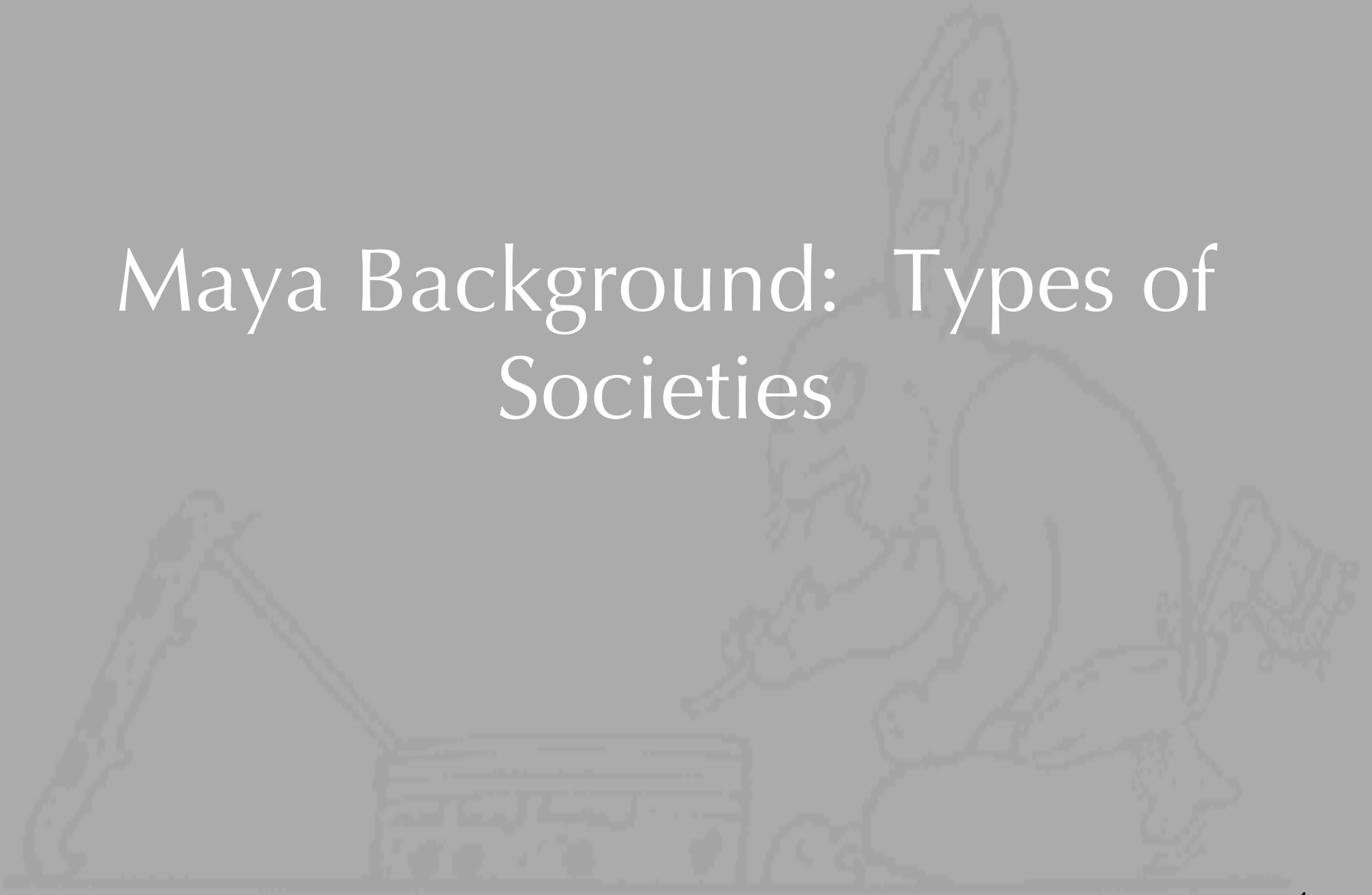
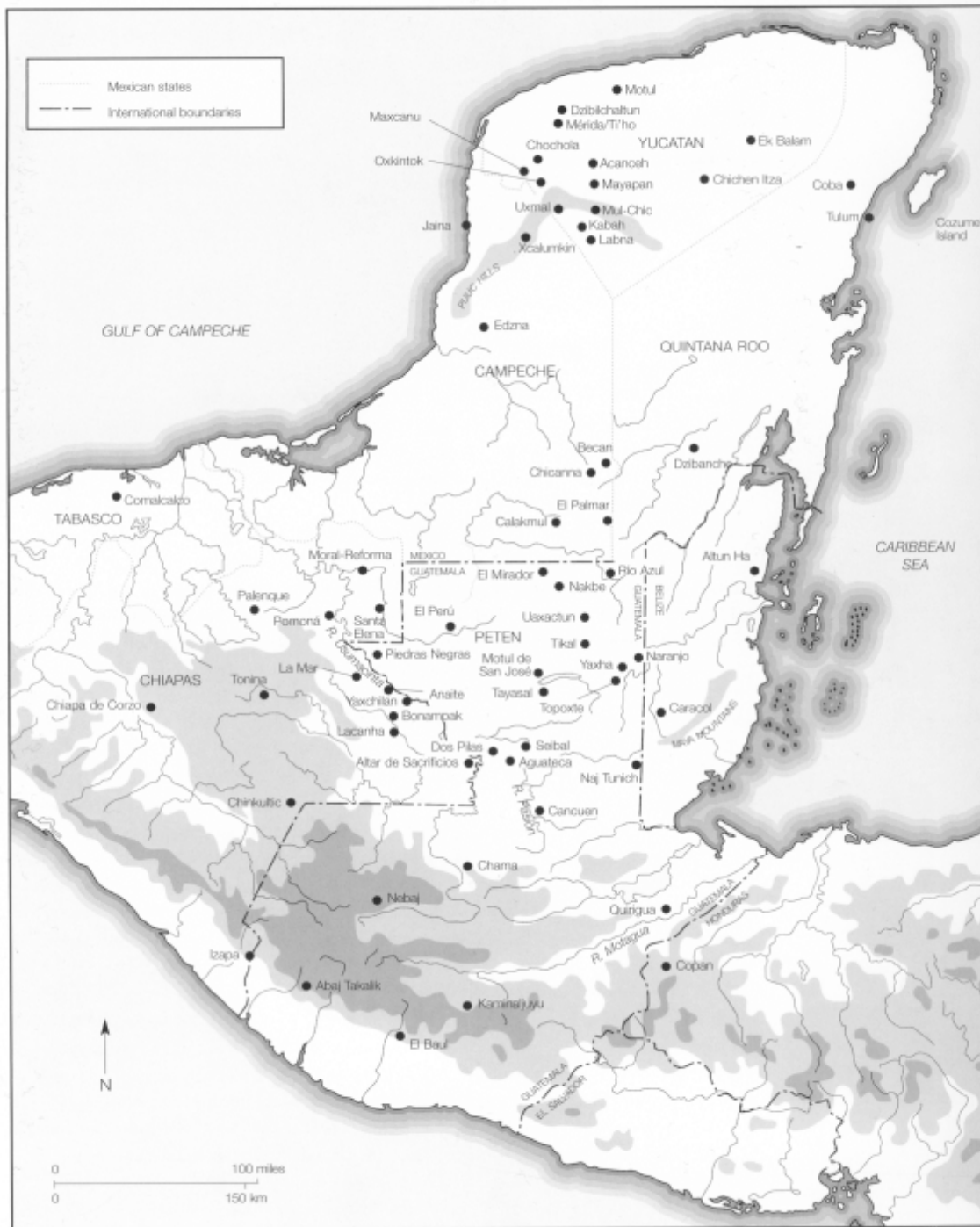


# Maya Background: Types of Societies





# Culture and Society

- ➔ Anthropologists describe patterns of sociocultural organization in societies.
- ➔ History of humans presents 3 main types of societies.
  - Not hierarchical, but varied in time and place.
- ➔ 3 types, focusing on economic system:
  - Egalitarian
  - Ranked
  - Stratified

# Egalitarian Societies

⇒ 2 types:

- Some live in small *bands* based on kinship – 12 – 20 people.

- Others live in *tribes* in farming-based villages.

⇒ Bands:

- Acquire food and necessities by hunting or foraging

# Egalitarian Bands

- ➔ Band moves throughout defined territory to hunt/gather resources.
- ➔ Territory combines different ecological zones, for variety in available resources.
- ➔ Order maintained by family authority and face-to-face interaction; leadership by consensus and prestige from personal ability and age.
- ➔ Bands are autonomous politically.
- ➔ Religion: natural world is sacred; shamans communicate with spirit world.

# Egalitarian Tribes

- ➔ Economy based on horticulture – growing crops.
- ➔ Live in permanent villages near farm fields.
- ➔ Slash and burn or shifting cultivation: need much farm land to maintain fertility.
- ➔ Population of several hundred in farming villages.
- ➔ Leadership by consensus, seniority, and merit.
- ➔ Prestige from individual ability and age.
- ➔ Religion includes shamans and religious societies which hold public rituals to communicate with spirits. Natural world sacred.

# Ranked Societies

- ➔ Chiefdoms
- ➔ Acquire necessities through farming, often with intensive methods. Supplement with hunting and gathering.
- ➔ Some differential in access to resources, with elite group holding advantage. People willingly give surplus in production to the chief for redistribution.

# Ranked Societies/Chiefdoms

- ➔ Permanent villages, with central community occupied by chief and surrounding territory occupied by farmers under chief's protection.
- ➔ Central community has administrative functions – collects resources and distributes them.
- ➔ Rank based on kinship group membership; groups vary in prestige and resources.

# Ranked Societies/Chiefdoms

- ➔ Political leadership in chief and his/her descent group.
- ➔ Leadership depends on charisma and fair treatment; break in trust can result in split in community.
- ➔ Religious beliefs include natural spirits and deities. Special places devoted to ceremonies. Rites of passage to mark individual life stages. Shamanism still powerful means for curing.

# Stratified Societies

- ➔ State organizations.
- ➔ Way of live involves intensive food production and division of labor.
- ➔ Marked differential access to resources.
- ➔ Territory with well-defined and defended boundaries.
- ➔ Cities and villages, with hierarchy and domination in relations.

# Stratified Societies

- ➔ Social control maintained by central authority and codified laws – state has monopoly on the use of force and uses force to gain compliance.
- ➔ Political governance by elite with hierarchy of administrative officials whose authority comes from social rank – not necessarily individual ability.
- ➔ Religious beliefs in formal religion with professional, trained priests. Sometimes political and religious leaders merge roles – divine kings and queens.

# Maya Society

- ➔ Maya have gone through all stages of these methods of organization, Early period: bands, then tribes.
- ➔ Chiefdoms developed, then stratified states.
- ➔ Returned to simple egalitarian way of life at end of socially complex period in various regions.

# Maya Culture History

- ➔ Some of the important questions about Maya history relate to how and why complexity developed - - and how and why it dissolved over time.
- ➔ Environmental, political, economic, and religious factors all important, and slightly different at each Maya city.

# Major Maya Time Periods

## ➔ Preclassic:

💧 3500 B.C. – 250 A.D.

## ➔ Classic:

💧 Early: 250 – 600 A.D.

💧 Late: 600 – 800 A.D.

## ➔ Terminal Classic: 800 – 900 A.D.

## ➔ Postclassic: 900 – 1500 A.D.

## ➔ Conquest/Colonial period: 1500 A.D.