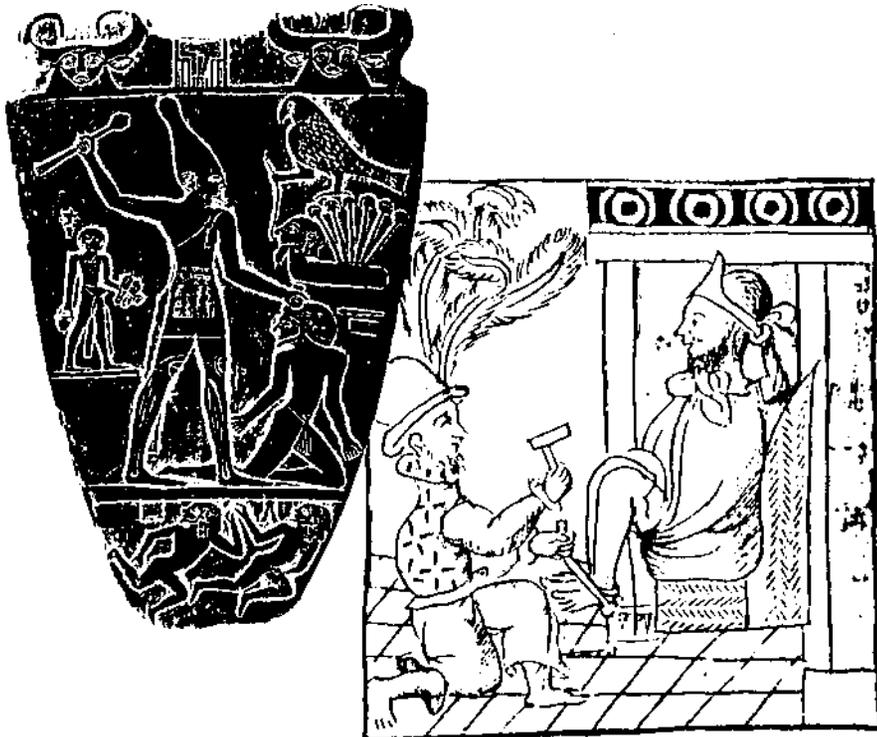


State and Society

The Emergence and Development of Social Hierarchy and Political Centralization

Edited by
J. Gledhill, B. Bender, M.T. Larsen



The traditional Eurocentric view of state formation and the rise of civilization is vigorously challenged in this unusually broad-ranging up-to-date and innovative book. Bringing archaeological research into contact with the work of ethno-historians and anthropologists, it generates a discussion of fundamental concepts rather than a search for modern analogies for processes that occurred in the past. Constantly challenging trends in interpretation, *State and Society* offers analyses of the dynamics of political centralization and the nature of social inequalities in a diverse range of historical and geographical contexts.

The book examines the developments and resistances encountered in state formation and the mechanisms which produce cumulative development on a world-historical scale. More developed systems of civilization, the nature of bureaucracy and the role of literacy are given as much attention as other processes underlying the development of early states. Contributions on the impact of European colonialism and modern Third World state formation help to develop a more universal picture of the human experience which may clarify the nature of 'the West' itself.

United by a common commitment to dialogue and to the idea that archaeology cannot exist in isolation from other social and historical sciences, this volume will be essential reading for all those working on the problems of power and social inequality.

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16 *Patrimonialism, involution, and the agrarian question in Java: a Weberian analysis of class relations and servile labour*

J. I. (HANS) BAKKER

Introduction

State organization outside the Western tradition has been analysed by writers as diverse as Fred Riggs (1966), Paul Mus (1964), Burton Stein (1977) and Karl Wittfogel (1981), but no adequate general models are widely accepted (Steinberg *et al.* 1971). In order to analyse the impact of colonialism on Java in the 19th century it is necessary to have a model of pre-colonial political centralization (Soedjatmoko *et al.* 1965a, 1965b). Similarly, in order to examine class relations in 19th century Java it is useful to place the Javanese case in a broader, comparative theoretical perspective. In this chapter the outlines of a general argument concerning 19th century Indonesia are sketched in so as to provide a broader framework for idiographic, historical information (Hall & Whitmore 1976).

This analysis of class relations and political centralization in Java attempts to clarify a number of theoretical questions ordinarily left vague in the discussions of 'involution' (Geertz 1963, 1984) and the 'agrarian question' in Indonesia generally (Kahn 1985). Those questions are:

- (a) What was the nature of the classic, pre-colonial Indic state in Java?
- (b) What was the structure of the colonial state in Java in the 19th century?
- (c) What were the historical conflicts among different classes and factions that influenced the agrarian structure of Java during the cultivation system (1830-70)?

The general thesis is that: (a) the classic Indic state in Java is best characterized by the ideal type model of 'patrimonial-prebendalism', (b) the colonial state established only a superficial layer of 'rational-legal bureaucracy', and (c) class relations in Java were 'prebendal', in part because the mercantilist faction in the Netherlands was able to hold on to power until at least 1848.

The argument follows the 'Historical School', particularly Max Weber

(Schumpeter 1954, pp. 800-24).¹ Hence, this analysis is based on the premise of 'historicist' rather than strictly 'objectivist' theoretical assumptions (Kahn 1985, pp. 80-1, 89-93).² Nevertheless, the arguments put forward by Geertz concerning the 'theatre state' and the process of 'involution' are examined critically. The general argument is that Java underwent a process I have called the 'bureaucratization of patrimonialism' (Bakker 1978).

Classic Indic states

In his work on the 19th century Balinese state Geertz (1980, p. 62) maintains that: 'The *negara* was, in Weber's now standard sense of the terms, neither a bureaucratic, nor a feudal, nor a patrimonial state.' Furthermore, he argues that this applies not merely to 19th century Bali but to other Southeast Asian societies as well. The 'characteristic form of the **Indicized** state in Indonesia' is viewed by Geertz (1980, p. 9) as 'a model which can then be used generally to extend our understanding of the developmental history of Indic Indonesia (Cambodia, Thailand, Burma) (see Heine-Geldern 1930, 1942, 1958). Geertz's model of the 'theatre state', however, might very easily be subsumed under Weber's ideal type model of the 'patrimonial state'.

Sandhu & Wheatley (1983, pp. 8-18) do just that. They accept Weber's 'patrimonialism' as directly relevant to Classic Indic states and go on to cite Geertz's discussions of 'the exemplary centre' and 'the theatre state'. Wheatley (1977, 1983, p. 318) clearly distinguishes 'patrimonial' from 'feudal' forms, or, technically, 'patrimonial-prebendal' from 'patrimonial-feudal' forms (Weber 1968, pp. 1006-110). Wheatley does not discuss Geertz's 'theatre state' as an alternative model at all.

State organization has not been well conceptualized for Southeast Asia, according to Geertz (1983, p. ix), and this has led to a:

certain provinciality in our thinking about power, dominance, command, loyalty, legitimacy, obedience, resistance, rivalry and rebellion . . . In particular, the so-called 'Indic' or 'Indianized' or 'Hindu-Buddhist' or 'Classical' states of Southeast Asia . . . have not been much looked at in terms of what they might tell us about the nature of politics in general . . .

However, in making that statement Geertz ignores the Weberian model of 'patrimonial-prebendalism' which has been used by van Leur (1937, 1955), Wheatley (1983), Tambiah (1976), and others. There is a family resemblance among the Javanese, Balinese, Burmese, Thai, and Cambodian cases which is captured—in a preliminary, ideal **typic** manner—by Weber's model. Perhaps the first writer to connect Weber's 'patrimonialism' with Southeast Asia was J. C. van Leur (1955), as was pointed out by Wertheim (1954, 1965, Soedjatmoko *et al.* 1965a, pp. 346-7). Van Leur was interested in the contrast between inland and coastal states. During the period of the pinnacle of 'Hindu-Javanese' civilization in the 14th century 'Madjapahit [Majapahit] combined the agri-

cultural strength of an island kingdom with the commercial power of a coastal empire . . .' (Peacock 1973, p. 14, Pigeaud 1960). Van Leur was the first to indicate that **Majapahit** can be considered 'patrimonial'. Subsequently a few other writers have utilized Weber's model to examine historical evidence concerning Indic states (Bakker 1979).

Weber's typology

Weber (1968, 1006 ff.) characterizes 'patrimonial-prebendal' structure in terms of at least six ideal type characteristics:

- (a) one ruler who has all political legitimacy under his control;
- (b) prebendal officials (*inisteriales*) who have no independent power base but must conform to the wishes of the patrimonial ruler;
- (c) *ad hoc* administration and decision making without a regularized and 'rational-legal' body of laws and administrative codes;
- (d) royal domains throughout the land, with few – if any – independent land owners; hence, no separate baronial or monastic landed estates;
- (e) collective liability for traditional tribute; subjects are *coloni* who are attached to their villages and collectively liable to the patrimonial ruler and his prebendal officials for percentages of crop yields; and
- (0) for labour obligations (*corvée*). There is no 'free labour'. Producers are subject to servile labour.

The analysis of **patrimonialism** constitutes a significant part of Weber's sociology of traditional domination (Madan 1979).

All forms of domination occurring in history constitute according to Weber, 'combinations, mixtures, adaptations, or modification' of the charismatic, the traditional, and the **legal** type' (Bendix 1962, p. 329).⁵

The six ideal typical characteristics of 'patrimonial-prebendal' structure are not always found everywhere in exactly the same 'pure' form. Indeed, Weber's discussion (1968, pp. 1044-51) of Ancient Egypt and China indicates that significant differences can exist in historical instances. The use of the label 'patrimonial' to designate the model Weber develops at length in *Economy and society* has not been followed widely, even though Weber's discussions of 'charisma' and legal-rational bureaucracy' have had an enormous impact on sociological theory.

Alternative models

There are at least six alternative ideal type models which have been applied to various regions in Southeast Asia:

- (a) 'hydraulic society',
- (b) 'Asiatic mode of production',
- (c) European-style 'feudalism',
- (d) European-style 'bureaucracy',
- (e) 'the theatre state' and
- (0) 'the segmentary state'.

There is something to be said for each of those models, of course, but I believe that the ideal type model which best fits the Classic Indic states of Southeast Asia is

- (g) 'patrimonial-prebendalism'.

Hydraulic society and oriental deposition

At first glance Wittfogel's 'hydraulic society' would seem to be a reasonable candidate. The 'empire' of Majapahit, for example, was closely tied to the development of wet rice, *sawah* cultivation in the dense tropical forest lands of Triuk (van Setten 1979, pp. 8, 136). Divine kingship was important to large-scale irrigation projects under the Sailendra (Çailendra) and Kanjuruhan kingdoms' of Java, as well as Majapahit (Moertono 1968). However, Wittfogel was not interested in Southeast Asia so much as China. It is generally recognized that he extrapolates far beyond the evidence he has available (Eisenstadt 1958, Pulleybank 1958). By recycling the misleading term 'oriental despotism', Wittfogel unnecessarily prejudices his argument with an outdated, ethnocentric label. Moreover, his main concern is with the 'Asiatic mode of production' question, particularly Lenin's alleged misuse of the Marxian concept (Wittfogel 1981, pp. 1-10, 369-412). Wittfogel can be viewed as contributing little that is new in terms of sociological understanding of Southeast Asia.

Asiatic mode of production

There is a large literature on the Asiatic mode of production (AMP) (Kradner 1975, 1976) and the ideal type construct has been defined in many ways (Thorner 1966, Bailey 1971). The general concept of 'mode of production' has been criticized (Friedman 1976) and it has been claimed that the term AMP is merely a residual category (Anderson 1974, p. 549). Amin (1973) has proposed using the term 'tributary mode of production' (TMP) to make it clear that this mode of production' can be found outside Asia as well. Wolf (1982, pp. 79-88) has gone so far as to reconceptualize 'modes of production' into three categories: kin-based, capitalist, and tributary. For Wolf the TMP also encompasses slavery and feudalism, a broadening of the term not originally intended by Amin. While the AMP model may be of value in interpreting Classic states in Southeast Asia, particularly in terms of Kradner's (1976) concept of 'civil society', we are basically not dealing with one model but many

(Godelier 1965, 1973). In so far as the AMP model is relevant to Java I believe it can be incorporated with Weber's more precisely specified model.

The classic statement by Marx of the different modes of production is found in his preface to *Toward a critique of political economy*. Marx's writings on 'pre-capitalist economic formations' are contained in the *Grundrisse* (Marx 1973) and *Capital*, Vol. III (1960). Basically, the Asiatic mode of production represents a system in which chieftains, ruling groups, or priest-kings emerge who perform trading or military or irrigation functions. '(They) obtain the material means of life through taxes exacted more or less voluntarily from the communes' (Mandel 1969, pp. 34-5, cited by Dunn 1982, p. 6). It is not clear whether Marx meant to include:

- (a) the absence of private property,
- (b) the identity of rents with taxes, so that tribute takes the form of rents, and
- (c) the identity of the ruling class with the state apparatus.

To a certain extent Marx was still caught up in mid-19th century 'orientalism'. Turner (1978) is highly critical of the tendency to make polar distinctions between East and West and argues that Marxism today should challenge ethnocentric assumptions. In so far as Marx clarified the existence of tributary relations of production, however, he definitely made a conceptual breakthrough with the AMP model. The relations of production specifying the AMP are elaborated by Godelier (1973, pp. 84-5). I believe that the AMP is best viewed as encompassing exploitative relations both *within* the village sphere and *between* the village sphere and the supra-village sphere. The form and the content should be viewed as an intertwined social structure.

Neo-Marxian aspects of Weber Basically the refined Marxian model of the AMP (Lichtheim 1963) and the Weberian model of the 'patrimonial-prebendal' structure can be reconciled. Weber is viewed here as less interested in the ideological 'superstructure' (e.g. a particular ethic) than in the analysis of 'class' (Lukačs 1972), a perspective that 'crystallized in the course of his dialogue with Marxism' (Zeitlin 1981, p. 127). Instead of the 'symbolic interactionist' Weber of many introductory textbooks, or the Parsonian version of Weber, it is the 'neo-Marxist' Weber of *The agrarian sociology of ancient civilizations* (1976) that is emphasized in this analysis (Turner 1974). Weber can be viewed as completing—in outline—Marxian analysis of relations of production in pre-capitalist societies. Therefore, I do not reject the AMP Model, but merely point out that

- (a) the model needs to be carefully specified beyond what one finds in Marx's original formulations,
- (b) it is not really one model, but many conflicting models, and
- (c) what is valuable in the AMP model can be further analysed through the model of relations of production implicit in Weber's 'patrimonial-prebendal' model.

Feudalism

The argument that Classic Indic states represent some form of 'feudalism' is never made systematically. However, prominent and reputable writers use the term (e.g. Burger 1975) and political rhetoric in Indonesia commonly employs the term '*féodalisme*', which is derived from the Dutch. There definitely were periods of centrifugal, feudal-like political organization in many Indic states. However, those periods can be understood as part of the oscillation between 'patrimonial-prebendal' and incipient 'patrimonial-feudal' structures discussed by Weber. Full-fledged European-style feudalism was never the dominant ideology or structure in any of the major Indic scats of Southeast Asia.

Bureaucracy

Similarly, 'rational-legal bureaucracy' - in Weber's sense-never existed as an indigenous state form in Southeast Asia during Classical times, although 'patrimonial bureaucracy' was very much in evidence (Weber 1968, pp. 229, 1014, 1026-31). Hence, I would agree with Geertz that the *negara* (*nāgara*) was neither a bureaucratic nor a feudal state (Geertz 1980, p. 62).

Theatre state

But was the Indic state primarily a 'theatre state'? Since the historical record is so unreliable prior to the coming of Islam, Geertz has attempted to reconstruct the basic Hindu-Buddhist system of Indonesia through a study of Bali in the 19th century. He tries to show how Bali was a 'theatre state' by examining the details of the 'sinking status system' of descent based on quasi-lineages (*dadia*) and the 'politics of irrigation' (*subak*). Geertz writes about the 'myth of the exemplary center' in such a way as to imply that it was not merely an ideological myth central to the culture of Bali but also, in part, a scholarly myth.

Basically Geertz argues that since there was no paramount ruler in Bali there could not have been any 'patrimonial' form of domination. Although the 'just-so story' of the founding of Bali in 1343 by Javanese invaders led by Ida Dalem Ketut Kresna Kepakisan may have produced a small-scale replica of the Majapahit *nāgara* at Samprangan-Gelgel-Klungkung, there was a rapid fading from view, Geertz argues (1980, p. 15), of a classical model of perfection. While the exemplary centre remained at Klungkung, it had only a ceremonial, 'theatrical' significance.

However, while it is true that 19th century Bali may have been a 'house of cards' in terms of political and economic centralization, that does not mean that the '**patrimonial-prebendal**' model is deficient. In a sense, Bali may be the exception that proves the rule! The ecology of the island of Bali alone helps to explain many variations from the Classic States in pre-colonial times. Bali may very well have been 'a ceremonial order of precedence imperfectly impressed upon a band of sovereigns' but that does not indicate that scholars such as Wheatley (1983) are misled when they regard Java, Sumatra, Cambodia,

Burma, or Bali as an example of 'patrimonialism' (Geertz 1980, p. 4). There is nothing wrong with Geertz's analysis of the gradual decline of prebendal centralization - mythic or real- but it is wrong to conclude from the Balinese situation c. 1860 or 1906 that the 'theatre state' is also characteristic of Classic Indic states (cf. Walters 19.71).

Segmentary States

if, as Geertz argues, our image of the Hindu-Buddhist state is 'over-centralized' then we have to ask which 'decentralized' model is appropriate. Geertz's 'theatre state' model may be appropriate for Bali in the 19th century, but it is not a general model. Another ideal type model that has sometimes been suggested is Burton Stein's 'segmentary state' (1977), a model derived from work by Radcliffe-Brown, Evans-Pritchard, and Fortes in Africa.' Interest in British Structural-Functionalist work in Africa has been increased by Meillassoux's work (1964), with its impact on Marxist anthropology (Kahn 1981a).

The 'liberal anthropological' view of segmentary society is that the lineage organizes all aspects of a tribal society.

For some of the **British** anthropologists, particularly in their work on what they came to call African segmentary societies, kinship appears as the key to an understanding of the whole social structure, since it is the segmentary lineage which appears to organize the economy, the political system and the ideology (Kahn 1981a, p. 73).

It is clear that Java was not a 'segmentary society' in this Structural-Functionalist sense, at least not since the 8th century. The Hindu-Buddhist state is not a tribal, lineage-based system. However, the concept of 'segmentary state' can be widened, as it has been by Stein (1977), in his analysis of the Chola kingdom of South India (c. 846-1279 CE). If the Chola kingdom was a simple 'segmentary state' in the British anthropological sense, then it is particularly damning to the thesis that pre-colonial Java was patrimonial-prebendal rather than segmentary, because it is likely that the Hindu-Buddhist ideology of Chola may have influenced Java. However, a careful reading of Stein indicates that he actually uses the anthropological term in a completely different sense from that originally intended. The Chola kingdom was not a tribal kingdom in which the simple segmentary lineage is determinative.

It is evident that **brahmanically** consecrated kingship was a cornerstone of the Chola system. Caste, rather than tribe, was the keystone to pre-Buddhist dharmic kingship! While caste does tend to create segmentation, the anthropological concept of the simple segmentary system is clearly over-extended by Stein. He even suggests that 'clumsy terms like feudalism' could be dropped in favour of his very broad use of the term 'segmentary'. Most of the factual material Stein presents on Chola's compound, **polysegmental** structure can easily be incorporated into the patrimonial ideal type model.

The **neo-Marxist** use of the concept is somewhat different, however, since Kahn points out (1976) that 'what appears to be an isolated segmentary society' (e.g. the Minangkabau of West Sumatra) can in fact be 'the product of a particular form of Dutch colonialism, and not a pre-capitalist survival at all.' The Marxian concept of the 'lineage mode of production' encompasses horticultural societies with complex relations of production and modes of distribution.

The main argument against the application of this version of the segmentary model seems to be that the situation in Java in the 19th century is not a matter of the survival of a tribal-like group, such as the Minangkabau, but rather the continued existence of a complex social, politically important structure which is not divided into tribal lineages at all. There simply are no simple 'segments' in 19th century Java; lineage is much less important than 'class'. Kinship ties continue to be important, of course, but they do not determine relations of production to the extent that prestige differences between 'prebendal' officials (*prijaji*) and producers (*petani*) do. I would agree with Terray (quoted by Kahn 1981 a, p. 69) that if we were to impute class **antagonisms** to lineage formations the concept of class would lose all power to discriminate between societies. Again, we would have broadened the British anthropological concept of the segmentary system to the point where its usefulness would have diminished considerably.

Patrimonialism

The Weberian ideal type model of patrimonial-prebendalism more closely approximates the pre-colonial Indic civilizations of Southeast Asia than any of the other models listed above. The pre-colonial situation in Java can be understood in ideal typical terms as an oscillation between the centripetal forces of the 'patrimonial-prebendal' structure and ideology, on the one hand, and the incipient 'patrimonial-feudal' forces of regional dissent and conflicting claims to legitimacy. Ideological legitimacy was always sought within a basically 'patrimonial-prebendal' model and when the patrimonial ruler was overthrown the new ruler continued to rule through prebendal rather than feudal structures. Most of the Hindu-Buddhist states of Southeast Asia tended to rely heavily on an ideology based on the concept of the *dhamma-raja* (*dharma-raja*), the 'wheel-turning emperor', the divine ruler, who stood at the apex of the microcosm (Tam biah 1976).

The Weberian ideal type model of 'patrimonial-prebendalism' fills a gap in our knowledge. There is a family resemblance among the Burmese, Thai, Cambodian, Javanese, and Balinese cases which is captured by Weber's model. Hindu-Buddhist state forms are quite diverse, of course, but in comparative, macrosociological terms there is an underlying structural similarity (Stcherbatsky 1923) that is due to similar relations of production in societies characterized by irrigated rice agriculture, trade centres, commercial, craft and artisan groups, and long-distance trade in metal goods and luxuries (Tambiah 1976, p. 69).

The patrimonial ruler of Java in the 19th century was the King of the

Netherlands, as represented by the Governor-General. The king was also a leader of the mercantilist faction and a major stockholder in the **NHM** (*Nederlandse Handel Maatschappij*, Netherlands Trading Company). The Governor-General was treated very much like a maharaja in Java. Nominally, of course, the rulers of Jogjakarta and Surakarta were still in control (Selosoemardjan 1962) and for many of the direct producers it must have seemed that there had been no change in rulership at all. The 'native' and 'European' officials were directly controlled by the Governor-General. Thus, for example, Javanese regents were sometimes banished by the Governor-General. Dutch officials came to Java, worked there and in other parts of the archipelago for several decades, and then returned to the Netherlands to retire. Decision-making was not entirely *ad hoc*, but the decrees of the Governor-General were the law. There was no parliamentary system. Administrative codes were established, but they could easily be overturned by decree (Zwart 1939). In essence the whole of Java was owned by the colonial government, with a few exceptions that stemmed from land sales during the British interregnum (1811-16) and at other times. Up to the passage of the Agrarian Land Law of 1870 land in Java fell under *de facto* state control (Reinsma 1955, 1959). The so-called preservation of 'native' land rights meant only that peasants retained some control of subsistence land' (Kahn 1981 b, p. 192). Villages were collectively liable for forced deliveries and forced labour. The situation in Java mid-century was basically 'patrimonial-prebendal', but with a relatively superficial layer of 'rational-legal' administration. Since the applicability of Weber's model to Java is explored in more detail elsewhere (Bakker 1979, 1987), this chapter focuses on the comparison of the applicability of Weber's ideal type model relative to other suggested models (see Eisenstadt 1973). Some of the implications of the Weberian model for the continued existence of servile labour in the mid-19th century will help to illustrate the heuristic value of the patrimonial-prebendal model.

Servile labour

There is no doubt that the accumulation of constant capital in Java in the 19th century depended on exploitation of servile labour (Soest 1869-71) through forced deliveries and forced labour. The internal labour market was not inter-related with the external market. Outside a few sugar factories and parts of some towns there was no free wage labour. Even after the Agrarian Law of 1870 had been passed it took a relatively long time for the transition from servile labour to free wage labour to take place on Java. It took even longer on the Outer Islands. The cultivators were not able to sell their labour; it was appropriated. They were not 'peasants', in the strict sense of 'petty commodity producers'. Nor were they free wage labourers. The average householder worked because he was forced to do so, both by the necessity of subsistence and by the various manifestations of indirect rule.

There were basically five types of servile labour obligation:

- (a) tribute,
- (b) penal,
- (c) 'cooperative',
- (d) cultivation, and
- (e)

In general, those servile labour obligations were oppressive for the 'little man' (*won, tjilik*). The cultivator had few, if any, possessions and was close to subsistence, tending perhaps 0.25 ha of land, or less. The amount of time and energy required to fulfil servile labour obligations often made life difficult. Labour duties were a regressive form of 'taxation' (in the loose sense), especially in areas where the 'crop payments' (i.e. colonial government's payment for crops) were low relative to the 'land rent' assessment. When new crops were being introduced in the 1830s in Java there were many instances of hardship, due in part to the cumulative effect of servile labour obligations, crop failures, soil depletion (e.g. indigo in Cheribon regency), and poor transportation facilities (Day 1966). Some of the abuses of the cultivation system were ironed out in the course of the 1830s and 1840s, but the structural aspects of servile labour remained relatively more oppressive than prior to 1830. Whereas traditional servile labour obligations had existed even in precolonial times, it was the 'rational-bureaucratic' layer of colonial government that made servile labour a rigorous, systematic duty.

Cultivation services were invented by Governor-General Johannes van den Bosch. The roots of the system originated in exploitation by the Netherlands East Indies Company (VOC, *Verenigde Oost-Indie Compagnie*) of parts of western Java, particularly the Preanger highlands (*Priangan, Preau regenschappen*). The VOC had extrapolated, in turn, from the assumed 'traditional' servile labour pattern. However, forced cultivation does not seem to have been systematically directed to cultivation of export crops in pre-colonial times (Filet 1895). Cultivation for export to European markets was never part of the tributary structure of relations of production in pre-colonial Java, of course. Hence, van den Bosch's cultivation system tied a larger proportion of the indigenous population to a 'European world system', without, however, making the people into peasants or free wage labourers.

The cultivator was given an option, at least in theory, between paying traditional tribute, undertaking to cultivate export crops on one-fifth of his fields, or working 66 days a year on government-owned estates or projects. In practice there was little or no choice. Sometimes cultivators (*petani*) had to grow cultivation crops such as sugar cane and also contribute compulsory labour services on government-estates, such as tea plantations. The basic principle of cultivation services as a type of servile labour obligation was that tribute was paid in kind (i.e. cultivation crops chosen by the colonial government). Such cultivation services (*kultuurdiensten*) had never existed in the pre-colonial tributary structure, but those members of the Dutch mercantilist elite in the Netherlands who advocated the cultivation system (e.g. King Willem I) were persuaded by van den Bosch to regard cultivation services as merely an

aspect of traditional labour obligations. The most significant export crop initially was coffee, both in Java and Sumatra. In the 1840s sugar production became relatively more important than coffee in Java, both in terms of total tonnage and total value. Coffee remained significant in West Sumatra, as well as Java and North Sulawesi. Local officials were allowed 'procentos' as an intensification measure; such percentages were effective incentives (Reinsma 1959).

While 'liberal' opponents of the cultivation system argued that the cultivation system was oppressive (Welderren 1948), much of their rhetoric can be traced to bias due to their desire to open up investment by that 'fraction' of the bourgeoisie that was not in power. The general effect on the peasantry, especially after 1834–35, does not seem to have been quite as black as polemical writers in the Netherlands tended to argue (Robijns 1967). The wealthy cultivators (*sikep*) were most likely to benefit, especially when the prices paid for government crops were relatively advantageous; but, the landless *petani* (the *menumpang*) sometimes also benefited, due to the need for their labour. (The land use rights also entailed customary obligations (Vollenhoven 1918–33, 1928). Therefore, landless people were given certain rights when there were not enough full members of the village to fulfil the increased work load for which the village community was collectively liable (Bakker 1983). In some respects the cultivation system can actually be considered a wise 'development' policy, since it allowed for expansion of production without 'proletarianization'. However, there were abuses and some people suffered hardships that they would not have suffered had no colonial power intervened.

Cultivation services (*kultuurdiensten*) were only a part of the total package (see Geertz 1960, Bakker 1987) discussed in the literature on the cultivation system (*kulturstelsel*, often translated culture system) in the Netherlands East Indies (Furnivall 1941, 1944, 1948, Fasseur 1975, Van Niel 1972, Bakker 1979). Seigneurial services were sometimes a particularly oppressive aspect of servile labour and there has been no thorough study of penal services (*Kerjaan paksa*), which often involved harsh penalties such as banishment, whipping, branding, and chaining for relatively minor offences. The cultivation system as a whole was oppressive and **exploitative**; but the most significant aspect of it economically, cultivation services, cannot immediately be considered worse than the realistically possible alternatives (i.e. pre-colonial tribute or some form of free labour such as petty commodity production or wage labour).

Cultivation services in 19th century Java, Sumatra, and Sulawesi were quite diverse in their impact. Cultivators mainly concerned with coffee production were, on the whole, in a quite different circumstance than *petani* who were charged with cultivation of cinchona trees or indigo plants. Geertz's analysis of the impact of the cultivation system on Javanese people tends to emphasize sugar cultivation on rice paddy lands (*sawah*) and to ignore the complex regional variations which historians have analysed in some detail (Van Niel 1969, Fasseur 1977, Kartodirdjo 1966). A detailed, historically based study of the cultivation system as a whole has yet to be written.

We do not know exactly how the transition from servile labour to free labour

took place. But, lacking detailed idiographic work, we can conjecture that the Agrarian Law of 1870 had a significant impact. The NH M, for example, started to turn to the financing of private enterprise, in the form of long-term loans to owners of small-scale private estate plantations. Previously the NH M had been the principal financier of the cultivation system. 'On private plantations and in privately-owned factories servile labor gave way', Kahn writes (1981 b, pp. 194-5), 'first to contract and indentured labour and then, by 1930, to "free" wage labor.' It was the period 1870 to 1930 that most probably conforms in key ways to the ideal type of 'Gutsherrschaft' rather than, as Kahn argues, the earlier cultivation system period (1830-70), which Engels considered (in 1883) a form of 'state socialism' (Engels 1975, p. 450). During the cultivation system period the labour situation was servile but not 'traditional', while in the subsequent periods true free wage labour emerged only very slowly and in selected locations. Java was never as 'proletarianized' as some other colonies, which is actually the positive feature of 'involution' and 'shared poverty'. A complex, mixed pattern existed, but it was not capitalist.

Peripheralization?

Kahn (1981b, p. 198) defines 'peripheralization' as a process of subsumption which can best be seen as 'a tendency for enterprises to emerge to which peasant producers are tied directly'. The labour force is held 'immobile', or, at least, the colonial government *attempts* to create an immobile labour force. That attempt was particularly successful during the cultivation system period in Java. Peripheral organization cannot be understood simply as a function of the historical evolution of a capitalist world system. What happens in the periphery is definitely the outcome of specific relations of production which have to do with 'class' in the broad sense (i.e. also encompassing pre-capitalist formations).

Class conflict in the Netherlands in the 19th century basically involved the struggle of the 'liberal' faction of the bourgeoisie to acquire control and change the way in which the Netherlands East Indies (and other colonies) could be exploited (Fasseur 1975). The 'conservative' faction in the Netherlands was mercantilist in its outlook (Westendorp 1950a, 1950b). It retained hegemony until 1848 and then started to lose its tight hold on colonial policy. A royal Commission for Constitutional Reform was instituted under Thorbecke and a new Constitution was promulgated on 3 November 1848. Ministers became responsible to parliament (*Staten Generaal*) and the lower house (*Tweede Kamer*) was directly elected by popular vote. The right of personal rule over the colonies by the king was removed. The gradual evolution of a more 'liberal', *laissez-faire* approach to colonial exploitation, as symbolized by Royal Decree of 20 July 1870, No. 15 (i.e. the Agrarian Law), became more or less inevitable; but, there was still considerable opposition from mercantilist-oriented members of the Dutch bourgeoisie.

The 'class' situation in Java was both more complex and much simpler than

Table 16.1 Organizational chart: administrative structure in Java c. 1850

Joint *Bestuur ter Plaats*: administration, supra-village sphere

Level of jurisdiction (government lands)	'Native' officials (<i>Inlandsch Bestuur</i>)	'European officials (<i>Binnenlandsch Bestuur</i>)
<i>pulau</i> Java, as a whole		Governor-General & Raad (Council)
residency		resident.
regency (= <i>kabupaten</i>)	regent (= <i>bupati</i>) <i>patih jaksa</i> <i>kluwon, carik, etc.</i>	assistant resident
<i>afdeeling</i> district	<i>wedono</i> <i>assisten-wedono</i>	<i>controleur</i>
<i>onder-(sub) district</i>	<i>mantri, bekel, carik, etc.</i>	<i>onder-controleur</i> (<i>der 2e klasse</i>) & <i>adspirant controleur</i>

The village cluster (*desa*) level

<i>desa (dessa)</i>	<i>petinggi</i> (or, = <i>lurah, kocwoe, djaro, etc.</i>)
<i>kampoeng</i> (kampong, negri)	<i>kamitoewa, kapetengans, kabajans, carik, and modin, etc.</i>

Source: Interpretation of text, article on 'Bestuur' (administration) in *Encyclopaedic van Nederlandsch Indië*, vol. I, pp. 279-88. Also, for the gradations within the regent group (Wen, Raden Adipati, etc.) see the summary by Berg (1902). Compare Bocchiaro (1963). Note that desa-level 'administrators' are not a part of the *Inlandsch Bestuur* in the strict sense. The Director of Cultivations is not listed because he does not administer a particular jurisdiction.

in the Netherlands. Since there was very little free wage labour in Java in the 19th century and no true 'peasant' population of petty commodity producers, most of the people were cultivators or fishermen. The elite consisted of a class of prebendal officials, some of whom were of aristocratic lineage but many of whom were descendants of pre-capitalist officials. This *prijaji* elite was manipulated by the Netherlands East Indies colonial government. A complex, European-style 'rational-legal bureaucratic' structure was set up consisting of parallel offices, with Javan 'native officials' (*Inlandsch Bestuur*) considered the 'younger brothers' of the 'European' officials (*Binnenlandsch Bestuur*) (Table 16.1). Younger brothers deferred to their older brothers. That is, it was a system of indirect rule.

Below the 'supra-village' colonial administration was the 'village' sphere. The 'village cluster' (*desa*) consisted of many 'hamlets' (*kampung*). In such hamlets there were cultivators who had a full share of so-called 'customary' (*adat*) land use rights and they were called by various names in different regions (e.g. *sikep*). There were also half-share, quarter-share, and other fractional shareholders, somewhat akin to the English medieval *Hide* or the German *Mark* (Weber 1981, pp. 3-25). Then there were the landless (sometimes called *menumpang*), who lived on the outskirts of the hamlet and had no customary use rights. They had sometimes migrated to the hamlet from their own traditional hamlet due to floods, disease, or war. They worked for the shareholders and received payment in kind. It is this group of landless cultivators that benefited, to a certain extent, from the servile labour arrangements of the cultivation system, since the customary system of village liability meant that land-holders (i.e. those who had customary use of the land, usually *sawah*) had to share some of that land in order to lighten their own burden of work. As the demand for production of export crops increased, the demand for labour in many hamlets increased and previously landless people were included to a greater extent than they had been in *adat* rights.

In addition to government cultivations there were also private cultivations of some commodities such as coffee (*bevolkingskoffie-kultuur*), and those cultivations probably had some positive impact in providing the initial basis for expansion of a money economy, even at government-controlled prices. The complexity of the situation underlines Kahn's statement (1981 b, p. 204) that 'A theory of pre-capitalist accumulation has unfortunately not been adequately developed.' The pre-capitalist forms found in Java in the mid-19th century were influenced by Dutch mercantilist interests, but not always in ways that could be easily predicted, even with detailed knowledge of traditional relations of production. No 'functionalist' assumptions about the workings of the capitalist world system can predict the specific 'class' structure of 19th century Java, Sumatra, or Sulawesi. Failure to distinguish between different levels of 'class' phenomena leads to simplistic generalizations and assumes a relationship between 'centre' and 'periphery' that can only be a very rough initial working hypothesis. However, some initial hypotheses are needed and sociological understanding will require successive approximations to the 'truth' of the matter.

World economy and patrimonialism

During the 19th century the European world economy' was slowly being formed and, in the absence of free wage labour or petty commodity production in Java, the direct producer was bound to the Dutch mercantilist bourgeoisie through a modified 'traditional' tributary-type mode of production. The process of peripheralization cannot be explained simply as a result of the working of external forces, but must take into account the internal dynamics of Javan societies (i.e. Javanese, Sundanese, Madurese). In Java the producers

were 'immobilized' by the system of colonial indirect rule that utilized a 'prebendal' status group or 'class' to administer forced cultivation of export crops through servile labour. One important feature of the old cultivation system, for example, was the use of 'passports' (*passenstelsel*) that severely restricted geographical mobility. Cultivators could not travel from one hamlet to another without the permission of the head of the village cluster (*kepala desa*). People simply could not get around without circumventing the system. Anyone found outside his own village cluster without a 'pass' was subject to severe penalties, especially in situations labelled 'revolt' or 'insurrection' (Kartodirdjo 1973).

Not only were direct producers tied to the system, the various layers of 'tax farmers' were also unable to escape from the logic of mercantilist control of the economy. The Javan elite did not make a transition from aristocratic land-holders to bourgeois capitalists because the true aristocracy (*pribadi*, members of the *kraton*, or patrimonial court) were either eliminated (e.g. after the Java War of 1825-30) or co-opted as 'officials' (prebendal functionaries, such as *bupati*s, regents). After 1830 the 'rulers' of Java were as much under the control of the 'I hitch' as the direct producers were. The *prijaji* gradually became the servants and sometimes puppets of a colonial government premised on indirect rule.

Java and Japan

But what if Java had not been patrimonial in pre-colonial times? Would it have made any difference? To answer that question fully would require another paper, but an initial answer can be suggested by a re-examination of Geertz's comparison between Java and Japan. Hall (1970) has argued that Japan can be characterized as 'feudal' during a significant part of its history. Hall & Jansen (1968) have developed that argument historically. Today it is commonly accepted that Japan, of all the countries of the world, comes closest to having had a European-style 'feudal' structure. Hence, the comparison made by Gertz (1963, pp. 130-43) could usefully incorporate the question: 'Is there any difference in the effects of the penetration of European world capitalist relations of production between a country that is basically "patrimonial" and a country that is significantly "feudal"?' Geertz confines himself to ecological considerations such as population which must certainly be taken into account but the political economy of Java must also be considered. The Dutch government was able to manipulate traditional patrimonial-prebendal aspects of Java's pre-colonial and early colonial political economy while Japan remained secluded from the European world economy. When Japan did become part of the world system (after Perry's visit in 1853 and particularly after the Meiji Restoration in 1868) it had a strong, indigenous elite, based on a heritage of feudal, aristocratic land-holders. Java never had a feudal aristocracy (in the European sense) and the court royalty was effectively blocked by the Java War.

Despite its entry into the European world economy much later, Japan

developed a true peasantry much earlier than Java. In Japan the process of proletarianization and urbanization also proceeded more rapidly. As Geertz points out (1963, p. 142):

The Japanese peasant had to go to town and become a full-time reasonably disciplined member of a manufacturing system The Javanese peasant did not, literally, even have to move from his rice terrace (*sawah*).

One therefore has to agree with Geertz's conclusion (1963, p. 143, emphasis added):

The real tragedy of colonial history in Java after 1830 is not that the peasantry suffered. It suffered much worse elsewhere, and, if one surveys the miseries of the submerged classes of the nineteenth century generally, it may even seem to have gotten off relatively lightly. *The tragedy is that it suffered for nothing.*

But the reason that direct producers in Java (and other parts of the archipelago) 'suffered for nothing' has to do not only with ecological factors and colonialism *per se*— as important as those factors are— but also with the general structure of traditional and colonial political economy. This general structure has to do with external and internal factors. Externally it is related to the long continuation of a mercantilist elite in the Netherlands and internally the utilization of patrimonial-prebendal relations of production, distribution, and exchange by the colonial system of indirect rule and forced cultivation. After the liberal bourgeoisie gained more power in the Netherlands a layer of *laissez-faire* capitalism did get established in Java, but the earlier mercantilist-inspired strengthening of a caricature of pre-colonial society also remained. Hence, a 'dualist' situation arose in Java, and in the archipelago generally.

Conclusion

The comparative study of pre-capitalist relations of production requires continued examination of the Javanese case, both in terms of historically specific idiographic detail and in light of sociological and anthropological theoretical ideal types and models. Particularly important are the implications of the servile labour system in Java during the cultivation system period (1830–70), as well as analysis of the transitions which occurred after 1870. The 'agrarian question' for Java (and other regions in Indonesia) constitutes a chapter in a larger debate concerning the nature of agrarian transformation and 'development', as Kahn (1985, p. 75) correctly points out. But that larger debate is not merely a matter of 'positivist' versus 'interpretative' or 'objectivist' versus 'historicist' paradigmatic approaches to the evidence. Geertz's interpretative, historicist approach, for example, is biased towards ecological variables and 'thick description', but can neither be simply brushed off as mere

'ethnography' nor fully accepted as a definitive summary of even one aspect of mid-19th century Javan history. Kahn is right when he argues that the anti-involution literature often misses the point, but he is incorrect to imply that the 'deconstructionist' position in the debate concerning whether rural producers are: (a) petty commodity producers (i.e. small-scale capitalists), (b) free wage labourers (i.e. disguised proletarians), or (c) simply pre-capitalist direct producers, is a question of 'historicist' versus 'positivist' approaches to the transformation, or lack of transformation, of agrarian structure.

Weber's comparative, historical sociology attempts to overcome the arbitrary division between positivist, 'causal' analysis and historicist, 'interpretative' understanding. The Weberian perspective that has guided my analysis of 'patrimonialism' and its impact on 'development' in Java has been both causal and interpretative. As stated above, Weber is viewed here as less interested in 'superstructure' than in the analysis of 'class', broadly conceived. Weber developed his main insights concerning class in his critical debate with the legacy of Marx, including his analysis of the agrarian question in Germany (Weber 1958a), which was in part an answer to Kautsky's analysis of the same question. As Zeitlin (1981, p. 159) states: 'Weber's highly sophisticated discussion of class can be regarded as an attempt to complete Marx's final chapter I of *Capital*, Vol. III] in the light of twentieth century conditions.' Weber can also be viewed as contributing to the further specification of Marx's analysis of relations of production in pre-capitalist societies in the light of conditions after Marx's death (Seddon 1978).

Weber's ideal type of 'patrimonial-prebendalism' should not merely be considered a model of political domination. It should also be seen as a model of the specific form which one major type of tributary mode of production exhibited in Indic societies such as Java (Schrieke 1955, 1957). The relations of production implicit in the Hindu-Buddhist state systems of Funan, Champa, Pagan, Kambuja, Srivijaya, Majapahit, and Bali in the pre-colonial period are very important to understand if we are going to assess the relative impact of various types of colonialism on subsequent 'development' in Southeast Asia. While an ideal type model can only serve as the beginning of enquiry and does not constitute the final end of scholarly investigation, nevertheless it is important to choose a model which will tend to promote investigation of specific classes and their inter-relations (Roth 1968). The particular form of colonial exploitation which existed in Java c. 1830–70 benefited a fraction of the dominant, mercantilist group in the Netherlands and existed despite contradictions with the general trend of capitalist penetration. Servile labour (forced deliveries and forced labour) was the basis of the cultivation system, and the particular form that servile labour took in Java had as much to do with pre-capitalist 'patrimonial-prebendal' structures as it had to do with mercantile capitalism. The debate on the agrarian question in Indonesia, far from being over, has just barely begun, despite the enormous literature on Geertz's involution thesis (Geertz 1984), on historical aspects of Dutch colonialism, and on 'the development of underdevelopment'. A Weberian interpretation of 'nāgara' as a 'patrimonial-prebendal' structure will contribute greatly to

further analysis and understanding of the formation of classes and the impact of the European world system. Eventually a more complete answer to the question of why the 'little man' in Java 'suffered for nothing' will be worked out.

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Notes

- 1 Schumpeter classifies Weber as a member of the 'Youngest' Historical School, along with Arthur Spiethoff and Werner Sombart. Collins (1986, pp. 117-42) provides an interesting analysis of the intellectual parallels between Weber and Schumpeter. Both writers were influenced by Marxian economics.
- 2 The *Methodenstreit* in Europe at the turn of the century is the basic root of distinction between 'idiographic' and 'nomothetic' approaches. Weber's comparative, historical sociology attempts to bridge historicism and positivism, hence '*verstehende soziologie*', a combination of interpretive *Verstehen* and causal '*sociologic*'.
- 3 Professor Ernest LeVos called my attention to Paul Wheatley's important contribution (pers. comm. 3 February 1987).
- 4 Professor Wertheim first mentioned J. C. van Leur's use of Weber's concept of *patrimonialism* to me in a private conversation, 23 May 1978, in Guelph.
- 5 Reading Professor Bendix's discussion of Weber's concept of *patrimonialism* (1962, pp. 334-84) was my first introduction to the concept, long before I had read *Economy and society*, or thought of studying Dutch colonialism in the Netherlands East Indies.
- 6 The concept of 'segmentary state' originates with Emile Durkheim's *Division of labor in society* (1893/1964), which makes a bipolar distinction between 'mechanical' and 'organic' solidarity. The simplest unit, for Durkheim, was the completely unsegmented 'horde'. Durkheim's classification continues with 'simple poly-segmental societies', 'polysegmental societies simply compounded', and 'polysegmental societies doubly compounded'. More complex than the 'horde' is the 'clan', and then a 'segmental society with a clan base'. 'We say of these societies that they are segmental in order to indicate their formation by the repetition of like aggregates in them, analogous to the rings of an earthworm . . .' (Durkheim 1964, pp. 175). See also Southall (1956).
- 7 Clans such as the Licchavis, Sakyas, Mallas, and Bhaggas in the time of Siddhartha Gautama were probably 'segmentary states' and the powerful new rulers of Magadha, Kosala, Kosambi, and Ujjeni followed a pattern which is 'poly-segmental' and 'compounded'. Then many segments are joined in a *mandala-type* structure which is like a 'tribal confederacy'. The later Asokan 'paternal despotism' and 'centralized, non-federal empire' (reigned 274-232 BCE) is a further extra-

- polation and resembles the basic 'patrimonial-prebendal' model (Tambiah 1976, pp. 48, 70-2).
- 8 The basis of the *cakravati* (Sanskrit *chakravartin*) 'world conqueror' model of dharmic kingship in earlier Buddhist thought and in Asokan edicts is discussed by Tambiah (1976). He made it clear that Buddhism was in some respects a direct response to brahmanical notions of political and economic organization. 'Kingship' was the articulating principle of Buddhism. The 'patrimonial ruler' is the 'fountain-head' of society. 'The real thrust of the Buddhist story is that it is self-consciously an inversion of the Vedic theory of the origin of the varna . . . in the Buddhist myth we find that social order - indeed society - occurs together with and as a result of the institution of kingship by the voluntary acts of men . . . the *dharm*a of kingship becomes the encompassing code that reigns over society cum political economy, which are not separable' (Tambiah 1976, p. 22, emphasis added).
 - 9 The term 'European world economy' is preferable to 'world system' because of the association of the term 'world system' with the specific assumptions of Wallerstein's paradigm, or 'world systems theory' (WST). Elsewhere I have argued (Bakker 1985) that what is valuable in WST is comparative, historically based sociology.

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