

TYPES OF SOCIETIES

Classification of Societies Based on the Mode of Subsistence or the Types of Technology: Hunting and Gathering Societies and their Characteristics: Herding or Pastoral Societies and their Characteristics --- Horticultural Societies and their Characteristics --- Agricultural or Agrarian Societies and their Characteristics Industrial Societies and their Characteristics --- Main Differences Between Pre-Industrial and Industrial or Pre-Modern and Modern Societies

Human societies are not uniform. They differ from one another in several respects. Sociologists throw more light on the types of societies for they very often make comparisons between societies. In fact, **macrosociology** which refers to the study of large scale social systems, makes comparative analysis of societies. Such an analysis requires the classification of societies. Social thinkers' interest in classifying societies is not something new. Historians, social philosophers were inventing classification schemes centuries before sociology came to be established as an independent science. Sociologists also continued that tradition.

The classical sociologists of the late 19th and early 20th centuries made great efforts in developing "master social types". The classification schemes introduced by our early thinkers included strong value judgements and hence have their own limitations. Some examples of such classifications may be cited below.

1. Morgan's Classification: Anthropologist **Lewis Henry Morgan** [1818 - 1881] in his last major work "*Ancient Society*" [1879] divided all societies into three groups - *savage, barbarian* and *civilised*. His argument, mostly in tune with the unilineal theory of evolution, was that *human societies progressed from savagery through barbarism to civilisation*.

2. Comte's Classification: The French philosopher **Auguste Comte**, also presented a scheme of classification based on the assumption that "*all societies passed through distinct stages of belief or ideology, evolving from the lower to the higher stages*". His scheme consisted of types of societies namely, (i) *military society*, (ii) *legal society*, and (iii) *industrial society*, which corresponded to three types of thinking namely, a) *theological thinking*, b) *metaphysical thinking* and c) *positive thinking*.

3. Spencer's Classification: **Herbert Spencer** also constructed two extremely dissimilar types or models to classify societies into two categories namely; (i) *militant societies*, and (ii) *industrial societies*. According to him, in the former, the '*regulating system*' was dominant and in the latter, the '*sustaining system*' [which stresses the importance of service] was much emphasised.

Classification schemes of societies such as the above, have their own weaknesses though they are important in giving a perspective from which to consider the overall workings of a society. A classification scheme which is in common use today is the one based on the mode of subsistence.

Classification Of Societies Based On The Mode Of Subsistence On The Types Of Technology

(Our social world consists of thousands of human societies. For the sake of comparison, analysis, it is necessary for us to classify them on some basis. According to Lenski and Lenski [1970], these diverse societies which are existing at present can be classified into a limited number of basic types depending upon the technologies or the subsistence strategies that they use to exploit their natural environment. Different societies have used different subsistence strategies, and those societies that have found more productive strategies have tended to grow larger and more complex. The complex societies often enjoy their success at the expense of societies using more primitive technologies.)

Speaking about the evolution of societies, it could be said that there has been a general historical trend of socio-cultural evolution, a process which is more or less similar to biological evolution. Society, like an organism, has to adapt to its environment in order to exploit food resources. In the process of socio-cultural evolution, some societies have evolved further and faster than others; some have become "stuck" at a particular level. In general, all have changed in ways that are unique to themselves.

Thus, it is on the basis of the level of technology or reliance on the basic type of subsistence strategy, societies can be generally classified into the following types:

- (i) *Hunting and Gathering Societies,*
- (ii) *Pastoralism or Pastoral Societies,*
- (iii) *Horticultural Societies,*
- (iv) *Agricultural Societies, and*
- (v) *Industrial Societies [which includes Pre-industrial Societies also.]*

Social scientists have long recognised that core technology or subsistence strategy has a major impact on values, beliefs, and virtually all social structures, including the family, religion, the political and economic orders, and educational institutions. Because of the importance of core technology or subsistence strategy, we can form an important classification system of societies based on differences in core technology or subsistence strategy.

1. HUNTING AND GATHERING SOCIETIES

As Gerhard Lenski pointed out in his *"Human Societies"* (1970), the oldest and the simplest type of society is the *"Hunting and Gathering Society"*. Such a society is characterised by a small sparse population; a nomadic way of life and a very primitive technology. They have the most primitive tools such as stone axes, spears and knives.

Hunter-gatherer society relies heavily on hunting wild animals and gathering food for its subsistence as it grows naturally in the form of fruits, nuts and vegetables.

Hunting and gathering societies represent *"A mode of subsistence dependent on the exploitation of wild or non-domesticated food resources."*¹

All societies used this subsistence strategy of hunting and gathering until only a few thousand years ago. Even today there are still a handful of isolated peoples who still continue this style of life. Example: (i) *Aranda of the Central Australian desert;* (ii) *The San people of Kalahari desert of Southern Africa.* (iii) *Itibamute Eskimos.* (iv) *Bushmen of Southwestern Africa*

Characteristics of Hunting-Gathering Societies

1. Small in Size: Hunting and gathering societies consist of very small but scattered groups. The environment in which they live cannot support a large concentration of people. They live upon whatever food they can find or catch from one day to the next. They live in small groups and sometimes their number does not even exceed 40-50 members.

1. "Oxford Dictionary of Sociology" - Page: 291

2. Nomadic in Nature: These people are constantly on the move because they have to leave one area as soon as they have exhausted its food resources.

3. Not Desire to Acquire Wealth: There is no strong desire among these people to acquire wealth for two main reasons: (i) *Firstly*, no individual can acquire wealth for there is no wealth to be acquired (ii) *Secondly*, *sharing is a norm in such societies*. Hence, people who do find a substantial food resources are expected to share it with the whole community. Sharing of food serves as a "social insurance" for it guarantees the one who shares his surplus today, some food tomorrow, from some one particularly when his collection is not good.

4. Family and Kinship Are The Only Defined Institutions: Hunting and gathering people have the only interconnected social institutions which are somewhat well defined namely; *family* and *kinship*. *Family* is all in all for these people. Educating the young, economic production, protection of the members of the group and such functions [which are normally looked into by the specialised institutions in the other established societies] are performed by the family itself. *Kinship* is also important in the sense most of these groups are based on kinship, with most of their members being related by ancestry or marriage. The entire society is organised around kinship ties, which means the idea of individual families existing as distinct units within society is unknown.

5. Absence of Political Institution: In these institutions the difference between the ruler and the ruled is not there, because political institutions are not found here. Statuses in these societies are essentially equal and hence the difference between the leader and followers is not there. Most decisions are made through group discussion. Warfare is unknown to these people, partly because they have virtually no property and therefore have very little to fight out.

6. Limited Or No Division of Labour : There is no scope for division of labour in these societies except along the lines of age and sex. Men and women, young and old perform different roles, but there are no specialised occupational roles. *There is gender-based division of labour but there is no gender inequality as such*. Most people do much the same things most of the time. Hence they share common life experiences and values. Production is communal and co-operative and *the distribution system is based on sharing*.

7. Constant Need To Face Danger : Some hunters and gatherers constantly face the danger of extinction in a struggle against adverse environments. Among the *Itibamute Eskimos*, for example, a family's fate rests in the hands of the father, who must find and catch the game, build the house and maintain the family. Hunting and gathering people in order to eke out their living in the natural set up, must command a complex knowledge of the plants, animals, environmental conditions, and seasonal changes in the environment.

8. Simple Religious Belief: Religion is not developed among these people into a complex institution. Their religion does not include a belief in a powerful god or gods who are active in human affairs. On the contrary, *they tend to see the world as populated by unseen spirits that must be taken into account but not necessarily worshipped*.

It is clear from the above description, though the hunting and gathering lifestyle seems alien to us, it appears to have been the most common form of society for most of the history of our human species.

2. HERDING OR PASTORAL SOCIETIES

The herding or the pastoral society is the one which "*relies on the domestication of animals into herds as a major means of support*"¹

"*Herding society refers to any form of society whose main subsistence comes from tending flocks and herds of domesticated animals. In practice, subsistence needs are often met by a combination of herding with hunting and gathering and other forms of agriculture*"²

1. Wallace and Wallace in "Sociology" - Page: 86.

2. "Collins Dictionary of Sociology" - Page: 280.

Around 10 to 12 thousand years ago, some hunting and gathering groups began to adopt a new subsistence strategy based on the domestication of herds of animals. Many people living in deserts of other regions which are not suited for cultivation, adopted this strategy and started taming animals such as goats or sheep which could be used as a source of food. Pastoral societies still exist today in the modern world, particularly in Africa, and in the Middle and Near East. *Example: Bakhtiari of Western Iran.*

Characteristics of Herding Societies

1. Relatively Larger in Size: In comparison with the hunting and gathering societies, herding societies are larger in size and may have hundreds or even thousands of members, due to their technological "invention" of the domesticated animal which can be used for human food. The Bakhtiari of Iran, for example, who herd goats and sheeps in the Zagros mountains even today, number between 50,000 to 1,50,000.¹

2. Pastoralism As A Better Productive Strategy: Pastoralism has proved to be a better productive strategy than hunting and gathering for it provides an assured food supply and permits the accumulation of surplus resources. But herding is never practised as a sole means of support, and is linked with either hunting and gathering or a more advanced technology such as horticulture or agriculture. Such societies are usually adapted to heavy grasslands, mountains, deserts, or other land that would not readily support crops.

3. Beginning of Inequality: Since pastoralism contributes to the accumulation of surplus resources, some individuals who have better access to surplus, become more powerful than others and pass on their status to their descendants. With this practice is born social inequality. Patterns of chieftainship begin to appear as powerful and wealthy families secure better social positions.

4. Nomadism Coupled With Trading: Herding people, like the hunters and gatherers, are nomadic because of their seasonal need to find sufficient grazing areas for their herds. Their nomadic way of life often brings pastoralists into contact with their groups. This helps them to develop trading. Goats, sheep, tents, woven carpets, simple utensils etc., constitute their main objects of trading.

5. Pastoralism And Development of Religious Belief: Pastoral people tend to develop their own religious beliefs. "They commonly believe in a God or Gods who take an active interest in human affairs, and look after the people who worship them. This belief seems to have been suggested by the pastoralists' experience of the relationship between themselves and their flocks. [Lenski & Lenski, 1974] It is no coincidence that the few modern religions based on this view of the relations between human beings and a god - Judaism and its offshoots, Christianity and Islam - originated among pastoral peoples."²

6. Herding Technology Leading To Several Changes: Herding technology has led to several social changes among which the following may be noted

- (i) The herding society tends to place a higher value on their temporary territories than do hunting and gathering societies. Disputes over grazing rights with other herding societies sometimes result in warfare.
- (ii) Slavery, unknown in hunting and gathering societies, makes its appearance as captives in one group are put to work for their conquerors.
- (iii) Since herds can be owned, ideas about private property and inheritance of wealth are likely to emerge.
- (iv) Patriarchal forms of social organisation tend to become popular especially among those who make use of horses for transportation and warfare.
- (v) In general, in these pastoral societies, populations become larger, political and economic institutions begin to appear and both social structure and culture become more complex.

1. Wallace and Wallace - Page: 86.

2. F.N.: Ian Robertson in "Sociology", Page: 83-84.

3. HORTICULTURAL SOCIETIES

- "A horticultural society is a social system based on horticulture, a mode of production in which digging sticks are used to cultivate small gardens"¹
- "A horticultural society produces its food through cultivation of the soil with hand tools"²

Horticultural societies first came into existence in the middle east about 4000BC and subsequently spread to China and Europe; those that survive today are found mainly in sub-Saharan Africa. Horticultural society is associated with the elementary discovery that *plants can be grown from seeds*. While herding is common in areas with poor soil, horticulture is more common as a means of subsistence in regions with fertile soil. But the horticultural societies first appeared at about the same time as pastoral societies. Examples for horticultural societies: (i) Gururumba Tribe in New Guinea, (ii) Masai people of Kenya.

Characteristics of Horticultural Societies.

1. Domestication of Plants: Horticulturists specialise in the domestication of plants such as wheat, rice, etc. The simplest horticulturalists cultivate manually with hoes or digging sticks in relatively small gardens without using the metal tools and weapons. More advanced horticultural societies have metal tools and weapons and not ploughs. Like hunting-gathering societies, horticultural societies are just subsistence societies.

2. Slash and Burn Technology: The subsistence strategy of the horticulturists is typically based on a "slash and burn" technology. This is a type of strategy in which people clear areas of land, burn the trees and plants they have cut down, raise crops for 2 or 3 years until the soil is exhausted and then repeat the process elsewhere.

Horticulture is essentially an alternative to pastoralism and depending upon the environmental factors people select one or the other. If the soil and climate favour crop cultivation, horticulture is more likely to be adopted. It is found that many horticultural societies still exist in Africa, Asia, South America, and Australia.

3. Horticulturalists are Better Settled Than Pastoralists: Unlike the pastoralists, horticulturalists, are relatively better settled, although periodically they must move short distances. They develop settlements that have larger populations and stay in one place longer before they migrate in search of better conditions.

4. Relatively More Complex Division of Labour: This society assures better food supply and the possibility of surplus. Existence of surplus leads to specialisation of roles. It means that some people no longer have to work at food production, and hence, specialised statuses and roles appear such as those of *Shaman* [religious leader] trader, or craft worker. Advanced horticultural societies sometimes consisting of as many as 5000 people [and sometimes even more], support specialists producing and trading with a variety of products such as boats, salt, volcanic glass, shells, pottery, war weapons, utensils and even textiles.

5. Emergence of Political Institutions: The surplus production allows some wealthy individuals to become more powerful than others. This leads to the emergence of political institutions in the form of chieftainships. Warfare is more common in the horticultural societies. Since it is more convenient and easier to steal one's neighbour's goods or property than to produce one's own, giving protection to wealth and property becomes a necessity. This situation necessitated warfare. *In fact, horticultural societies are also the first known societies to support the institution of slavery.*

6. Creation of Relatively Elaborate Cultural Artefacts: Since these people live in comparatively permanent settlements, they can create more elaborate cultural artefacts. These could consist of, for example, houses, thrones, or large stone sculptures. Their settled way of life also contributes to greater complexity in social structure and a more diverse and elaborate material culture.

1. Allan G. Johnson in his "The Blackwell Dictionary of Sociology" - 2000, Page: 132.

2. Wallace and Wallace in "Sociology" - Page: 87.

7. *Some Rare Practices:* One important feature of the horticultural societies is that some rare practices such as *cannibalism*, *headhunting*, and *human sacrifice* are found exclusively in a few horticultural societies. "*Cannibalism usually involves either eating one's deceased relatives as an act of piety or eating one's enemies skin as an act of ritual revenge. The successful hunting of head is taken as evidence of the courage and skill of the warrior. The emergence of human sacrifice coincides with a change in the nature of religious beliefs.*"¹

In the more advanced horticultural societies, political and economic institutions become well developed as conquest and trade, link various villages together.

4. AGRICULTURAL OR AGRARIAN SOCIETIES

Around 3000 B.C [or 6000 years ago] the invention of the plough led to the beginning of the agrarian society. Agrarian societies first arose in ancient Egypt and were based on the introduction of the plough and the harnessing of animal power.

- "An agricultural society focuses its mode of production primarily on agriculture and cultivation of large fields."²
- Agricultural societies employ animal drawn ploughs to cultivate the land."³
- Agrarian society refers to "any form of society, especially so traditional societies, primarily based on agricultural and craft production rather than industrial production".⁴

The mode of production of the agrarian society, that is, cultivation distinguishes it from hunter-gatherer society which produces none of its food, and the horticultural society which produces food in small gardens rather than big fields.

Characteristics of Agricultural Societies

1. *Cultivation of Land Through the Plough:* Based on the invention of the plough around 3000 B.C., the "agrarian revolution" marked its beginning. This invention enabled people to make a great leap forward in food production. Use of plough increases the productivity of the land. It brings surface nutrients that have sunk out of reach of the roots of plants. It also returns weeds to the soil as fertilizers. The use of animal power to pull the plough enables a person to achieve greater productivity.

● *Combining irrigation techniques* with the use of the plough increased productivity and made the increased yields more reliable. It also made it possible to work on land which had previously been useless for food production. The same land can be cultivated almost continuously. Full permanent settlements become possible.

● *Introduction of plough in the cultivation of land increased food production enormously.* One person with an animal drawn plough could do the work of many working with sticks and hoes. This increased production and ability to renew the soil allowed the development of some of the first permanent residential settlements or cities, in human history.

2. *An Increase in The Size of Society:* Size of the agricultural societies is much greater than that of horticultural or pastoral communities. It relieves the burden of working in the field for a fairly large number of people who can engage themselves in other types of activities on a full-time basis.

Appearance of Cities: The full-time specialists who engage themselves in non agricultural activities tend to concentrate in some compact places which ultimately led to the birth of cities. The society itself often consists of several such cities and their hinterlands loosely welded together.

3. *Emergence of Elaborate Political Institutions:* Agricultural societies, in course of time, lead to the establishment of more elaborate political institutions. Power is concentrated in the hands of a few.

1. Ian Robertson, Page: 85.

2. "The Blackwell Dictionary of Sociology", Page: 7.

of a single individual. A hereditary monarchy tends to emerge. The monarch becomes powerful and literally has the power to take off the lives of his subjects. In well established agricultural societies, a formalised government bureaucracy emerges duly assisted by a legal system. Court system of providing justice also emerges. These developments make the state not only to become for the first time a separate institution but also the most powerful one.

4. Evolution of Distinct Social Classes: Agricultural societies produce relatively greater wealth which is unequally shared. As a result, a small minority enjoys a surplus produced by the working majority. Thus for the first time, two distinct social classes - *those who own the land and those who work on the land of others* - make their appearance. Land is the major source of wealth and is individually owned and inherited. This actually creates the major difference between the social strata. The old feudal system of Europe is an example of such differences between the strata.

5. Emergence of a Clearly Defined Economic Institution: Agricultural societies provide the basis for the establishment of economic institutions. Trade becomes more elaborate and money is used here as a medium of exchange. Trade which takes place on an elaborate scale demands the maintenance of records of transaction, crop harvest, taxation, government rules and regulations. These developments provide an incentive for the enrichment of systematic writing which is found only in these societies and not in the previous ones.

6. Religion Becomes a Separate Institution : As societies become more and more complex, the religion also becomes more complex with the status of a separate institution. Religion requires full-time officials (priests, *shamans*, church officials and others) who often exercise considerable political influence. The religions of the agricultural societies often include a belief in a "*family of gods*", of whom one becomes more powerful than the others. In some societies, a hierarchy of gods (higher gods, lesser gods, etc.,) is also found.

7. Warfare and Empire Building: Agricultural societies constantly fight amongst themselves and hence warfare becomes a regular feature. These societies also engage themselves in systematic empire building. These developments necessitate the formation of an effective military organisation. For the first time, full-time permanent armies make their appearance. These armies require, like that of the traders, the development of proper roads and waterways. Such developments in the field of transport bring the previously isolated communities into contact with one another.

8. Enrichment of Culture: Since more food is produced than is necessary for subsistence, agricultural societies are able to support people whose sole purpose is to provide creative ideas to the culture. Hence, poets, writers, historians, artists, scientists, architects and such other talented people are encouraged to spend their days cultivating wisdom and beauty rather than fields. Surplus agricultural resources are now invested in new cultural artefacts such as paintings, statues, public buildings, monuments, palaces and stadiums.

"The ability to produce great surpluses and to support a complex division of labour brought with it an enormous expansion of knowledge, technology, population, trade and the size and performances of communities that could truly be called 'cities'. With these changes came major social institutions such as organised religion, the state, universities, and the military."

9. Revolutionary Transition in The Social Structure: In comparison with many other less evolved types of societies (hunter-gatherer, herding or horticultural) the agricultural society has a far more complex social structure and culture. The transition from the previous social structures to the present one has been revolutionary. *"The number of statuses multiplies, population size increases, cities appear, new institutions emerge, social classes arise, political and economic inequality becomes built into the social structure, and culture becomes much more diversified and heterogeneous."*²

INDUSTRIAL SOCIETIES

The industrial mode of production began in England about 250 years ago. It became a very successful one and has since spread all over the world. It has, in one way or the other, absorbed or transformed all other types of society in the process of its emergence. The very invention of machines to produce goods has proved to be an event of great historical importance.

Industrial societies have existed only in the very modern era, dating from the industrialisation of Great Britain in the late 18th century. The most advanced industrial societies today are found in North America, Europe and East Asia including Japan, Taiwan, Hongkong and South Korea. Countries such as India, Mexico, Brazil and some African countries have also become industrialised to a great extent.

- "In the simplest sense, an industrial society is a social system whose mode of production focuses primarily on finished goods manufactured with the aid of machinery." ¹
- "In industrial societies, the largest portion of the labour force is involved in mechanised production of goods and services." ²
- "Industrial society refers to that form of society, or any particular society in which industrialisation and modernisation have occurred." ³

The general term "industrial societies" originates from Saint-Simon who chose it to reflect the emerging central role of manufacturing industry in the 18th century Europe, in contrast with previous pre-industrial and agrarian society.

Characteristics of Industrial Society

1. Industrial Society is Associated with Industrial Revolution and Industrialism

Industrial Revolution spanning the late 18th to the early 19th centuries, is an event of great socio-economic and historical significance. "It transformed much of Europe and the United States: replacing essentially agriculturally based societies with industrial societies based on the use of machines and non-animal sources of energy to produce finished goods". ⁴

Industrialism is based on the application of scientific knowledge to the technology of production, enabling new energy sources to be harnessed. It permits machines to do the work that was previously done by people or animals. It is a highly efficient subsistence strategy. Because it allows a relatively small proportion of the population to feed the majority.

2. Technology Initiating Vast and Rapid Social Changes

Technology based on modern scientific knowledge leads to higher rate of technological innovations. These innovations in turn, bring about a flood of social changes. "New technologies, such as the steam engine, the internal combustion engine, electrical power, or atomic energy tend to bring about social changes as the economic and other institutions constantly adjust to altered conditions. Unlike other societies, therefore, industrial societies are in a continual state of social change." ⁵

3. Larger Societies With Huge Populations

The high levels of productivity of industrial societies further stimulates population growth, increasing members living in cities and metropolitan areas. Populations of these societies often reach tens or hundreds of millions. In all the highly advanced industrial societies a majority of the population prefers to live in urban areas, where most jobs are located. The growth rate of population increases very sharply in the early stages of industrialism. New medical technologies and improving living standards serve to extend life expectancy. But it is observed that population size tends to stabilise in the later stages of industrialism as the birth rate drops.

1. "The Blackwell Dictionary of Sociology" by Allan . G. Johnson -Page 140.
2. Wallace and Wallace in "Sociology" Page-90.
3. "Collins Dictionary of Sociology", Page: 340.
4. "The Blackwell Dictionary of Sociology", Page: 139.
5. Ian Robertson, Page: 87.

4. Large Scale Division of Labour

As industrialism spreads and population grows, division of labour becomes highly complex. Industrial society creates tens of thousands of new specialised jobs. More and more statuses are achieved rather than ascribed. In the previous agricultural societies a person used to become a lord or peasant through circumstances beyond personal control. But, here in the industrial society, statuses as those of politicians, teachers, advocates, mechanics, technicians, chartered accountants, engineers, doctors, etc., could be achieved.

5. Losing Importance of Family and Kinship

Family and kinship as social institutions tend to lose their importance. The *family* loses many of its functions. It no longer remains as a producing unit but has to be contented with as a unit of consumption. It loses the main responsibility of educating the younger ones. *Kinship* ties are also weakened. Kinship does not play an important role in unifying and controlling people. The immediate neighbours often become more important than the distant kins.

6. Religion Losing its Hold over the People

Religious institutions are no longer playing an important role in controlling the behaviour of the people. The influence of religious institutions as such shrinks markedly. People hold many different and competing values and beliefs. The world no longer remains as *the god-centered world* for it is looked upon as *the man-centered one*. Various technological and scientific developments have made religion to lose its hold as an unquestioned source of moral authority.

7. Increasing Importance of Science and Education

For the first time, science emerges out as a new and very important social institution. All technological innovations depend on the growth and refinement of scientific knowledge. Science is looked upon as a promising and an effective means of socio-economic progress. Similarly, *education* has evolved into an independent and distinct institution. Any industrial society for that matter, requires a literate population to understand and make use of the modern technological innovations. For the first time, formal education becomes a compulsory thing for majority of people rather than a luxury for the few.

8. Increasing Important Role of The State

Hereditary monarchies die out giving place to more democratic institutions. State which assumes the central power in the industrial society is more known for its welfare activities than for the regulative functions. State is increasingly involved in the economic, educational, medical, military and other activities. States are equipped with the war weapons to fight wars, but the actual outbreaks of war are relatively infrequent. "One study of pre-industrial European societies found that over periods of several centuries, they were at war, on the average, almost every second year. (Sorokin, 1937). In contrast, most European societies have been at war only twice in the course of the century, and some have not been at war at all." ¹ Warfare can be ruinous for an advanced industrial society for it involves deadly war weapons and economic dislocations.

9. Widening Gap Between The Rich and The Poor

Industrialism, in its beginning stages, is normally associated with the emergence of the two social classes- *the rich and the poor*- between whom sharp inequalities are found. It also often widens the gap between the rich and the poor, referred to by Marx as *the haves* and *the have-nots*. The rich class which is also known as the *capitalist class* is branded as the exploiting class, and the poor class known as the *working class* is sympathised as the exploited class. According to Marx, these two classes are always at conflict. Phenomenal changes have taken place in the industrial world especially after the death of Marx. Most of his predictions have not come true. However, the general trend of industrial societies is towards a steady reduction in social inequalities, although, according to Lenski (1966), there are some notable exceptions.

10. Spread of Heterogeneous Culture

Industrial societies give rise to a number of *secondary groups* such as corporations, political parties, business houses, government bureaucracies, cultural and literary associations and special purpose organisations of various kind. Primary groups tend to lose their importance and more and more social life takes place in the context of secondary groups. New life styles and values create much more heterogeneous culture which spreads its influence far and wide.

The overall characteristics of industrial societies described above, tend to be broadly similar partly as a result of the effects of global mass communications and partly because industrialism imposes certain basic requirements on social structure and culture. The industrial society is becoming more and more dominant in the modern world extending its influence on the other types of societies such as agricultural, horticultural, etc. It has become highly successful in exploiting the natural environment in an effective manner. But this success has caused "a variety of problems as witness in the form of -environment pollution, exhaustion of scarce resources, over population, the destruction of traditional communities, the disruption of kinship systems, mass anonymity, and a breakneck rate of social change that constantly threatens to disorganise the existing social structure".¹

INDUSTRIAL AND PRE-INDUSTRIAL SOCIETIES : COMPARATIVE DIFFERENCES

Striking differences do exist between what are known as "traditional", or "pre-modern" "pre-industrial" societies, and "modern" or "industrial" societies. Both these types of societies exist in various regions of the world. Many sociologists and anthropologists have made attempts to clarify the differences in the quality of social life by distinguishing between the two extremes.

1. Durkheim's Classification: The French sociologist **Emile Durkheim** in his book "*Division of Labour in Society*" [1893], distinguished societies based on two types of solidarity namely; *mechanical solidarity*, and (ii) *organic solidarity*. The former one which corresponds to 'pre-modern or traditional society serves as bonds of common activities and values. Here the society is held together by the fact that people perform the same tasks and share similar values. The latter [organic solidarity], which corresponds to modern society serves as bonds based on interdependence. Here the society is held together by the fact that people are highly specialised and are, therefore, mutually dependent on one another.

2. Ferdinand Tönnies's Classification: The German sociologist **Ferdinand Tönnies** used labels *Gemeinschaft* [community] and *Gesellschaft* [association] to describe similar differences between societies.

Gemeinschaft type of society, Tönnies argued, is characterised by intimate, face-to-face contact, strong feelings of social solidarity, and a commitment to tradition. The *Gesellschaft* type of society is characterised by impersonal contacts, individualism rather than group loyalty, and a decline of traditional ties and values.

3. Robert Redfield's Classification: American anthropologist **Robert Redfield** drew distinction between "folk" and "urban" societies. *Folk society* is small and bound by tradition and intimate personal links. The *urban society*, on the contrary, represents a large scale social unit marked by impersonal relationships and a pluralism of values.

The classification mentioned above, make it evident that the same phenomena of the differences between the pre-modern and the modern, or the pre-industrial and the industrial societies highlighted in several ways but in different words.

What then, are the fundamental differences between pre-industrial and industrial societies? Some outstanding differences which can be noticed easily and which are important, are the following:

1. Ian Robertson - Page: 89.

Main Differences Between Pre-Industrial And Industrial Society

1. Simple Versus Complex Social Structures

In the *pre-industrial societies*, social structure is comparatively simple. There is less scope for division of labour, which is mostly based on age and sex. Men normally go out of family for hunting or fishing or for cultivating the land while women confine themselves to home to raise children and sometimes go out to gather food or work in the field. There are, in general, fewer statuses and roles. Social institutions other than family and kinship, are either non-existent, or in a rudimentary stage, or very ineffective.

In the *industrial societies*, the social structure is more complex. There is vast scope for division of labour and specialization and it is more based on personal talents, abilities, efficiency, experience and preferences than age and sex. Vast number of statuses and roles emerges. The importance of family and kinship in the social structure tends to get reduced. A series of new institutions and organisations catering to the diverse needs of the people emerges.

2. Life in the Context of Primary Groups Versus Secondary Groups

In the *pre-industrial societies*, we find the domination of primary groups such as family, kinship groups, small communities, etc. Life in the context of these groups is under the grip of social relationships which are conducted on an intimate and personal basis. In these simple societies, social relationships generally involve those who have known one another for their lifetime. Relations are personal, and individual emotions and needs are considered.

In the *modern industrial societies*, on the contrary, social life occurs in the context of secondary groups and large anonymous urban communities. Here, social contact is often between relative strangers who have little or emotional involvement with each other. Social relationships take place mostly on an impersonal basis where there is no real emotional attachment. Workers in service positions do not particularly care who their clients are personally, for there is no personal and emotional involvement in this kind of relationship. Modern people may be treated as living material to be processed, in much the same way that raw material is treated in factories. This attitude which characterises the modern form of social bond is formal rather than informal, and non-intimate rather than intimate.

3. 'Ascribed' Versus 'Achieved' Statuses

Statuses in the case of the *pre-industrial societies* are normally 'ascribed'. A person's "station in life", so to say, is usually determined by the unchanging element of *birth*. Institutions such as family, kinship, race and religion rather fix the status of an individual on the basis of the birth of the individual. There is hardly any scope to change or improve it. Personal talents, capacities, efficiencies do not help much an individual to improve his status.

In *industrial or modern societies*, many statuses can be 'achieved'. There is scope for the individuals to achieve social mobility, that is, to move up and down the status scale. Availability of wide socio-economic, occupational and political opportunities helps individuals to take a chance to improve their statuses.

4. Homogeneous Versus Heterogeneous Cultures

Pre-industrial societies are characterised by a homogeneous culture in which striking resemblances are found in the ways of thinking, behaving, dressing, conversing, believing and so on. Unity and uniformity in social life are largely visible. Life is simple and smooth going with less tension and friction. There is general agreement among people on social values, opinions, morals, religious beliefs, community practices, and so on.

Industrial societies are mostly dominated by urban way of life and hence they are characterised by heterogeneous culture. Diversification of life - styles is very conspicuous. Life is complex and

manysided. Differentiation is potent in modern societies. The wide range of different groups lead a pluralism of values, outlooks, opinions and beliefs. Wide range of sub-cultures also make their appearance.

5. Social Control Through Informal Versus Formal Means

In *pre-industrial societies*, behaviour of the people is regulated by informal means such as social customs, traditions, folkways, mores and the like which are rarely questioned. People have a strong sense of belonging or identity with their group and hence they tend to think of themselves as members of their group first and as individuals next. In simple societies, violators of group norms are often taken to task first by the very witnesses to the offence, and only afterwards, they call the police if needed.

The *industrial societies* attempt to control behaviour through more institutionalised means such as laws, legislations, written contracts with specific penalties and procedures for dealing with offences. In the event of any violation of the rules or norms, witnesses themselves would not pursue offenders but would call the police. In these societies, custom and tradition lose much of their force and people act primarily as individuals, often taking more account of their personal interests than the needs of the group.

6. Slow Versus Rapid Rates of Social Change

In *the pre-industrial societies*, the rate of social change is usually very slow. People are not ready for sudden changes. They are for status quo, and hence change is regarded with suspicion. Their social life is routinised to such an extent that a small deviation from it is regarded as an unusual feature of social life.

In *the industrial societies*, rapid social change becomes a normal state of affairs. People have a positive attitude towards social change. They expect change and sometimes even welcome it. Change is often identified with "progress" towards a better life. Rapid improvements in the fields of transport and communication, progress in the fields of science and technology, introduction of a new legal and educational system and such other developments taking place in the industrial societies have added new dimensions to social change.

Conclusion: The changes mentioned above, are entirely new in the history of the human species, and industrial societies are still in the difficult process of adjusting themselves to them. The terms such as pre-industrial and industrial, or pre-modern and modern, have been used to facilitate discussion. It is important to note, however, "that societies actually exist on a continuum from pre-modern to modern rather than as purely one or the other. Furthermore, no modern society is modern throughout its territory. Social relations in some areas are more *Gemeinschaft* (community) than urban and more characterised by mechanical than organic solidarity. Generally, however, as societies move towards the modern end of the spectrum they experience increasing division of labour, fewer primary relations, greater reliance on non-family institutions and less reliance on custom to regulate behaviour" ¹