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World Civilization

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Chapter 16

In the Late Agrarian Era, many networks began to develop under hierarchies. These hierarchies were based on political, economical, and religious status. Within these networks, certain people groups and societies ruled. The groups were very diverse and not everyone had equal rights. Power was distributed unevenly as it was based on those three categories. In comparison to the form of government in America today, hierarchies had some similarities, but also many differences within each of these concepts.

In this late Agrarian Era, communities began to move away from hunting and gathering and toward systems for producing food. This movement left many past social systems behind, but resulted in longer lives and more permanent and free lifestyles as they were able to stay in one place and devote less time to food and more time to themselves. Soon enough, in various parts of the world, larger and denser settlements began to emerge, which were called complex societies. As food surplus began to occur, some people were able to not participate in food production. These societies needed ruling and order, which led to a social hierarchy. In this hierarchy based government, labor was divided based on specialization and a centralized government. People began to create new social hierarchies, which consisted of economic, political, and religious institutions. In each of these institutions, people played specialized roles in different occupations. In order to control and manage these many different networks, a ruler was needed, and the leaders took the form of many different things based on the power they held

and their level in the hierarchy. Those of higher social status held the control, leading the others suppressed with less rights. Power was distributed based on political standings, religious standings, and economical standings. An agrarian society is based on its occupational structure with the specialized worker system and family centered institutions. The land ownership is uneven within this society, so the more you own, the more wealthy you are and therefore the more power. In an Agrarian society, a power pyramid begins to form with one unitary political leader at the top, then the elites, then local elites, then the commoners. Class power is determined based on economic resources, as well as Human Resources and gender power. The more land and resources you own, the higher up you are in the pyramid. If you are a female then you are automatically a commoner. Farmers and workers alike tend to hold the lowest position in the hierarchy. The lower you are in the hierarchy, the less rights you have within the hierarchy. Overall, the Agrarian society runs based on status and political standing.

Just like in an agrarian society, the world today operates based on social status, in regards to political power and economic wealth. Another similarity between the two, is the leader in power. As in an agrarian society there is one head leader, which is the same with in America being the president. Then the people next in line to the present, who hold a high position in politics take the same role as those on the second step of the hierarchy. Hierarchies work very similarly as the American government does today, with those with more money and power have better rights and are higher up in the hierarchy and those with less power, which is referred to as the working class or lower class, is the same as those on the bottom step in the hierarchy. In America we have upper, middle, and lower class, which is very similar to the steps in the hierarchy. A difference between the two is the fact that in the Agrarian society, wealth status was based mostly on land ownership, while today as land does represent wealth, you could own a

large portion of land for cheap just depending on the location. On top of that, food production played a big role in the hierarchy model, which isn't the same with America's current society. America has hierarchies within its society, like the different levels of government, as the executive, judicial, and legislative branches. However, the differences between our current society and the Agrarian's hierarchies is the symbol and source of wealth. Nonetheless, the similarities are much more striking than the differences because there was much injustice within the Agrarian hierarchies regarding human rights, therefore the similarities remain much more unsettling.