Getting Food

Chapter 5
Modes of Subsistence
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• Hunting & Gathering (Food Collection)
• Horticultural & Pastoral
• Agrarian
• Industrial
• Post-Industrial
Hunting & Gathering Societies

- Characteristics of Hunter/Gatherers:
  - They neither produce nor preserve food.
  - They lead leisurely lives.
  - They live in groups of 10 to 50 members and the membership changes routinely.
  - Distribution of food is based on sharing the days hunting/gathering.
Hunting & Gathering: Cont’d

- Characteristics: Cont’d
- Nomadic way of life.
- No formal leaders in the group and status is achieved by hunting and gathering.
- Basic unit or social organization is the nuclear family.
Hunting & Gathering: Cont’d

• !Kung – Kalahari Desert, Africa
• Region too dry to support livestock or agriculture.
• !Kung adults average 17 hours per week collecting food. (They exploit only about 1/3 of the edible plant foods that can be eaten and only 17 of the 223 local species of animals.)
Hunting & Gathering: Cont’d

• Food collection – 17 hours per week
• Tool making – 6 hours per week
• Housework – 19 hours per week
• Total – 42 hours
• The !Kung seem to have a great deal of leisure time. (Ember)
Horticultural Society

- Characteristics of Horticultural Societies:
  - Neolithic Revolution – (10,000 years ago)
  - First time humans became food producers by means of slash/burn. (Swidden or Shifting cultivation)
  - Utilized tree, seed, and root crops
  - Tree Crops:
    - Bananas, plantains, figs, dates coconuts.
Horticultural Society

• Seed Crops:
• Wheat, barley, corn, oats, rice. (Protein)
• Root Crops:
• Yams, arrowroots, taro, manioc, macaxeira, potatoes. (Starch)
Horticultural Society

• Characteristics: Cont’d
• Settled villages – from 40 to 250 population
• War, walled fortresses, raiding, cannibalism, infanticide were practiced.
Pastoral Society

• Characteristics of Pastoral Societies:
• Subsistence based primarily on domesticated animals.
• Eastern/Southern Africa: Cattle
• North Africa/Arabian Peninsula: Camels
• Sub-Arctic areas of eastern Europe & Siberia: Reindeer
Pastoral Society

- Europe and Asia: Mixed herding
- Including goats, sheep and cattle.
- Himalayan Region:
- Goats, sheep and Yak.
Pastoral Society

• Livestock as a life sustaining resource-
• **Food Source:** (also economic)
  • Meat
  • Milk – Butter, yogurt
  • Blood
  • But also:
Pastoral Society

- **Dung** - Fertilizer, house building, fuel.
- **Bone** - Tools, artifacts.
- **Skin** - Clothing, tents.
- **Hair** – Thread, clothing, rope, blankets, tents, (Pashmina wool)
- **Entrails** – Water bags, waterproof bags.
- **Urine** – Antiseptic uses.
Pastoral Society

• Movement Patterns
• *Transhumance Pastoralist*:
• …some of the men move livestock seasonally while the other members of their group, including women and children stay in permanent settlements.
• …verticle movement of livestock.
Pastoral Society

- **Movement Patterns**
- *Nomadic Pastoralist*: 
- …there are no permanent villages, and the whole social unit of men, women and children moves the livestock to new pastures.
Agrarian Society

• **Technological Innovations:**
  - Wheel, ships, ceramics, bronze, baked bricks, calendars and money.

• **Social Innovations:**
  - Cities, kingdoms, first full-time priest, warriors, craftsmen, poets, clerks, slaves.
Agrarian Society: Cont’d

• Agricultural Innovations:
• The plow, harness, irrigation, terracing, and crop rotation.

• Increased food production per family.
Industrial Society

• Resulted from three related technical developments:
  • Harnessing new sources of energy
  • Mechanization
  • Creation of Factory System
Post-Industrial Society

- Society relying for its subsistence primarily on the production of services and information.
- Crucial Social Institutions:
  - Education
  - Science