

United States History and Government
Kailua High School
Social Studies Requirement
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Mr. Wilson

What is Communism???

Communism is a stage of history

Communism is the result of a previous stage of history called Capitalism.

Capitalism is the result of a previous stage of history called Feudalism.

Feudalism is the result of a previous stage of history called Master / Slave

Master / Slave is the result of a previous stage of history called Primitive Communism

Marx's (and Engles') Stages of History

Every stage of history has a division of labor and except for the first and last stages, classes (wealthy, poor)

Primitive Communism: Men + Women= Children. Over time, all of those children have needs that are beyond the needs of their parents. To fulfil the needs of a growing society, one society goes to war either for more resources or defends itself from war

Master / Slave: those who lose in war become slaves to the victors. Now society has created classes (social hierarchy). The master class now has leisure time. From leisure are created new social needs. Over time, social needs become necessities. To obtain

those necessities, society goes to war. The master class grows (or shrinks in defeat) and accumulates new slaves. More slaves mean more Labor, and the labor becomes specialized to fulfil growing needs of both the Master class and the slave class. The complexity of needs and specialized labor, as well as the growth of both Masters and Slaves and leads to the next stage of history, Feudalism.

Feudalism is the expansion of private property which used to be limited to Masters owning slaves. But the increase in population necessitates ownership of large tracks of land in order to produce food and acquire supplies for war. Under feudalism, new social needs are created by Land Lords and the division of labor between Master and Slave now becomes specialized labor of the Master and Apprentice and a new form of production is created: Manufacture. Manufacture is the breaking down of the creation of a thing into its essential steps. Think of a three legged stool: it requires wood; the wood requires axes and saws to fell the trees; saws to saw trees into lumber; transportation of the lumber to a place to make the stool; more saws to cut the lumber for the stool; people to assemble and finish the stool; people to transport the stools to market. Now image how complex a society is from the point of view of production: Resource extraction (felling trees); manufacture (stools); distribution; exchange (consumption). Apply those steps to all things that are made. Out of these requirements for manufacturing what society wants is born a new class of people who provide wealth for the manufacture of things. And with the new class of people who

provide wealth is also born a new class of people who work in the production of things. Over time, a new stage of history emerges: Capitalism.

Capitalism is a “hi-tech” society of automated factories. The new classes of people are called Bourgeoisie (owners) and Proletariat (workers). This stage of production is so efficient that all social divisions become simplified into only workers and owners.

Production is also so efficient that workers pay for their 8 hour wage during the first two hours of work. So the workers become aware that an inequality exists between the owners and the workers. So the workers organize themselves into unions and demand higher wages. Over time the owners fight back and install new machines and cut labor jobs. Finally the workers revolt, take over the means of production, and a new stage of history is formed: Communism.

Communism is the stage of history where each individual is given what they need. And over time, as needs are taken care of, society starts producing what people want!

Communism is the result of capitalism. There are no skipping stages of history. Russia and China were in the feudal stages of history when they declared themselves communist. And in order to create true communism, the leadership of both countries resorted to totalitarian and authoritarian means in order to bend the meaning of communism. Since Russia declared itself as communist and the leader of the Communist Party, communism was a means to support other countries who wanted to

show that they were superior to capitalism, or in the case of Vietnam, French Colonialism.