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Occasional Paper No. 47

MORE ON MODES OF POWER
AND THE PEASANTRY

PARTHA CHATTERJEE

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CENTRE FOR STUDIES IN SOCIAL SCIENCES, CALCUTTA

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Occasional Paper No. 47

More on Modes of Power and the Peasantry

Partha Chatterjee

May, 1982

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1950-1951

The following statement of works is submitted for the year 1950-1951. It is based on the programme of work approved by the Council of the Institute of Physics, London, in 1949. The programme is divided into three main sections: (a) General Physics, (b) Atomic and Molecular Physics, and (c) Applied Physics. The work is to be carried out by the following staff: Professor [Name], Dr. [Name], and Mr. [Name]. The total cost of the programme is estimated at £[Amount].

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Centre for Physics Sciences, Calcutta

1950-51

MORE ON MODES OF POWER AND THE PEASANTRY

Partha Chatterjee

In an earlier article,¹ I had presented a set of concepts of modes of power and forms of state organisation, along with the outlines of an analytical framework, in the context of a study of certain peasant movements and ideologies in twentieth-century Bengal. It has been pointed out to me that this presentation was much too "cryptic" and that it was disproportionately general in scope in relation to the very specific discussion which followed on Hindu-Muslim riots in the Bengal countryside in the 1920s and 1930s.

It needs to be explained that the conceptual framework presented in the first part of that article was in fact relevant to the analysis of a much wider range of phenomena than Hindu-Muslim riots in Bengal. It is, properly speaking, an attempt at an elementary conceptualisation of the general problem of politics and the state in large agrarian societies. I take this opportunity, therefore, to elaborate on some of these general analytical implications of my framework and to point out what I think are the theoretical advantages of using it.

I begin with a consideration of the recent contribution made by Robert Brenner to the debate on the transition from feudalism to capitalism.²

The Political Question in the Transition from Feudalism to Capitalism

Reviewing the contending positions in the earlier Dobb-Sweezy debate,³ Brenner has shown with great clarity that each of the arguments in that debate was based on one form or another of economic determinism. Thus, the process of transition was explained either in terms of the dissolving effect of external trade on an otherwise static feudal economy, or the crisis of rent caused by long-term declines in productivity and by depopulation in feudal agriculture. The unacceptability of the former argument Brenner points out without too much difficulty: it is grounded in the assumption that a transition in modes of production can be explained in

its essentials by developments in the sphere of exchange and circulation. Brenner shows this in the course of his discussion of Sweezy's arguments and of the more recent writings of Wallerstein.⁴ The other argument, which was stated with much force by Dobb, hinges on the crucial question of the crisis of seigniorial revenues brought about as a result of the internal contradictions of feudalism and the specific resolution of that crisis. Dobb argued in terms of a single form of resolution: the breakdown of feudal relations in the countryside and the rapid emergence of a superior, i.e. capitalist, mode of production. Brenner shows that this sort of argument is in fact based on a "determinism", viz. that the technical superiority of one mode of production necessarily determines its ultimate victory. It begs the whole question of the specific process of struggle between the contending forces vying for social supremacy, i.e. the process of class struggle whose ultimate resolution describes the specific process of transition. Brenner, therefore, states the main theoretical problem of the medieval crisis in the following terms:

... on the one hand, ... what was at stake were the fundamental surplus extraction relations which underpinned the ruling class's dominance; on the other hand, in the last analysis, the resolution of the crisis through the restrengthening in one form or another of feudal class relations or their dissolution would be decided in terms of the class conflict between lords and peasants, the forms of their class power and their relative strength.⁵

The seigniorial crisis of late feudalism was accompanied by a widespread decline in population all over Europe. How did the rival agrarian classes react to this crisis?

It was the logic of the peasant to try to use his apparently improved bargaining position to get his freedom. It was the logic of the landlord to protect his position by reducing the peasants' freedom. The result simply cannot be explained in terms of demographic-economic supply and demand. It obviously came down to a question of power, indeed of force, and in fact there was intense Europe-wide lord-peasant conflict throughout

the later fourteenth, fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, almost everywhere over the same general issues: first, of course, serfdom; secondly, whether lords or peasants were to gain ultimate control over landed property, in particular the vast areas left vacant after the demographic collapse.⁶

And the outcomes were not the same everywhere. Brenner shows this by taking three specific cases : eastern Europe, western Europe and England. In each, the landlords attempted to overcome the rent crisis by increasing controls over the peasantry. In eastern Europe, controls were in fact successfully strengthened. In western Europe, peasants won freedom from serfdom, in fact obtained freehold rights over much of the land, while the aristocracy sought to reorganise its position through the medium of the absolutist states. In England, serfdom collapsed, although landlords retained control of the land. "To account for the foregoing divergences would require an account of the differential evolution of lord-peasant class relations which lay behind the differential outcomes of class conflicts in the different European regions." This, in turn, would require an inquiry "into the sources of class solidarity and power of the peasantry, especially in their village communities, and of the lords, especially in their military organisation and above all their state."⁷

It is clear, therefore, that the whole question of the specific form of transition is here extricated from the bog of techno-economic determinism, depopulation, declines in productivity, dissolving impacts of external trade, etc. etc. - and posed as a problem of politics, i.e. of the class struggle.

The element of 'indeterminacy' emerges in relation to the different character and results of these conflicts in different regions. This is not to say that such outcomes are somehow arbitrary, but rather that they tended to be bound up with certain historically specific patterns of development of the contending agrarian classes and their relative strength in the different European societies : their relative levels of internal solidarity, their self-consciousness and organization, and their general

political resources - especially their relationships to the non-agricultural classes (in particular, potential urban class allies) and to the state (in particular, whether or not the state developed as a 'class-like' competitor of the lords for the peasants' surplus).

Brenner, in fact, goes further than this and considers historical examples of certain specific configurations of this triad, viz. landlord, peasant and the state, and the specific resolutions of the ensuing power struggles : in east Elbian Germany, west Elbian Germany, France and England. In the first case, landlords successfully increased controls because the peasant communities were weak and there were virtually no independent political institutions in the village, which in turn is attributable to the leadership of the landlords rather than of peasants in the colonisation of the eastern lands. The medieval crisis therefore led to a new serfdom. In western Germany, the peasant-communal organisations of the Gemeinde were by the late middle ages far stronger in the economic regulation and political self-government of village life - the peasantry there was engaged in a constant struggle against the lords to perfect its common rights, such as the common lands and the common-field organisation of agricultural rotation. The peasantry then went on to demand reductions in rent and the right to inheritance, to replace the landlord-installed village mayors by their own elected magistrates and to choose their own village priest. The lords were forced to accept the institutionalisation of these rights won by the peasantry in the form of village charters (Weistümer). In France, too, the peasantry resisted the landlords and won similar rights, but the absolutist state emerged as a contender to landlord power : it intervened on behalf of the peasantry to reduce landlords' rents and to protect peasant proprietorship in order to tax the peasants' surplus. Paradoxically (though not surprisingly), the state now replaced the landlords as the target of peasant revolts. There were, in fact, similar developments in the "mini-absolutisms" of the west German princes. In England, on the other hand, the peasantry fought successfully against serfdom, but the landlords responded by taking as much land as possible from the "customary sector" and adding it on to the "leasehold sector" where they brought in capitalist

tenants who made improvements and cultivated by wage labour. It was the emergence of this landlord-capitalist tenant-wage labour structure which ultimately demolished peasant proprietorship and ushered in capitalist development in England.

By contrasting these four specific cases, Brenner is able to suggest that there can be more than one possible resolution of the landlord-peasant-state tussle which is the political form of the feudal crisis. Only under two specific conditions is the outcome directed unambiguously towards capitalist development: "on the one hand, the destruction of seifdom; on the other hand, the short-circuiting of the emerging predominance of small present property."⁹

But what Brenner's contribution brings out above all is the theoretical importance of locating the element of "indeterminacy" in the transition problem in the specific political form of the class struggle. Brenner has been able to demonstrate convincingly that the path of transition is not uniquely determined by the techno-economic terms of evolution of a certain mode of production. The problem now is to define the theoretical terms in which this political question of the transition problem can be attacked.

The task requires new theoretical categories. It is now widely accepted that the political structures of society (with the possible exceptions only of the most elementary forms of social organisation in early or "primitive" communities -- but here the problems are of a different sort) are not mere reflections of its "economic" structures built around the activities of social production. There are institutions, and instituted processes, of power and of ideology which intervene and give the political structures a certain relative autonomy. But merely to state this is to stop short of posing a crucial problematic: what precisely constitutes "relative autonomy"? Where is it located? How are we to identify and describe it in the domain of our theoretical concepts? Put in otherwards, what are the theoretical concepts and analytical relations which are specific to the world of the

political ? What Brenner has been able to suggest are certain empirical patterns among political phenomena connected with a limited number of historical examples of transition from one mode of production to another. What are the distinctive categories with the help of which specific political problems such as peasant struggles, feudal domination or the constitution of the absolutist state can be posed within a general framework of theory ?

To generalise: we now possess a reasonably strong theoretical framework built around the central concept of the mode of production for the analysis of historical-material processes in human society. The mode of production has been defined¹⁰ as an articulated combination of three elements - labourer, non-labourer and means of production -- combined according to both a "property" connection (the relations of production) and a "real appropriation" connection (the forces of production). The problem of historical analysis is to study how the combination of these three elements changes in terms of the two connections. Now, the "real appropriation" connection is the specific field of social production in its techno-economic aspects, for the study of which there are appropriate categories and analytical relations. What we are concerned with here are the categories and relations relevant to the analysis of the "property" connection, i.e. the question of rights or entitlements in society, of the resultant power relationships, of law and politics, of the process of legitimation of power relations, etc. I will now attempt an elementary categorisation of some of these concepts.

The Modes of Power

Let me first repeat the definitions I had presented in the earlier paper.¹¹

I defined three modes of power which could exist, even co-exist, in a particular state formation. These modes are distinguished in terms of the basis of specification of the "property" connection (the relations of production) in the ordered and repeated performance of social activities, i.e.

the particular pattern of allocation of rights or entitlements over material objects (sometimes extended to non-material objects such as knowledge) within a definite system of social production. The three modes of power I called the communal, the feudal and the bourgeois modes.

The communal mode of power exists where individual or sectional rights, entitlements and obligations are allocated on the authority of the entire social collectivity, i.e. the community. Here the collective is prior; individual or sectional identities are derived only by virtue of membership of the community. Institutionally, there may be various forms in which such authority could be exercised. It may consist of an assembly of all members of the community, but this is by no means a necessary institutional form. Communal authority may be exercised through a council of elders or of leading families, or even by a chief or patriarch. The point is that authority resides not in the person or even in the office; it resides only in the community as a whole. The officials or councils are no more than mere functionaries. We will see later that the communal mode of power may be said to exist even in situations where there is no definite or recognisable institutional form for the exercise of such authority.

The feudal mode of power is characterised fundamentally by sheer superiority of physical force, i.e. a relationship of domination. It is founded on conquest or some other means of physical subordination of a subject population. In our conception, it denotes not just the state formation which accompanies the feudal mode of production, but may in fact serve to describe political institutions corresponding to a whole range of forms of organisation of production based on direct physical control over the life-processes of the producers. At one extreme, one may have production by slaves where both the life-processes of the producers as well as the labour-process itself are controlled by the master; at the other extreme, one can think of a free peasantry which is only required to make a periodic tax-payment or a regular tribute to the agent of an external state; and in between there could be various degrees of serfdom, involving different degrees of control over the

life-processes of the peasantry as a means of collecting a part of the social product as rent. The political domination which in all of these forms of production organisation is the prerequisite for rights or claims on the social product we will classify under the feudal mode of power.

In the bourgeois mode of power, unlike in the feudal, the domination of non-producers, i.e. capitalists, over the producers, i.e. wage-labourers, and the appropriation of surplusvalue are assured not by physical control over the life-processes of producers but by complete control over the labour process secured by rights of property in the means of production and in the product and by the impersonal operation of the market. The necessary political conditions for the full development of capitalism as a system of social production requires, therefore, the separation of the state from the sphere of civil society, the elevation of the state into a "neutral" institution which does not recognise real inequalities in society, making the individual the unit in political and legal transactions, conceiving society as the result of a contract between individuals, turning all individuals irrespective of differences of race, religion, language, education or wealth into equal subjects before law. The fundamental institutional form by which the bourgeoisie sustains its political domination is that of representative government.

The rest of this paper will be concerned with an elaboration of some of the ways in which this conceptual framework can be used in the historical analysis of state formations and political processes. I will take various illustrative examples drawn from different regions of the world and different periods of History in order to emphasise the advantages as well as the difficulties of using these concepts for an understanding of the peasantry in history.

Community and Statelessness

I avoid, for reasons of space, an explicit discussion of the formulations in Engel's classic The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State.¹² The similarities and differences in approach will be evident from my arguments.

Within the domain of theory, the community is a conceptualisation of the first instituted form of collective social authority. It is thus logically prior to a conceptualisation of the state as a machinery of repression, as the instituted form of exploitative power relations in society. I hasten to add that this theoretical ordering does not require the support of any historicist conception of all human social groups passing through the successive stages : stateless anarchy -- communal social organisation -- state.¹³

If one is looking for appropriate historical evidence having a bearing on this formulation (although it is worth reminding ourselves of the logical status of the concept of community within a theory of state formations), the community can be identified in its most concretely expressed form in anthropological studies of "tribal" groups. Many such studies, particularly from sub-Saharan Africa, have revealed the existence of "tribal" communities which apparently do not possess a state apparatus or distinctly identifiable political structures differentiated from the social group at large. The idiom of group solidarity here is often kinship, whether real, or imagined and imputed. In some of these cases, a number of local lineages are combined into a village community to comprise the smallest political segment; a number of villages united in a regional confederacy defines the tribe or people. These are usually categorised in anthropological literature as "segmentary lineage systems" and there exists a theory about how such societies are regulated, in the absence of centralised political structures or ranked and specialised holders of political authority. This explanation rests on "the relations of local groups to one another", which, in this theory.

are seen as a balance of power, maintained by competition between them. Corporate groups may be arranged hierarchically in a series of levels; each group is significant in different circumstances and in connection with different social activities economic, ritual and government. Relations at one level are competitive in one situation, but in another the formerly competitive groups merge in mutual alliance against an outside group. ... The aggregates that emerge as units in one context are merged into larger aggregates in others, so that a segment that in one situation is independent finds that it and its former competitors are merged together as subordinate segments in the internal administrative organisation of a wider overall segment that includes them both. This wider segment is in turn in external competitive relations with other similar segments, and there may be an entire series of such segments.¹⁴

In the original formulation by Fortes and Evans-Pritchard¹⁵, these segments were corporate lineages, and the classic studies of such segmentary lineage systems were of the Muer of Sudan, the Tallensi of Ghana¹⁶, the Tiv of Northern Nigeria, the Mandari and the Dinka of Southern Sudan, the Anba of Uganda, the Konkomba of Togo and the Ingura of the Uganda-Congo region¹⁷. But there have also been studies of politically uncentralised societies in which there are no corporate lineages,¹⁸ but corporate authority is vested in age-set or age-grade systems, such as among the Eikuyu and the Kamba or Muya¹⁹, or in village councils as among the Kalabari, Bonny and Okrida of Eastern Nigeria²⁰.

The most interesting cases are of groups in which there exist official functionaries, such as chiefs or elders or lineage heads or priests for the performance of various administrative and other regulatory acts. There may be petty chieftains who perform routinised, often ritualised official duties but have no special privileges. The Shilluk in Sudan have kings who are merely symbols of communal unity but have no authority.²¹ And then there is the phenomenon of the "big man" who has great personal influence because others defer to him for his personal qualities - wisdom, valour or magical powers - or because they are obligated to him in some way. Sometimes there is an institutionalised role for the stranger who acts as a mediator.²²

At other times, parallel to the institution of chiefship, there is an earth cult and there are priests who act as "custodians of the earth": the ritual of the earth cult specifies the respective position of each structural unit with respect to one another and also symbolises the unity of the whole community.²³ Chiefdom of a more advanced kind emerges in a larger confederation of "tribal" groups. Here there is a ranking, because the chief or his descent group is superior to the rest.²⁴

But in most of these cases where there are recognised official functionaries, there is a simultaneous institutionalisation of the authority of the community as a whole, in the form of a council or even an assembly of all members which has to be summoned on occasions that require extraordinary decisions falling outside the routine competence of the functionaries. The Mandari of Sudan have hereditary chiefs, but the chief's judgements are only the expression of the views of the council of elders.²⁵ The Nkwato of Botswana have chiefs but "all matters of tribal policy are dealt with finally before a general assembly of the adult men in the chief's kgotla (council-place)."²⁶

Theoretically, it is legitimate to distinguish societies of this kind having recognised offices of authoritative functionaries, including advanced chiefdoms, from class society proper because chiefdom may still not necessarily imply an institutionalised claim on the social surplus based on political domination, i.e. the ability to coerce. Generally speaking, the distinctive features of the social organisation of production in this situation are set by the low level of techniques, low productivity and the lack of any substantial quantity of social surplus. Mere subsistence and the simplest forms of social reproduction require considerable cooperation and mutual aid in productive activities and substantial communal-control of consumption, sexual relations and indeed of the overall life-process itself. But perhaps the most crucial consideration which defines and shapes the form of communal political authority in stateless "tribal" societies is the need for protection against external threats. "The tribal superstructure," writes Sahlins, "is a political

arrangement, a pattern of alliances and enmities, its design shaped by tactical considerations. Overarching relations of clanship or regional confederacy seem most compelled by competitive threats, in connection with which large-scale economic and ritual cooperation may play the derivative role of underwriting cohesion in the face of external dangers."²⁷ Thus, the need to order the internal life and labour-process of the community as well as the requirements of evolving a viable organisation of communal defence against external attack create the conditions for the institutionalisation of communal authority.

Feudal Power and Instituted Coercion

We can think of at least four distinct processes by which institutions of power based on force, and hence an institutionalised claim by a few on a part of the social surplus, can emerge. First, there could occur, as a process internal to the historical development of the community, a transformation of offices of communal authority into institutions of feudal power. Thus, chiefs or warriors or priests or literati who had earlier performed as commissioners of communal power could, because of changes either in the conditions of production or in the external political environment, begin to wield coercive force on the rest of the community of producers in order to claim a part of the surplus. This, of course, is a historical process of transition for which it is impossible to set empirical thresholds or temporal datelines to demarcate the passage from stateless communal authority to feudal domination. One historical example we could consider is provided by E.A. Thompson²⁸ who compares the historical accounts left by Caesar and Tacitus to show how in the first century B.C., at the time of Caesar, the German tribes (pagi) had no peacetime authority, such as a chieftain, with powers over all the clans which made up a people (civitas), although there were war councils of tribal leaders at the time of war. By the first century A.D., however, Tacitus observed that the Germans had a permanent council of leading men to deal with matters of minor importance affecting the people as a whole, most weighty

business was decided by an assembly of warriors. But now there was also a new kind of chief whom Tacitus calls "kings" (*rex*) who was elected from within a "royal clan". Yet, Thompson notes that in spite of the king and "the growing inequalities of economic power and social standing among the Germans of the first century A.D.," the assembly of free tribesmen was still the sovereign body. In the majority of cases, the assembly's decisions "must have been reached more or less unanimously, for there was no peaceable means by which a substantial minority of the people could have been coerced into a course of action of which they strongly disapproved : there was even in Tacitus' time no public and coercive authority over and above the people themselves."²⁹

Thompson's account suggests a process by which the continuous pressure of warfare not only creates relatively permanent institutions of specialised coercive authority within a community, but also creates the conditions for converting these offices into seats of feudal power. The second, and more direct, method by which this could happen is, of course, the obvious one of conquest of one people by another. Where conquest is followed by direct domination by the conquering group over a subject population, and the institutionalisation of exploitative relations in the formal delineation of rights, there is little problem for historical analysis. But the analysis often becomes complicated because of the complex formations one encounters in historical examples of societies in which there have been conquests, often successive waves of conquests, by other peoples. One does nonetheless find in anthropological studies examples even in politically uncentralised societies of freeborn and slave lineages, often attributable to conquest, with clearly recognised economic and ritual relations of dominance between the two categories sometimes including direct payments in terms of labour.³⁰ It has also been pointed out recently that much of the conventional anthropological literature, guided by an almost obsessive concern to unravel the procedural and symbolic intricacies of the balancing mechanisms in segmentary political systems, has

missed the very real exploitative relations which characterise the social formations of most extant "tribal" peoples. Many of these relations are in fact the result of the domination imposed by conquering groups. Frankenberg, for instance, has reanalysed the political relations of the Lozi tribe, earlier studied by Gluckman, and has shown that as a result of a history of conquest the Lozi have secured exclusive "ownership" of the mound gardens which give them a crucial advantage in the sharing of productive resources among the people of Baroteseland, and have thus ensured their domination over other peoples of the region.⁵¹

This sort of dominance by conquest can also take the form - and this in general terms, is the third possible form in which feudal power relations can emerge - of a simple tribute-extracting relation in which the social formation of the subject people is left largely intact, including its own internal constitution of authority which may, in fact, continue to retain a segmentary character. This, sometimes, is the form found in historical examples of large kingdoms with well-developed productive and state organisations attempting to extend their domination over more "primitive" peoples living in peripheral regions.

And finally, of course, we have the familiar case, usually the consequence of a long and complex historical process involving a combination of "internal" development and external political intervention over centuries, of the breakdown of segmentary forms of social organisation, the evolution of more developed techno-economic forms and more complex social arrangements of production, the emergence of differentiated and institutionalised forms of extraction and distribution of the surplus, and the creation of formal institutions of coercive domination. This, properly speaking, is the typical situation in which one encounters the peasantry in history.

Now, while it seems convenient for analytical purposes to distinguish between these separate processes of the emergence and establishment of regular exploitative class relations based on sheer superiority of physical force, one

would rarely find concrete historical examples of social formations in which these specific processes can be delineated with any degree of accuracy. In other words, it seems on the whole futile to attempt concrete historical analyses of either "tribal" or peasant societies by positing a framework of unilineal transition from some kind of "primitive communism" to class-divided society. A more useful approach would be to locate all precapitalist political formations in a historical process of which the central dynamic is to be found in the dialectical opposition between the communal and the feudal modes of power. Let me elaborate.

The Opposition between Communal and Feudal Modes of Power in "Transitions" to Feudalism

A common problem one comes across in the literature on political arrangements in "tribal" societies is that of deciding when "state institutions" have emerged. One approach to the problem is, so to speak, to postpone its solution by constructing a set of evolutionary stages in the process of emergence of fully developed state institutions, and placing all societies appearing to lack formal structures that cannot unequivocally be designated as state formations in one or the other of these stages. Thus, Elman Service subdivides the case studies in his book on the subject according to the "societal levels" of band, tribe, chiefdom and "primitive-state".³² Needless to say, classificatory schemes of this kind are entirely arbitrary: one can insert other stages in between any two, or lump together two or more stages and call them one. Besides, by refusing to designate as "state" institutions all regular arrangements of exercise of class power which cannot be defined in terms of some positive criteria such as territory or legitimate monopoly of force, one naturally tends to overlook in studies of societies otherwise characterised by "segmentary" forms of authority the process of emergence of exploitative class relations. This has, in fact, been a major argument in recent critiques of conventional anthropological methods. Fundamentally, the problem lies in the utility of trying to capture a process of change within a framework defined by a set of mutually exclusive positive categories.

The problem is highlighted in the work of anthropologists who, faced with incontrovertible evidence of the existence of regular processes of domination in "tribal" societies, have attempted to incorporate this into the conventional positivist framework. Aidan Southall, for instance, studying "processes of domination" among the Alur people of East Africa,³³ found two contrary principles of authority - one based on kinship, i.e. authority and order within lineages and clans built upon values inculcated in the family, and then spreading outwards through the agnatic core of brothers, father and sons to embrace all kinsmen of corporate lineages or the clan section, and the other political, stemming from chiefship and delegated downwards to chiefties and the heads of corporate lineages or clan sections. The kinship authority system retained a considerable responsibility for the provision of personal security and the regulation of everyday social relationships. But the society also had chiefs who not only acted as the main centres of a system of reciprocal exchange of goods and services but also obtained fines and tributes in kind as well as in services. The system of political authority was a flexible one with much responsibility left to the heads of local groups, while the chief stepped in to reinforce their authority.

when directly called upon by them, or when violent and unresolved disorders required his intervention. Alur chiefs did not enforce any rigidly defined authority within strict territorial frontiers. They relied mainly on the general influence of their ritual and supernatural authority to bring them the tribute and services required to maintain themselves and the economic system of which they were the pivots, and to secure reasonable conformity to the minimal requirements of order justice, in which the strictness of the regulations and the certainty of their enforcement diminished somewhat from the centre to the periphery of a jurisdiction. They had no military organisation to oppose against direct challenge to their political authority. But they could usually rely on the loyalty of a sufficient number of clan sections to muster an extempore force stronger than any that was likely to challenge them, and they had a miscellaneous body of dependents, closely tied to them by economic privileges, who could provide an informal body-guard.³⁴

In trying to square this evidence with the conceptual framework of "segmentary lineage systems", Southall then finds it necessary to invent the hybrid concept of the "segmentary state".³⁵ This he describes as follows :

(1) Territorial sovereignty is recognised but limited and essentially relative, forming a series of zones in which authority is almost absolute near the centre and increasingly restricted towards the periphery, often shading off into a ritual hegemony. (2) There is centralised government, yet there are also numerous peripheral foci of administration over which the centre exercises only a limited control. (3) There is a specialised administrative staff at the centre, but is repeated on a reduced scale at all the peripheral foci of administration. (4) Monopoly of the use of force is successfully claimed to a limited extent and within a limited range by the central authority, but legitimate force of a more restricted order inheres at all the peripheral foci. (5) Several levels of subordinate foci may be distinguishable, organised pyramidally in relation to the central authority.... (6) The more peripheral a subordinate authority is the more chance it has to change its allegiance from one power pyramid to another...³⁶

It then turns out that not only a large number of African societies, but several feudal states in Europe, India and China as well, were segmentary states! All the above characteristics of a "segmentary" distribution of power could be seen in the political organisation of these ancient and medieval kingdoms :

For, until the central authority can prove its efficacy to the average individual in terms of personal security, the individual must cling to kin or other traditional local units, and even to feudal authorities, in such a way that the distribution of power is segmentary in type.³⁷

Let us overlook the rather crude psychologism of the last formulation. The important point is that after looking at a wide range of empirical evidence from "tribal" as well as "feudal" agrarian societies, Southall has noticed a common feature -- the coexistence of two contrary principles of political authority, one based on kinship, the other on domination. He has not, of course, succeeded in locating this finding within a theory of the historical process of change in political formations. A much more remarkable anthropological study is the one by Leach on the Kachin people of upper Burma.³⁸ Kachin society is simultaneously

segmentary and class-stratified : the lineage segmentation does not lead to "balanced opposition" as in the theory of Fortes and Evans-Pritchard, but rather to a status ranking between two ideal constitutions of the social order - one based on the principle of kinship and the other on the principle of rank. The gunsa system of ranking means a status differentiation between chief and his followers. Ideally, it means a system of reciprocal obligations, but "the gunsa system is that the successful chief is tempted to repudiate links of kinship with his followers and to treat them as if they were bond slaves (nayen)."³⁹ When this happens, the contrary principle of gunlao can be invoked by the commoners to justify revolt against the chief. In the gunlao constitution, there are no chiefs and all lineages are of the same rank. Yet, the historical evidence seems to show that after a successful revolt and a period of egalitarian gunlao regime, "gunlao groups ... seem to revert rather rapidly to class differentiation on a lineage basis..."⁴⁰

Generally speaking, then, Leach describes the political system of the Kachin as one of oscillation between two opposed poles ideally defined in the Gunsa and the Gunlao. "A gunsa political state tends to develop features which lead to rebellion, resulting, for a time, in a gunlao order. But a gunlao community, unless it happens to be centred around a fixed territorial centre such as a patch of irrigated rice terraces, usually lacks the means to hold its component lineages together in a status of equality. It will then either disintegrate altogether through fission, or else status differentiation between lineage groups will bring the system back into the gunsa pattern."⁴¹

Leach also identified a third ideal pattern which the gunsa form tends to initiate, viz. the much more overtly "feudal" pattern of the Shan principalities: when the Kachin chiefs have the opportunity, they model their behaviour on that of the Shan princes. But what is more interesting is Leach's claim that the two contrary poles between which the Kachin political system oscillates are not merely abstract categories constructed by the anthropologist but ideal types that are recognised as such in Kachin society.⁴²

Leach also points out that while certain features of Kachin society are clearly similar to the classical segmentary type, or to Morgan's "gentile" organisation as among the Iroquois or the ancient Greeks, it is also different in that it has a distinct class system associated with a lineage system. In this respect, it is "only half a step removed" from neighbouring Shan society which resembles much more strongly what is commonly understood as feudalism. "The transition from Kachin-type organisation to Shan-type organisation involves the substitution of a straight landlord-tenant relationship for a relationship based either on common lineage or affinal dependence."⁴³ What Leach does not point out is that the opposition between the two contrary principles of organisation of power and authority is an integral aspect of political formations even in feudal society proper.

Marx on the "Original" Forms of Property

Let us turn to Marx's discussion in the Grundrisse on precapitalist formations. There are several pages here on what Marx calls the "original forms of property and production". The broad range of these forms Marx sets out in terms of two extremes -- small, free landed property, on the one hand, and "communal landownership resting on the Oriental commune", on the other. In all the forms falling within this range,

the worker relates to the objective conditions of his labour as to his property; this is the natural unity of labour with its material presuppositions. The worker thus has an objective existence independent of labour. The individual relates to himself as proprietor, as master of the conditions of his reality. He relates to the others in the same way and -- depending on whether this presupposition is posited as proceeding from the community or from the individual families which constitute the commune -- he relates to the others as co-proprietors, as so many incarnations of the common property, or as independent proprietors like himself, independent private proprietors -- beside whom the previously all-absorbing and all-predominant communal property is itself posited as a particular ager publicus alongside the many private landowners.⁴⁴

Marx then gives illustrations of several of these "original forms of property" that may occur within this range. In the first of these forms,

an initial, naturally arisen spontaneous community appears as first presupposition. Family, and the family extended as a clan, or through intermarriage between families, or combination of clans. ... This naturally arisen clan community, or, if one will pastoral society, is the first presupposition - the community of blood, language, customs - for the appropriation of the objective conditions of their life, and of their life's reproduction and objectifying activity (activity as herdsmen, hunters, tillers etc.). The earth is the great workshop, the arsenal which furnishes both means and material of labour, as well as the seat, the base of the community. They relate naively to it as the property of the community, of the community producing and reproducing itself in living labour. Each individual conducts himself only as a link as a member of this community as proprietor or possessor. The real appropriation through the labour process happens under these presuppositions, which are not themselves the product of labour but appear as its natural or divine presuppositions.⁴⁵

Now, "with the same land-relation as its foundation", this form of property can "realize itself" in many different ways. There could be little communities existing side by side, with individual families working independently on the plots assigned to them: the only part of their labour which is kept aside is for such purely communal expenses as "war, religion etc." and a certain communal reserve for purposes of insurance. On the other hand, there could be a communality of labour itself, as, says Marx, in Mexico or Peru, or among the early Celts or a few clans of India. Again, communality can appear in the form of the chief of a clan, or as a council of patriarchs. That is to say, the specific organisation of communal authority associated with this form of property can have various forms -- relatively more despotic or relatively more democratic. It could even appear, "as in most of the Asiatic land forms", as a comprehensive unity standing above all the little communities, a unity represented in the person of the despot who appears as the sole proprietor of the land and the little communities of producers merely as hereditary producers. Here, the surplus product, "determined by law in consequence of the real appropriation through labour", goes as tribute to this highest entity.⁴⁶

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The second "original" form of property Marx describes is the "ancient" form. Here too the community is the "first presupposition", but the difference is that the base of the community is not the countryside but the town: "the cultivated field here appears as a territorium belonging to the town". The major communal activity here is war, "the great communal labour which is required either to occupy the objective conditions of being there alive, or to protect and perpetuate the occupation". The community here is therefore "a negative unity towards the outside".

The commune - as state - is, on one side, the relation of these free and equal private proprietors to one another, their bond against the outside, and is at the same time their safeguard. The commune here rests as much on the fact that its members consist of working landed proprietors, small-owning peasants, as the peasants' independence rests on their mutual relations as commune members, on protection of the ager publicus for communal needs and communal glory etc. Membership in the commune remains the presupposition for the appropriation of land and soil, but, as a member of the commune, the individual is a private proprietor. He relates to his private property as land and soil, but at the same time as to his being as commune member; and his own sustenance as such is likewise the sustenance of the commune, and conversely etc.⁴⁷

The third form is the "Germanic". Here neither is the commune member a co-possessor of the commune property as in the oriental form, nor is there a separation between state property and private property as in classical antiquity. Rather, the commune exists only in the form of an actual "coming-together" of the individual members in an assembly. The individual households here are in fact independent centres of production, and the commune and communal property appear as forms "mediated by, i.e. as a relation of, the independent subjects to one another."⁴⁸

It is clear then that there can be several empirical variants of the "original form of property". Moreover, there is no difficulty if later-historical or anthropological research persuades us to extend, amend or even reject the descriptions given by Marx of some of these specific historical variants, or to add new ones to his list. The fundamental theoretical

criterion on which the conceptualisation of the "original form" depends is the presupposition of a community; all allocation of social rights, i.e. of property, proceeds from this presupposition; the objective mode of existence of the labouring individual - his relation to land and to all the conditions of his labour - is thus mediated by his existence as member of this community. Many specific variations of this objective mode of existence, and hence of the concrete forms of "communal property", are possible. The evolution of each of these would depend "partly on the natural inclinations of the tribe, and partly on the economic conditions in which it relates as proprietor to the land and soil in reality, i.e. in which it appropriates its fruits through labour, and the latter will itself depend on climate, physical make-up of the land and soil, the physically determined mode of its exploitation, the relation with hostile tribes or neighbour tribes, and the modifications which migrations, historic experiences etc. introduce."⁴⁹

It is also clear now that any conceptualisation of exploitative class relations, e.g. slavery or serfdom, requires as a theoretical presupposition the logical existence of a concept of "communal property". Once again, it is useful to emphasise that one does not thereby need in each specific case an empirical discovery of the specific form of the original property : it seems safe to assert that that given existing techniques of historical research, this would be virtually impossible in a lot of cases. On the other hand, by looking at historical situations of instituted relations of class exploitation in pre-capitalist societies in terms of the categorical opposites community/external domination, one obtains a perspective into the historical process in which such forms of property are embedded, and it becomes possible thereby to conceptualise the contradictory character inherent in all such instituted forms of exploitation. Marx, for instance, gives the example of one clan being conquered by another :

The fundamental condition of property resting on the clan system (into which the community originally resolves itself)

... makes the clan conquered by another clan propertyless and throws it among the inorganic conditions of the conqueror's reproduction, to which the conquering community relates as its own. Slavery and serfdom are thus only further developments of the forms of property resting on the clan system. They necessarily modify all the latter's forms.⁵⁰

Thus, in this particular case, community is prior; slavery or serfdom are developments on the "original" communal forms. It is clearly possible to generalise this logical sequence of conceptualisation of evolving forms of property for every other process of imposition of exploitative relations based on superiority of physical force. In fact, Marx himself states this quite directly:

Property, then, originally means - in its Asiatic, Slavonic ancient classical, Germanic form - the relation of the working (producing or self-reproducing) subject to the conditions of his production or reproduction as his. ... This relation as proprietor - not as a result but as a presupposition of labour, i.e. of production - presupposes the individual defined as a member of a clan or community (whose property the individual himself is, up to a certain point). Slavery, bondage etc., where the worker himself appears among the natural conditions of production for a third individual or community... - i.e. property no longer the relation of the working individual to the objective conditions of labour - is always secondary, derived, never original, although it is a necessary and logical result of property founded on the community and labour in the community.⁵¹

Feudal State Formations

A feudal mode of power can, therefore, be seen to operate within a specific state formation only in opposition to a conception of social authority based on the community. In all political formations in which there exists an institutionalised sphere of class domination based ultimately on indirect superiority of physical force, it is in constant battle against subordinate forces seeking to assert (perhaps reassert) an alternative mode of power and authority based on the notion of the community. The effective limits of domination at any point of time is thus the resultant at that time of this inherently contradictory process.

By looking at the question of power in feudal political formations as the opposition between feudal jurisdiction/community, we are thus able to conceptualise the political process of struggle in these societies in terms of the opposites domination/resistance.

I cannot at this stage attempt anything like a full-scale examination of the many analytical implications of this framework. Here I will only take a few illustrations, drawn mainly from European history, to show what I think are some of the advantages of using this approach and also point out some of the major problems which will need much greater clarification than is possible at the moment.

A central question, for instance, is the one of defining "servitude" or conversely, "freedom", in the context of feudal relations of production. Within the theory of modes of production, servitude would, of course, be defined in terms of the specific form of the "property" connection between the labourer and non-labourer elements in a feudal system of production. That is to say, "property" or the conditions of labour here are such that while the labourer possesses the means of his labour, he himself is part of the conditions of production for the non-labourer, in this case the lord, i.e. the labourer is a part of the landlord's "property". This defines the labourer's servitude and a part of his labour (or its product) is appropriated by the lord as rent whatever the specific form of appropriation. The lord's right to rent is thus a function of his rights of "property" in the labourer's "person" (exclusive of course of his means of labour). That is to say, these are rights amounting to the "appropriation of an alien will"⁵², i.e. rights extending into the "life-process" of the labourer as distinct from the "labour-process". (This last qualification is what distinguishes servitude from slavery, because in the latter the master's rights of property in the slave's person include his means of labour as well - the slave is "property-less"). These rights, however, have their basis in a direct relation of political domination by the lord over his "subjects". The appropriation of rent is directly dependent on superiority of physical force.

Thus defined, servitude can not only have different forms, depending in one aspect on the specific form in which the surplus is appropriated as rent, but can also vary in the range of incidence as well as in intensity. Thus, the form of rent could be cash, kind or labour, or a combination of those forms. As a limiting case, the non-producer element could even be organised in the form of a state and the exaction of the surplus could take the form of a tax or revenue. And the quantum of rent could vary greatly. The exact form and magnitude of feudal exaction is determined as the outcome of a process of struggle between the rent-exacting classes and the subordinate peasantry : this is what determines in any given context the specific meaning of "servitude" or "freedom".

In most historical examples of such struggles, the form is one of a battle over "rights" - the determination of the respective spheres of feudal jurisdiction and peasant rights. What is interesting in the European evidence is that the sphere of peasant rights is virtually coextensive with "communal rights". Duby is quite definite about what a "free peasantry" meant in early medieval Europe :

What was meant by [freedom] was not personal independence but the fact of belonging to the "folk" (populus), of being answerable to public institutions. ...The right to bear arms, to follow the war-leader on expeditions undertaken each spring, and so to share in the eventual profits of war, all constituted the basic criteria of liberty. Freedom also implied the duty of assembling at regular intervals to declare the law and to do justice. Finally, it gave men a voice in the collective exploitation of patches of wasteland and in decisions on whether or not to welcome newcomers to the community of "neighbours" (vicini).⁵³

The extension of feudal jurisdiction and increasing servitude of the peasantry essentially meant the erosion of institutionalised communal rights.

The most important gains made by the great estates took place at the expense, not of neighbouring estates, but of the still

independent peasantry. Some peasant resistance was encountered within the nascent village community. Associations of "neighbours" were gathering strength around the parish church and the collective possession of customary rights. It is even possible (for the class struggle may now have assumed this basic pattern) that peasants had been forming special associations to protect them from oppression by the rich.⁵⁴

In many of the Romanized provinces, however, peasant freedom was eroded considerably. "Nevertheless", Duby points out, "the loss of liberty was not total",⁵⁵ and even among the most dominated serf populations, communal solidarity was kept alive in such residual institutions as communal drinking:

The humblest workers in this poverty-stricken world would indulge in merrymaking, the object of which was now and then to rekindle a sense of brotherhood and to command the goodwill of the invisible powers through communal, short-lived and joyful destruction of wealth in the midst of a universe of privation. Such were potationes, ritual drinking bouts of alcoholic beverages, aimed at one and the same time to half-open the gates of the unknowable and to reinforce group cohesion for mutual protection.⁵⁶

Not only this. In the constant battle between feudal forces striving for greater dominance and the resistance of a subordinate peasantry waged through a wide variety of means ranging from deception to open rebellion, the balance of forces can be seen to oscillate in terms of the relative recognition of "feudal" and "communal" rights in the established structure of law, whether customary or codified.⁵⁷ Thus, the success of peasant resistance would often be marked by the grant of charters of liberties which would mean greater autonomy for village institutions;⁵⁸ on the other hand, increasing feudal power would mean not just a rise in the quantum of exaction but an extension of the sphere of feudal "jurisdiction" in the matter of administering "justice". It is this structure of "rights" which expressed the specific combination of the two contradictory modes of power in a given state structure. The balance was seldom stationary, and the resultant at any given moment of this struggle between the two opposing forces provided a definition of the "degree" of servitude of the subordinate peasantry.

The Communal Mode of Power in Feudal State Formations

Of course, since it is politics we are talking about, and politics of a sort carried out within the regularly ordered process of a relatively stable state formation, notions of authority, legitimacy, jurisdiction, resistance, rebellion, must be seen as incorporated within a unified and apparently consistent system of beliefs representing the dominant social ideology. The normal "function" of such ideologies is always to provide legitimacy to existing structures of domination. In large and well-developed kingdoms and empires, this takes on the elaborate cultural form of a state-wise religion tying peasant communities, towns and state into a single "great tradition". Yet, the process of legitimation itself contains within it - in myths, rituals, ceremonies, customary practices, cultural institutions, literary and aesthetic ideals, and appearing in the garb of such virtues as kinship, reciprocity, paternalism, mutual trust, and so on - the signs of feudal dominium coming to terms in a relatively stable balance of forces with the world of the peasant communities. As a result, the same set of ethical norms or religious practices which justify existing relations of domination also contain, in a single dialectical unity, the justification for legitimate revolt. Let me give just one example of a phenomenon that has been noticed on numerous occasions in many different places and periods. During the revolt in Catalonia in 1640, "rumours of strange and miraculous events spread with extraordinary speed. When the troops burnt the church of Riudarenes, tears were seen to fall from the eyes of the Virgin in a picture of the church." The bishop pronounced this rumour a sacrilege.

It was only one step from excommunication by the bishop to a proclamation by the rebels that they were fighting for god and their churches. Inevitably, the episcopal censure was regarded by the insurgents as a complete vindication of their activities. It gave the rising the character of a Holy War - an idea already suggested by the miraculous tears of the Virgin and encouraged by the clergy and members of the religious orders, who told them that divine retribution was now being meted out to soldiers when temporal justice had failed to punish.⁶⁰

It is this inherent contradictoriness of established ideologies in feudal society which creates the possibility for these sudden inversions in signification which are so much a feature of peasant revolts.

The anthropologist Victor Turner has suggested that these events, and particularly the millenarian ideologies which often accompany revolts of this kind, should be seen as a kind of liminal behaviour, specifically as rituals of status reversal.⁶¹ He argues that when society acquires a specific structure in terms of jural, political and economic positions - "differentiated culturally structured, segmented and often hierarchical system of institutionalised positions"⁶² -- resistance or revolt often takes on the form of what he calls communitas. "Beyond the structural lies communitas;" in contrast to segmented and hierarchical society, there is now a "direct, immediate and total confrontation of human identities" and a belief in a model of society which is homogeneous, unstructured communitas.⁶³ Several features of millenarian movements have the properties of liminality, their rituals those of rites of passage : homogeneity, equality, anonymity, absence of property, reduction of all to the same status level, the wearing of uniform apparel, sexual continence (or its antithesis, sexual community), minimisation of sex distinctions, abolition of rank, humility, disregard for personal appearance, unselfishness, total obedience to the prophet or leader, sacred instruction, the maximisation of religious (as opposed to secular) attitudes and behaviour, suspension of kinship rights and obligations, simplicity of speech and manner, sacred folly, acceptance of pain and suffering.⁶⁴

Of course, the spontaneity and immediacy of communitas can hardly be sustained for long. Soon it returns to the domain of structure, either reverting to the old segmentations and hierarchies, or perhaps to a structure modified by the impact of the revolt. The revolt is only a moment in the historical process of domination/resistance. Its structure is to be found not in any novel reorganisation of social relations, but rather, "in a Levi-Straussian way", in "the lurid and colourful imagery of the apocalyptic or the

generated in the milieu of existential communities." The power of the community is "structured" in ideology: "Rules that abolish minutiae of structural differentiation in, for example, the domains of kinship, economics, and political structure liberate the human structural propensity and gives it free reign in the cultural realm of myth, ritual and symbol"⁶⁶ - "an almost febrile, visionary and prophetic poetry [is] their main genre of cultural utterance."⁶⁷

One can, in fact, go further and note the many other possibilities which arise because of the contradictory character of ideologies legitimising structures of domination - the many ambiguities in meaning which create possibilities for manoeuvre both by forces seeking to consolidate or extend their domination in tune with changing circumstances and by subordinate groups rising in revolt. I cite two examples, this time from a completely different historical situation. Among tribes in southern and eastern Africa with political formations showing different types of combination of corporate kin authority and centralised state structures, there often exist two sorts of religious cults and rituals - one involving "spirits of the household" invoked by lineage sections or segmented kin groups, and the other of "spirits of the land" invoked for the well-being of the country, defined in terms of territory, in which all, irrespective of kin linkages, take part. The history of the Mang'anja people, for instance, shows that with successive waves of migration and conquest, and the reestablishment of a political order following each of these upheavals, these cults expressing different combinations of kin solidarity and hierarchic rule have taken different forms and have been manipulated to serve different ruling interests.⁶⁸ Conversely, at the time of the 1896 uprising against white colonial rulers in Southern Rhodesia, the rebel leadership of Mkwati attempted to unify in a common cause the traditionally hostile Ndebele and Shona tribesmen (the Shona were tributary tribes of the Ndebele). He did this by appealing to the memories of the pre-Ndebele past and by invoking the Milno cult by which supposed kinship ties were established among the various tribes through a woman who was made "grandmother" of all the

Matabele peoples. Mwatini, therefore, was not merely using the support provided by a "traditional" religious system. He was transforming the material provided by these religious elements "into something more radical and revolutionary". Mwatini's was, therefore, -

a prophetic leadership operating over and above all the restrictions implied by hierarchic order and links with the past He had no claim before the rising to be the senior Mwatini cult representative. It was just before and especially during the rising that he emerged as "the great Mwatini" ... When he did so it was with a revolutionary message and a revolutionary set of instructions. His followers were promised invulnerability and even immortality; they entered a new society which transcended the old When the rising became really desperate, the authority of the Mwatini and the other cult officers who had chosen the same path was elevated above that of "traditional" political authority; indunas and chiefs were deposed. For however brief a period Mwatini was seeking not merely to co-ordinate but to create a "new order".⁶⁹

This last example also points to another important feature of communal authority : the ability to produce a suitable leadership when the community needs to resist external forces of domination. Communal resistance could, of course, be carried out under the leadership of customarily recognised communal leaders and through the medium of traditional communal institutions. On the other hand, since it is the community as a whole which is the source of all authority, no one is a permanent repository of delegated powers. Hence, when the need arises, traditional leaders may suddenly be replaced or superseded by new ones having no previous standing in the customarily recognised arrangement of communal authority. This is a feature very common in historical examples of peasant revolts. It also makes it possible for the community to act as a community in specific instances of resistance even when there do not exist under normal circumstances any recognised institutional arrangements for the exercise of communal authority.

The structure of communal authority must be located primarily in the domain of ideology. It is possible of course, as we have seen in some of the examples discussed above, for a given peasant community to possess specific institutional arrangements for the self-regulation of communal life when specialised state institutions are absent, or even when it operates in a vaguely and flexibly demarcated field within a larger state structure. However, within a dialectical process defined principally in terms of domination/resistance, the institutional structures are best seen as representing a certain temporary state of equilibrium within a definite system of production and a definite arrangement of the relations of dominance/subordination. The principal dynamics within such a system, i.e. the class struggle within a specific pre-capitalist formation, must be located fundamentally in the political ("extra-economic", if you will) domain of the struggle over "rights". And, here, depending on the specific strategic configuration of the struggle, not only can the agents of communal authority change suddenly and spectacularly, but even the definition of the community - its boundaries - can shift. The strategic configuration may vary with changing techno-economic conditions of production or with changes in the feudal organisation of power. But the conditions which make possible a specific expression of the identity and authority of a community in a specific context of struggle must be located above all in the domain of ideology.⁷⁰

If one looks once again at the evidence on the European peasantry in the medieval age, the smallest communal unit appears to be the village, defined territorially as the agglomeration of contiguous parcels of land each of which is referred to as the manse or the huba or the hide, and each of which is occupied by an individual household.

We understand by an enclosure, solidly rooted to its site by a permanent barrier such as a palisade or a living hedge, carefully maintained, a protected asylum to which the entry was forbidden and the violation of which was punished by severe penalties: an island of refuge where the occupant was assumed to be the master and at whose threshold communal servitude and the demands of chiefs and lords stopped short.

However, in the European case, this territorial definition of the village as the sum of manes, the arable and the meadows, grazing grounds, forests etc. used by the community is coupled with a specific institutional arrangement :

The unity of the terroir is always sanctioned and embodied by a communal body, the "assembly of inhabitants", which abides by traditional rulings and occasionally makes new ones to ensure that where the exploitation of the land is the concern of the community it operates in the common interest What normally complicates (or perhaps simplifies) matters is that the parish "religious" assembly often became identified in the long run with the "agricultural" assembly of inhabitants, where concurrent debates tackled material problems to do with the church, agrarian problems to do with the terroir and even fiscal problems, 72 principally those raised by the collection of royal taxation.

Underlying the territorial definition, then, is a social conception of the group as united by ties of solidarity. In other contexts, these could take on the more explicit form of ties of kinship - real affinal connections, or imagined (perhaps fabricated) beliefs of common lineage, or lineages related to one another in specific ways that are sanctified in mythology and ritual. These bonds of affinity contain possibilities of manipulation. Thus, the boundaries of community could vary with varying contexts of collective action. The point which distinguishes the communal mode from other modes of organisation of power is this : here it is not a perception of common interests which compels organisation to achieve unity; there is rather the conviction that bonds of affinity already exist which then become the natural presupposition for collective action.

The State-Lord-Peasant Triad

One important element which affects the context of communal resistance is the feudal organization of power. A specific feudal structure has its own history, encompassing movements of population, conquest and subjugation, the stabilization of complex relations of obligation and reciprocity with the subordinate population, incorporation into larger state structures, and so on. In developed kingdoms and empires, these could acquire an elaborate hierarchical

structure of overlordship and vassalage. On the other hand, the dominant power structure could take on the form of an overarching state bureaucracy with a complex hierarchical organisation of the military-bureaucratic nobility. Political struggles in this situation can be analysed within the framework of a triad: king/state - lords/officials - peasantry. Various strategic combinations of the three elements are possible. One often finds in the history of medieval peasant revolts occasions in which the externality and distance of the monarchy can make it the ideological ally of a peasantry engaged in a struggle with local lords and officials. Thus, Elliott writes of the Catalan revolt of 1640 :

Even though more than a century of royal absenteeism had gradually weakened the patriarchal and formal ties between the king and his Catalan subjects, they still looked upon him as a father who - if once the just complaints of his children were allowed to reach his ears - would promptly act to right their wrongs and remove the cause of their distresses. If the rebel bands shouted "Death to traitors!" they also shouted, with equal enthusiasm, "Long live the king".

The instinctive loyalty of the peasantry to a king they scarcely knew is not really very surprising.⁷³

Then again, in France at the time of the ancien regime, the peasantry resisted the domination of all these rural patriarchs who collected "feudal rights". Here, writes Goubert,

- (a) The king and kingship inspire loyalty and love;
- (b) But there is deep-seated resentment of the financial methods of the monarchy, although it is hoped that the good king and the States-General will reform them;
- (c) The majority protest against various feudal rights, or against all of them, or against the principle of them...;
- (d) There is an at least equally powerful resentment, not of the principle of tithes but of the way they are collected, their unfairness, exorbitance and inconsistencies, and above all of the fact that they have been diverted from their original aim (hardly any of the cardinals are hostile to religion itself);...⁷⁴

And yet, the events leading up to the Revolution were to culminate in popular action against the person of the king and his family. On the other hand, there are numerous instances in the history of medieval kingdoms and empires where the peasantry, especially in outlying and peripheral regions are found resisting the encroachments of the larger kingdom in alliance with local chiefs and magnates. The externality of the institution of monarchy makes its position quite ambivalent in relation to the peasant communities.

It is even possible to argue that there exists in peasant ideology a distinction between kings and kingship, and that a revolt against a king is not necessarily a revolt against kingship. That is to say, political struggles in feudal society, defined as a process of domination/resistance and occurring in a strategic context defined by relations within the state-landlord-peasantry triad, can be seen as a political process within a particular feudal state formation. As Gluckman says of rebellions in African kingdoms :

... societies which have a stagnant techno-economy have conflicts which can be resolved by changing the individuals occupying office or in relationship with one another, without changing the pattern of the offices or relationships. Politically, it means that a rebellion changes the king, but does not affect the kingship - nay, may even strengthen the kingship, against a tyrant who has broken its norms. Secondly, it means that the territorial sections of a kingdom struggle against the central power and each other, without disrupting the central authority,⁷⁵

The distinction between the modes of power thus enables us to define the field of possibilities : a specific combination within the state-lord-peasant triad then becomes open to specific explanations in particular historic contexts. But thereby it also enables us to discuss the conditions which make possible the supersession, dissolution or reappropriation of particular modes of power in the wider historical context of the transition from feudalism to capitalism.

The Modes of Power under Capitalism

The transition to capitalism, i.e. the historical triumph of the capitalist mode of production, also implies the rise of dominance in the state formation of a new mode of exercise of power. I have described earlier the main features of what I have called the bourgeois mode of power. I will not elaborate on it any further here, since, while the central attributes of the ideological conception of the state in liberal constitutional theory are well known, the actual mechanisms of exercise of class domination in capitalist societies form a subject of considerable dispute and debate. It is not possible to stretch the implications of the framework proposed above so as to make a contribution to any of these specific debates until much further work is carried out into historical materials on the development of political institutions and processes in the modern period. The following comments are, therefore, entirely tentative and hypothetical.

First of all, it may be worth reconsidering the histories of the emergence of the capitalist nation-states of the world in order to delineate the specific paths by which a characteristically bourgeois mode of power gains ascendancy. It is certain that even in the most classical case of the rise to hegemony of the bourgeoisie and the complete sway of a capitalist mode of production, the evolution of political processes will reveal nonlinearities, zigzags, disjunctures as well as continuities, representing numerous compromises with other modes of exercise of power, and the survival and perhaps ultimate appropriation of feudal institutions, conceptions and forms of authority. One is reminded here of that rather cryptic comment by Marx in the Grundrisse. Talking about the master-servant relation in which the presupposition is that of "the appropriation of an alien will", Marx remarks :

...it forms a necessary ferment for the development and the decline and fall of all original relations of property and of production, just as it also expresses their limited nature. Still, it is reproduced - in mediated form - in capital, and thus likewise forms a ferment of its dissolution and is an emblem of its limitation.⁷⁶

The identification of the specific differences in the rise of dominance of the bourgeois mode of power, and in the limits to this dominance, is central to a historical understanding of the class struggles in individual capitalist countries in the phase of the rise of capitalism.

Here, a preliminary analytical tool would be the distinction between the nodes of power. If one looks once again at the description given by Brenner of the differences in the transition processes in each of the European countries one can immediately identify the main elements which describe the class struggle in this period : a feudalism in crisis, a rising bourgeoisie, the absolutist state, varying levels of organisation of feudal power, varying degrees of solidarity among the peasantry. The first two elements describe what is potentially "new" in the situation; together, they create the conditions of possibility for a transition. The specific process of transition would, however, be marked by a series of strategic configurations, shifting from point according to the changing relative strengths and positions of each of these elements. An explicit categorisation of the nodes of power would, it seems to me, provide the necessary analytical complement to the task of identifying the techno-economic conditions for a transition : together, they not only provide a complete analytical encapsulation of the "real appropriation" as well as the "property" connections which describe a mode of production, but they also enable us to locate the element of "indeterminacy" in the domain of the political.

The second point concerns the question of the peasantry in social formations dominated in some way or other by capitalism. It seems reasonable to argue that the establishment of bourgeois hegemony over all structures of society requires not so much the abolition of feudal institutions or feudal conceptions and symbols of authority, for these could in fact be appropriated and subsumed within a dominant bourgeois mode of exercise of power. What it requires rather is the dissolution of the peasantry as a distinct social form of existence of productive labour, and hence the extinction of a communal mode of power. To the extent that a peasantry continues to exist as peasantry in a society dominated by a capitalism, it represents a limit to bourgeois hegemony.

This precisely is the kind of problem one encounters in countries which retain the character of large agrarian societies in the modern period of history. The usual features here are the intrusion of new extractive mechanisms into the agrarian economy, often with the active legal and armed support of a colonial political authority, leading to a systematic commercialisation of agriculture and the incorporation in varying degrees of the agrarian economy into a larger capitalist world-market; the growth of a new industrial sector, usually of a limited nature in comparison with the absolute size of the economy and with varying combinations of foreign, "comprador" and "national" capital; the growth of new political institutions and processes based on bourgeois conceptions of law, bureaucracy and representation. The result is a differential impact on pre-capitalist structures - sometimes crushing them into oblivion, sometimes modifying them to fit in with the new demands of surplus extraction and the new procedures of governance, and at other times keeping intact, perhaps bolstering, pre-existing productive systems and local organisations of power while merely establishing a suitable extractive mechanism.⁷⁷ The analytical problems which arise in the course of characterising the relations of production or state formations which develop in these situations are numerous, and have been much debated.

The usual analytical frame in which the impact of a colonial economy on the peasantry is studied is one of differentiation - the growth of different strata within the peasantry and the progressive increase in the differences between them in terms of incomes, assets and economic viability. The problem that is often encountered, however, is that of relating this process to the political role of the peasantry in colonial (and post-colonial) societies. For here, once again, we find many asymmetries between the changing patterns of solidarity within the peasantry in their political actions and what would be the expected structures of interests if the peasantry is seen as an amalgam of differentiated strata. Many unexpected possibilities are created here because of the combination of different modes of power the conscious organisation of group interests into larger alliances or coalitions, the continued perception of state institutions as agencies of external domination, the sudden expressions of solidarity on the presupposition that there already

exist affinal bonds (which now begin to be called, in contrast with the new modes of organisation of interests, "promordial loyalties"), and the countless avenues of manipulation, mobilisation and appropriation into larger structures of power that are opened up as a consequence. Talking about the innovations in the mechanisms of power in modern-day capitalist society, Michel Foucault has drawn our attention to the "capillary form of existence" of power, "the point where power reaches into the very grain of individuals, touches their bodies and inserts itself into their actions and attitudes, their discourses, learning processes and everyday lives. The eighteenth century invented, so to speak, a synaptic regime of power, a regime of its exercise within the social body, rather than from above it. ... This more-or-less coherent modification in the small-scale modes of exercise of power was made possible only by a fundamental structural change. It was the instituting of this new local, capillary form of power which impelled society to eliminate certain elements such as the court and the king."⁷⁸ Foucault has sought to demonstrate the complexities of this novel regime of power in his studies of the history of mental illness; of clinical practice, of the prison, of sexuality and of the rise of the human sciences. When one looks at regimes of power in the so-called backward countries of the world today, not only does the dominance of the characteristically "modern" modes of exercise of power seem limited and qualified by the persistence of older modes, but by the fact of their combination in a particular state formation, it seems to open up at the same time an entirely new range of possibilities for the ruling classes to exercise their domination.

FOOTNOTES

1. Partha Chatterjee, "Agrarian Relations and Communalism in Bengal, 1926-1935" in Ranajit Guha, ed., Subaltern Studies I : Writings on South Asian History and Society (Delhi : Oxford University Press, 1981).
2. Robert Brenner, "Agrarian Class Structure and Economic Development in Pre-Industrial Europe", Past and Present, 70 (February 1976), pp.30-75; "The Origins of Capitalist Development : A Critique of Neo-Smithian Marxism", New Left Review, 104 (July-August 1977), pp.25-92; "Dobb on the Transition from Feudalism to Capitalism", Cambridge Journal of Economics, 2, 2 (June 1978), pp.121-140.
3. Now available in Rodney Hilton, ed., The Transition from Feudalism to Capitalism (London : New Left Books, 1978).
4. Brenner, "The Origins of Capitalist Development".
5. Brenner, "Dobb on the Transition", p.127. It could be argued that Brenner has been somewhat unfair to Dobb in his charge that Dobb had overlooked the class struggle aspect of the transition. The point, however, is that in spite of a masterly empirical presentation of this evidence, Dobb did not incorporate the class struggle as an integral part of his fundamental theory of the transition.
6. Brenners, "Agrarian Class Structure", p.51.
7. Brenner, "Dobb on the Transition", p.129.
8. Brenner, "Agrarian Class Structure", op.cit., p.52.
9. Ibid., p.47.
10. Etienne Balibar, "On the Basic Concepts of Historical Materialism" in L. Althusser and E. Balbir, Reading Capital (London: New Left Books, 1970), pp.201-308, esp. pp.212-6.
11. Chatterjee, "Agrarian Relations and Communalism", section II.
12. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, Selected Works, Vol.3 (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1973), pp.191-334.
13. It is instructive to note the remark of an anthropologist who, in an attempt to put into a comparative framework the results of anthropological researches on tribal state organisations, has shown a similar concern to avoid this historicism. Gluckman discusses the difficulties of postulating "a single evolutionary development for each tribal type society into a differentiated society", but then adds: "... it is certain that the tribal-type antedated the differentiated society in the whole march of human history." Max Gluckman, Politics, Law and Ritual in Tribal Society (Oxford : Basil Blackwell, 1965), p.81.

14. John Middleton and David Tait, "Introduction" in Middleton and Tait, eds., Tribes Without Rulers : Studies in African Segmentary Systems (London : Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1958), pp.1-32.
15. M. Fortes and E.E. Evans-Pritchard, "Introduction" in Fortes and Evans-Pritchard, eds. African Political Systems (London : Oxford University Press, 1940), pp.1-24.
16. The Studies by Evans-Pitchard and Fortes in ibid.
17. Studies by Laura Behanman, Jean Duxton, Geoffrey Lienhart, Edward Winter, David Tait and John Middleton in Middleton and Tait, op.cit.
18. M.G. Smith, in an early critique of the segmentary lineage theory, pointed out its limited applicability even in the "tribal" situation : "... the foundation of segmentary theory consists in a combination of two basic concepts, segmentation as a structure and process on the one hand, and political organization on the other. Where these conceptions are combined with unilineal descent groupings, segmentary lineages exist, otherwise they do not". He pointed out that there were "tribal" societies lacking specialised organs of administration in which the segments were not lineages, but localities or age-sets or cult-groups. Smith, of course, carried forward the argument to contend, in the manner of the "political systems" theorists, that all political processes involved segmentation and all administrative organisation involved hierarchy and that, therefore, "the old problem of 'states' and 'stateless societies' is largely spurious ... In a real sense, therefore, the distinction ... reduces to variability in combination and degree of explicitness in hierarchic organization, differentiation of governmental units in terms of political and administrative functions and the variable distribution of these functions among Corporations Aggregate or Sole, organized with varying degrees of explicitness." But a critical discussion of this last part of Smith's argument would require a long digression. M.G. Smith, "On Segmentary Lineage Systems", Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain & Ireland, 86, 2 (July-December 1956), pp.39-80.
19. John Middleton and S. Kerchaw The Kikuyu and Kamba of Kenya (1965).
20. G.I. Jones, The Trading States of the Oil Rivers (London Oxford University Press, 1963).
21. Gluckman, Politics, Law and Ritual, pp. 130 ff.
22. This "becomes more significant when previously hostile tribes have had to unite against foreign domination. Then some outsider, not occupying a role of authority in established systems, arises as a prophet, backed with supernatural powers, to unite the previously warring groups. This has happened in several areas of Africa : among the Nuer among the tribes of the Cape Province of South Africa, in East and Central Africa." Ibid., p. 102.

23. See, for example, M. Fortes, "The Political System of the Tallensi of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast", in Fortes and Evans-Pritchard, op.cit., pp.239-271.
24. Among the Benba, for instance, the chiefly clan is like a superior caste. Audrey I. Richards, "The Political System of the Benba Tribe - North-Eastern Rhodesia", ibid., pp.83-120. Among the **Zulus**, the king's family formed a superior rank; the close relatives of various chiefs were the aristocracy in the chief's tribe. Max Gluckman, "The Kingdom of the Zulu of South Africa", ibid., pp.25-55.
25. Jean Buxton, "The Mandari of the Southern Sudan" in Tait and Middleton, op.cit., pp.67-95.
26. I. Schapera, "The Political Organisation of the Ngwata of Bechuanaland Protectorate", in Fortes and Evans-Pritchard, op.cit., pp.56-82.
27. Marshall D. Sahlins, Tribesmen (Englewood cliffs, N.J. : Prentice-Hall 1968), p.17, Sahlins also notes "the general propensity of tribal peoples to cloak alliances of convenience in kinship garb. Where peace is necessary or desirable, kinship is extended to effect it." Ibid., p.11. It is curious that in order to put this idea into a more general framework of the evolution of state institutions, Sahlins has to borrow his political theory from Hobbes. His view of this development is one from a state of "Warre" where "force is held in severalty" to "Peace" where it is held in a sovereign body which has sole legitimate monopoly of force. But surely the most distinctive premise on which the Hobbesian theory is based is that of warring individuals and not communities already united in bonds of solidarity. The idea of individual members of society entering into a contract and passing on all coercive powers into the hands of a sovereign or sovereign body is fundamentally antithetical to the notion of communal authority. Perhaps this confusion of categories in Sahlins has to do with his attempt to generalise and elevate into a "domestic mode of production" the Chayanovian idea of self-sufficient and jealously self-centred peasant households. Sahlins, Stone Age Economics (London : Tavistock, 1979).
28. E.A. Thompson, The Early Germans (Oxford : Clarendon Press, 1965).
29. Ibid., pp.44-5.
30. Among the Bonny and Kalabari peoples of Eastern Nigeria, for example, the "tribe" is divided into freeborn and slaves, and the membership of village councils is confined only to the freeborn. G.I. Jones, op.cit. Also see, Jack Goody, "Land Tenure and Feudalism in Africa" in Z.A. Koczanski and J.M. Koczanski, eds., An Economic History of Tropical Africa, Vol.I (London : Frank Cass, 1977), pp.62-69.

31. Ronald Frankenberg, "Economic Anthropology or Political Economy ? The Berotse Social Formation - A Case Study" in John Clammer, ed., The New Economic Anthropology (London : Macmillan, 1978), pp.31-60. Also see, Y. Lacoste, "General Characteristics and Fundamental Structures of Medieval North African Society", Economy and Society, Vol.3. No.1 - (1974). David Seddon, "Economic Anthropology or Political Economy ? Approaches to the Analysis of Pre-capitalist formations in the Maghrob", in John Clammer, ed., op.cit., pp.61-109
32. Elman R. Service, Profiles in Ethnology (New York : Harper & Row, 1978).
33. Aidan W. Southall, Alur Society : A Study in Processes and Types of Domination (Cambridge : W. Heffer, 1953).
34. Ibid., p.237
35. It is interesting to note what Southall has to say about his methodological problem : "The distinction between state and segmentary organisation is theoretically valid, and at this abstract level intermediate forms demand no separate category. But in any scheme of classification which claims empirical relevance the criteria of legitimate isolation are different, and any empirical form which has a certain frequency, stability and structural consistency must receive due consideration. The morphologically transitional is not necessarily the empirically transitional form." Ibid., p.246. Positivism and empiricism go hand in hand !
36. Ibid., pp.248-9.
37. Ibid., p.261.
38. E.R. Leach, Political Systems of Highland Burma (London: G. Bell, 1954).
39. Ibid., p.203.
40. Ibid.
41. Ibid., p.204
42. Ibid., pp.235-6.
43. Ibid., p.233.
44. Karl Marx, Grundrisse, tr. Martin Nicolaus (Harmondsworth : Penguin, 1973), p.471.
45. Ibid., p.472.

46. Ibid., pp.472-3. It is somewhat distressing to find even in recent writings extended discussions on the "reality" of "communal ownership" in pre-capitalist societies. Obviously, a mercantile notion of property rights in land is irrelevant in pre-capitalist formations, and Paul Bohannon, writing about land rights in pre-colonial Africa, quite correctly dismisses such a notion as "silly". He also shows that it was after the colonial penetration that the history of landed property in Africa was written on the basis of such a definition of "communal ownership", doubtless to suit specific colonial interests. Paul Bohannon, "Africa's Land" in George Dalton, ed., Tribal and Peasant Economies (Garden City, N.Y. : Natural History Press, 1967), pp.51-60.
47. Marx, Grundrisse, p.475.
48. Ibid., pp.477-84.
49. Ibid., p.486.
50. Ibid., p.493.
51. Ibid., pp.495-6.
52. Ibid., pp.500-1.
53. Georges Duby, The Early Growth of the European Economy : Warriors and Peasants from the Seventh to the Twelfth Century, tr. Howard B. Clarke (London : Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1970) p.33. Also see the excellent survey of the social forms of the medieval European peasantry in Rodney Hilton, Bond Men Made Free (London : Temple Smith, 1973) pp.25-134. It may be added here that the question of servitude or freedom should not be confused with notions of "equality", for there was considerable inequality among the medieval European peasantry. See Rodney Hilton, "Reasons for "Inequality among the Medieval Peasant", Journal of Peasant Studies, Vol.5, No.3, April 1978.
54. Ibid., p.94. In the case of the Frankish Kingdom, Mitteis says : "The Frankish constitution may be defined as personal monarchy based upon folk-law. One sphere of national life remained, at least initially, outside the sphere of monarchy : the administration of justice was almost exclusively in the hands of the community, until at last royal influence began to infiltrate even this citadel of folk-law." Heinrich Mitteis, The State in the Middle Ages, tr. H.F. Orton (Amsterdam : North-Holland, 1975), pp.46-7.
55. Ibid., p.34.
56. Ibid., p.53.

57. In his classic study of medieval monarchy, Fritz Kern remarks : "The medieval monarch, in a certain sense, was merely a communal head." Thus, for a long time the monarch was chosen "by kin-right. There is no need to deny that in most cases kin-right was supported by the overwhelmingly superior power and wealth of the royal house, and also by considerations of political expediency ... (but) mere expediency is entirely insufficient to explain the tenacity with folk-belief held fast to the notion of royal magic...". Later, even after kin-right was transformed into hereditary right, "this absolutism in practice never developed into absolutism in theory, and this, from our point of view, is the decisive point." That is to say, "... the general conviction that the community's duty of obedience was not unconditional was deeply-rooted, and no one doubted that every member of the 'folk' had the right to resist and to take revenge if he were prejudiced in his rights by the prince... This relationship ... must not be designated simply as contract. The fundamental idea is rather that ruler and ruled alike are bound to the law; the fealty of both parties is in reality fealty to the law; ... If, therefore, the king breaks the law, he automatically forfeits any claim to the obedience of his subjects." Fritz Kern, Kingship and Law in the Middle Ages, tr. S.B. Chrimes (Oxford : Basil Blackwell, 1956), pp.6,14,81,87.
58. The most well-known set of such charters - the Weisterhäuser - comes from late medieval Germany. See two recent studies on the content of these charters : David Sabean, "German Agrarian Institutions at the Beginning of the Sixteenth Century : Upper Swabia as an Example", Journal of Peasant Studies, 3, 1(October 1975), pp.76-88.
59. Robert Redfield, Peasant Society and Culture : An Anthropological Approach to Civilization (Chicago : university of Chicago Press, 1956).
60. J.H. Elliott, The Revolt of the Catalans : A Study in the Decline of Spain (1598-1640) (Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 1963), pp. 426-7.
61. Victor W. Turner, The Ritual Process : Structure and Anti-structure (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1969), p.167.
62. Ibid., p.177.
63. Ibid., pp.131-2.
64. Ibid., p.111.
65. Ibid., p.153.
66. Ibid., p.133.
67. Ibid., p.153.

68. Mathew Schoffeleers, "The History and Political Role of the M'Bona Cult among the Mang'anja" in T.O. Ranger and I.N. Kinarbo, eds., The Historical Study of African Religions (London : Heinemann, 1972), pp.73-94. Also see, I.N. Kinarbo and C.K. Onari, "The Development of Religious Thought and Centres among the Pare", in Ibid., pp.111.21,
69. T.O. Ranger, Revolt in Southern Rhodesia 1896-7: A Study in African Resistance (London : Heinemann, 1967), p.214.
70. It is worth suggesting a clarification here to a problem which often crops up in attempts to use the term "peasantry" as an economic category for describing a certain productive organization of society. Entirely justified criticisms have been made of conceptions such as a "peasant" or a "domestic" mode of production. See, for example, Judith Ennew, Paul Hirst and Keith Tribe, 'Peasantry' as an Economic Category", Journal of Peasant Studies 4, 4(July 1977), pp.295-322. Yet the problem has persisted of bringing within the received range of analytical categories phenomena relating to the political role of the peasantry within feudal or other state formations. The proposal here is to construct an explicit set of categories relating to the specification of the "property" connection in different social formations, thus providing the analytical complement to the set of "economic" categories describing a mode of production.
71. Georges Duby, Rural Economy and Country Life in the Medieval West, tr. Cynthia Postan (London : Edward Arnold, 1968), p.7.
72. Pierre Goubert, The Ancien Regime : French Society 1600-1750, tr. Steve Cox (London : Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1973), pp.78-9.
73. J.H. Elliott, op.cit., p.468.
74. Pierre Goubert, op.cit., p.11.
75. Max Gluckman, Order and Rebellion in Tribal Africa (London : Cohen and West, 1963), pp.86-7.
76. Marx, Grundrisse, p.501.
77. For a remarkably incisive description of these differential effects in a specific region, see the study of the evolution of village communities in Wallachia and Moldavia from the thirteenth to the twentieth century in Henri H. Stahl, Traditional Romanian Village Communities, tr. Daniel Chirot and Holley Coulter Chirot (Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 1980).
78. Michel Foucault, Power/Knowledge, tr. Colin Gordon et al. (New York : Pantheon, 1980), p.39.

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31. **Cobb-Douglas Agricultural Production Functions: A Sceptical Note** (*Economic and Political Weekly*, Review of Political Economy, Vol. XVI, Nos. 42-43, 1981)
N. KRISHNAJI
32. **রাজের ইতিহাস প্রসঙ্গে কয়েকটি কথা**
 (A Few Observations on the History of Rath, forthcoming in *Prof. Nihar Ranjan Ray Felicitation Volume*, Calcutta)
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36. **The Formation of a Transport Network in an Export-Oriented Economy: Brahmaputra Valley, 1839-1914** (Forthcoming in *Geographical Review of India*, Calcutta)
KEYA DASGUPTA
37. **Economic Dislocation in Nineteenth Century Eastern U. P.: Some Implications of the Decline of Artisanal Industry in Colonial India** (Forthcoming in *Essays on the Social and Economic History of India in the Colonial Period*)
GYAN PANDEY
38. **Merchants and Colonialism**
AMIYA KUMAR BAGCHI
39. **Rallying Round the Cow: Sectarian Strife in the Bhojpur Region, C. 1888-1917** (Forthcoming in *Subaltern Studies*, Vol. II)
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40. **Some Aspects of Labour History of Bengal in the Nineteenth Century: Two Views**
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PROCEEDINGS OF CONFERENCES & SEMINARS

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1. Historical Dimensions (Calcutta, Oxford University Press, 1977)
2. Three Studies on Agrarian Structure in Bengal, 1850-1947 (in press)

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