

Chapter 5. People as Village Farmers: The Agricultural Wave

Chapter 5. A. Study Questions

Chapter 5. Section 1. Introduction to the Agriculture Wave

Section 1: Terms to Consider

Neolithic (Stone Age)

domestication

horticulture

modern folk societies

Mesopotamia

loess

theory of progress

Oasis hypothesis

"Marginal Zone" or "Edge" hypothesis

domestication as co-evolutionary

human agency theory

Section 1. Questions to Consider

1. Introduction

- What does the following statement mean to you: "the shift to agriculture was a mix of strategies to a different way of life?"
- What category do modern folk societies fit into? Explain.

2. Four Forms of Agriculture

- What are the four different forms of agriculture briefly outlined in your book?
- What form is used in your country today? Explain.
- Explain the concept: "people who farm are developmentally, not chronologically, linked."
- Do you think the Agricultural Wave should be included in this holistic world history? Explain.

3. Change and Continuity

- Where does agricultural production first begin?
- Why does it begin in this area?
- What were the early domesticated grains and other foods? Where were these foods domesticated?

4. Theories Explaining the Shift to Agriculture

- What theories explain the domestication process or shift to agriculture production?
- Which theory that explains the shift to agriculture seems most plausible to you? Least plausible?
- Conduct additional research to find other theories than those listed in your book.
- As it relates to agricultural production, explain what is meant by the statement that "the theory of progress is embedded in deep cultural assumptions held by many people today."
 - What does this cultural assumption reflect?
 - Do you agree or disagree with this assumption? Explain.
 - Do you think the invention of agriculture was an "inevitable" process? Explain.
 - What reasons are cited by those who challenge the idea that agricultural development was "progress"?
 - Describe the theory of co-domestication of plants/animals/humans. Do you think this theory has merit? Why?

j. Do you think the transition to agriculture production occurred gradually or abruptly?

5. Systems Approach

- a. How does this world history's systems approach look at the development of agriculture?
- b. Do you agree with this approach?

6. Insights

- a. What is the relationship that you have with food in your country? For example, what do you eat, where do you eat, when do you eat, who do you eat with?

Chapter 5. Section 2. Relationship with Nature: Ecosystem Currents

Section 2. Terms to Consider:

milder climates
 dispersal agents
 biodiversity
 Chaco Canyon
 ecological balance
 sacred interdependence
 sacrifice
 scarce resources

Section 2. Questions to Consider:

1. Environment

- a. How did humans benefit from a shift to a milder climate around 12,000 BP?
- b. How did human life change?

2. Human Populations

- a. Why did small farming villages grow?
- b. What environmental repercussions accompanied the spread of agriculture?
- c. What is the relationship between environmental degradation and population collapse?

3. Natural Populations

- a. What gave the human/plant/animal domesticates a competitive edge in their survival?
- b. What does the following statement mean to you: "With the development of agriculture humans and their co-dependent domesticated plants and animals began to consciously divorce themselves from the surrounding natural ecosystem."
- c. What happened in Chaco Canyon in present day New Mexico (USA)?
- d. What does this statement by LeBlanc mean to you: "This (Chaco Canyon) scenario, or ones very much like it, has probably played out hundreds of times the world over."
- e. Why does LeBlanc think that farmers did not attempt to live in ecological balance?

4. Farmers and Nature

- a. In what ways were farmers acutely aware of their dependence on the forces of nature to produce their crops?
- b. Are farmers acutely aware of this dependence today? Explain.
- c. Do you agree with the following statement: "Both destructive and constructive behaviors towards the environment paradoxically co-existed with agricultural people?" Why or why not?

5. Insights: Learning from the Past Ecosystem Currents

- a. Do you agree with some scholars who believe that with the advent of agriculture human's domination of nature officially began? Defend your position.
- b. Why do humans invent and perform rituals of sacrifice to the gods/goddesses in the Agriculture Wave?
- c. Do you agree with the premise that warfare often results from competition over scarce resources? Explain.

Chapter 5. Section 3. Ways of Living: Techno-Economic Currents

Section 3. Terms to Consider:

Acoma Pueblo
 6 domesticated plant species
 slash and burn agriculture
 dry land farming
 dog
redistribution
intermediary
artisans
querns
 pottery
 string skirts
domestic mode of production
subsistence level
 specialized labor
 long distance trade
 pack animals
 celebratory feasts

Section 3. Questions to Consider:

1. Daily Life

- a. Conduct additional research to see what the daily life of different agricultural societies during the Agriculture Wave was like?
- b. If you are from the U.S., have you ever heard of Acoma Pueblo? Did you know it was the oldest inhabited community in the U.S.?
- c. Were you surprised to learn that when humans switched to cultivation of foods it did not necessarily mean a more reliable and nutritious food supply than foraging? Why do you think it is always assumed that the cultivation of food was a step in human progress? Explain your answer.
- d. What were some of the health repercussions of the diet for people in the Agriculture Wave?
- e. What were some of the health repercussions of the close proximity of animals for people in the Agriculture Wave?
- f. Why was slash and burn agriculture environmentally destructive?

2. Animal Domestication

- a. Why is the dog considered "man's best friend?"
- b. What was the early relationship between dogs and humans?
- c. Conduct additional research to find out how humans domesticated the dog (and how the dog domesticated humans).
- d. Do you have a dog? What is the dog's relationship to you or your family?
- e. What animals have been domesticated?
- f. Do we still have these domesticated animals today?
- g. What are they "used" for?

3. Economy

- a. Describe how a redistribution economy works.

b. In what ways is your nation's economy a redistributive economy? Give examples.

4. Technology

- a. What inventions were made by women in the Agriculture Wave?
- b. Research additional inventions made by women (or men) in the Agricultural Wave?

5. Labor

- a. Why did farmers in the Agriculture Wave have little incentive to produce a food surplus greater than what they needed throughout the year?
- b. Why did leaders pressure farmers to produce a food surplus and coerce individual households to enter into the flow of village commerce?
- c. What were the labor duties of men? Women? Children?
- d. Why do agricultural people have more occupational specialists than foragers?
- e. Why did (do) women do most of the farming in the Agriculture Wave?

6. Exchange and Trade

- a. What were the forms of trade practiced by people in the Agriculture Wave?
- b. When did they engage in long-distance trade?
- c. By what means was trade carried out?

7. Insights

- a. Do you think that humans progressed with the transition to agricultural production? Explain.
- b. Why were women the "first farmers?"
- c. Conduct additional research to find out more about women as the "first farmers."

Chapter 5. Section 4. Human Networks: Social Currents

Section 4. Terms to Consider:

tribe

patrilocal societies
matrilocal societies
arranged marriage
divorce
"exposed"

Section 4. Questions to Consider:

1. Groups

- a. Why has the term tribe fostered debate?
- b. If you prefer not to use the term tribe, what term do you think would be more appropriate?

2. Family

- a. Why are most marriages arranged in the Agricultural Wave?
- b. Why did divorce occur in the Agricultural Wave? (for men and women)
- c. Why did family size increase with the Agricultural Wave?
- d. What forms of population control were used among agriculturists?
- f. What happened to women in patriarchal agricultural societies when they no longer contributed significantly to the daily production of food?

3. Prestige and Social Status

- a. What happened to equality when agricultural societies increased their population? Why?

Socialization/Education

4. How were boys socialized in agricultural societies? girls?
5. Insights
 - a. Do you agree with the saying “it takes a village to raise a child?” Explain.

Chapter 5. Section 5. Establishing Order: Political Currents

Section 5: Terms to Consider

tribe
 voluntary associations
 oaths
ejido
ambush
raid
no-man’s land
 New Guinea warfare

Section 5. Questions to Consider:

1. Leaders
 - a. Describe the qualities of tribal leaders.
 - b. How were they able to cement their leadership over a group?
2. Customs and Rules
 - a. How was order maintained in tribal societies in less complex agricultural societies?
 - b. How was order maintained in tribal societies in more complex agricultural societies?
 - c. How was land generally owned in agricultural societies?
 - d. Describe the *ejido* system in Mexico. Conduct additional research.
3. Migration and Interaction
 - a. What type of interaction took place between farmers and foragers?
4. Conflict and Cooperation
 - a. What type of conflict took place among people of the Agricultural Wave?
 - b. What was the major cause of conflict in the Agricultural Wave?
 - c. Conduct additional research into the types and causes of conflict among Agriculture Wave people? Is it more deadly than conflict among other societies?
 - d. Why was no man’s land so deadly?
 - e. Research conflict and warfare among agricultural societies. Two—New Guinea and Yanamamo—are mentioned in your text.
5. Insights
 - a. Describe the difference in leadership and political organization among smaller agricultural societies and larger ones.
 - b. Of the three insights for the political current in the Agriculture Wave, which one to you is most interesting?

Chapter 5. Section 6: Human Expression: Cultural Currents

Section 6. Terms to Consider

spirits

folk religion

ancestral spirits

goddess

temples

art

Section 6: Questions to Consider:

1. Spirituality/Religion

- a. Describe spirits and religious expression among people in the Agricultural Wave.
- b. How is religious expression different (or similar) for you?
- c. What religious rituals were conducted? Who conducted these rituals?
- d. What does the following statement mean to you: "religion and life were indivisible?" Do you agree with the statement?

2. Goddess

- a. Why is a goddess an important or sacred symbol to early agricultural people?
- b. What does she represent?
- c. What is the goddess relationship with seasonal cycles? With nature?
- d. In what ways did the worship of the goddess affect all aspects of life in the villages?
- e. Why were many of the cultural representations in many agricultural societies female?
- f. According to some scholars the feminine was celebrated in agricultural societies. Conduct additional research to see how prevalent this practice was (if it was prevalent at all), where it occurred, and how the feminine was celebrated.
- g. Do you think the controversial research that shows the centrality of the goddess in many agricultural societies has any merit?

Chapter 5. Section 7. Chiefdoms

Section 7. Terms to Consider

chiefdom

chiefs

hereditary

Mesa Verde

theocratic

Section 7. Questions to Consider

1. Introduction to Chiefdoms

- a. What distinguishes chiefdoms from simpler agricultural and urban societies?
- b. Conduct additional research to see where chiefdoms continue today. Where are they located? What is their life like? Are they influenced by modern societies?

2. Techno-economic Currents

- a. Why did chiefdoms use a redistribution type of economy?
- b. When did redistribution of resources take place?
- c. Why did chiefdoms have a high degree of labor specialization?

3. Social Currents

- a. Describe the social structures of chiefdoms.

b. Explain in what ways chiefdoms had both characteristics of simpler agricultural and more complex urban societies. Why?

4. Political Currents

- a. Describe the leadership functions of chiefs.
- b. How much power did the chief's have? Explain.
- c. What was the hierarchy in chiefdoms?
- c. Why was their intense rivalry among chiefs?
- d. What was the linkage between what the Earth could sustain and warfare among chiefdoms?

5. Social Currents

- a. Why did most chiefs assume the role of religious leader as well as their political leadership role?
- b. What purpose did the chief's religious leadership role serve?
- c. How did chiefs reinforce this religious leader role?

5. Insights

- a. What paradox did humans experience with chiefdoms?

Chapter 5. Section 8. Cahokia: A Mississippi River Settlement

Section 8: Terms to Consider

Cahokia
 Paleo-Indians
 Woodland culture
 American Bottom
 population zenith
 hamlets
 satellite community
 chert
 ceremonial mounds
 Monks Mound
 Woodhenge
 stockade
 afterlife

Section 8. Questions to Consider

1. Introduction to Cahokia

- a. From where do the Cahokians trace their lineage?
- b. What was the Woodland culture?
- c. What were several of the cultural parallels between the societies of Cahokia and Mexico?

2. Ecosystems

- a. What were the four types of Mississippian communities in North America?
- b. How was each one organized?
- c. How and why did Cahokians overextend the environmental limits of the region?

3. Techno-economic Currents

- a. What foods did the Cahokians enjoy?
- b. Were there any deficiencies in their diets?
- c. What were the results of these deficiencies?

- d. How did the lives of Cahokians change with the seasons?
- e. What tools did Cahokians manufacture?
- f. How were the tools used?
- g. What raw materials were used in the manufacturing? Where did they get the raw materials?
- h. How did the Cahokians make their pottery?
- i. What purpose did mound construction serve in Cahokian society?
- j. What was the purpose of Woodhenge?
- k. What trade did the Cahokians conduct?
- l. Who did they trade with?

4. Society

- a. How was the Cahokian community organized?
- b. How was Cahokia's four-tiered socio-political hierarchical system organized?
- c. What was the status of women in Cahokian society?

5. Political

- a. What is the evidence for warfare among Cahokians?

6. Cultural

- a. Describe the Cahokians belief system.
- b. What is their view of an afterlife?
- c. How did Cahokians express their artistic talents?
- d. What were some of the community pastimes?

7. Insights

- a. Why did Cahokia decline as a vibrant, creative society?
- b. What happened to the dispersed population?
- c. How is the decline of Cahokia similar to the decline of other societies?
- d. Is there a chance that your nation could decline like Cahokia's?
- e. Conduct additional research to find out what happened to Cahokia's dispersed population.

Chapter 5. Section 9. The Agricultural Wave: Concluding Insights

1. Connection with Nature

- a. One of the continuities in history is our relationship with and dependence upon nature to provide our food.
- b. Do you think this connection with nature is largely ignored in conventional history?
- c. If so, why?

2. Farmers

- a. Paradoxically, as the number of farmers decline around the world, our demand for food increases.
- b. Why do you think this is happening?
- c. What do you think will happen in the future if this trend continues?

3. Domesticated Animals in the Western Hemisphere

- a. Conduct research into why people in the Western hemisphere before 1500 didn't have any or many domesticated animals?
- b. What impact did this have on their lives?
- c. Why didn't they domesticate more animals?

4. In what ways does population size of a village influence the political and economic currents?

5. Conflict

- a. Why does conflict intensify among agricultural people compared to foragers?
 - b. How does warfare become more institutionalized (more organized by the government)?
 - c. What is the conflict about?
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6. Disconnect with Nature
 - a. What is your reaction to the assertion made in the *Concluding Insights* section that we as a modern society have a disconnect with the food we eat?
 - b. Do you agree with the assertion? Disagree? Why?