

# Major Transformations in Human Society

Domestication, Agriculture, Industry, Information

## Hunting and Gathering Societies

- Hunting and gathering societies relied on readily available plants and hunted game for their subsistence.
- These societies were:
  - Small (about 40 members)
  - Nomadic
  - Had little or no division of labor



## 1. The Domestication Revolution

- Domestication of plants and animals for food purposes led to the first major transformation in human society. It resulted in:
  - Horticultural societies
  - Pastoral societies



## Social Organization

- Domestication was the first successful effort by people to use social organization:
  - To gain greater control over the production of food
  - To improve their lives.

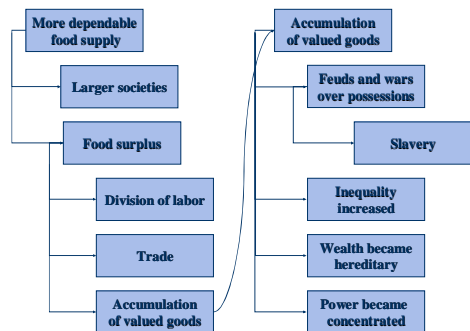


## Dependable Food Supply

- The availability for the first time in human history of a dependable food supply unleashed a whole chain of events that changed society forever.



## Domestication: Chain of Events



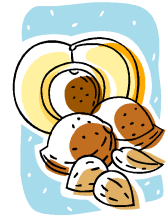
## Larger Societies

- The more dependable food supply made it possible to support larger societies.



## Food Surplus

- For the first time in human history, food surpluses became common.



## Division of Labor

- Food surpluses freed some workers to do other forms of work, such as crafts.



## Trade

- Surplus food and crafts were traded with others.



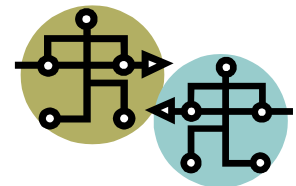
## Accumulation of Valued Goods

- Durable goods could now be saved and some people accumulated more than others.



## Feuds and Wars Over Possessions

- People now had possessions worth fighting over.



## Slavery

- Captives from battles were forced to do less appealing work.



## Inequality Increased

- Some people accumulated much over time while others accumulated little.



## Wealth Became Hereditary

- The wealthy wanted to pass their benefits on to their children.



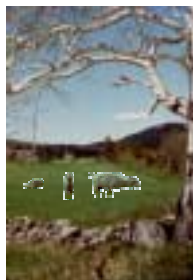
## Power Became Concentrated

- Wealth and power became concentrated in the hands of a few and chiefs, kings, and feudal society emerged.



## Pastoral Societies

- Pastoral societies domesticated animals and raised them for food in pastures.
- These societies:
  - Developed where there was not enough rainfall to grow crops.
  - Were usually nomadic, moving on after the animals had exhausted the food supply.



## Horticultural Societies

- Horticultural societies planted crops in small gardens for subsistence, without the use of plows or more advanced technology.
- These societies:
  - Required a climate that was suitable for growing crops
  - Established permanent settlements.

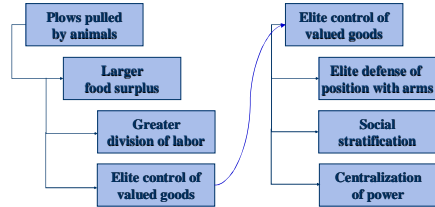


## 2. The Agricultural Revolution

- Large-scale agricultural production led to the second major transformation in human society.
- This era, resulting in agrarian societies, is often called the "dawn of civilization."
- Inventions included the plow, the wheel, writing, and numbers



## Agriculture: Chain of Events



During this period, stratification became a major feature of social life. An elite gained control of surplus resources and defended their position with arms. This centralization of power and resources eventually led to the development of the state as the rich and powerful developed the institution of the state to further consolidate their gains.

## Agrarian Societies

- Agrarian societies are based on large-scale agricultural production made possible by plows pulled by animals.
- These societies:
  - Are more efficient than earlier societies
  - Have a huge food surplus
  - Have a complex division of labor
  - Permit the accumulation of wealth by the few
  - Involve considerable inequality.

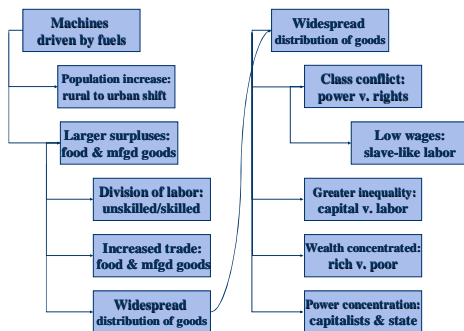


## 3. The Industrial Revolution

- The Industrial Revolution involved a dramatic change in the nature of production:
  - Machines replaced tools
  - Steam and other energy sources replaced human or animal power
  - Unskilled workers replaced skilled workers
- Work that had been performed in the home by family members was now performed in factories with the help of machines.



## Industry: Chain of Events



## Industrial Societies

- Industrial societies rely heavily on machines powered by fuels for the production of goods.
- These societies:
  - Are extremely efficient
  - Produce large surpluses of food & manufactured goods
  - Involve substantial inequality
- The breakup of agricultural-based feudal societies caused people to seek employment in the cities, creating a labor surplus resulting in extremely low wages.



## 4. The Information Revolution

- The Information Revolution involves a dramatic shift from manufacturing and agriculture to service industries.
- The information superhighway, satellite dishes, and cellular phones are changing:
  - How families spend their time
  - The kind of work we do
  - Many other aspects of our lives



## Postindustrial Societies

- Postindustrial societies are dominated by:
  - Information
  - Service industries (e.g., government, research, education, health, sales, law, banking)
  - High technology
- It is still too early to identify and understand all the ramifications this new kind of society will have for social life.



## Sources

- Sociology Timeline  
<http://www.missouri.edu/~socbrent/timeline.htm>
- The Great Transition  
[http://www.mc.maricopa.edu/~reffland/anthropology/lost\\_tribes/hg\\_ag/](http://www.mc.maricopa.edu/~reffland/anthropology/lost_tribes/hg_ag/)
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