiefly lineages. As in the Plains-influenced eastern Plateau groups, emphasis in the chieftaincy may have shifted to proven leadership ability as intergroup hostilities increased in the protohistoric and early historic periods. This increase in hostilities encouraged the Yakima to adopt a tribal organisation. Archaeological survey demonstrates that defensive stoneworks were built in certain strategic locations during the historic period (Smith 1910; W. Smith 1977). In 1814, fur trader Alexander Ross (cited in Anastasio 1985:158) noted a large gathering in Yakima territory, observing that the tents of the chiefs were placed in the middle of the encampment. This placement may have served a defensive function.

Horses were integrated into Yakima society at a relatively early date, and came to play an important role in the prestige system (Anastasio 1985). It seems that the acquisition of the horse may have shifted the power structure on the Plateau. Groups such as the Yakima with an extensive territory comprised largely of rolling plateaus with ample rangeland may have been at an advantage in this regard. Their increased mobility, together with access to firearms, would enable them to greatly expand their sphere of influence and trading capabilities, thereby taking advantage of the opportunities created by the new Euroamerican trade.

During the ethnographic period, then, the Yakima as a whole probably attained greater power than they had in the prehistoric period. Strong ties were forged with the Wishram, although it is difficult to say whether or not these may have also existed earlier. In the nineteenth century, the Yakima insisted on permission to use their territory; such permission, if granted, would always be for a specific purpose and for a limited duration (Ray 1939:17). Scouts wereeven posted at strategic locations to monitor entry and behaviour in lands claimed by the Yakima (Ray 1939:17). Slaves were taken as captives in war as well as purchased, and were held to be very valuable—Curtis (1911b:14) states that it required five horses to purchase one slave, and that this referred to a time when horses were still relatively rare.

Little ethnographic information on the burial practices of the Yakima is available. Undoubtedly the Yakima, like their neighbours, practised inhumation in terraces and sandy knolls as well as talus slope burial. In 1811, Ross (1969:144), after passing the confluence of the Yakima, noted a series of burial places on small eminences, always with a few small sticks marking the place. There is no ethnohistoric or ethnographic evidence that the Yakima used either mortuary sheds of the type seen among the Wishram, Umatilla, or the "low-lying sheds" of the Nez Percé. Curtis (1911b:9) states that canoe burial was common among the Yakima, and there is archaeological evidence for cremation (Smith 1910).

Harlan I. Smith (1910:148) stated regarding the Yakima Valley: "Compared with other branches of the Plateau culture area it must be considered inferior in complexity [reference here is to material culture] to its northern neighbour of the southern interior of British Columbia and also to the adjacent branch near The Dalles to the south". He further notes that Lewis and Clark found the culture to be of a relatively simple and undeveloped sort. These statements could be taken to imply that the Yakima were less organisationally complex than many other western Plateau groups. However, the information available is really too sparse to decide the issue.

The Columbia and Wenatchi

The Columbia (or *Sinkiuse*) and the Wenatchi are often referred to together as the Middle Columbia Salish. Relatively little information is available on these two groups. Their social organisation largely parallels what has already been observed regarding Sahaptian-speaking groups on the Columbia Plateau outside of The Dalles. Chieftaincy in some bands was hereditary, but in the majority it was also based in part on the pre-eminence of an individual in wealth, war, and other personal abilities

(Teit 1928).The Columbia and Wenatchi were the principal traders of the Salish people in the west Columbia Plateau, travelling to The Dalles and thence to minor trading centres located at the mouth of the Okanagan and at the mouth of the Snake (Teit 1928). The people were known for their abundant ornamentation, principally marine shell beads, tubular copper beads, bracelets, and pendants, and tooth and claw core necklaces. Some individuals were tattooed (Teit 1928). Teit (1928:120) writes: "... there appears to have been a good deal of difference in wealth between different families, more so than in the tribes to the east and north. Some had great quantities of skins, clothes, and horses; while others were very poor". The horse quickly became important in this region, such that by the 1830's large herds existed. Wealth was measured largely by the number of horses one owned. The chiefs and other leading men gathered large herds, while other members of the community had few animals. One chief in the 1830s is said to have owned a herd of between 500 and 1000 horses (Teit 1928).

Teit (1928) records that the Columbia and Wenatchi practised interment in sandy terraces near the village or, when available, in talus slopes. Cremation is not mentioned for either group. Graves were lined with mats, bark, and slabs of stone, when these were convenient. Reportedly, nearly all interments would be covered with a stone cairn and marked by a small pole. (Elsewhere, Teit states that stone slabs would be placed around a grave only when convenient. This is not consistent with our expectations given the energy expenditure model outlined in Chapter 2. Whether this ethnographic information was available or not, however, a stone-lined facility would not be interpreted as indicative of higher status unless supported by some other dimension of mortuary variability, such as a greater frequency and/or richness of grave inclusions.) Teit (1928) further notes that canoes were also sometimes placed over the graves, although he does not expand on the circumstances in which this would be likely to occur. Finally, it is noted that some articles, mainly pipes and ornaments, were placed in the grave, while others were hung on grave poles (Teit 1928:127).

The Sanpoil-Nespelem

Verne Ray did most of his ethnographic work among the Interior Salish-speaking Sanpoil-Nespelem. These groups epitomised the pacifist and egalitarian traits that he saw as central to the original Plateau way of life, prompting such statements as: "Class distinctions were unthinkable" and "Nor did wealth carry with it an advance in status" (Ray 1932:25-26). Even if Ray was largely accurate in his depiction of these two groups, which is questionable, there is little basis on which to generalise from them to the rest of the Plateau. For one thing, the relative egalitarianism of the Sanpoil-Nespelem may have been largely a result of their environmental circumstances. Ray (1932:114) refers to the comparative poverty of the Sanpoil as the reason they were largely spared raids by other groups (although Ruby and Brown [1970:15] state that the neighbouring Spokan did frequently raid the Sanpoil). The Sanpoil-Nespelem may have also participated less fully in the new wealth brought by the fur trade. Other Okanogan groups apparently felt the Sanpoil to be particularly impoverished—in clothing, horses, guns and food—(see ethnohistoric accounts in Bouchard and Kennedy 1979), but this may have been a bias on their parts.

Ray's own data give somewhat conflicting impressions regarding the structure of Sanpoil society and the inequalities that existed. The basic sociopolitical unit was the village/band, each with its own chief. Ray, seemingly at great pains to emphasise the equality of Sanpoil social and political institutions, writes: "When a new chief was selected any man was eligible", selection being made by "... popular vote on the basis of moral character alone" (1932:25). Yet later in the same work Ray (1932:110) explicitly describes the chieftaincy as hereditary in principle and often in practice. It was only when more than one individual was eligible (brothers having more or less equal claim to the position) that a "popular vote" was resorted to. In fact, Ray (1932:69) describes not only the position of village/band chief as hereditary, but he also describes the prestigious position of Salmon Chief as "nominally hereditary", with a son frequently taking over the position from his father. Other positions conferring high prestige were that of hunting chief, gambler, and shaman. Polygamy was practised extensively (Ray 1932:142) in what I refer to as these high status positions. While Ray denies that chiefs were wealthier than any other village member, the prevalence of polygamy among chiefs and others in prestigious positions strongly implies that these individuals were indeed above average in wealth.

The village chief wore special insignia indicating his position—a headdress with buckskin pendants covered with eagle feathers, but the status of a chief's family was held not to be different from that of other families (Ray 1932:111). Yet Ray (1932:137-139) also states that prestigious families arranged marriages for their children, and that there was "... some tendency for the sons of chiefs, shamans and others of achievement to marry daughters of men of like standing". And since reciprocal gifts formed a

part of the marriage contract, "... families of like economic status were more often united than those of markedly different resources" (Ray 1932:139). Thus despite Ray's insistence on the Sanpoil's egalitarianism and lack of wealth, we find in his own data evidence that a differential distribution of both prestige and wealth did exist, and moreover that the two appear to have been correlated.

Burial took place in terraces or hillsides near the village. The burial of a chief or shaman was, according to Ray's informants, identical to that of others. Children were also accorded the same treatment in death as other members of society. But then Ray (1932:150) also states that the poor were wrapped only in mats, while others (i.e. the wealthy) were wrapped in both deer skins and tule mats. Presumably such minor distinctions did not figure as significant in Ray's scheme. Goods were placed with the body, and the grave was frequently marked with cedar sticks (Ray 1932:151). Reportedly, horses were never killed as part of the funerary rites, but were inherited, usually by a surviving brother (Ray 1932:152). There apparently were no special family burial places, which argues against any significant sustained socioeconomic ascendancy for certain families. However, archaeological data from within traditional Sanpoil territory discussed in Chapter 6 documents the presence of significant inequalities in non-perishable wealth interred with the dead.

The Colville (Shwayip)

There is less information available on the Colville, or *Shwayip*, than on their immediate neighbours to the southwest, the Sanpoil. But besides the potential biases in Ray's Sanpoil data, its applicability to the situation among the Colville is highly questionable since it was the latter that controlled the fishery at Kettle Falls. Too often the Colville are lumped together with surrounding groups (Chance and Chance 1985). Kettle Falls, or Ithkoyape, was the most important salmon fishing location on the Columbia Plateau after The Dalles (Hewes 1947:109; Ray 1932:62). As with other major fishing locations on the Plateau, Kettle Falls was also an important trading centre (Teit 1930:250); in fact, Anastasio (1985:154) refers to it as the most important meeting place of the southern Salish. Kettle Falls itself marked the boundary between the Lakes and the Colville people. It was held by the latter group, but apparently also shared with the Lakes to some extent (Curtis 1911b:64).

The Colville occupied a very small territory. This, together with the heavily wooded terrain, resulted in their being little affected by the introduction of the horse compared to neighbouring Salish groups. They were undoubtedly indirectly affected, however, by the shift in power relations over the entire Plateau. Chieftaincy among the Shwayip was largely hereditary. Again, something akin to chiefly, or perhaps more accurately Big Man, status could be also achieved through feasting and the distribution of wealth to a group of supporters. John Work, writing in the 1920s, noted a clear relationship between wealth and the chieftaincy (cited in Chance and Chance 1925). Paul Kane (1968:216), who visited Kettle Falls in 1846, stated that the Colville were governed by two chiefs, the "Chief of the Earth" and the "Chief of the Waters" (later commonly referred to as the Salmon Chief), both of whom exercised great power and influence. Among the Lakes, chieftainship is also described as having been generally hereditary (Bouchard and Kennedy 1985). A study of sporadic early Jesuit records (1838-1841 and later) suggests that chiefly families married outside of their local group more frequently than other families (Chance and Chance 1985).

Many Plateau scholars have emphasised the accessibility of the Kettle Falls fishery to anyone wanting to use it (see especially Jorgensen 1980:130 and Ray 1939). This is in turn used as support for an egalitarian view of Plateau society. There are a number of problems with such a view. The fishery was no doubt to some degree open to most of the surrounding groups. But this was probably not solely due to the egalitarian and generous nature of its inhabitants. The salmon runs at Kettle Falls were so productive—second only to The Dalles on the Columbia Plateau—and yet so limited in duration that the Shwayip alone could not possibly utilise even a small fraction of the available fish. Therefore they stood nothing to lose by making the fishery accessible to other groups. By doing so they may have defused potential hostilities (cf. Cannon 1992:518 regarding a similar situation for the Fraser River Lillooet on the Canadian Plateau), earned reciprocal rights to resources in other territories, and facilitated trade in their territory, over which they retained a greater degree of control than would otherwise have been the case. Their success in achieving these goals is attested to by their role as arbitrators in disputes rather than as participants and by the degree to which they were sedentary traders. Anastasio (1985:155) states: "... they [the Colville] are not reported as being raided, although nearby groups raided each other" (again this scenario displays striking similarities to that described by Cannon [1992] for the Fraser River Lillooet). Teit (1930:255) notes: "The

Colville did no carrying or hardly any. Their country was small and the surrounding tribes all came to them".

It is also important to note that the fishery was probably not indiscriminately open to literally anyone. Permission was required to fish (Kane 1968:217), and many of the individuals in the groups using the resource would have had kinship ties with the Colville. Furthermore, as Chance *et al.* (1977) note, the Kettle Falls fishery was limited in the number of good fishing sites available. The best sites would, then, most likely be monopolised by those individuals and families with the appropriate standing in the community. According to Paul Kane (1968:217), the salmon chief of the Colville placed his large fish basket a month before anyone else was allowed to. Kane (1968:219) writes: "After the expiration of one month, the Salmon Chief abandons his exclusive privilege, as the fish are then getting thin and poor, and allows all who wish it to take them". The salmon chief distributed the salmon thus taken equally among *his* people (presumably limited to only the Colville), likely gaining reciprocal exchange privileges as well as prestige in the process.

The Colville population at Kettle Falls appears to have declined drastically after about 1785 due to introduced diseases (Chance *et al.* 1977). The Colville and Lakes were further decimated by smallpox around 1800 and again in 1832 (Teit 1930:212). It is possible that these rapid demographic changes may have affected the ability of the Colville to assert their claim to the fishery effectively, so that the situation observed ethnographically may not be entirely applicable in prehistory. Furthermore, population decline among the Colville may have been more rapid than that of neighbouring groups (Leeds *et al.* 1985). On the other hand, as shall be seen in Chapter 6, there is little evidence for a more elaborate material culture and social organisation (such as that seen at The Dalles) in the vicinity of Kettle Falls prehistorically.

Root resources were also very important to the Colville, probably second only to salmon. Council members of the modern Colville Confederated Tribes remarked that root digging areas were sometimes so exclusive that they were recognised as belonging to individual families (Galm *et al.* 1981:23). It is likely, need it be said, that areas thus owned were among the most productive. More frequently, however, grounds were held in common by the band and would be shared with neighbouring bands through permission. Chance and Chance (1985) also note individual ownership of houses and house sites.

Very little ethnographic information concerning specifically Colville burial practices is available. Presumably that which has been said regarding other Okanagan groups applies to them as well.

The Sinkaietk

The Salish-speaking Southern Okanogan or Sinkaietk occupied an important territory bordering the Southern and Northern Plateaus (or the Columbia and the Canadian). The Sinkaietk were heavily involved in trade between southern and northern Salishan groups. In addition, they held a major fishing and trading location at the confluence of the Okanagan and the Columbia Rivers (Cline *et al.* 1938:75; Teit 1930).

The chieftaincy in each Sinkaietk village/band was hereditary and based largely on wealth. The position conferred real material benefits and privileges. Alexander Ross (1969:318) writes: "All the chiefs and other great men have invariably a plurality of wives". Cline *et al.* (1938:87-94) state that the chief's mat lodge would be the first to be built and the largest. The best food was reserved for the chief and his family, and the chief also controlled the village's food surplus to distribute in times of need. Thus the wealthy among the Sinkaietk "... are respected and residence in their proximity is desirable, for practical reasons. In case of famine and extreme conditions, the wealthy assist the poor" (Cline *et al.* 1938:87). Cline *et al.* (1938:98) report that the Sinkaietk never kept or traded in slaves. On the other hand, Ross (1969:345), who was in charge of Fort Okanogan for a number of years beginning in 1811, states that the people there did occasionally keep slaves.

In an intriguing statement, unique on the Plateau as far as I am aware, one of Cline *et al.*'s (1938:56) informants related that chiefs commissioned the manufacture of weapons from those most adept and subsequently retained control over them, only loaning them out to those who needed them. However, Cline *et al.* remark on the potential bias of the informant, who was himself a chief.

The Okanogan River salmon runs were an important resource for the Sinkaietk. Locations suitable for the construction of weirs, the main means of taking fish, were limited, and permission was needed from the chief before construction could begin. The extent to which the weirs were then owned is not clear, although Cline *et al.* (1938) state that the associated traps were said to be communal. Platforms built to take suckers were privately owned, although they could be used by others with permission.

Burial among the Sinkaietk took place in talus slopes or wherever the body could be covered with rocks (Cline *et al.* 1938:127). The grave would be lined with tule mats, and the body flexed and wrapped in a buffalo robe, if the deceased owned one, or deer hide. Personal belongings and "power objects" were placed on the body and/or destroyed over the grave. Some of Cline *et al.*'s informants denied that valuables would be interred with the body, although this practice is mentioned by Curtis (1911b) and Ross (1969:346). Ross (1969:346) further states that a small pile of wood would be placed over the grave, with suspended goods "... indicating the quality of the deceased". Horse hides were sometimes place over the grave as well. Additional property would sometimes be given away at the funeral feast (Cline *et al.* 1938:128).

The Canadian Plateau
The Okanagan/Similkameen

The Canadian Okanagan have much in common with the Southern Okanogan of the Columbia Plateau. Although grouped here together with the Okanagan, it should be noted that the Similkameen Valley in late prehistoric and early protohistoric times was occupied, as was the Nicola Valley, by an isolated Athapaskan-speaking group (Teit 1900). The timing of this group's arrival in the south-central interior of British Columbia from the north has been debated (see Wyatt 1972), but may have occurred only within the last 600 years or so. During the early historic period, and probably due at least in part to their acquisition of the horse, the Okanagan expanded their territory to encompass the Similkameen Valley. In general, in contrast to the situation in the Nicola Valley, the process of replacement seems to have been accomplished peacefully through intermarriage and Okanagan cultural and linguistic dominance and assimilation. Since what follows is based solely on ethnohistoric and ethnographic accounts, it applies equally to the "Similkameen", who were during this period both culturally and linguistically Okanagan.

As with the Yakima, the introduction of the horse may have shifted the balance of power to groups like the Okanagan (Teit 1930:250), who may have been somewhat marginalised previously. One of the advantages that would accrue to them would be the shift in emphasis to upland trade routes rather than valley bottoms; as Teit (1930:252) writes: "Following the introduction of the horse, trade conditions changed rather suddenly, and the old routes became of minor importance". In addition, as elsewhere on the Plateau, the herds of horses quickly became a measure of wealth as well.

In a pattern that should by now be familiar, Teit (1930:262) refers to two classes of chiefs among the Okanagan divisions: hereditary chiefs and those who achieved the title of chief through their distributions of wealth and through their abilities in war and oratory (see also Bouchard and Kennedy 1985 regarding the Lakes division of the Okanagan). The children of both kinds of chiefs were said to have had "... a certain prominence because of their ancestry and training..." (Teit 1930:263). Hudson (1990:70-71) states that chieftaincy among the Okanagan was loosely hereditary, with chiefs drawn from high status families. According to Hudson (1990:72), the Okanagan did not exhibit rigorous class stratification but families were still socially differentiated and ranked, the prestige of the family depending largely on its size and the strength of its kinship ties. The Okanagan kept slaves but generally only a few, most often young women taken captive in war (Teit 1930:277). R. Atkinson, the first curator of the Penticton City Museum, offers an interesting statement regarding the Okanagan near Penticton. He (1937:5) writes that larger housepits were "... the abode of people of importance, chiefs etc. who were poligamous [sic] and owning as many as six wives". (It should be noted that Atkinson does not specify his source, although it seems that he had many contacts among the local Native community.)

Important salmon fishing stations were located at Shuswap Falls and at Okanagan Falls (Hudson 1990:58; Teit 1930:247). The Canadian Okanagan also travelled down to Kettle Falls each year to share in the plentiful runs there, being closely related to the Colville. As among the Colville, access and distribution of salmon was controlled by a salmon chief. There is no mention of privately owned fishing stations among the Canadian Okanagan, possibly because of the lesser abundance and therefore reduced importance of salmon resources, and the lack of suitably localised procurement stations.

Given the lesser abundance of salmon, hunting played a correspondingly greater role in Okanagan subsistence. While hunting territories were held in common by bands, snares, deer fences and deer traps were private property (Teit 1930:277). Deer fences are relatively permanent structures, and thus it could be that their placement in a small valley would effectively mark ownership of that valley, or at least control of its deer resources.

As characteristic of most of the Plateau, two forms of burial dominated in the Okanagan/Similkameen: interment in sandy terraces or hills, and talus slopes. Talus burial was quite

common where suitable slopes were available, with a slender pole frequently marking the head of the grave (Teit 1930:288). Cairns were built over shallow graves, while deeper graves were marked by stone circles. Occasionally a canoe would be placed over the grave. Grave effigies were sometimes erected in the Similkameen and the lower Okanagan Valleys (Ostapkowicz 1992; Teit 1930:289). Bodies were placed in the graves in flexed positions, wrapped in matting or occasionally in skin robes. Reportedly cremation was never used (Teit 1930:289), although possible archaeological examples have been found (see Chapter 6).

The Thompson (Nlha7kápmx)

The Middle Fraser Canyon region between Lytton and Lillooet in many respects represents the apogee of cultural complexity on the Canadian Plateau, much as The Dalles does for the Columbia Plateau. The similarity can be largely attributed to their position on the most productive stretches of the main salmon rivers of their respective areas. The Middle Fraser Canyon provides many excellent fishing stations and, possibly even more importantly, the hot dry winds of the Canyon greatly facilitate the drying of large quantities of fish for storage. Ethnographically the canyon was occupied by two ethnolinguistic groups: the lower stretches of the canyon, bordering Coast Salish territory, were held by the Lower Thompson people, while the upper part was held by the Upper Lillooet. Both of these groups, together with the Canyon Shuswap, appear to exhibit the most complex social organisation known for the south-central interior of British Columbia. The Thompson, or *Nlha7kápmx*, are often discussed as two groups, the Lower Thompson and the Upper Thompson (Teit 1900). The Lower Thompson inhabited the transitional area between the Coast and Interior Salish, sharing many cultural traits with their downriver neighbours, the Coast Salish Stó:ló., while the Upper Thompson inhabited the more arid eastern part of the territory.

The Thompson sociopolitical system was based on semi-autonomous village bands each under a theoretically non-hereditary chief. In practice, however, the chieftaincy tended to be at least loosely hereditary (Teit 1900:289). Status was also influenced by wealth: "The rank of each person was determined by his wealth and his personal qualities" (Teit 1900:289). Prestige was acquired through the distribution of wealth at feasts (Teit 1900). The Thompson, especially the Lower division, maintained strong slavery institutions during the ethnographic period (Ray 1939).

Teit (1900:325) provides the following information regarding the arrangement of marriages:

> There were formerly no restrictions regarding marriage, owing to the fact that there were no hereditary ranks and classes. There seems, however, to have been an inclination, on the part of those who were wealthier, more successful, or more industrious, and so more distinguished, than others, to marry their children to other wealthy people.

A similar practice existed among the Lillooet (Nastich 1954). Clearly this represents an attempt by the wealthy elite to maintain and enhance their privileged position. Gifts were given by the bridegroom to the parents of the bride; normally there was no return exchange, except among some of the wealthy (Teit 1900:322). Also relating wealth to marriage, Teit (1900:326) also notes that the practice of polygyny "... flourished, very many men having from two to four wives, sometimes all sisters, and not a few having as many as seven or eight; yet there were a large number of men who had only one wife. For a man to have several wives was indicative of wealth".

Certain salmon fishing stations were individually owned, as were deer fences and also eagle eyries. All three were inherited by all male children, with the eldest son retaining a degree of priority (Teit 1900). As among the Lillooet, discussed below, hunting was considered a particularly prestigious occupation.

The Thompson buried their dead tied in a flexed position in the sandy soil of river terraces and knolls overlooking or otherwise near a village (Teit 1900). Occasionally the grave would be lined with birch bark; frequently it would be marked with a small stone cairn. The graves of the wealthy had conical mat or skin structures erected over them (Teit 1900:329). The deceased's property would be both placed with the body and hung on poles or trees nearby (Teit 1900:328). If the deceased owned dogs and/or horses, some were killed and their skins hung on frames placed over or beside the grave (early historic photographs from the Fraser Canyon show horse hides hung beside graves [see Ostapkowicz 1992]). Slaves would also sometimes be killed and buried beneath their owners (Teit 1900:328). The bones of the deceased of wealthier families would be exhumed one to two years after death and wrapped in new blankets before being reinterred; this was accompanied by a feast (Teit 1900:330, 336). The poor, on the other hand, were not buried at all, but simply covered over with sticks and bark (Teit 1900:330).

A passage in Teit suggests that the graves of infants and young children might be expected to be spatially segregated from those of older children and adults:

> If a young child were buried close to some old grave, its mother would have no more children. Consequently a young child was always buried some distance away from old graves (Teit 1900:330).

This presents an interesting mechanism to help account for the separation of infants from the adult mortuary space seen in some of the Plateau burial sites discussed in Chapter 6. Indeed, this is an excellent example of how emic and etic interpretations may be complementary.

Burial grounds in the Lytton area during the earlier part of the nineteenth century became quite elaborate. Canoes would often be placed over graves; and over some, large carved wooden effigies were erected. In 1808, Simon Fraser observed such effigies among the Lower Thompson together with large carved cedar chests covered with marine shells (Lamb 1960). These chests were the repositories for multiple individuals, and may have been family or clan tombs. The similarity in the features of the effigies erected at large gravesites to one another could suggest that a group identity was being consciously emphasised (Ostapkowicz 1992). Teit notes that each group of families had its own burial ground, "... which was carefully chosen in a conspicuous place" (Teit 1900:330). Teit's emphasis on a "group of families" strongly implies a suprafamilial corporate aspect to Thompson cemeteries. The carved wooden figures themselves, like the horse and dog skins hung at the gravesite, are clearly related to status display; Teit's (1900:330) informants stated that they were erected to "... let the people know who was buried there, and that the dead had living relatives who were above the common people as to wealth, and able always to renew the clothes of the figure". The renewal of a figure's clothing was accompanied by a large mortuary feast for the participants and witnesses, and thus involved a quite considerable expense beyond the reach of the common people (Ostapkowicz 1992). It has clear antecedents in the practice of rewrapping the bones of the dead in new blankets, noted above.

The Lillooet (Stl'átl'imx)

Ethnographically the Lillooet or *Stl'átl'imx* (this term refers specifically to the Upper Lillooet, concerning whom most of the following information relates) represent one of the most culturally complex groups on the Plateau. Considerable ethnographic research has taken place among the Lillooet during the latter half of this century, so that the group can be discussed in some detail. The Lillooet sociopolitical system has been described as intermediate between ranked and stratified (Romanoff 1992a:494). The basic sociopolitical unit during the ethnographic period was the band, composed of two to three villages, and recognising the leadership of one main chief (Nastich 1954:23). Chieftaincy was largely hereditary, and the position involved considerable influence and prestige (Nastich 1954; Romanoff 1992a; Teit 1906:254). Inheritance was validated by strong spirit acquisition and by feasting (Romanoff 1992a:495). Men of great influence and generous wealth could also be called "chief", even if not in the hereditary line (Nastich 1954; Romanoff 1992a; Teit 1906:255).

It is likely that what Nastich refers to as a "band" is what Teit (1906) denotes very specifically by the term "clan", attributing the development to coastal influences. The Lillooet clan consisted of a number of families that in some cases extended beyond the village (Teit 1906:254: see also Romanoff 1992a:475, 1992b:224). Each clan kept one hereditary chief, even when it spread over a number of villages (Teit 1906:254). What Teit (1906) refers to as clan "totems" were sometimes carved and/or painted on the tops of housepit ladders. As detailed below, clan images were also used in other contexts.

The Six-Mile/Bridge River fishery was the single most productive aboriginal fishery on the Middle and Upper Fraser River (Kennedy and Bouchard 1992; Romanoff 1992b), and probably on the entire Canadian Plateau. Simon Fraser in 1808 observed a huge gathering of some 1000 people at Six-Mile (Lamb 1960). In spite of the abundance of salmon, good fishing stations were limited and unevenly distributed, and the Lillooet wealth and prestige system was based largely on this differential access to fisheries (Kennedy and Bouchard 1992; Romanoff 1992b). An important distinction can be made between the public sockeye fishery, generally open to all, and the privately owned spring salmon fishing stations (Kennedy and Bouchard 1992; Romanoff 1992a, b). The spring salmon resource was by far the more important of the two, and the best spring rocks were individually or family owned and inherited (Kennedy and Bouchard 1992; Nastich 1954:35; Romanoff 1992a). Thus when Teit (1906:256) states only that ownership of fishing sites was invested in the clan, he is likely referring mainly to sockeye salmon sites.

He further notes that the Lower Lillooet erected carved and/or painted poles representing clan "totems" at fishing locations.

Hunters among the Lillooet enjoyed high prestige, possibly due to their ability to provide highly desired meat and dressed skins for potlatches (Romanoff 1992a). Tyhurst (1992:399) suggests that, as with the Shuswap discussed below, hunting territories prior to or just at Euroamerican contact may have been owned by families and inherited within them. Kennedy and Bouchard (in Romanoff 1992a:502) also record that among the Lower Lillooet hunting territories were in the past owned. Even during ethnographic times, when common use of resources and a sharing ethic is widely emphasised for the Plateau, permission to trespass for any type of resource extraction was usually required, and seems to have been given only in instances where reciprocal resource use or kin ties existed (Tyhurst 1992:400).

While prestige was acquired through the distribution of food and other articles throughout the Plateau, the Lillooet perhaps exaggerated this principle to a degree not seen elsewhere. Thus Romanoff (1992a:477) states: "Hostile giving was a way of asserting dominance". Competitive potlatches were held between chiefs (Teit 1906:258). The Lillooet seem to have been particularly conscious of the influence of wealth in their social organisation. Many dichotomies in Lillooet society refer to rich versus poor individuals and families. Those households considered wealthy were large and kept a number of slaves. Such households would include a fringe of poor relatives who provided services in exchange for food and protection (Nastich 1954:23; Romanoff 1992b:248). Nastich (1954) states that wealthy Lillooet families attempted to maintain and increase the wealth and standing of their children by arranging good marriages. Teit (1906:269), on the other hand, denies that there were any restrictions on marriages between members of different classes.

Warfare may have been more highly developed and more frequent on the Canadian Plateau at contact than to the south (Ray 1939). In 1808, Simon Fraser noted a large, palisaded village near the modern town of Lillooet (Lamb 1960:82), an observation later supported by Teit's (1906) informants. While the Lillooet rarely initiated raids against other groups, except in retaliation (and even then rarely), their rich salmon stores made them a tempting target for Shuswap and Chilcoltin attacks (Cannon 1992; Teit 1906). To some extent the Lillooet appear to have attempted to defuse potential hostilities through a strategy of widely trading their surplus salmon (Cannon 1992). Slaves were kept by the Lillooet over the short term in relatively large numbers compared to the rest of the Canadian Plateau (Cannon 1992:516; Nastich 1954; Teit 1906:221), but for the most part the Lillooet facilitated trade in slaves rather than keeping them for themselves (Cannon 1992:516).

The Lillooet were great traders, with access via a number of routes both to the Lower Fraser and directly to the coast (Teit 1906). Although not developed to the extent seen at The Dalles, Lillooet (referring to the modern town) served as a major trading and meeting place. It has been interpreted as the hub of a large trading territory, a gateway community, by Hayden *et al.* (1985). Fountain, or "The Fountain", located some eight kilometres upriver from Lillooet, was known as another major trading centre (Teit 1906, 1909). The Lillooet locality in general may have attained particular importance as the interior end of a trade corridor extending over the Coast Mountains to Harrison Lake and hence down the Lower Fraser to the coast. Supporting this, recent excavations at the Scowlitz site (DhRl 16) at the confluence of the Harrison and the Fraser Rivers have found mortuary evidence for considerable complexity and marked inequality, as well as interior connections in the form of native copper and projectile point styles.

Burial practices among the Lillooet appear to have undergone rapid changes during the protohistoric and early historic periods. The oldest practices still followed the general prehistoric Plateau pattern of single flexed interments in sandy terraces or hills (Teit 1906:270). A canoe would sometimes be drawn up over the grave or burned on the grave (Nastich 1954:68), and slaves were said to sometimes have been killed and buried with their owners (Teit 1906:270). The use of burial boxes and monumental sculpture appears by at least the turn of the nineteenth century, especially among the Lower Lillooet. The sides of the burial boxes were often carved, and some had four posts rising from the corners, carved with the clan figure of the deceased (Teit 1906:272). Freestanding mortuary figures were also used, again sometimes displaying the inherited privileges of the deceased and/or those of his or her family (see Ostapkowicz 1992).

The mortuary feast, held a year or more after a death, played an important role in validating and maintaining the status of a family. The bones of the deceased would usually be gathered up at this time and rewrapped in new blankets or robes before being reinterred (Nastich 1954:67-68; Teit 1906:270). The scale of the ceremony, including whether it took place at all, depended on the wealth of the deceased's family. An effort was made to return the remains of those who died away from their villages for burial. This may

have been more likely to occur within high status families, although specific information to this effect is lacking.

The Shuswap (Secwepemc)

The extensive region to the north of the Thompson, Okanagan, and Lillooet is the traditional territory of the Shuswap or *Secwepemc* people. The majority of their territory extended north and east from Kamloops, but it was the western divisions, and especially the Canyon Shuswap, that had the highest population concentration, were the wealthiest, and had the most complex social organisation (Teit 1909). Kamloops and Green Lake seem to have been important locations, serving as centres for trade and social interaction among the Shuswap themselves (Teit 1909:536, 1930:250).

Shuswap sociopolitical organisation differed significantly between the divisions of the west and those of the rest of the territory. But in all of the divisions, the chieftaincy was considered fairly strictly hereditary in the male line (Teit 1909:569, 576). The band itself was focused around one primary village, but might include a number of smaller camps as well. In the southern and eastern divisions, each band had its own hereditary chief. Also recognised as "chiefs", though differentiated from the hereditary line, were those who achieved prominence through personal abilities, oratory skills, and especially wealth, which was used in feasting (Teit 1909:569). Chieftaincy, even when hereditary, reportedly had no special privileges associated with it, but gave considerable prestige and influence. The positions of war chief and hunting chief also conferred prestige, but these were not necessarily hereditary.

Both fishing stations and hunting territories were in theory held in common by all Shuswap people (Teit 1909:572). In practice each band controlled access to a nuclear territory which included its most important salmon fishing places and prime berrying grounds. Permission to use resources within these areas had to be acquired. Deer fences and eagle cliffs were individually owned inheritable property (Teit 1909:573).

The western Shuswap refers to the bands of the two divisions, the Canyon and the Fraser River, occupying both sides of the Fraser River from above modern Lillooet to well above the confluence of the Chilcotin River. These bands, especially the Canyon, exhibited considerably greater sociopolitical complexity than the Shuswap bands discussed above. The Canyon Shuswap recognised three classes, comprising nobles, commoners, and slaves (Teit 1909:576). (Employing the same scheme used by Spier and Sapir [1930] for the Wishram, another class, consisting of the hereditary chief's family, would be included.) As among the Coast Salish (Suttles 1987) the nobility may have frequently comprised up to one-half or even two-thirds of the community (Teit 1909:576). The nobility was organised into a clan or crest group system sharing similarities with that of the neighbouring Chilcotin and Lillooet, possibly ultimately derived from the Coast (Teit 1909:576) in its details if not in concept. Chieftaincy was strictly hereditary, but rather than band chiefs as among the Shuswap elsewhere, these were clan chiefs. Thus villages could have more than one hereditary chief.

In contrast to the other divisions, the nobility among the western Shuswap did enjoy certain privileges. For one thing, hereditary membership in a crest group was not open to commoners, although dancing societies also existed in which all, other than slaves, could participate (Teit 1909:577). The nobility tended to marry within their own class, and polygamy was commonplace (Teit 1909:591-592), though presumably limited mainly to the wealthy upper classes. Large potlatches were frequently held by the western divisions, particularly the Canyon, who were considered the wealthiest Shuswap group by the Shuswap themselves (Teit 1909:470). The Canyon were also noted to be the greatest traders of the Shuswap, acting as middlemen in the lucrative trade between other Shuswap bands and the Chilcotin, who had access via the Bella Coola Valley to the relatively greater wealth of the Northwest Coast. The Canyon Shuswap guarded their strategic position jealously, not permitting the above mentioned groups to trade with one another directly (Teit 1909:535).

Among the western bands, all land and whatever grew on it belonged to the nobility of each band (Teit 1909:582). Ownership of fishing sites and trapping grounds, however, was invested in the various clans or crest groups. Clan chiefs collected rents for permission to use resources on lands they considered their own. Among some bands, each crest group had its own habitations and cemeteries on its own land; sometimes this would be within a village and other times it appears that a crest group would have its own village. In other bands, members of different crests lived in the same village and buried in the same cemetery, although they would still live in separate dwellings (Teit 1909:583). Among the Canyon Shuswap, crest representations (crests listed by Teit [1909:577] for the nobility include Grisly [sic] Bear,

Raven, Wolf, Eagle, and Beaver) were erected at the main fishing places of family groups. Crest figures were also carved onto the tops of house ladders and erected at graves.

As stated above, the right to occupy certain fishing spots was hereditary, at least among the Canyon and Fraser River divisions (Dawson 1891:15; Teit 1909:582). The bands of these two divisions, being centred on the Fraser River, owned the best salmon fisheries. The rapids of the Chilcoltin River, held by the Canyon, were probably the most important fishery in all the Shuswap territory (Teit 1909:525). Prior to approximately 1800 some of the Shuswap may have also maintained hereditary family hunting territories (Dawson 1891:14; Mitchell cited in Tyhurst 1992:399). After this date, changes brought about by the introduction of the horse and the devastating effects of disease apparently collapsed the older system in favour of larger hunting territories held in common by larger social units.

The Shuswap as a whole appear to have been one of the more aggressive groups on the Canadian Plateau. Hostilities occurred both between Shuswap bands and, more commonly, with other groups (Teit 1909). Large palisaded forts complete with interior trenches, escape routes, and supplies for sieges were observed by Simon Fraser in 1808 (Lamb 1960). Teit (1909:540) notes that there were two such forts among the North Thompson division of the Shuswap about 1850. The Kamloops and nearby Savona bands of the Shuswap were reportedly particularly prone to aggressive raiding (Teit 1930:257). Raids were frequently conducted for the express purpose of revenge, but Cannon's (1992) analysis of the pattern of aggression on the Canadian Plateau indicates that economic motives were primary. The Canyon Shuswap, reminiscent of both the Lillooet and the Colville, mainly acted as arbitrators in the frequent conflicts between the Fraser River bands and the Chilcoltin.

Burials among all divisions of the Shuswap were generally made on terrace edges or hillsides near villages, and apparently never in caves or in talus slopes (Teit 1909:592), although archaeological data introduced in Chapter 6 indicates that at least talus slopes were indeed used prehistorically. According to Teit (1909:548, 554, 592) cremation was practised when a warrior died or was mortally wounded while on a raiding expedition. Poor people who had no "powerful relatives" were not buried, but simply deposited on the ground or piled over with mats and brush. Relatives tended to be buried together as much as possible. Many items owned by the deceased were interred with the body, though some were also hung on poles around the grave. These two methods of property disposal seem to have been universal on the Plateau. Horses, slaves, and dogs were sometimes also killed in honour of the dead (Teit 1909:592). The implication here is, of course, that this would only be done with those rich enough to afford such a sacrifice. Conical lodges of poles were sometimes erected over single graves and groups of graves of wealthy people (Teit 1909:593). Again among the wealthy, the bones of relatives were taken up every few years and reburied in new blankets or robes. While grave effigies such as those in use during the protohistoric and early historic among the Lower Thompson and Lillooet were apparently not used by the Shuswap, carved and painted crest figures were erected at graves by the western divisions, especially the Canyon.

Discussion

As should be apparent from the brief descriptions provided above, there are many similarities among the various Plateau groups. This may be related both to historical factors and to the fact that they shared a common subsistence base focused primarily on land mammal hunting, root resources, and the extensive storage of salmon, allowing semi-permanent winter village occupation over much of the area. The importance of this latter resource is reflected in the winter village settlement pattern, which is to a large extent focused along major river systems, especially near confluences with the major salmon rivers and streams (other local factors also enter into site location). It is also along river courses that village/band boundaries are most precisely defined (Anastasio 1985; Ray 1939). In many Plateau groups there is evidence for at least some degree of ownership of fishing locations at the family or lineage level. This generally does not seem to be the case with hunting and root gathering territories, which were more often used in common by a number of villages (Ray 1939). Even here, however, some Plateau groups recognised and upheld territorial boundaries more strongly than others. Examples of stricter territorial behaviour may be found for the Yakima, Thompson, Lillooet, and the Canyon and Fraser River divisions of the Shuswap. The limited information of this sort that is available suggests that some other groups may have also claimed ownership of their lands, or at least of the resources on them.

The resource base of the Plateau to a large extent did not exhibit the richness and diversity of the Northwest Coast, but many favoured locations, such as The Dalles, Kettle Falls, the Mid-Fraser Canyon, and others, still permitted large surplus stores of salmon to be taken for purposes of trade and reciprocal or possibly even competitive feasting (Romanoff 1992a:476-477). The surplus salmon could be dried,

allowing the formation of large semi-permanent winter villages characteristic of the Plateau. The degree to which salmon resources were depended upon obviously varied greatly from region to region. In some groups on the eastern Plateau, root gathering and hunting were probably both more important than salmon resources. Ames and Marshall (1980) in particular have argued that an increased emphasis on root resources on the Columbia Plateau was the major adaptation leading to the winter village pattern known ethnographically. In either case, storage was an important feature of Plateau society.

There are many common elements in the sociopolitical organisation of the Plateau groups discussed in this chapter. The village/band was the basic sociopolitical unit for most groups, at least before the introduction of the horse and firearms which led, particularly on the eastern Plateau, to a movement towards tribal organisation in the historic period. Leadership was relatively informal for the most part, being based on a combination of wealth and various personal abilities. Still, chieftaincy in the majority of Plateau groups may be characterised as "loosely hereditary", with other factors being prowess in war (again most developed during the protohistoric and early historic periods along the eastern periphery of the Plateau), oratory ability, and, often most importantly, wealth (Anastasio 1985; Ray 1939; Teit 1900, 1906, 1909, 1928, 1930). Personal status outside of the chieftaincy was also based on these same qualities. In most groups skill in hunting conferred a great deal of prestige, most likely because it provided highly desired materials for clothing, tools, and feasts. Other positions of high status included various specialists, such as war chief, salmon chief, hunting chief, and shaman. Thus, outside of the chieftaincy, status was largely achieved through one's abilities. At the same time, however, there is evidence that these qualities tended to remain with some consistency within certain families. This seems to have been accomplished in some cases by a combination of arranging marriages between families of roughly equivalent social and economic status, and by the superior "training" received in the "better" families (Cline *et al.* 1938; Ames and Marshall 1980; Marshall 1991; Nastich 1954; Spier & Sapir 1930; Teit 1900, 1906, 1909; see also Suttles 1987 regarding the Coast Salish). Whatever the mechanisms, the end result was that those born into families of high status gained that status, unless proving themselves unworthy through laziness or incompetence.

Within some Plateau groups, social organisation appears to have been somewhat more complex and social positions more rigid. Among the Wishram of The Dalles the chieftainship was for the most part strictly hereditary, and a distinct nobility as well as strong class divisions existed (Spier and Sapir 1930). A similar situation could be found among some western divisions of the Shuswap on the Canadian Plateau (most notably the Canyon Shuswap), as well as among the Fraser River branch of the Lillooet (Teit 1906, 1909). These groups have a number of things in common. First of all, they occupied the richest salmon fisheries of the Columbia and Fraser Rivers, respectively. This allowed the densest populations to develop (see Kroeber 1939), and encouraged near-permanent occupation of comparatively large villages. They were, in addition, strategically located to control important trade corridors between coastal and interior groups, and achieved great wealth through their production of dried salmon for trade and by acting as middlemen in the regional trade network. They were also less prone to hostilities than most of their neighbours, preferring to act as arbitrators in the exchange of captives, from which they again profited.

There is some argument as to the origin of these more stratified systems, with many researchers holding that the developments in these areas are recent introductions from their respective coastal neighbours (see especially Ray 1939 and Sarbescue 1955). Even if there was increased influence from both the Northwest Coast and the Plains with the historic period trade in Euroamerican goods, however, it is difficult to account for the production of large surpluses and complex socioeconomic organisation solely on this basis. The capacity to develop a stratified social organisation can be persuasively argued to be directly related to the economic system and subsistence base; the specific ways in which such organisation will be expressed may certainly be to a large extent influenced by nearby examples of such societies, particularly when close ties to these more complex societies are perceived as conferring or enhancing prestige. Thus if groups inhabiting areas such as The Dalles were atypical of the Plateau in terms of their developed sense of social class, this should be related first and foremost to their unusually rich salmon resources rather then to coastal influences. Coastal groups may have influenced its form, but probably had little effect on the underlying structure of the observed complex social, political, and economic organisation.

While occasionally acknowledging it as a factor, Ray consistently downplays the role of wealth in Plateau sociopolitical organisation: "Nowhere in the Plateau is chieftainship based upon wealth... nor directly correlated with wealth" (1939:19 and again: "In the Plateau wealth and rank are virtually absent" (1939:21). These statements are difficult to reconcile with numerous other ethnographic accounts (as well as Ray's own data) discussed in this chapter, in which wealth and status are definitely present, and are

moderately to strongly correlated (Anastasio 1985; Cline *et al.* 1938; Curtis 1911a, b; Dawson 1891; Nastich 1954; Romanoff 1992a, b; Ruby and Brown 1970; Spier and Sapir 1930; Teit 1900, 1906, 1909, 1928; Walker 1968). Ray himself (1939:27) admits that: "On the western edge of the Columbia Plateau there is a certain awareness of class distinctions based upon descent", but then proceeds to explain this away as solely the result of recent coastal influences. He grudgingly admits to "... certain *vague* social distinctions..." (1939:27) (emphasis mine) of the Wishram of The Dalles, by all other accounts a highly stratified society made up of strictly hereditary chiefs, nobles, commoners, and slaves (Curtis 1911a; Spier and Sapir 1930; Cressman 1977). But one need not look only to the admittedly unique position of the Wishram. Ray found statements by early explorers and fur traders in the north-central Columbia Plateau, the supposed core of the egalitarian ethic, to be, as he termed it, "ambiguous" and could not reconcile them with his egalitarian framework (1939:26). Regarding the Southern Okanogan (Sinkaietk), for example, Alexander Ross (cited in Ray 1939:26), wrote: "... no man has a natural right to the obedience of another, except he be rich in horses and has many wives"; unless, in other words, he is a chief. Invariably, such evidence is explained away by Ray as "ambiguous", "atypical" or "recent"—in any case not characteristic of what he views as "true" Plateau society.

Such reasoning fails to explain why only certain groups develop social stratification. Simple geographic proximity is neither sufficient nor necessary for the diffusion of ideas and behaviours to take place. Where differential power and wealth are concerned, there must be a supporting infrastructure for such changes to be accepted. This has been recognised for many decades; as Steward (1938:246) states in his *Basin-Plateau Sociopolitical Groups*: "Basic patterns of organization and chieftainship obviously could not be borrowed unless conditions to support them were present". And on the Plateau, this infrastructure had been in place for possibly thousands of years. Thus it is also difficult to see the basis of Ray's belief that increased social stratification on the western Plateau must be a *recent* borrowing from the Coast, given the considerable evidence for complexity long being a feature of Northwest Coast societies together with extensive archaeological evidence for coast-interior trade throughout much of prehistory (cf. Richards and Rousseau 1987).

In most Plateau groups, wealth in general, and the chieftaincy in particular, carried certain privileges of varying exclusiveness. In some groups, the wealthy had larger houses, located in more advantageous parts of the village. They had the support of a group of followers, and in some areas owned numbers of slaves that contributed to the wealth and prestige of their owners. The wealthy by definition had access to the most and best foods, often through familial ownership or "stewardship" of resource extraction locations. As detailed in Chapter 4, the wealthy frequently wore better quality clothing and made greater use of expensive ornamentation. The acquisition of exotic ornaments among some groups appears to have been facilitated by the elite practice of dominating or completely controlling trade with outside groups. In some groups, the use of special insignia for certain social positions, such as shaman or chief, has been documented (see Chapter 4).

It was through wealth that a man could marry a number of wives, who in turn made a substantial contribution to the economic success of the family, through their plant food gathering and storage skills, and their essential labour in the preparation of salmon and deer meat for drying. Wealthy men, especially those who aspired to chiefly status of some kind, in addition to acquiring multiple wives, endeavoured to maintain the support of a group of followers through feasts and the distribution of gifts. This type of behaviour is characteristic of Big Man societies. The combination of heredity and wealth on which status and prestige were frequently predicated suggests that Plateau society was in general intermediate between an emphasis on acquired versus achieved status. It should be clear from what has already been said that placement on this scale was not the same for all Plateau groups.

There are clearly a number of possibilities in the mortuary regimes of the various Plateau groups discussed in this section that would allow for the expression of socioeconomic status differentiation. Such expression ranges from the ostentatious to the subtle. The non-interment of the lowest social classes may represent the most extreme form of mortuary differentiation in Plateau society. It is fairly clear that, in a context in which the ability to trace one's descent from a group of ancestors is important in terms of legitimising differential access to and control over resources, those who cannot do so will be disadvantaged.

The use of skin robes or woven mountain goat blankets as opposed to simple rush matting presents one example of a behaviour distinguishing the wealthy from the poor, one that is mentioned frequently in the ethnographic accounts discussed in this chapter, and includes even such nominally "egalitarian" groups as the Sanpoil (Ray 1932). The potential for this type of behaviour to reflect wealth and status is accentuated by the practice of rewrapping the remains of the deceased in new robes or blankets at intervals

of one or more years, with an accompanying mortuary feast. This was a common practice recorded ethnographically on the Canadian Plateau (Dawson 1891; Nastich 1954; Teit 1900, 1906, 1909), as well as among the Coast Salish Upper Stó:ló, where it was also limited to the wealthy (Barnett 1955; Duff 1952; Suttles 1987). The Wasco-Wishram of The Dalles appear to have had a similar practice (Curtis 1911a). Archaeologically, direct evidence of the wrapping of the dead in robes or blankets can persist under exceptional preservational conditions (e.g. Freeland, Canoe Creek—see Chapter 6; see also Schulting 1992). It may also be possible to infer the practice from secondary burials in which the long bones appear to have been purposefully bundled (e.g. the Tucannon site).

Grave offerings both in and around the grave offer another means of emphasising the status of the deceased and his or her social group. The sacrifice of one or more horses, dogs, or slaves perhaps represents one of the clearest messages concerning social status. This behaviour, especially involving horses, is documented for many Plateau groups. This should not be surprising, given the wealth and status associations that the animals quickly attained once introduced into Plateau culture. The sacrifice of slaves upon the death of important individuals is mentioned in the ethnographies for the Wishram on the Columbia Plateau (Spier and Sapir 1930), and the Thompson (Teit 1900), Lillooet (Teit 1906), and some divisions of the Shuswap (Teit 1909) on the Canadian Plateau. (Ross Cox [1957], a fur trader on the Columbia River during the second decade of the nineteenth century, observed the torture and execution of Plains war captives among Sahaptian groups, but this occurred in quite another context from that being discussed here.) Because the sacrifice would apparently often be made over the grave, or in another location entirely, evidence for the practice may be relatively difficult to detect archaeologically. Still, as discussed in Chapter 6, some human burials are clearly associated with dog skeletons (e.g. Nicola Valley), and horse remains are frequently found scattered over the burial islands of the Middle Columbia. And two sites on the Canadian Plateau (Skwaam Bay and Fountain) offer tentative evidence for the inclusion of slaves with primary burials.

With the exception of those offerings and animal hides hung around the grave, the above practices would only serve to show status during the ceremony itself, and in the living memories of the participants. Other aspects of mortuary behaviour remained more permanently visible. The destruction of a canoe over some graves, reported for many Plateau groups (and found archaeologically), represents an energy investment beyond that of a simple stone circle or wooden pole. The fact that it did not occur in all cases as part of the group's normative burial practices suggests that it may have been related to wealth and high status. The erection of wooden tent-like superstructures over graves of the wealthy is mentioned for the Shuswap. The historically documented burial sheds of the Wasco-Wishram on the Columbia Plateau, and the gravehouses of the Lower Thompson and Lillooet on the Canadian Plateau represent the most elaborate mortuary structures of their respective areas. All indications are that these structures were built andused by families or lineages, and it is highly likely that status display played a large role in their construction and maintenance. The commission and erection of grave effigies, documented for the Thompson, Lillooet, and, to a much lesser extent, the Okanagan/Similkameen, involves an even greater expenditure of wealth, the more so when the accompanying mortuary feasts and re-clothing ceremonies are taken into account. The conspicuous placement of these historic cemeteries and the effect of familial resemblance in the groups of figures at gravesites could imply an assertion of control to nearby resources (see Ostapkowicz 1992 for a thorough overview and discussion of Salish mortuary figures and the context of their use).

There is abundant ethnographic evidence, then, that status differences in the living community were reflected, more or less directly, in the mortuary behaviour of many groups on the Plateau. Some important aspects of funerary display and expenditure can not be expected to preserve in the archaeological record, but ethnographic accounts suggest that the degree of redundancy built into the display will still allow generally valid inferences to be made on the *relative* amount of wealth expended.