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The Political Economy of Seigneurialism: an Interpretation of the Historical Development of Rural Spanish America.

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The Louisiana State University and 
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THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF SEIGNEURIALISM:
AN INTERPRETATION OF THE HISTORICAL
DEVELOPMENT OF RURAL SPANISH AMERICA

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

in

The Latin American Studies Institute

by
Harvey Jordan Kaye
B.A., Rutgers University, 1971
M.A., University of London, 1973
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To those familiar with his writings, the ideas and work of Professor Eugene Genovese will, hopefully, be apparent in this dissertation. I have titled this work *The Political Economy of Seigneurialism* in honor of his first book, *The Political Economy of Slavery*, in order to record my intellectual debt to him, and in appreciation of his personal encouragement.

I must also thank my friend, Kevin B. Smith, for putting up with my alternating enthusiasm and despair while working on his thesis for the Master's Degree in Sociology. Additional thanks go to my friends, Gary Stokley, Joel Lindsey and Dr. William Falk.

My parents, grandparents, sister and her husband, and my wife's
family have made a most important contribution to this work through their loving, familial support.

To my wife, Lorna, I dedicate this work. During my studies and the writing of this dissertation she has been lover, companion, wife and typist. Hopefully, this work has liberated her from the last.

Finally, that doubts persist cannot be denied, but I wish to record the following note of intellectual encouragement written to me by Dr. Cristóbal Kay: "Some of the confusion you might have will become clarified once you advance in research, and some confusion will always remain: those you can present as future research areas."
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the dissertation was to analyze the development of the Spanish American societies and rural Spanish America in historical and comparative perspective. Locating the dissertation in the context of the debate over whether the Latin American societies should be defined as "pre-capitalist or capitalist?", the author reviews the dualist and development of underdevelopment theses as presented by Jacques Lambert and Andre Gunder Frank, respectively. And noting the critiques offered by Eugene Genovese, Ernesto Laclau and F. Stirton Weaver, the author proposes that the historical development of the Spanish American societies and rural Spanish America be analyzed in terms of the social relations of production and the class structures to which they give rise. Several chapters are then devoted to analyzing the development of rural Spanish America: historically, in the context of the respective national societies of Spanish America and the developing world economy, and comparatively, as suggested by Cristóbal Kay, with Eastern Europe.

The thesis of the dissertation is: That the Spanish American societies have - until recently - been characterized by the domination of pre-capitalist ruling classes and that rural Spanish America has been characterized by the persistence of pre-capitalist, predominantly seigneurial social relations of production and domination. And, that the underdevelopment characteristic of the Spanish American societies, and, in particular, rural Spanish America, has been the historical
product of that persistent seigneurial domination. Furthermore, it is argued, the participation of the Spanish American societies in the changing and expanding world economy of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries had the combined effect of strengthening that seigneurialism at the same time that it furthered the development of capitalism in those societies. Thus, the Spanish American societies experienced the contradiction of combined, or heterogeneous, development (i.e. the coexistent expansion of seigneurialism and capitalism) which, during the twentieth century - under the impact of the world crises - generated the populist (multi-class) alliances which have seriously challenged the pre-capitalist domination of the Spanish American societies and the persistence of seigneurialism in rural Spanish America.
INTRODUCTION

Life must be lived forward, but can only be understood backward.
-Kierkegaard

In 1957, the International Labor Organization published a study on the agrarian structure of Latin America.\(^1\) This study indicated that there were three main types of land tenure patterns in contemporary rural Latin America.\(^2\) The first type was the communal landholding, apparently a survival from pre-conquest society. The second type was the latifundia, a product of the conquest and colonization of America by Spain and Portugal. And the third type was the family-farm landholding, characteristic of Europe: the result of the migrations to Latin America from Europe in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.\(^3\)

The communal and latifundia land tenure types had, it appeared, persisted for centuries. Often, the communal lands and the latifundia lands did not exist in isolation from each other, but had, in fact, been involved in a continuing struggle over land and labor within a latifundia-minifundia tenure pattern. Rural Spanish America from the sixteenth century (and earlier) to the twentieth century might be

\(^1\)This dissertation is restricted to an interpretation of Spanish America, focusing primarily on Mexico, Peru, and Chile, with more than occasional reference to Bolivia and Venezuela.


\(^3\)Ibid., pp. 1-2.
described in terms of persistence and continuity. But, as C. Wright Mills once wrote:

Rather than 'explain' something as a persistence from the past, we ought to ask 'why has it persisted?' Usually we will find that the answer varies according to the phases through which whatever we are studying has gone; for each of these phases we may then attempt to find out what role it has played, and how and why it has passed on to the next phase.4

And yet, since the 1930's, there have been major changes in the Spanish American countryside: Mexico, Bolivia, Venezuela, Chile and Peru have all experienced (or are experiencing) major reforms of their agrarian structures.5 A common element in these reforms has been the diminution of the latifundia as a land tenure type in favor of greater peasant landholding.

However, that major changes have finally occurred in rural Spanish America does not negate the question 'why did the agrarian structure persist?' Rather, the whole issue is provided with new significance. By rephrasing the question of persistence as 'why was there no change?' and posing it opposite the question 'why have there recently been major changes in rural Spanish America?,' it becomes very apparent that persistence and change must be studied in relation to each other, rather than in isolation.

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5"...generally understood to mean a set of institutions, norms (both written and unwritten) and social, political, and economic relationships governing the access to and use of land as a productive resource." Rodolfo Stavenhagen, "Introduction" in Stavenhagen, ed., Agrarian Problems and Peasant Movements in Latin America (Garden City: Anchor Books, 1970), p. 3.
The study of continuity and change is essential in the study of development. And if "historians should stress continuity over change,"\textsuperscript{6} while "sociology is an attempt to understand the direction of change,"\textsuperscript{7} then the integration of history and sociology - whose relationship Peter Berger has called "symbiotic,"\textsuperscript{8} must be achieved for an appreciation of development. At the same time, it must be remembered that we are not referring "to the dull little padding known as 'sketching in the historical background,'"\textsuperscript{9} but rather that:

\begin{quote}
...the use of such a perspective goes beyond the notion of 'historical background' to the theoretical comprehension of development and underdevelopment as historical processes.\textsuperscript{10}
\end{quote}

Nevertheless, history has been excluded from the field of development studies; probably because of sociology's eagerness to both break with the "evolutionism" of its theoretical origins (which has been seen as an historical approach) and also to "establish its own academic credentials."\textsuperscript{11} The contradiction has been that the rebellion from history has not only been at the expense of understanding

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{8}Peter Berger, \textit{Invitation to Sociology} (Garden City: Anchor Books, 1963), p. 169.
\item \textsuperscript{9}Mills, \textit{The Sociological Imagination}, p. 154.
\item \textsuperscript{11}Abrams, "The Sense of the Past," p. 25.
\end{itemize}
persistence,\textsuperscript{12} but also - by necessity - it has been at the expense of understanding change. Thus, an understanding of development has been jeopardized, if not sacrificed:

As a reaction to the concept of an inevitable succession of stages, social scientists have turned anti-historical - erecting a barrier between social change and social development.\textsuperscript{13}

The historical development of rural Spanish America has been characterized by persistence, continuity and, since the 1930's, major change. The challenge of this dissertation is to explain that persistence and change, and, thus, to seek to further understanding of the development process in Spanish America. As the historian, E.H. Carr, once wrote:

A historically-minded generation is one which looks back, not indeed for solutions which cannot be found in the past, but for those critical insights which are necessary both to the understanding of its existing situation and to the realization of the values which it holds.\textsuperscript{14}

\textbf{An Outline of the Study}

This dissertation is an attempt to interpret persistence and change in rural Spanish America in historical and comparative perspective, and to relate the issue of persistence and change to the subject of development and underdevelopment.

\textsuperscript{12} Which, in fact, many critics in the discipline claim has been just the opposite, i.e. sociology has been stuck on equilibrium studies.


Basically, the thesis presented herein is, that the Spanish American societies have - until recently - been characterized by the persistence of precapitalist ruling classes\textsuperscript{15} and that rural Spanish America has been characterized by the predominance of precapitalist, seigneurial relations of production and domination.\textsuperscript{16} Furthermore, it is argued, the underdevelopment characteristic of the Spanish American societies,\textsuperscript{17} and in particular rural Spanish America, has been the product of that persistent precapitalist, seigneurial domination.

Chapter One, "A Debate and A Thesis," locates the issue of persistence and change in rural Spanish America within the debate "feudalism and/or capitalism in Latin America?", as represented by the "dualist" and the "development of underdevelopment" theses. Following a critique of these two theses, seigneurialism and capitalism are defined for the purpose of historical analysis and the thesis of this study is presented in more complete form.

Chapter Two, "Spanish Seigneurialism," examines the changes in, and yet persistence of, seigneurialism in Iberian Spain in order to locate the origins of Spanish American seigneurialism as an historico-social formation.

Chapter Three, "Colonial Development in Comparative Perspective," examines the persistence of, and changes in, Spanish seigneurialism produced by the conquest and colonization of America, and places the

\textsuperscript{15}The term, precapitalist ruling classes, does not include all non-capitalist ruling "classes," e.g. the ruling bureaucracies of the communist states.

\textsuperscript{16}See pages 26-27.

\textsuperscript{17}Generally understood to be the lack of economic growth via industrialization.
development of Spanish American seigneurialism in historico-comparative perspective with Eastern Europe, which also experienced the persistence of seigneurialism in this period of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Chapter Four, "Spanish American Seigneurialism," follows the persistence and expansion of seigneurialism as a mode of production and domination during the first half of the nineteenth century and the establishment of Spanish American independence; and examines Spanish American seigneurialism as a mode of production characterized by the social relations between a dominant landowning class and a dependent peasantry.

In Chapter Five, "National Development in Comparative Perspective," Spanish America is again placed in comparative perspective with Eastern Europe in order to examine the decline of seigneurialism as a result of the development of capitalism, and to understand the divergent paths that their respective agrarian structures followed as a result of the specific class alliances which emerged during the period of transition.

Finally, in the "Conclusion," the dissertation is summarized with reference to the theses presented, and an attempt is made to indicate the limitations of this study and to propose further areas of research to be pursued.

Note on Methodology

It would be easy to fall upon the quote of Paul Sweezy and say "all sociology worthy of the name is historical sociology."18

However, in order to present the methodology of this dissertation, a few more words on "historical sociology" seem essential.

It has already been stated that the objective of this dissertation is to confront the questions (or dual question) "why did the agrarian structure persist and why has there recently been change?" In order to accomplish this task, the Spanish American societies and their rural sectors must be placed in historical, comparative perspective, i.e. they must be examined through the phases of their historical development.

Analyzing the historical development of a society (or institution, community, etc.) is the task of historical sociology. The method of historical sociology is the application of social science theory to the research and evidence of the historian. To quote Mills, "The production of historians may be thought of as a great file indispensable to all social science." Directly relevant to the use of historical works in sociology is Seymour Martin Lipset's citing of T.H. Marshall's statement:

Another criticism which has been levelled at the sociologist's attempt to generalize by comparing the histories of several nations is that he must inevitably rely extensively on secondary authorities without going back to the original resources. T.H. Marshall, one of the deans of British sociology, has justified this practice: Nothing is more unreliable than the first-hand account of an

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19Seymour Martin Lipset, "History and Sociology: Some Methodological Considerations," in Lipset, Revolution and Counter-revolution: Change and Persistence in Social Structure (Garden City: Anchor Books, 1970), pp. 3-36. In this article, Lipset states: "A significant source of the renewed interest in historical and comparative sociology has been the emergence of the body of inquiry which has been called the sociology of development." (p. 5)

eye-witness, nor more liable to deceive than
diaries and correspondence whose authors
thoroughly enjoyed writing them. And even the
accounts of treasurers cannot always be accepted
as representing the final and absolute truth.
It is the business of historians to sift this
miscellaneous collection of dubious authorities
and to give to others the results of their
careful professional assessment. And surely
they will not rebuke the sociologist for putting
faith in what historians write.\textsuperscript{21}

If there is a tradition which the methodology and interest of
this dissertation would pretend to fit, it is the traditional concern
of the classical sociologists for historical social change,\textsuperscript{22} and the
renewed interest among historians and social scientists in unifying
the study of the past and the present.\textsuperscript{23}

In particular, this dissertation subscribes to the proposal of
the French historian, Fernand Braudel. Braudel, directing himself to
the issue of unifying the social sciences and history, proposed that
the unification begin through the study of the "long term" and
"duration."\textsuperscript{24} In this way, he hopes that historians will be able to
move away from merely focusing on the short-term, the individual and

\textsuperscript{21}\textit{Seymour Martin Lipset}, \textit{The First New Nation: The United States
in Historical and Comparative Perspective} (Garden City: Anchor Books,
and Other Essays} (London: Heinemann, 1963), pp. 36-37.

\textsuperscript{22}The classical sociologists, Karl Marx and Max Weber, studied
history to understand the meaning of change in their respective
presents.

\textsuperscript{23}In more recent times, there has been a renewed interest in
historical social change, exemplified by the work found in the
journals, \textit{Annales} (French), \textit{Past and Present} (British), and \textit{Comparative

\textsuperscript{24}Fernand Braudel, "History and Social Sciences," in Peter Burke, ed., \textit{Economy and Society in Early Modern Europe: Essays from Annales
the event, and social scientists, who often make pretensions to trans-historical analysis, will return to the study of historical society: 25

The past can only be told as it truly is not was. For recounting the past is a social act of the present done by men of the present and affecting the social system of the present. 26


A major debate among students of Latin America has been the issue of whether Latin American society, and in particular rural Latin America, should be termed pre-capitalist or capitalist. The persistence of the debate has been due to several reasons. The first reason is that the many participants in the debate have not all defined the term capitalism in the same manner. Thus, although they may be analyzing the same society (or societies) they are not using the same criteria. This problem of definition has been compounded by the fact that the participants in the debate have rarely made explicit the definitions they are using in their analyses.

A second reason, closely related to the first, is that the many analyses carried out and the propositions which have been stated are often focusing on different levels, i.e. some arguments in the debate focus on the region, others on the nation, and others on the international system. It is possible that contradictory conclusions which were reached about Latin America would not have been reached had the

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same level of analysis been used in each case. At the same time, the case of similar definitions, at different levels of analysis, resulting in opposing conclusions, can guide analysis in search of the cause of this contradiction.

Still a third reason for the persistence of the debate over pre-capitalism vs. capitalism in Latin America is that this issue is not merely an academic one. Political and social change strategies, formulated by both revolutionaries and reformers, have been constructed according to the particular framework of social organization believed to exist in the respective Latin American societies. It has been written that:

> Modes of definition embody particular assumptions and concerns and give rise to particular methods and uses. It is one of the peculiarities of social science that its concepts and the activities of its practitioners themselves enter the field of study.  

Thus, political and governmental coalitions, peasant mobilizations and agrarian reforms, development programs and projects have often depended on the definitions used and the conclusions reached in the debate over capitalism in Latin America.

**Definitions of Capitalism**

Before examining the major arguments in the debate, it is important to review the particular definitions of capitalism which exist in historical and sociological research. Maurice Dobb, the late British economist and economic historian, wrote that there have been "three

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separate meanings assigned to the notion of capitalism." \(^5\)

The first definition of capitalism, according to Dobb, is the one proposed in the writings of Werner Sombart and Max Weber. Sombart sought the meaning of capitalism in a particular unity of the "spirit of enterprise" or adventure, and the "bourgeois spirit" of calculation and rationality: \(^6\)

...we must trace the origin and growth of the capitalist spirit...we dissect the whole into its component parts, and we shall turn our attention chiefly to two, the spirit of enterprise and the bourgeois spirit which when united generated the capitalist spirit... The spirit of enterprise is a synthesis of the greed of gold, the desire for adventure, the love of exploration ... The bourgeois spirit is composed of calculation, careful policy, reasonableness, and economy. \(^7\)

Max Weber also referred to a particular world view which he called the "spirit of capitalism," and in his work he sought to differentiate modern capitalism from capitalisms of the past and other geographic regions, i.e. the spirit of capitalism was not merely the quest for wealth, but rather the quest for wealth according to rational conduct and a rationalistic economic ethic:

The impulse to acquisition, pursuit of gain, of money, of the greatest possible amount of money has in itself nothing to do with capitalism. This impulse exists and has existed among waiters, physicians, coachmen, artists, prostitutes...gambler and beggars. One may say it has been common to all sorts and conditions of men at all times and all countries

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\(^6\)Ibid., pp. 4-5.

of the earth... [this] Unlimited greed for gain is not in the least identical with capitalism, and is still less its spirit. Capitalism may even be identical with the restraint, or at least a rational tempering, of this irrational impulse. But capitalism is identical with the pursuit of profit, and forever renewed profit, by means of continuous rational, capitalistic enterprise.®

The second definition is the one which identifies capitalism with production for the market, particularly distant markets. Thus, Henri Pirenne located the origins of capitalism in the twelfth century, amongst a developing class of merchants:

In actual fact, the capitalistic spirit made its appearance simultaneously with commerce...it began in conformity with the stimulus which it received from the outer world - with long range trading and the spirit of big business...it was dominated by the capitalist spirit... Those who initiated and directed and expanded the commerce of Europe were a class of merchant-adventurers.®

Thus, for Pirenne, capitalism is commerce. In fact, he wrote:

Of one thing we may be absolutely sure, that these men were inspired by a greedy spirit of profit-seeking. We must not think of them simply as respectable folk doing their best to make both ends meet. Their one object was the accumulation of wealth. In this sense, they were animated by the capitalist spirit, which the rudimentary psychology of our modern economists would have us regard as something highly mysterious, born in penury or Calvinism.®

With these words, Pirenne attempts to sweep aside the work of


®Ibid., p. 195.
Sombart and Weber and their notion of a particular synthesis of profit-seeking and rationalism, and argues that capitalism originated in a "greedy merchant-class - not among god-fearing calvinists."

Related to the definition of capitalism offered by Pirenne is that of Karl Polanyi, which equated capitalism with the market economy, reaching its height in the nineteenth century. Polanyi wrote:

Neither under tribal, nor feudal, nor mercantile conditions was there, as we have shown, a separate economic system in society. Nineteenth century society, in which economic activity was isolated and imputed to a distinctive economic incentive, was indeed a singular departure.¹¹

This definition of capitalism is today found in similar form amongst a particular school of economic anthropologists who focus on market and exchange relationships. Thus, capitalism is defined as increasing complexity in the market, whereby the range of transactions is enlarged through the monetization of the economy.¹²

The third definition of capitalism, according to Dobb, is the one traditionally identified with the work of Karl Marx. In this case, capitalism, and other historical forms of society, are identified by the "social relations between men which result from their connections with the process of production."¹³ Thus, to quote Dobb:

Capitalism was not simply a system of production for the market, but a system under which labour-power had itself become a commodity and was bought and sold on the market like any other object of exchange. Its historical prerequisite was the


¹³Dobb, Studies, p. 7.
concentration of ownership of the means of production in the hands of a class, consisting of only a minor section of society and the consequential emergence of a propertyless class for whom the sale of their labour-power was their only source of livelihood. Productive activity was furnished, accordingly, by the latter, not by virtue of legal compulsion, but on the basis of a wage contract.\textsuperscript{14}

Or, as Marx himself wrote:

...two very different kinds of commodity possessors must come face to face and into contact: on the one hand, the owners of money, means of production, means of subsistence, who are eager to increase the sum of values they possess, by buying other people's labor; on the other hand, free laborers, the sellers of their own labor power, and therefore the sellers of labor. Free laborers, in the double sense that neither they themselves form part and parcel of the means of production, as in the case of slaves, bondsmen, etc., nor do the means of production belong to them, as in the case of peasant proprietors...\textsuperscript{15}

This definition of capitalism, based on the analysis of the social relations of production, has been termed the "materialist conception of history," while the "spirit of capitalism" approach has often been posed in opposition to it as the "idealist" argument. Thus, Marxian theory has often been countered with what has been called "Weberianism." However, not all social scientists have viewed the Marxian-Weberian dialogue as necessarily a conflict. In their work in social psychology, Hans Gerth and C. Wright Mills recognized this and wrote that:

\textsuperscript{14}Ibid.

For both Karl Marx and Max Weber, in contrast to both Simmel and Sombart, "modern capitalism" is anchored in the sphere of production. Accordingly, the historical emergence of modern capitalism is not seen as a quantitative expansion of markets, but as the emergence of the factory as a productive unit or, in Weber's terms, of a rational organization of formally free labor for the continuous acquisition of profits... Marx focused on the labor supply... Weber was more interested in the origins and psychology of...[the] middle class entrepreneur.16

In The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, his classic work on the origins of capitalism, Weber wrote that: "The Occident has developed...a very different form of capitalism which has appeared nowhere else: the rational capitalistic organization of formally free labor."17 Therefore, the significance of Weber's work in relation to that of Marx was, perhaps, not to argue against it, but rather to understand the psychological and socio-cultural dimensions of the development of capitalist society.

There are, then, three definitions of capitalism which have predominated in historical and sociological theory:

1) capitalism as a specific "spirit of livelihood;"
2) capitalism as production for a market, i.e. commercial enterprise for profit; and
3) capitalism as a particular historical formation in which the owners of the means of production hire labor from a propertyless class


which has nothing to offer for sale but that labor.\textsuperscript{18} The methodological and theoretical significance in the choice of a particular definition of capitalism will become apparent in the following discussion of the debate over the characterization of the Spanish American societies as pre-capitalist or capitalist.

**The Debate**

In the debate over whether Latin American society and its rural sector should be characterized as pre-capitalist or capitalist, there have arisen two dominant theses, which can be termed the "dualist thesis" and the "development of underdevelopment thesis."

The dualist thesis originated in the work of the Dutch economist, J.H. Boeke.\textsuperscript{19} Cyril Belshaw, in *Traditional Exchange and Modern Markets*, explains that:

The notion of dual economy implies that within one political framework, there is one sector which operates according to the principles of modern capitalism. This sector is commercially sophisticated, linked with international trade, dominated by motives of maximization... Opposed to this sector and separated from it is the traditional peasant economy, which, according to the purist form of the theory, is conservatively oriented, interested in security and continuity rather than change, not concerned with maximization of profit or resource use, oriented towards the satisfaction of social needs rather than reacting to international forces, and incapable of engaging dynamically in trade and commerce.\textsuperscript{20}

\textsuperscript{18}The definition of capitalism used in this dissertation is that favored by Marx, see p. 26.


\textsuperscript{20}Belshaw, *Traditional Exchange*, p. 96.
According to this thesis, the dual society is, in fact, two separate societies with their own laws of dynamics and change. Supposedly, the interaction between the two societies (of the dual society) is minimal.

The dualist thesis applied to Latin America is best represented by the work of Jacques Lambert. According to Lambert, the majority of the Latin American countries is characterized by social dualism, which exists when "the population is divided between archaic and developed forms of social organization." He indicates three forms of social dualism: regional dualism, rural-urban dualism, and rural dualism. Regional dualism is characterized by Brazil, where the southern region is modern and developed and the northeast is archaic and underdeveloped; and by Peru in the contrast between the coast and the sierra. Rural-urban dualism exists throughout Latin America and is supposedly increasing "to the point where there may be a 'break' between the rural and urban society." The third form of dualism is rural dualism which, in Latin America, refers to the difference between the plantation and the hacienda. The plantation, according to Lambert, is typified by the coffee fazendas of São Paulo, sugar plantations of the Caribbean and the coast of Peru, and fruit farms of Central America - as well as many cattle estancias of Argentina and

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22 Ibid.


Uruguay. He contrasts these "capitalist" agricultural investments to the "feudal" haciendas of pre-revolutionary Mexico and Bolivia, highland Peru, northeast Brazil and other regions of Latin America. Lambert differentiates between the two types of latifundia, plantation and hacienda, by whether they are market-oriented or not. He finds that the plantations often concentrate on a single-crop for export, while the haciendas are not so commercially-oriented, but rather tend towards self-sufficiency. He further states that the plantation's commercial orientation leads it to establish modern, capitalist labor relations, i.e. hired labor on wage contracts, while the hacienda's relations of production are feudal in nature because of its basically non-commercial orientation.

Thus, Lambert argues that rural dualism (and dualism in general in Latin America) results from the fact that some landholdings, the plantations, are commercially-oriented and involved in the market economy, while other landholdings, the haciendas, are not commercially oriented, nor involved in the market economy, and that these respective orientations are the product of their owners' motivations.

In contrast to the dualist thesis, there is the development of underdevelopment thesis which was formulated by Andre Gunder Frank. Actually, Frank proposed the development of underdevelopment thesis to counter the dualist thesis, which he felt was ahistorical. According to Frank, one cannot talk of "feudalism" in Latin America because Latin

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26 Ibid., pp. 72-73. 27 Ibid., pp. 68, 72.

America has been capitalist since the Conquest. It is Frank's argument that, in fact, Spain and Portugal were capitalist in 1500 and, thus, any analysis of rural Latin America must be seen in the framework of capitalism. In his research and writings, Frank has sought to show that, historically, those regions which are today most "backward" and characterized by isolation from the market were, at one time, most involved in commercial relations, e.g. northeast Brazil, highland Peru, and Bolivia, and other regions. Thus, according to Frank, the backward regions of contemporary Latin America are the product of the development of underdevelopment, which is the result of the contradictions of capitalist development, i.e. the development of Western Europe and the United States has been at the expense of Latin America and the rest of the Third World. Frank's thesis is based, in part, on the work of Paul Baran, the economist, who argued that the Third World's underdevelopment must be viewed in relation to the development of the advanced capitalist countries. Frank writes:

Economic development and underdevelopment are the opposite faces of the same coin. Both are the necessary result and contemporary manifestation of internal contradictions in the world capitalist system... One and the same historical

29 Luis Vitale, the Argentine historian, in his research has also argued that Spain and Portugal were capitalist societies and, thus, the idea that Spain or Portugal transplanted feudal societies to the Americas is out of the question. His thesis is based on a definition which equates "natural economy with feudalism" and "money economy with capitalism." Vitale, "Latin America: Feudal or Capitalist?" in James Petras and Maurice Zeitlin, eds., Latin America: Reform or Revolution? (New York: Fawcett Publications, 1968), pp. 32-43.

30 Ibid.

process of the expansion and development of capitalism throughout the world has simultaneously generated - and continues to generate - both development and underdevelopment.32

Frank, like Lambert, defines capitalism on the basis of whether or not the society, region or community, is involved in - or has been involved in, market and commercial activity. According to this definition, Frank finds that all of Latin America has been actively participating in capitalist economy and, therefore, the Latin American societies can only be termed capitalist.

The debate over feudalism vs. capitalism in Latin America deals, in effect, with the issue of persistence and change. According to Lambert's dualist thesis, the persistence of "feudalism" in rural Latin America is due to the non-commercial orientation and lack of integration of those regions and/or enterprises in the national/international economy. Frank's development of underdevelopment thesis takes the opposite view. According to Frank, the persistent "backwardness" of those regions which Lambert termed "feudal" is actually due to their historical commercial activity and integration in the world economy.

Of course, one must ask how it is possible that the two theoretical frameworks arrive at different, even contradictory, conclusions, especially when Lambert and Frank have defined capitalism in the same way. That is, both the dualist thesis and the development of underdevelopment thesis define capitalism in the manner proposed by Pirenne, i.e. "is production being carried out for the market?"

To a certain extent, the issue can be termed the "problem of

32Frank, Capitalism and Underdevelopment, p. 33.
sociology without history and history without sociology." Lambert's analysis was based on contemporary Latin America and projected into the past, leading to ahistorical conclusions. Thus, Lambert's weak historical analysis placed his thesis in jeopardy, or as Rodolfo Stavenhagen has written:

There is no doubt that in all the Latin American societies great social and economic differences exist - between rural and urban areas, between Indian and non-Indian populations, between the mass of peasants and the urban and rural elites, and between the very backward and the relatively developed regions.

Nevertheless, these differences do not justify the use of the concept of dual society for two principal reasons. First, the relations between the "archaic" or "feudal" regions and groups and the "modern" or "capitalistic" ones represent the functioning of a single unified society of which the two poles are integral parts; and second these two poles originate in the course of a single historical process.33

At the same time, Frank's historico-economic analysis, and its emphasis on Latin America's integration in the world economy fails to provide us with an explanation for Latin America's structural heterogeneity on the level of national social organization.34 Frank's argument that the Latin American societies cannot be termed dual societies because of Latin America's integration in the world economy, although admittedly with historical and regional variation, does appear more tenable than Lambert's, considering the evidence. However, by focusing his analysis on the level of the world economy, he does not

33 Rodolfo Stavenhagen, "Seven Fallacies about Latin America," in Petras and Zeitlin, eds., Latin America, pp. 16-17.

provide us with a framework within which we can understand the historical development of particular Latin American societal structures and regional variations in social organization.

As well as the problem of "sociology without history and history without sociology," there is the problem of "definitional weakness" in the debate over capitalism in Latin America. Maurice Dobb has commented that:

> The justification of any definition must ultimately rest on its successful employment in illuminating the actual process of historical development; on the extent to which it gives a shape to our picture of the process corresponding to the contours which the historical landscape proves to have.  

With this in mind, the problem of definitional weakness in the debate over capitalism in Latin America can be recognized in Dobb's critique of the definition of capitalism proposed by Sombart and Pirenne:

> Both Sombart's conception of the capitalist spirit and a conception of Capitalism as primarily a commercial system share the defect, in common with conceptions which focus attention on the fact of acquisitive investment of money, that they are insufficiently restrictive to confine the term to any one epoch of history, and that they seem to lead inexorably to the conclusion that nearly all periods of history have been capitalist, at least in some degree.  

Thus, in a similar fashion, we can see that by using the definition of capitalism which Lambert and Frank seem to utilize, we could be led to conclude that both contemporary Europe and pre-Columbian Mesoamerica have been capitalist societies.

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35 Dobb, Studies, p. 8.  
36 Ibid.  
37 Something which neither scholar would wish to suggest.
A related criticism of Frank's thesis, that the Latin American societies are necessarily capitalist by virtue of their integration in the world economy, has been made by a number of historians and social scientists. Ernesto Laclau has written that in "the debate over 'feudalism vs. capitalism'...its protagonists have constantly confused the two concepts of the capitalist mode of production and participation in a world capitalist economic system." Similarly, although not necessarily directed at Frank, the following statement by Eric J. Hobsbawm is relevant:

...while in many ways Detroit and Cuzco are today part of a single system of functional inter-relationships (for example, part of one economic system) few would regard them as part of the same society, sociologically speaking.

In the same vein, but in this case directed specifically at Frank's work, Eugene Genovese has written:

What Frank cannot understand - and this failure stems from his singular concern with economics... is that it is one thing to argue that European capitalism has intruded itself into every part of the world and has exploited and subjugated the most diverse peoples, societies, and social systems; but it is quite another thing to argue that therefore every such people, society, or social system has become one more variant of bourgeois culture.

And, with greater reference to the issue of development, F. Stirton Weaver has directed the following criticism at both traditional

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international economic development theory and the development of underdevelopment thesis which located itself in supposed opposition to the former:

The real problem is the narrowness of the economic terms in which the argument is conducted; it simply does not include a sufficient view of social process to make historically valid generalizations about the impact of foreign trade and investment on economic development.41

Later, he added (which, to a certain extent, introduces the method of historical analysis to be used in this dissertation):

Although inter-nation transfers of economic surplus is useful for understanding the benefits accruing to the developed capitalist trading and investing nations, it is too fragile to bear so much of the burden of explanation for the more complex "development of underdevelopment." The extreme wealth of Latin American appropriating classes through history is potent prima facie evidence against "capital scarcity" and "too poor to save" explanations of economic stagnation. The use of economic surplus, not merely its quantity, must be the center of attention, and this necessitates class analysis.42

Actually, what these criticisms appear to be moving towards is, as Genovese proposes, "a redefining of capitalism. From being understood as merely a system of economic relations, it must be understood as a social process."43 And, following Marx, (Weber), and Dobb, Genovese argues that such a "redefinition of capitalism" should begin by focusing analysis on the mode of production of the society and the


42 Ibid., p. 176.

social relations which compose it. To operationalize his proposition, Genovese suggests that the following definitions of "seigneurialism" and "capitalism" be used:

Seigneurialism is here defined, following Marx and Dobb, as the mode of production characterized by a dependent labor force that holds some claim to the means of production. This definition makes seigneurialism roughly equivalent to serfdom, but not exactly so, for it includes regimes in which the lords' claims on the economic surplus are met by payments in money or kind, as well as in labor services. Capitalism is here defined as the mode of production characterized by wage labor and the separation of the labor force from the means of production, that is, as the mode of production in which labor power itself has become a commodity.

He explains that:

The great value of this viewpoint lies in its focus on the human relationships inherent in labor systems. As such, it should be understood to transcend mere economic categories and to define each mode of production as a social rather than as a narrowly economic system.

These are the definitions upon which the historical and

Genovese's work has been devoted to analyzing (U.S.) Southern plantation society and the master-slave relationship, placing it in comparative perspective with the slave regimes of the Caribbean and South America, particularly Brazil.

Genovese, The World The Slaveholders Made (New York: Vintage Books, 1971), p. 16. Genovese's use of the term seigneurialism instead of feudalism is explained: "The substitution represents a grudging, long-resisted capitulation to those medieval historians who bitterly complain about the expropriation of one of their favorite terms. Since feudalism continues to define a particular, fairly well delineated political system...the dual meaning causes unnecessary trouble. As Marx and Dobb themselves show, the mode of production they call feudal does not require the political system of the same name, although some kind of rough historical correlation may be made. The term "seigneurial" expresses the essentials of that mode of production and avoids the difficulty." (p. 16)

Ibid., p. 17.
sociological analysis of this dissertation will be based. From a study of the social relations of production, analysis can proceed to the class relations and structure of the society, which are based on those social relations of production.

Frank appears to have recognized that his emphasis on economic relations required further grounding in social class analysis. Thus, his argument that Spain and Portugal were capitalist societies in 1500 was refined and he proceeded to describe Iberian society as "merchant capitalism," in which the merchant class becomes the dominant class in the society. Therefore, his argument that Spain and Portugal were capitalist societies remained intact.

However, if we are going to define capitalism as a specific historical form of social relations, is there a "merchant capitalism?"

Maurice Dobb responded to this issue with the following:

If we are speaking of Capitalism as a specific mode of production, then it follows that we cannot date the dawn of this system from the first signs of the appearance of large-scale trading and a merchant class, and we cannot speak of a special period of "Merchant Capitalism" as many have done. We must look for the opening of the capitalist period only when changes in the mode of production occur, in the sense of direct subordination of the producer to the capitalist. This is not just a point of terminology, but of substance; since it means that if we are right, the appearance of a purely trading class will have of itself no revolutionary significance; that its rise will exert a much less fundamental influence on the pattern of society than will the appearance of a class of capitalists whose fortunes are intimately linked with industry; and that while a ruling class, whether of slave owners or feudal

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lords, may take to trading or enter into a class alliance with traders, a merchant class, whose activities are essentially those of an intermediary between producer and consumer, it is unlikely to strive to become a dominant class in quite that radical and exclusive sense of which we were speaking a moment ago. Since its fortunes will tend to be bound up with the existing mode of production, it is more likely to be under an inducement to preserve that mode of production than to transform it. It is likely to struggle to "muscle in" upon an existing form of appropriating surplus labour; but it is unlikely to try to change this form.48

Max Weber, in his research, stated:

...we shall see that at the beginning of modern times it was by no means the capitalistic entrepreneurs of the commercial aristocracy, who were either the sole or the predominant bearers of the attitude we have here called the spirit of capitalism. It was much more the rising strata of the lower industrial middle classes.49

And Gunnar Myrdal has noted that: "Trade by itself...rather tends to have backwash effects and to strengthen the forces maintaining stagnation or regression."50

Thus, the appearance of an active and aggressive merchant class is - according to our definition and analytical method - insufficient to characterize a society as capitalist, because it will not necessarily entail the development of capitalist social relations.

In fact, neither does the appearance of a bourgeoisie itself, whose further progress would seem dependent on the expansion of

48Dobb, Studies, pp. 17-18. Also, see the work by Dobb, ed., Transition from Feudalism to Capitalism (New York: Science and Society, 1954).


capitalist social relations - both as an enlarged market and an enlarged labor supply, necessarily guarantee the transformation of a society from seigneurialism to capitalism. Eric Hobsbawm, in discussing the European crisis of the seventeenth century, has shown that large-scale production of a capitalist nature developed early in some regions, but at the same time the rising bourgeoisie of those regions was immobilized by a still-strong seigneurial structure of society. And Genovese has similarly illustrated, in his work on the slave South, that the commercial and industrial bourgeoisie was immobilized to the point of becoming strong supports of the slaveholders' regime. Thus, it can, perhaps, be argued that it is not merely the appearance of a "capitalist class" which forwards the development of capitalism to the extent that it becomes the dominant mode of production, but rather, as one historian has written: "Capitalism, as a mode of production, does not attain great strength until the disintegration of feudalism reaches an advanced stage." Therefore, rather than resort to the "promiscuous application of class labels," the uniqueness of social classes in their specific historical and national context must be recognized.

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A Proposition and A Thesis

This work, in approaching the issue of persistence and change in rural Spanish America, will follow the method of analysis which focuses on the social relations of production and the class relations and social structure which develop from them; recognizing that such an analysis must be carried out in the context of the national societies of which the rural sectors are a part. At the same time, those national societies were originally the product of a common source, the expansion of Spain, and they have developed, and are developing, within the developing world economy, which together provide a framework for a comparative analysis and perspective.

Stated formally, the thesis of this dissertation is: That the Spanish American societies have - until recently - been characterized by the domination of pre-capitalist ruling classes and rural Spanish America has been characterized by the persistence of pre-capitalist, predominantly seigneurial social relations of production and domination. And that the underdevelopment characteristic of the Spanish American societies, and in particular rural Spanish America, has been the historical product of that persistent seigneurial domination. Furthermore, it is argued, the participation of the Spanish American societies in the changing and expanding world economy of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries had the combined effect of strengthening that seigneurialism at the same time that it furthered the development of capitalism in those societies. Thus, the Spanish American societies experienced the contradiction of combined, or heterogeneous, development (i.e. the coexistent expansion of seigneurial and capitalist social relations of production), which
during the twentieth century - under the impact of the world crises
- generated the populist (multi-class) alliances which have seriously
challenged the pre-capitalist domination of the Spanish American
societies and the persistence of seigneurialism in rural Spanish
America.

Although we have been highly critical of both Lambert's dualist
thesis and Frank's development of underdevelopment thesis, they have
made valuable contributions to Spanish and Latin American development
studies. Lambert's dualist thesis recognized the coexistence of
seigneurial and capitalist social relations in Spanish America. On
the other hand, Frank's development of underdevelopment thesis has
recognized that Spanish (and Latin) America have participated in the
world economy with historical and regional variation. Nevertheless,
we will argue - on the basis of class analysis - that the underdevelop­
ment characteristic of Spanish America, and in particular rural
Spanish America, has been due neither to a supposedly non-commercial
orientation of the Spanish American landowning classes, nor caused by
the Spanish American societies' participation in the world economy.

In view of our criticism of the dominant theses of Spanish
America's historical development, i.e. the dualist thesis and the
development of underdevelopment thesis, there are a number of ques­
tions which remain unanswered or require re-evaluation in terms of the
method of analysis to be used herein. The following questions can,
therefore, serve as a guide to this dissertation and the argument of
the thesis presented:

1) What was the nature of Iberian-Spanish society at the time of
the Conquest, and what role did it play in the creation of
conquest societies in America?

2) What was the nature of the societies which developed during the colonial period and established their independence in the nineteenth century, and what were the dominant social relations in the rural sector?

3) What was the impact of the changing and expanding world economy of the nineteenth century, followed by the world crises of the twentieth century, on the Spanish American societies and their rural sectors?

4) And, considering the changes of this century in Spanish America, and particularly in rural Spanish America, what role did the social relations of production play in generating those changes?
CHAPTER IX

SPANISH SEIGNEURIALISM

The discovery of America, the rounding of the cape, opened up fresh ground for the rising bourgeoisie. The East Indian and Chinese markets, the colonization of America, trade with the colonies, the increase in the means of exchange and in commodities generally, gave to commerce, to navigation, to industry an impulse never before known, and thereby, to the revolutionary element in the tottering feudal society, a rapid development.¹

Although it was Spain which discovered and conquered America, thus enlarging the European world economy and providing further stimulus to the transition from feudalism to capitalism, it was not Spain which was to undergo this revolutionary change. The new markets available and the wealth which was generated did not instigate the social changes necessary to develop capitalism in Spain, rather they merely served to support the persistence of the seigneurial regime which had developed.

In turn, it was not capitalism which conquered and colonized America,² for if it had been capitalism, the development of America would have proceeded differently. Spanish America inherited from Iberia the social relations of seigneurialism, although admittedly


²i.e. Spanish America. For Portuguese America, see Genovese, The World The Slaveholders Made.
cast with a mercantilist orientation. Thus, to understand seigneurialism in rural Spanish America, analysis must begin in Spain, set in the Mediterranean world and the product of the Reconquista.

The Reconquista's impact on the historical development of Spain is a debate unto itself. But within that debate there seems to be agreement that the nature and the longevity of the struggle impeded the development of classical medieval feudalism.

At the same time, the error should not be made of assuming that the weakness of feudalism made the victory of capitalism easier. In fact, one might argue the contrary, i.e. that the strength of the monarchy would not depend as much on an alliance with the nascent bourgeoisie to subjugate the nobility to its authority. Thus, although feudalism (political) would not have developed, seigneurialism (socio-economic) and its inhibition of capitalism would not be seriously challenged by such an alliance. Claudio Sánchez-Albórnoz wrote:

It has been stated that Spain never knew feudalism, and some have affirmed that it didn't know the Renaissance either. For two decades I have insisted many times about an absence no less transcendent:

^i.e. commercial orientation.


^The period of the Reconquista can be seen as having stretched from 711-1492.

Spain lacked a bourgeoisie.\(^7\)

The Reconquista produced an Iberia of disunited kingdoms: Portugal, along the Atlantic coast, which had finished its reconquest earlier than the other Iberian kingdoms, and the Spanish kingdoms, which by the late fifteenth century were to come under the domination of Aragon and Castile.

Aragon commanded Mediterranean Spain, and in the latter period of the reconquest had developed a commercial empire, along with Catalonia. This Catalan-Aragonese commercial empire supported a ruling class of merchants and a small nobility. J.H. Elliott has written:

> The success of the Catalan-Aragonese commercial system brought prosperity to the towns of the Crown of Aragon and helped to consolidate powerful urban patriciates. These, in practice, were the real masters of the land, for, apart from a handful of great magnates, the nobility of the Crown of Aragon was a small-scale nobility, unable to compare in territorial wealth with its counterpart in Castile.\(^8\)

Merchant classes, as Maurice Dobb has argued, are not the revolutionary bourgeoisie which has been attributed with the transformation of societies from feudalism to capitalism. The Catalan-Aragonese merchants are further proof of the statement:

> One feature of this new merchant bourgeoisie that is at first as surprising as it is universal, is the readiness with which this class compromised with feudal society once its privileges had been won.\(^9\)


\(^9\) Dobb, Studies, p. 120.
Thus, the "new nobility" of merchants in the Crown of Aragon invested their profits in land, in order to collect the seigneurial rents of the peasantry, as did the "old nobility."

In Aragon (and Catalonia) the major institution of the seigneurial structure was remenca. The remenca-peasantry constituted up to a third of the population,\textsuperscript{10} and:

...they were for the most part bound to the soil, unable to leave or dispose of the farms they held without the lord's consent; their rights over their personal property, and their privileges of marriage and inheritance were seriously limited by seigniorial interference; and they staggered under a heavy burden of dues of various sorts, which were payable in money, labor, and kind, and were imposed in most vexatious ways.\textsuperscript{11}

The lot of the Catalan peasantry was exceptionally hard under the seigneurial regime, due to the particular regional variation of remenca which included the seis malos usos - six evil customs.\textsuperscript{12}

Thus, Aragon and Catalonia, although highly mercantile and integrated into the Mediterranean world economy, remained seigneurial on the essential level of the social relations between the ruling nobility (old and new) and the working peasantry. While the Crown of Aragon was commercially oriented and involved in the Mediterranean, the Crown of Castile continued with the reconquest of Iberia and pushed its domain

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{10}Elliott, \textit{Imperial Spain}, p. 37.


\textsuperscript{12}Ibid., p. 478. The six evil customs gave the lord greater control over the peasant's property and, in some local areas, included the traditional (and infamous) seigneurial privilege of first night with the peasant's bride.
\end{footnotesize}
southward. The Reconquista for Castile "was at once a crusade against the infidel, a succession of military expeditions in search of plunder and a popular migration."\(^{13}\) The 'tradition of conquest' which Castile maintained through the continuing battles in southern Spain was to lend itself to the later conquest and colonization of America.

J.H. Parry, in his classic, *The Spanish Seaborne Empire*, wrote:

> In Andalusia the Castilians developed their own domestic imperialism and formed the habits of conquest and settlement which they would inevitably, sooner or later, seek to exercise beyond the boundaries of Spain.\(^{14}\)

Southern Spain, conquered by Castile, was carved into vast landed estates and distributed to the nobility as their reward for participating in the struggle.\(^{15}\) Along with their estates and jurisdictions, the Castilian nobility secured a "numerous and extremely docile peasant population."\(^{16}\)

In Aragon, the merchants and nobles secured an agrarian labor

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\(^{13}\)Elliott, *Imperial Spain*, p. 31.

\(^{14}\)J.H. Parry, *The Spanish Seaborne Empire* (London: Penguin Books, 1973), p. 8. Parry also notes the significance of the Castilian conquest of southern Spain and the capture of Seville, "The richest, most productive and most civilized territory in all Spain, the greatest and most industrious city, a thriving port which was to become the gateway to Atlantic trade and discovery, became incorporated in Castile, the most warlike, the most powerful, economically, and socially the most backward kingdom in Spain. A whole armoury of new weapons had been placed in the hands of the successors of the Cid."


\(^{16}\)Parry, *The Spanish*, p. 4. Also, "A docile peasantry is a source of strength and weakness to a strong ruler who can organize its capacity for labor and taxes, but under a weak and disintegrating government such a peasantry will, without much spontaneous resistance, render passive obedience to an invader from outside."
force and taxes from the remenca-peasantry. In Castile, there was also a seigneurial system of lordship over the peasantry known as señorío de solariego (which persisted into the seventeenth century). Varying, according to the amount of land owned by the lord, "its principal feature was that the vassals [peasants] obtained inheritance rights from their lords in exchange for dues or services."

Seigneurialism in Aragon and Castile took different juridical forms; however, the essential features were similar in both kingdoms. The peasants were subject to feudal-seigneurial labor services and dues, owed to the nobility (or merchant aristocracy) which dominated landholding as well.

In the century prior to the Spanish conquest of America, Spain itself was taking shape. During the fourteenth century, the Mediterranean world economy had suffered a severe crisis, which has been termed a "crisis of feudalism" by many economic and social historians. A result of the crisis was a decline in the economic strength of the seigneurial nobility involved in the Mediterranean world economy.

However, the economic crisis and the weakening of the seigneurial nobility did not lead to the collapse of the feudal-seigneurial regimes. Rather, as a result of the economic crisis, many merchant regimes...
families purchased landed estates with their wealth and bought their way into the nobility,\textsuperscript{20} and:

\begin{quote}
tended inevitably to transform themselves into aristocracy, a new part of the aristocracy that sought to inherit and almost always succeeded in doing so, the privileges - all the privileges - of the old aristocracy.\textsuperscript{21}
\end{quote}

The Spanish seigneurial structure maintained itself by being open and available to the mercantile class which sought entry into it.\textsuperscript{22}

Social mobility, i.e. movement from the merchant class to the aristocracy (and the seigneurial power and privilege it provided) was possible and appears to be a characteristic of Spanish society at this time. Luis Suárez Fernández, in his research, has commented:

\begin{quote}
From time to time a new man appeared and immediately poured all his energies into founding a mayorazgo, into creating a noble house; it cannot be said, therefore, that the oligarchy was a closed one. The great lords served as a model for a large number of nobles of an intermediate type... They were highly conservative, and their conservatism was directed above all toward the economic structure which allowed them to develop their power. They can be called capitalists only in the sense they they had been able to accumulate enormous sums of money.\textsuperscript{23}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{20}There have even been hypotheses that the crisis in the Mediterranean economy was due, in part, to the merchants' preference to 'seigneurialize' themselves rather than expand their commercial activities or involve themselves in manufacturing.

\textsuperscript{21}Romano and Tenenti, \textit{Los Fundamentos}, p. 69. The authors ask if it should be termed neo-feudalism.


Following the crisis of the fourteenth century, the fifteenth century was a period of decline in the Catalan-Aragonese economy and commercial empire in the Mediterranean. The economic and commercial decline of the Crown of Aragon generated conflict between the classes, and a civil war broke out. Meanwhile, Castile was laying the foundation for its eventual dominance in Iberia and the future Spanish empire overseas.

The economic crisis of the fourteenth century had led many of the Catalan merchants to place their wealth in agrarian estates and to seigneurialize themselves. When the crisis of the fourteenth century was followed by the commercial decline of the Catalan-Aragonese economy in the fifteenth century, the merchant-nobility (as well as the older nobility) made increased demands on the remenca-peasants, generating peasant uprisings. The landlords in the countryside who wished to preserve their social privileges over their backward serfs...tended to link hands with the merchant oligarchs and form a combination.24 Urban socio-political conflict was also breaking out between the merchant elite and the class of "artisans, craftsmen, producers, and exporters who were seeking greater political equality and more protective tariffs against foreign competition."25

In the third quarter of the century, full-scale civil war erupted in the towns and in the countryside:

The landlords in the countryside who wished to preserve their social privileges over their backward serfs,...tended to link hands with the merchant oligarchs and form a combination.26

These struggles were, in great part, limited to the principality


26Roger Highfield, "Introduction," in Highfield, Spain, p. 18.
of Catalonia, the most commercially-oriented region of the Aragonese Crown. (It was the Catalan peasant and townspeople who most immediately felt the commercial decline and the increased exactions made by the merchant nobility.)

The Crown's involvement in the struggle tended to support the popular-urban classes and the peasantry. The Aragonese monarchy was hoping to further tame the nobility by reducing its seigneurial power and privileges. Thus, attempts were made to set the remenca-peasantry free. The nobility (old and new) attempted coups against the monarchy at the same time that it sought to crush the rural and urban rebellions. In the 1470's, the monarchy gained the victory and the nobility swore allegiance to the Aragonese Crown.

The civil war had further weakened Aragon's economy at the time when Spain was finally moving towards unification under a Castilian-Aragonese partnership. Thus, Castile was to dominate the partnership. Also significant was the fact that the weakened Catalan merchant class was unable to effectively compete with their Genoese commercial rivals, which meant that the Spanish economy, on the eve of its empire-building, was to be heavily infiltrated by foreign commercial interests. Later, in 1492, with the expulsion of the Jews, the Italian merchants were further able to extend their activities. As Elliott has written:

This Genoese predominance decisively influenced the course of sixteenth century Spanish development. If the Catalans rather than the Genoese had won the struggle for entry into the Castilian commercial system, the history of a unified Spain would have taken a profoundly different turn.  

Ferdinand of Aragon, who had married Isabella of Castile (thus, at least unifying the Crowns in one family) issued the *Sentencia de Guadalupe* in 1486, which finally set the Catalanese peasantry free from remenca and the six evil customs. The nobility maintained ownership of the land, but the peasants were guaranteed usufructuary rights on the payment of a fixed rent,\(^28\) i.e. "...it very cleverly gave the peasant effective possession of his land."\(^29\)

Some historians, eager to locate capitalism in the Spanish past, have emphasized these political events in Catalonia, and the Crown's support of the popular classes;\(^30\) however, a more accurate reading of the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella reveals the uniqueness of the Catalanian case (even within the Crown of Aragon). In fact, "...if anything, the reign of the Catholic Kings was characterized by an increase in the social and economic power of the great nobles."\(^31\)

It is true that Ferdinand and Isabella sought to tame the political power of the nobility:

...feudal castles were destroyed, private wars were declared illegal... The audiencia, or high court of justice, frequently presided over by the monarchs themselves, became the supreme judicial body, and with the establishment of minor audiencias in local districts royal justice


\(^29\)Vicens Vives, *An Economic History*, p. 294. He adds, "Ferdinand the Catholic's accomplishment was truly democratic, for it gave some 50,000 individuals access to a fair-sized property. This is why there have not been, up to the contemporary period, any attempts at agrarian revolt in Catalonia."

\(^30\)Luis Vitale, "Latin America," pp. 32-43.

made deeper inroads on the private law of the feudal lords.\(^2\)

However, the united monarchy followed a 'dual policy' toward the nobility:

While reducing it to political obedience on the one hand, the crown fully ratified its social and economic predominance on the other.\(^3\)

During the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella, 95\% of the population "lived in the country and were peasants"\(^4\) and yet, "the nobles owned 97\% of the territory of the Peninsula, either directly or by jurisdiction."\(^5\) The monarchy 'ratified' the socio-economic strength of the seigneurial nobility through a variety of politico-legal decisions and actions. Following the conquest of the kingdom of Granada, the Catholic Kings carved up the new territories into vast landed estates for the nobility. Later, under the Laws of Toro (1504), the monarchs "confirmed and extended the right of establishing mayorazgos;" the right of hereditary transmission which entailed property to the first-born of a family.\(^6\)

A major political economy decision of the united monarchy was its support of the Mesta,\(^7\) the guild of sheepowners. Through several

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\(^3\) Payne, *A History*, vol. 1, p. 270.


cédulas (edicts) the monarchy gave the Mesta 'right of way' to Spain's countryside, in preference to agriculture, e.g. edicts expelling farmers from certain lands, communal and private, and banning enclosures in certain regions, like the kingdom of Granada.38

The policy of supporting the Mesta at the expense of agriculture is further proof that it is not merely the 'search for profit' which provides the impetus for capitalist development, because, in fact, it was the monarchy's eagerness to collect the revenues from the pastoral interests and wooltrade rather than promote agriculture and await its return which led it to make those decisions. Furthermore, it was the nobility which had the biggest stake of all, because many nobles had been converting their lands to pasture to take advantage of the market in a way which needed little investment of money and manpower.39

For these reasons, Richard Herr has written:

After Ferdinand and Isabel brought order to Castile, the clergy and aristocracy no longer posed a direct threat to the crown, but the kings did little to reduce the wealth of these groups or the income they obtained from the commoners over whom the crown had given them seigneurial jurisdiction.40

Admittedly, the nobility was no longer classically feudal, in a political sense; however, its socio-economic strength unchallenged - if

38 The importance of enclosures appears even more significant if we recall the role of enclosures in the development of capitalist agriculture in Britain. On capitalist agricultural development in Britain, see R.H. Tawney, The Agrarian Problem in the Sixteenth Century (London: Longmans, 1912).


not increased - the harnessing of the nobility might better be called an association than a subjection. Perhaps the transition can be termed one of feudal-seigneurialism to aristocratic-seigneurialism, i.e. reducing the nobility's political prerogatives, but assuring the perpetuation of its socio-economic power and privilege.

The peasantry of Spain could no longer be referred to as serfs in a legal sense because they were no longer bound to the land by feudal laws, i.e. they were permitted to change their residences. However, remembering that the nobility possessed 97% of the land through ownership and seigneurial jurisdiction, the words of one historian that "this freedom meant only the freedom to die of hunger," can be properly understood. The peasantry could move about, but it was merely able to move from one seigneurial estate (or jurisdiction) to another, and as Elliott points out:

> The land was worked by peasants who had probably been compelled to borrow in the first instance to secure a plot, and then found their meagre earnings drastically reduced by tithes, dues [seigneurial] and taxes. After this, it only needed one or two bad harvests to make them fall hopelessly into debt.

Thus, by the sixteenth century, the seigneurial regime had come to be based on two foundations: seigneurial jurisdictions and land-ownership. At times, the two were so closely intertwined that they became indistinguishable. The peasantry owed dues to the nobility

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41 Vicens Vives, An Economic History, p. 299.

42 Elliott, Imperial Spain, p. 115. Those two bad harvests came early in the sixteenth century - 1502 and 1509.

for the right to cultivate lands of the estates and as subjects of the seigneurial jurisdictions.

Sixteenth century seigneurialism in Spain had acquired new features, and like Spanish seigneurialism historically, it persisted because it was flexible. It remained available to successful merchants and, like a chameleon, responded to the rise of the united monarchy in the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Of course, one historian has admitted: "To break this power [the seigneurial lords'] would have been a formidable task and it could hardly be done in a single generation."^44

Where was the Spanish bourgeoisie during these crucial years of the rise of the united monarchy and the development of a united Spain? Richard Herr has written: "Most lacking of all was a middle class engaged in commerce and manufacture."^45 And another historian wrote:

It was undoubtedly because of this pervasive seigneurial economy that Castile did not succeed in creating industry... This inability to create an industry was reflected in the social order. There was no bourgeoisie conscious of itself as a class which might oppose the nobility.^46

There have been recent attempts to counter this view of the absence of a bourgeoisie lacking in class consciousness,^47 however, debate continues over whether the Comunero movements of 1520-21 were urban attempts to maintain their medieval privileges, or social

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^45Herr, An Historical Essay, p. 47.


movements of a revolutionary nature against the persistent seigneurialism which inhibited the development of capitalism. In any case, the movements failed, and as Marx recognized:

While the aristocracy drowned in decadence without losing its most noxious privileges, the cities lost their medieval privileges without gaining modern power.48

The Crown's policy towards the nascent bourgeoisie and the merchant class had already manifested itself prior to the Comunero uprisings. During the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella, the monarchy's policy was to favor, if not instigate, the establishment of guilds amongst the producing groups, and consulates for the merchants. More for the purpose of regulation than protection, its effect on the development of capitalism and the rise and spread of industry in Spain was negative. In the words of the economic historian, Vicens Vives:

At the end of the 15th and beginning of the 16th centuries, just at the moment when all Europe was starting to break loose from the guild, Ferdinand the Catholic put the corporative strait-jacket on the Castilians.49

The definitional level of the social formation has been posited as the social relations of production. However, of major significance are the ideology, culture and social psychology of the respective classes comprising the Spanish social structure and economy for the way in which they help to shape the relations between the social classes and to support or reject the rule of the dominant class. As Irving Zeitlin has written:


Weber's work must not be read as a repudiation of Marx's methodological principles, but rather as a 'rounding out' and supplementing of his method.\(^{50}\)

Spanish nobles based their wealth, privilege, power and prestige on mayorazgos and señoríos. Did the bourgeoisie, which in sixteenth century Spain was the merchant class and a number of petty industrialists, reject these symbols? On the contrary, what Fernand Braudel calls the "treason of the bourgeoisie"\(^{51}\) and Ruth Pike "this passion for hidalguía"\(^{52}\) was the bourgeoisie's eagerness to enter the aristocracy by purchasing estates, creating mayorazgos, and securing seigneurial jurisdictions, both for economic reasons and for the social prestige they provided.

John Lynch explains that the absence of a middle class in Spain could be attributed to the social prejudice against trade and the odium attached to business and manual work - "el deshonor de trabajo."\(^{53}\)

These prejudices were probably associated with the prejudices against Moors and Jews who were associated with crafts, manual labor and trade. Lynch adds that:

The mania for aristocratic status need not have been damaging to Spanish society and economy if the newly ennobled, like those of the English


gentry who came from merchant backgrounds had remained faithful to business. But it produced a contempt for trade and restless anxiety to join the aristocracy which were ruinous for Spain and her people. 54

The supremacy of the nobility, based on the seigneurial regime it had succeeded in maintaining, was not rejected by the merchant class and nascent bourgeoisie. The flexibility of seigneurialism meant, in part, the failure of the bourgeoisie to overcome it. Eric Hobsbawm, comparing Spanish historical development to that of the rest of Europe, stated:

Spain is different. Capitalism has persistently failed in that country and so has social revolution, in spite of its constant imminence and occasional eruption. The problems of Spain rise out of its failures, not the successes, of the past. 55

The failure of the Spanish bourgeoisie meant failure for the Spanish peasantry, which remained subject to seigneurial jurisdictions and dependent on the nobles' mayorazgos for land and laboring. The seigneurial regime, with the subjection of the peasantry to the burdensome 'tithes, due and taxes' and the entailment of landed estates in mayorazgos, prevented the development of capitalism and the rise of industry in Spain. One historian, in his study of rural sixteenth century Spain, has recognized the problem:

It isn't strange. The 16th century has on its stage two contradictory ages: that of feudal


economy, and that of capitalist economy. But the passage to the second age...was not to be effected completely until the radical destruction of the feudal landholding and the liberation of the peasantry from seigneurial laws and dues and ecclesiastical tithes, transforming them into independent producers and consumers.56

The discovery, conquest and exploitation of American wealth did not instigate and generate the further development of capitalism in Spain, even though it appears to have stimulated its further growth in other parts of Europe. The gold, silver, dyes and other resources provided by America could not change the Spanish social structure and economy; it could merely act upon the structure which was in the process of taking shape. And that structure was seigneurial.

Spanish society persisted in its seigneurial mold into the eighteenth century. The movement from basing one's power, wealth and prestige on seigneurial jurisdictions to basing it on mayorazgos and a dependent peasant labor force had continued,57 however, the seigneurial jurisdictions were still significant.58

There was an attempt at modernization in the eighteenth century when the Bourbons replaced the Hapsburgs on the throne of Spain;


58 Richard Herr, The Eighteenth Century Revolution in Spain (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1958), pp. 89-102. In fact, Herr points out that in many cases señorío and mayorazgo, because they became intertwined on a local basis, almost became indistinguishable (p. 95). He also points out that the Church was a major landholder and holder of señoríos. The ecclesiastical version of mayorazgo was mortmain, which meant the land could never be alienated.
however:

The changes in the classical agricultural structure of Spain between 1750 and 1850 were achieved by a rearrangement of the traditional economy, by its expansion in space, but not by any fundamental change.59

The transition to capitalism and the elimination of seigneurialism in Spain finally came in the mid-nineteenth century, following the independence of Spanish America.60 And yet, social structures seem to leave legacies, depending on how they are transformed. The legacy of Spanish seigneurialism was the latifundia.61

The Spanish seigneurial legacy also made its impact on America, and has persisted there longer - molded to the conquest, colonization and particular development of the Spanish American societies.

Pierre Vilar, the French historian, playing on the words of Lenin,62 has termed the expansion of Spain into America and imperialism in Europe as the supreme stage of feudalism, and he has written:

In so far as it instituted the world market and in so far as it permitted the primitive accumulation of capital, by pouring cheap silver into Europe, the Spanish Conquest founded a new society. Such a society, however, could only develop with increased productive forces and with new social relationships. This is what was to come about in northern Europe. In


60Some historians link the rising of the bourgeoisie in Spain with the crisis of the loss of the colonies. On this, and on the transition from seigneurialism to capitalism in Spain, see Josep Fontana, Cambio económico y actitudes políticos en la España del siglo XIX (Barcelona: Editorial Ariel, 1973). Also interesting is Marx and Engels, La Revolución en España.

61Carr, Spain, and Malefakis, Agrarian Reform.

Spain, on the other hand or rather in Castile, the ruling classes managed the Conquest as they had the *Reconquista*, namely in the feudal manner. To occupy land, subjugate the inhabitants, and carry off their riches was in no way to prepare for investment in the capitalist sense.\(^{63}\)

CHAPTER III

COLONIAL DEVELOPMENT IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

Andre Gunder Frank, eager to prove that the conquest of America by the Spanish was a capitalist enterprise, has quoted Christopher Columbus: "The best thing in the world is gold...it can even send souls to heaven," and Hernan Cortés: "The Spaniards are troubled with a disease of the heart for which gold is the specific remedy," as evidence for his thesis.¹

There is no denying the role of economic motivations in the conquest of the New World; however, even Weber recognized that greed alone is not the source of the 'capitalist spirit' when he wrote:

Traditional obstructions are not overcome by the economic impulse alone. The notion that our rationalistic and capitalistic age is characterized by a stronger economic interest than other periods is childish; the moving spirits of modern capitalism are not possessed of a stronger economic motive than, for example, an oriental trader. The unchaining of the economic interest merely as such has produced only irrational results; such men as Cortez and Pizarro, who were perhaps its strongest embodiment, were far from having an idea of a rationalistic economic life. If the economic impulse itself is universal, it is an interesting question as to the relations under which it becomes rationalized and rationally tempered in such fashion as to produce rational institutions of the character of a capitalist enterprise.²

If Iberian-Spanish society at the time of the conquest of America

¹Andre Gunder Frank, Capitalism and Underdevelopment, p. 310.

²Max Weber, General Economic History (New York: Collier Books,
was seigneurial, although shaped by a developed commerce and an increasingly absolute monarchy, then the regime which the Spanish colonizers would seek to establish might also be expected to be seigneurial.\(^3\) One historian, in his study of the early colonial period in Spanish America, commented:

> Anthropologists have made us familiar with the stubbornness with which people cling to their cultural patterns. The Spaniards who carried out the conquest brought with them the accumulated social habits of centuries and never relaxed in their long effort to impose them upon the indigenous population of America.\(^4\)

At the same time, the Spanish conquest and colonization of America, even if possessed with the seigneurial idea and the intention of recreating seigneurial relations of production in the new lands and amongst the colonized peoples, would be subject to the limitations generated in the encounter with the conquered societies. Eugene Genovese pointed out that:

> A ruling class does not grow up simply according to the tendencies inherent in its relationship to the means of production; it grows up in relationship to the specific class or classes it rules.\(^5\)

Because the Spanish conquistadors and colonizers recognized themselves as subject to the Crown and Church of Spain they would also

1961), p. 261. Elsewhere, he wrote that capitalism rested on the expectation of profit from peaceful exchange, which Spain's entry into America was never accused of being.

\(^3\)Unless, of course, the Spaniards who conquered and colonized Spanish America were refugees or utopianists eager to create a new society but, except for rare instances, this was not the case.


encounter obstacles to their seigneurial ambition from those paramount institutions.

**Eastern Europe's Second Serfdom**

It has been noted by historians and sociologists that the "long sixteenth century," from 1450 to 1650, was characterized by the decline of feudalism in Western Europe, the intensification of serfdom in Eastern Europe, and the creation of Iberian overseas empires. Of historico-comparative significance is the simultaneous weakening of seigneurialism in Western Europe and its intensification in Eastern Europe; and, as it will be argued, its rise in colonial Spanish America.

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8 It is only recently that attention has focused on this possibility for historico-comparative analysis, i.e. comparative analysis made within an historically unified framework. A Polish historian has commented, with reference to the potential for comparison of Eastern and Western Europe: "It seems astonishing that both of these processes, which took place at the same time are usually analyzed separately." Jerzy Topolski, "Manorial Serf Economy in Central and Eastern Europe in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," in Agricultural History, vol. 47, no. 3 (July 1974), pp. 341-352.

9 Magnus Morner noted in a recent article that attention has also finally begun to focus on the possibilities for comparing Latin America and Eastern Europe as frontiers of the Atlantic World. Morner, "Spanish American Hacienda: A Survey of Recent Research and Debate," Hispanic American Historical Review, vol. 53, no. 2 (May 1973), pp. 183-216. He cites the work of Mario Góngora, Encomenderos y estancieros: estudios acerca de la constitución social aristocrática de Chile después de la Conquista, 1580-1640 (Santiago: Universidad de Chile, 1970), and Cristóbal Kay, Comparative Development of the European Manorial System and the Latin American Hacienda System: An Approach to
Freidrich Engels initiated an historical debate when, in a letter to Karl Marx, he wrote:

I consider the view expounded here [referring to an article by someone else which he was enclosing] regarding the conditions of the peasantry in the Middle Ages and the rise of a second serfdom after the middle of the fifteenth century as on the whole incontrovertible.10

The criticism of Engels, and the debate which was generated, arose over his denotation of the developments in Eastern Europe during the period under discussion as "serfdom." It was argued that serfdom could only refer to the Middle Ages in Europe. However, Engels' response— which seems highly descriptive of Latin America— was:

It is certain that serfdom and bondage are not a peculiarly medieval-feudal form, we find them everywhere, or nearly everywhere, where conquerors have the land cultivated for them by the conquerors have the land cultivated for them by the old inhabitants.11

Engels termed the resurgence of Eastern European serfdom the "second serfdom" because the resurgence followed upon a period of declining seigneurialism, in which capitalist farming had begun to develop:

...in the midst of the feudal system, e.g. paid employment of the poorer villagers and of day-laborers, especially on lands rented by wealthy

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11 Engels to Marx, December 22, 1822, Ibid., p. 148. Perhaps the disagreement over terminology is due to Marx and Engels' being historical sociologists concerned with comparative analysis, rather than strictly historians.
peasants. 12

The original theory proposed to explain the return of serfdom and the manorial structure has been termed the "military theory." It stated that the nobility began to take a more active interest in the rural economy in the late Middle Ages because the changing nature of warfare displaced them from the army; thus, they increased their demands on the peasantry. 13

Comparatively, it might be argued that the same process took place in the New World, i.e. the conquest completed, and rapid plundering no longer possible, the Spanish 'nobles' settled into seigneurial relations with the Indians to take advantage of less immediate wealth. However, the military theory has been proven inadequate for Eastern Europe, and although extremely descriptive for the immediate aftermath of the conquest in America, it is incomplete for later colonial development.

There were other theories proposed, but recently two theories have been favored for their explanatory powers, the "market theory" and the "political theory." 14

The market theory emphasizes the expanding export opportunities in Western Europe resulting from the economic development and population growth taking place in those countries. Thus, it is argued, the nobility began to take advantage of the market opportunities by


13 See Jerzy Topolski, "Manorial Serf Economy," for references to works in East European languages.

14 Ibid., pp. 342-343.
demanding increased labor services and eventually proceeding to expand the size of the demesne.

The political theory, on the other hand, emphasizes the significance of the strong political position of the East European nobility and argues that, by virtue of this power, it was able to further subject the peasantry to seigneurialism, having the state legitimate its actions. Jerome Blum wrote:

> Among the factors which were present in all of the Eastern European lands was the acquisition by the nobles of political power in the state, which enabled them to reduce the peasants on their manors to a position of dependence on them.15

Blum's emphasis on the factor of political power may be due to the inclusion of Russia in his analysis. Russia also experienced a renewal of serfdom during this period, some have even claimed it was a "first" serfdom; however, Russian agriculture was not involved in the export market supplying Western Europe.

In any case, the two theories, the market and the political, are not contradictory. The market theory provides the stimulus, or instigating factor, for the nobility to demand increased dues and labor service from the peasantry and its heightened interest in demesne production. At the same time, the nobility's ability to intensify its demands on the peasantry was based on its political domination of the state and the relative weakness of a bourgeoisie to effectively oppose it.

The intensification of serfdom characteristic of Eastern

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European lands in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was not a sudden and total reversal of the trend towards capitalist agriculture. During the fifteenth century, a period of gradual revival following the crisis of the fourteenth, the nobles of Eastern Europe closest to the trade routes - particularly the Baltic - recognized the commercial opportunity of exporting grains to the west. Thus, in great part due to its geographic location, Poland began to expand its export of wheat to Holland, England and northern France early in the fifteenth century, and as the population continued to expand in the west, Poland's nobles found an ever larger market.

Following Poland's lead in the export market, and responding to the rising demand for grain in the west, the nobilities of other East European countries took a more active interest in the rural economy and their seigneurial holdings and domains. In Hungary, the nobility's commercialization occurred in three phases. First, the lords increasingly demanded payment from their peasantry in kind, rather than in money. In this way, the lords secured a stronger hold on the market early in the sixteenth century. In the second phase, the nobility moved into the livestock trade, still leaving the production aspects intact. This commercial activity also began early in the century, but did not become significant until the middle of the century. Finally, the lords began to increase production on their demesnes. The further growth of the export market and the commercial opportunity of supplying

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the King's military forces on the frontiers instigated production expansion onto fallow land and into pasture and forests. Much of this expansion took place at the expense of the peasantry's common land. \(^{18}\) "But the exploitation of land demanded the exploitation of labor;"\(^{19}\) thus, it was necessary to intensify labor inputs - which meant increasing the amount of time that the peasants would have to work on the demesne:

Whereas in the years 1510-20, one day of compulsory labor was the rule, according to the laws of 1514, and this in fact was not enforced, by the middle of the century the situation was very different.\(^{20}\)

Similar patterns took place throughout Eastern Europe; on Bohemia one historian has written:

During the sixteenth century the lords began to acquire and add land to the demesne and to cultivate grain crops for income. By the second half of the sixteenth century they began to demand more robota from the peasants in order to get the increased demesne acreage tilled.\(^{21}\)

Even on the frontier of Europe with the Ottoman-Turk Empire, the economic growth of Western Europe made its impact via Eastern Europe and supported the rise of a second serfdom.\(^{22}\)

The export market stimulated the interest of the nobility in


\(^{19}\)Elliott, Europe Divided, p. 45.


\(^{21}\)William E. Wright, Serf, Seigneur and Sovereign: Agrarian Reform in Eighteenth Century Bohemia (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1966), p. 9. Robota is similar to corvée, i.e. compulsory labor by the peasantry.

rural economy, but it was the weakness of the opposition which enabled the lords to proceed with the second serfdom.

There is little disagreement with the following comment of J.H. Elliott:

The nobles of the West, while still immensely powerful, had seen their seigneurial jurisdiction eroded by the advance of royal justice; and although they had managed to infuse urban society with many of their own values, they nonetheless found themselves competing with their social inferiors, whether gentry or townsfolk, for the effective control of power in a monarchical state. The magnates of the East, on the other hand, had little competition to fear. With kings and towns alike too weak to contest their authority, they dominated an overwhelming agrarian society, in which their economic predominance as great landowners was backed up by the exclusive rights over the serfs on their estates.23

Thus, Eastern Europe was similar to Spain in that the strength of the seigneurs persisted; however, in Eastern Europe there was even less question that it had increased. The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries experienced the rise of absolutism,24 however, this did not always signify the decline of the nobility:

In Eastern Europe, where there was no powerful middle class to set against the nobles, the rulers secured the nobles' loyalty by granting to them greater powers over their serfs, a concession which in no way weakened the crown.25

With an association between the monarchy and the nobility, which has been referred to as a "feudal state," the weak bourgeoisie lost

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23Elliott, Europe Divided, p. 46.

24Except for England and Poland.

further ground in Eastern Europe. The more active the nobility became in the export market, the more it discovered that it was possible to deal directly with long-distance merchants from Western Europe, rather than through local, domestic merchants. And through this trade the nobility found it could acquire the luxury and manufactured goods which it desired at advantageous prices.

Finally, the intensification of serfdom limited the peasantry's participation in the market as consumers and/or potential laborers for capitalist industry, while in Western Europe the peasantry was becoming free for capitalist-industrial development. The significance of the peasantry's bondage was recognized by Engels when he wrote:

The general reintroduction of serfdom was one of the reasons why no industry could develop in Germany in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

and more recently by Alexander Gerschenkron: "Emancipation of the peasants, despite its manifold deficiencies, was an absolute prerequisite for industrialization."

By the end of the sixteenth century, the second serfdom characterized Eastern European rural life (or society, as they were agrarian societies). Attracted by the profitable opportunities of the export market, the lords injected themselves into commercial activities,
demanded increased dues and labor services, and began expanding the size of the demesne at the expense of the pastures, forests, and, eventually, peasant holdings.  

During the seventeenth century, the European world economy experienced a severe crisis, and in the midst of the crisis religious warfare and peasant uprisings occurred. As a result of the crisis in the European economy, the market for East European grains declined in the west, although it did not experience a total collapse. The response to the crisis in the market by the East European nobility was to demand still further increases in the dues and services owed by the peasant-serfs; in order to maintain the income level they had achieved previously. One study of the crisis argues that the East European nobility was in a position of international debt bondage to West European merchants; therefore, to meet their obligations they had to increase pressure on the peasantry.

The trend towards the renewal of serfdom thus continued in the midst of the crisis. The nobility was also able to increase its labor supply through manorial expansion at the expense of increasingly impoverished free peasantry. When crises forced the peasant to borrow, by necessity the lending agent was the local lord - further crises and

30 i.e. the lords altered the rural economy from Grundherrschaft to Gutsherrschaft.


32 Henry Kamen, The Iron Century: Social Change in Europe, 1550-1660 (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1971), pp. 223-228. Kamen terms the East European nobility "feudal-capitalists" because they were profit-oriented, but their profit seeking was based on the "feudal mode of production," i.e. serfdom.

indebtedness forced the free peasant to sell his land to the lord and become a peasant of the estate, which meant that the peasant had become enserfed: "Indebtedness of an impoverished peasantry became one of the essential factors in the evolution of serfdom." 34

At the same time, it must be recognized that seigneurial social relations and the serf's relation to the lord did provide the peasant with some security:

For all this subjection to his lord the serf did enjoy, according to the customs of the land, at least assurance of aid in times of emergency and great need. In time of famine the lord was required to distribute food from the community stores and procure seed for the next sowing. If the serf should have his house, tools or animals destroyed by fire or natural disaster, the lord was to stand ready to lend materials, tools or animals to replace losses. 35

Eastern European serfdom persisted in the eighteenth century, if it was not actually intensified, and was not finally eliminated until well into the nineteenth century. In contrasting the status of the peasantry in Eastern Europe with that of the peasantry in the west, which was experiencing further declines of serfdom in the eighteenth century, George Rudé wrote:

East of the Elbe, however, the issue was not so much one of occasional services and obligations as one of a continuous and almost total lack of freedom, varying from personal bondage in the form of serfdom to the status of a domain or household chattel. One or other of these conditions was general in Brandenburg, Prussia, in Poland, Russia and in large parts of the Austrian Empire...there were of course exceptions...[and yet] in most of

34Kamen, The Iron Century, p. 216.

35Wrights, Serf, Seigneur, p. 18. He adds: "However, this was small compensation...for the many indignities and aggravations that the serf suffered at the hands of his seigneur."
these countries serfdom was extending and not contracting and the remaining pockets of freedom were being gradually mopped up.36

The Development of Spanish American Seigneurialism

The bourgeoisie, by the rapid improvement of all instruments of production, by the immensely facilitated means of communication, draws all, even the most barbarian, nations into civilization. The cheap prices of its commodities are the heavy artillery with which it batters down all Chinese walls, with which it forces the barbarians' intensely obstinate hatred of foreigners to capitulate. It compels all nations, on pain of extinction, to adopt the bourgeois mode of production; it compels them to introduce what it calls civilization into their midst, i.e. to become bourgeois themselves. In one word, it creates a world after its own image.37

The analogy stated by Pierre Vilar (using Lenin's "imperialism - the highest stage of capitalism") that "Spanish imperialism was the highest stage of feudalism," can be extended to enhance the analysis of the Spanish conquest and colonization of America. Marx's proposition that the bourgeoisie "creates a world after its own image," might be restated for the conquest of America as: "the seigneurs created a world after their own image." In similar fashion, it has been written:

Spaniards going to the New World left a society of landholding aristocrats, a small bureaucracy, a few townsmen and a mass of peasants and estate laborers. It was logical that they refuse to create family farms in the colonial world where there existed huge expanses of land and a large population of skilled, subservient Amerindian agriculturists.38


37Karl Marx, The Communist Manifesto, pp. 12-13. Also, see Marx, Karl Marx on Colonialism and Modernization, ed. Shlomo Avineri (Garden City: Doubleday and Co., 1968). Marx's use of the word "barbarian" is merely evidence of his own historically situated life.

38Stein and Stein, The Colonial Heritage, pp. 36-37.
What was the nature of the societies which the Spanish, and Iberian seigneurialism, encountered and subjected to their domination, eventually leading to the formation and development of Spanish American societies?

The most significant peoples whom the Spanish encountered in the New World were the Aztec, the Maya, and the Inca. The Aztec and the Maya shared the culture area referred to as Mesoamerica and the Inca dominated the Andean culture area.39

Although not exactly alike, there were strong similarities in the social organization of these peoples. At the time of the Spanish arrival in America, each of these peoples had developed into class societies. By the sixteenth century, the Maya were reduced to a state of civil wars between feuding city-states, while the Aztecs and the Inca had succeeded in creating extensive empires.

These three societies were agrarian, with the overwhelming percentage of their populations being peasant. The ruling nobilities of each consisted of warriors and priests; there also existed state and religious bureaucracies, and merchant and artisan classes.

The ruling classes, and the state and religious apparati, were supported by the peasantry, who secured access to the land through their membership in the clans: the Aztec calpulli, the Mayan patrilineal protection societies, and the Incan ayllu.40 There were Land


40 Vaillant, pp. 122-134; Coe, pp. 168-172; Mason, pp. 174-179.
tenure customs unique to each clan-system; however, the general form was that of communal landownership with individual family usufruct.41

The peasants' support of their respective ruling classes had, historically, been in the form of tribute, either a share of the communal harvest, as in Mesoamerica; or communal labor on special lands of the community, the harvest of which supported the rulers, as in the Andes.42

All three societies appear to have developed several forms of slavery: selling oneself or one's child, criminals bound to their victim or the victim's family, war captives, etc. However, slavery remained of secondary importance to their economies and in their social structure (in comparison with the predominating tribute systems).43

Besides the tribute in kind, which the peasantry supplied to support the ruling classes, there were also compulsory labor systems to construct and maintain imperial and communal projects. Referred to as coatequil amongst the Aztecs and mita amongst the Inca, the compulsory labor systems were also based on the community. Thus, historically, the most advanced civilizations of pre-Columbian America were founded on tributary relations, based on a peasant community.

And yet, a significant change was occurring in the imperial societies of pre-conquest America. In the period prior to the arrival

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of the Spanish, there emerged relations of serfdom alongside the tributary systems which prevailed.

In the fifteenth century, the Aztecs had increased in strength and through military conquest extended their domain from the valley of Mexico throughout the central highlands and beyond. The rise and expansion of the Aztecs meant greater power and prestige for the warrior-nobility, which demanded greater rewards in the form of land and labor. Thus, they acquired private landholdings amongst the conquered peoples and the Aztecs themselves. Through two methods the nobility acquired a labor force to cultivate its estates. One method was to use the labor tribute of the vanquished. The other method was to enserf landless peasants. Increasingly, the lands of the calpulli had become inadequate for the members of the clan. In order to secure land to cultivate, a peasant would leave the community and request land from a noble. Having left the community, the peasant lost membership in the calpulli, and the protection it provided. And by moving onto the land of the noble, the peasant became enserfed. The growing numbers of enserfed peasantry were called mayeque.

The Inca experienced a similar development early in the sixteenth century, also related to imperial expansion. The Inca nobility, as a reward for their service in the conquests and imperialist expansion,

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were granted landholdings in the core of the empire. These landholdings came to be worked by a group of peasants called yanacona. The origin of these peasant-serfs were the tribes which had rebelled against the empire. Their punishment was the alienation of their lands, which were distributed amongst the Inca nobility; with the formerly rebellious peasants attached as serfs, or yanacona.  

Another source of yanacona was the Inca ayllu. Member families would send individual family members to the nobles as "bondsmen." They would either work the land, or they might serve the noble in a more responsible capacity. The yanacona could be exchanged later for another family member.

Thus, the Spanish conquerors and colonizers were not only to encounter primitive societies, as in some regions of the New World, but also class structured societies, based on tributary systems and developing seigneurial relations.

The competition, and developing conflict, between the tribute relations based on the community-clan systems and the emerging seigneurialism based on landholding and the noble-serf relationship were not dissimilar to the social conflict which was taking place in Iberia. In Spain, the crown was seeking to reduce the nobility's seigneurial control over the peasantry and to limit the seigneurial relations to tribute. At the same time, the nobility was transforming the base of its seigneurial power from merely feudal jurisdictions to power based on both mayorazgos (entailed land systems) and feudal-seigneurial

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In America, the Spanish crown was to attempt to prevent the formation and development of seigneurial regimes by favoring the creation of tribute systems, or the adaptation of pre-existing tribute relations, based on the Indian community; while the nascent aristocracy of conquerors and colonizers sought to develop seigneurial societies which stood in opposition to the Indian Community. Thus, the pre-conquest competition between communal tributary and seigneurial systems, which had been developing in unique, but not dissimilar forms, in both America and Iberia, was recast in colonial Spanish America as a struggle between the tribute paying Indian peasant community, supported by the crown and the Church, and the new nobility of conquerors and colonizers. The major struggle in colonial Spanish America was not between a developing capitalism and a persistent seigneurialism but between a developing seigneurialism and a persistent Indian community. In fact, the historical development of rural Spanish America up to the twentieth century can be viewed, in great part, in terms of this struggle.

The political conflict between the crown and the colonizers emerged rapidly in the immediate expansion and colonization of the Caribbean. The Spanish, having developed imperialist practices in the later Reconquista and the original overseas expansion in the Atlantic, had already established the institutional precedents to be applied in the conquest of the New World. Thus, the Spanish conquerors expected

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49Robert S. Chamberlain, "Celtian Backgrounds of the Repartimiento-Encomienda," *Contributions to American Anthropology and History,*
and received from their leaders grants of Indian labor and tribute with which to mine for precious metals and support themselves.\textsuperscript{50}

These grants of Indian labor and tribute, or \textit{encomiendas},\textsuperscript{51} were accepted by the crown as a temporary arrangement, and in any case preferable to the enslavement of the Indians. However, the struggle between the colonizers and the crown was inherent in the encomienda as it was structured. And yet, the issue of whether the encomienda was to be a permanent, hereditary grant or merely temporary, was not to be resolved in the Caribbean, because the major impact of the Spanish conquest was the rapid decline of the Indian population.\textsuperscript{52} The decreasing Indian numbers and the colonizers' critical labor shortage led to the enslavement of the Indians on islands still being conquered (the crown accepted the enslavement of Indians who refused to accept domination and Christianization) and eventually, due to the continued decline, the colonizers resorted to the African slave trade which the Portuguese had established to supply southern Iberian and Mediterranean estates.\textsuperscript{53} Thus, the struggle between the colonizers and the crown

\textsuperscript{50}For a description of the discovery, conquest and exploitation of the Caribbean, see Carl O. Sauer, \textit{The Early Spanish Main} (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966).


\textsuperscript{52}For example, on the island of Hispaniola, the indigenous population suffered the following decline: 1490 - 1,000,000; 1508 - 60,000; 1554 - 30,000; 1570 - 500. From Roland Mellafe, \textit{Breve historia de la esclavitud en América Latina}, Seq Setentas no. 115 (Mexico: Secretaría de Educación Pública, 1973), p. 22.

was unresolved, while the Caribbean became a region of African slaves and European masters. The crown did not intend to permit the extension of the encomienda to the mainland of the New World. It insisted that the Indians were free vassals and could neither be enslaved nor enserfed (which was not to state that they did not owe tribute to the crown). Lesley Byrd Simpson has rightly argued that the crown did not intend to permit the rise of a New World nobility when it was just beginning to tame the Old World nobility. However, the ambitions of the conquerors and colonizers demanded the labor of Indians for the mines, and their tribute to supply produce to maintain and support them. In the process of the conquest and colonization of Mexico, Central and South America, the Spanish conquistadors continued to establish and grant encomiendas to themselves and their followers.

The crown's response to events in America was to insist that the encomienda was a temporary arrangement, emphasizing that it merely represented the crown's temporarily granting its own privilege to receive tribute from the Indian community to the conqueror, as a reward for his services in the conquest. The encomienda, as originally structured, granted the holder the right to receive tribute from designated Indian communities, in kind or in labor service. The encomendero, on his part, was expected to protect the Indians in his

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55 Simpson, *The Encomienda*.

charge and to provide for their Christianization.\textsuperscript{57}

Originally, it was believed that the encomienda also entitled its holder to the lands of the Indians; however, legal historians have adequately proven that no juridical link existed between the encomienda and the later development of the landed estate.\textsuperscript{58} Nevertheless, their evidence that no juridical link existed does not mean that no functional relationship existed.

The struggle between the crown and the Spanish colonizers was inherent in the encomienda system. Was the encomienda to serve as a temporary arrangement giving way to a tributary relationship between the Indian community and the crown, or was it to serve as the basis for the development of a new seigneurial society dominated by the Spanish colonizers? In part, the crown was right, the encomienda was to be temporary, not only because of the crown's opposition to it, but more so as a result of the changes involved in the formation of the Spanish American societies.

In the early stages of conquest and colonization, the encomienda was able to serve the needs of the colonizers,\textsuperscript{59} but, due to the repetition of the Caribbean tragedy on the mainland, i.e. the Indian population's decline, while the Spanish population and demands were increasing, the encomienda was to be an inadequate method of supporting

\textsuperscript{57}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{58}Silvio Zavala, \textit{De encomiendas y propiedad territorial en algunas regiones de la América española} (Mexico: Antigua Librería Robredo-Porrúa, 1940).

the nascent colonial nobility.

The process whereby the conflict inherent in the encomienda emerged as the struggle between the developing seigneurial hacienda and the tribute paying Indian community held in corregimiento (encomiendas which were held directly by the crown) is comparable to the rise of the second serfdom in Eastern Europe. As in Eastern Europe, the intensification of the latent seigneurial structure was to be instigated by the expanding market opportunities available to the dominant class, or nascent nobility in the case of Spanish America. Although it appears that the first wave of conquerors was not necessarily from the noble class (which is not to say that they did not carry the seigneurial idea with them in the conquest), nevertheless, the Spanish nobility's second sons, excluded from seigneurial inheritance in Spain as a result of the mayorazgo system, did play a significant role in the later conquests and colonizations.60

It appeared in the mid-sixteenth century as if the crown had been able to exert its authority over the seigneurial ambitions of the Spanish colonizers. In Mexico, the crown had succeeded in removing the labor service as part of the Indians' obligations to the encomendero, and the encomienda was limited to two generations, after which it reverted to the crown.61 In South America, the encomienda continued

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61 In the New Laws of 1542, labor service was abolished, but it was not possible to fully enforce this until 1549. See Simpson, The Encomienda, chapter 11, "The New Laws," pp. 123-145.
to include labor services until later in the century, and in a few regions into the seventeenth century; however, the crown was able to set certain limitations on the use of Indian labor by the colonizers. At the same time, although the encomienda was to be continually reduced in importance, it did persist as a tribute system into the eighteenth century in several parts of the empire.

However, the declining significance of the encomienda as a labor system was not due merely to a royal victory over the colonizers. The encomienda's decline should be seen in relation to the use of other, parallel, tributary and seigneurial systems. For, as the Indian population declined, absolutely and relatively to the colonizers' and mestizos' numbers, alternative methods of exploiting the Indian peasant population developed to meet the needs of the colonizers and their seigneurial ambitions.

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63 See María Isabel González Porres, "La Encomienda de indígena en Chile durante el siglo XVIII," *Historia*, vol. 5 (1966), pp. 7-103.

64 Nicolas Sánchez Albórnoz, *La Población de América Latina: desde los tiempos pre-colombinos al año 2000* (Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 1973), pp. 58-107. It has been estimated that the pre-conquest populations of Mexico and Peru were approximately 25 million and 10 million respectively, and that by 1560 they had declined to approximately 2.5 million and 1 million, respectively.

65 The internal conflict in the encomienda was recognized by Robert Keith in "Encomienda, Hacienda and Corregimiento," *Hispanic American Historical Review*, vol. 51, no. 3 (August 1971), pp. 431-446. Keith argues that the conflict was between an antifeudal crown and a capitalist colonizing class; however, it will be argued herein that the conflict was not feudalism vs. capitalism, rather that it was between the crown's intention to create a tributary system based on the Indian peasant community vs. the seigneurial ambitions of the colonizers who were not above making a profit.
Developing parallel to the encomienda and increasing in importance with the decline of the encomienda were the corregimiento and the hacienda. The corregimiento, or royal encomienda, was intended to protect the Indian community's cohesiveness against the ambitions of the colonizers and the development of the seigneurial hacienda. Thus, the struggle inherent in the encomienda system emerged in these two ways.

The corregimiento was in the charge of a royal official, rather than held privately by an encomendero. The communities of the corregimiento were still obligated to provide tribute for the crown and they were also subject to temporary corvée labor, or repartimiento, when requests for it by the colonizers were approved by the royal official. The requests for repartimiento came from mine operators, owners of obrajes (textile sweat-shops), and landowners. The Indians involved in repartimiento were to be paid salaries for their labor.

The hacienda, on the other hand, was in the early phases of its development. The crown had provided means for the establishment of towns and the distribution of lands, based on the Iberian experience, to be followed in America. Hoping to protect the Indian communities, the crown intended that the lands distributed should be worked by the Spanish themselves; however, regardless of their social origins, the

66 Gibson, Spain, pp. 143-144.

67 Repartimiento was called coatequil in Mexico and mita in Peru, showing its structural-functional continuity with pre-conquest times.

68 Gibson, Spain, p. 144.

conquerors and colonizers were imbued with the seigneurial idea, enhanced by their domination as conquerors. Thus, the holding of land also required the acquisition of a labor force.

At first, when the Spanish population was small and the encomenderos were still politically dominant, it was not uncommon for the encomendero and the landholder to be the same individual. Although the encomienda grant itself did not include landholding, neither did it forbid the encomendero to own land. Thus, the encomenderos often sought landownership near the site of the encomienda. In fact, based on evidence from various regions of the empire, one historian has concluded that:

One can say with some assurance that during the conquest period encomenderos in all the major regions of the Spanish Indies regularly owned land as private individuals and that many of their holdings were inside the limits of their own encomiendas.

And so long as the encomienda permitted labor service, the landholder, as encomendero, used his Indians to work his land.

However, as the non-encomendero Spanish population grew, it became evident that the encomienda would not be able to meet the colonizers' needs, nor their seigneurial ambitions. The decline of the encomienda, although greeted with hostility by the encomenderos, was welcomed by the non-encomendero population because it was replaced


by the corregimiento, and the repartimiento labor that it provided. Increasingly, Spanish landowners utilized repartimiento labor.\textsuperscript{72}

With the continued growth in the non-Indian population and the expansion of markets in the Spanish mining and administrative centers, the demand for labor in agriculture continued to increase. The Indian-peasant population was declining rapidly. Thus, while the Indian labor force was declining, the demands upon it were increasing: for the mines, for public works projects, and for the agricultural lands which supplied them.

The several sectors calling upon the repartimiento as a labor supply (mining, obrajes, the colonial administration, and agriculture) were, in effect, competing with each other for the Indians. In a system based on compulsory labor, this situation does not necessarily benefit the laborer. Instead, the colonizers were able to have the amount of repartimiento which was required of each community increased.\textsuperscript{73} The competition for labor became so intense, according to one historian, that:

Spaniards sequestered laborers, beat them, refused to pay them, seized their food and clothing to prevent escape, and undertook to acquire private native workers outside the draft... The repartimiento system of the late sixteenth century was everywhere one of compulsion and abuse.\textsuperscript{74}

The landowners, eager to take advantage of the commercial opportunities available by supplying the population centers with


\textsuperscript{73}Ibid., (Gibson), p. 230, and Rowe, "The Incas Under Spanish," pp. 170-175.

\textsuperscript{74}Ibid., (Gibson), p. 233.
agricultural produce, sought a more readily available labor force than that of the repartimiento. The precedent for debt peonage already existed to a certain extent in Spain and had appeared in the New World as a means to secure a labor force for the obrajes. The obrajes had been in competition for repartimiento labor with the mines and agriculture, but they had also acquired labor by "buying" criminals from the courts, who would then work for a stipulated period in the obraje. The obraje operators turned to debt peonage, in which they would forward a cash payment to an Indian which was to be worked off in the shop. The Indian would never be able to pay back the debt and would, thus, remain tied to the obraje. To prevent escape, the obraje operator would be sure to keep the workers chained and the doors to the obraje locked.\textsuperscript{75}

Eventually, the obraje operators turned to debt peonage, in which they would forward a cash payment to an Indian which was to be worked off in the shop. The Indian would never be able to pay back the debt and would, thus, remain tied to the obraje. To prevent escape, the obraje operator would be sure to keep the workers chained and the doors to the obraje locked.\textsuperscript{76}

The spread of debt peonage in agriculture is part of a process of circular causation which leads to the rise of the hacienda, comparable to the rise of the second serfdom in Eastern Europe. The increasing competition for the decreasing Indian labor force instigated the Spanish landowners to seek to acquire a private labor force, apart from the repartimiento. The Indians, suffering the increasing burden of repartimiento, were easily attracted by salary advances made by the landowners. The landowners demanded that their peons be excluded from the labor requirements of the community and the repartimiento draft, and were often successful in having their requests granted.\textsuperscript{77}

\textsuperscript{75}Fernando Silva Santisteban, \textit{Los Obrajes en el virreinato del Perú} (Lima: Museo Nacional de Historia, 1964), p. 37. Also, see Gibson, \textit{The Aztecs}, pp. 243-244.

\textsuperscript{76}Ibid., (Gibson), p. 245.

landowners were willing to pay the Indians' tribute in order to maintain their presence on their lands.78

The attraction of Indians to the Spanish lands became a cumulative process. The decrease in the communities' population was advanced by the continuing departure of additional Indians to the Spanish lands (peonage was preferable to working in the mines or the obrajes), which meant that even less Indians were available in the communities to meet the required, increasing demands of repartimiento. Thus, even more Indians abandoned the communities to enter into peonage arrangements with the Spanish landowners. Furthermore, the latter were eager to expand their landholdings; so the less populated Indian lands were sought and acquired through purchase, rental, encroachment, and usurpation.79 It has been noted that:

*Peonage moreover was not limited to individual Indians. Entire families and successive generations of families were drawn within the system. And through advance payments on rentals of communal lands, hacendados were able to subject whole towns to a condition of subservience and economic thralldom.*80

The elements in the growth of the hacienda, debt peonage and

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78Ibid.


80 Charles Gibson, "The Transformation of the Indian Community in New Spain, 1500-1810," *Journal of World History*, vol. 2, no. 3 (1955), p. 597. The process of seigneurialization sounds similar to that described by Marc Bloch in *Feudal Society*, vol. 1, p. 242: "The majority of peasants belonged, therefore, at one and the same time to two groups constantly out of step with each other; one of them composed of subjects with the same master, the other of members of the same village community."
land acquisition, did not go unheeded by the crown; however, royal policies were inconsistent. The crown's response to debt bondage was one of acceptance, because formally it appeared as a voluntary wage relationship which the crown favored. And yet, because it was recognized as a potentially compulsory labor relationship, the crown sought to regulate it. The same inconsistency prevailed in the crown's response to the hacienda's land acquisition. At the same time that decrees were issued seeking to protect the communities' lands, the crown carried out policies jeopardizing the Indians' landholdings, e.g. congregaciones and composiciones.

There were two major impediments to a consistent crown policy. The first was the political power of the landholders: "The wealthiest and most powerful persons in the colony - viceroys, high ranking officials, prosperous merchants, ecclesiastics..." and:

For the accumulation of such large estates, political power as well as money was required. Diego de Ibarra was Governor of New Biscay. Holders of that office generally managed to do well for themselves in land. Perhaps the process was cumulative - they first became eligible for office because they were landowners, and then authority enabled them to build up their domains.


82Congregación was the reduction or transplantation of Indian communities in order to facilitate administration, tribute collection, and Christianization. Composición was the paying of a fee to consolidate and legitimate the lands one held - which meant that "encroached upon and/or usurped lands" would be titled as belonging to the Spanish occupant. On the social-legal impact of the crown's policies, see Jose Miranda, "La Propiedad comunal de la tierra y la cohesión social de los pueblos indígenas mexicanos," Vida Colonial, pp. 56-66.

83Gibson, Spain, p. 155.
And the second was the crown's need for additional revenues. At various times, starting in 1591, the holding of composiciones took place.

Thus, as in Eastern Europe, the 'estate' was encroaching upon the peasants' lands to supply an expanding market. The absorption of Indian-peasant labor and Indian-peasant land in the sixteenth century in colonial Spanish America was not a competition between seigneurialism and capitalism, giving rise to a bourgeoisie and a rural proletariat, but a struggle between the tribute paying Indian-peasant community and the seigneurial hacienda, giving rise to a regime of aristocratic landowners, often resident in the urban centers, and serfs, resident on the hacienda and managed by overseers. The struggle was a transformation of the conquest-colonial relationship between Spaniards and Indians to a class relationship between dominant landowners and dominated peasant-serfs.

The nobility of Eastern Europe had encroached upon the labor and land of the peasantry, and had expanded demesne production, in order to exploit the commercial opportunities of the Western European grain markets. Although not so directly involved in Western European commerce as the East European nobility, the nascent "nobility" of Spanish America supplied agricultural produce to the mining centers.

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which exported precious metals to Spain - which then moved them to Western Europe in return for manufactured goods. This commercial network has been termed the European-world economy, and the crisis of the seventeenth century in the European-world economy also appears to have involved parts of the Spanish empire in America, particularly New Spain (Mexico and Central America).

The impact of the seventeenth century crisis had not reversed the trend towards a second serfdom in Eastern Europe and it even seems to have accelerated the process in many areas. In New Spain's "century of depression" and connected to the crisis, a similar acceleration in seigneurialism occurred.

There are two arguments which seek to explain the acceleration in the rise of the landed estate during the crisis. The first states that those Spaniards who possessed land (or could acquire it) moved onto their landholdings in order to take refuge there against the economic crisis; and that they managed their estates as self-sufficient manors. Thus, cumulatively the landowners sought to secure a resident labor force, through debt peonage, and a monopoly on landholding, to force additional Indians to move onto the estate. One historian has written on Central America:

Many Spaniards...abandoned the more overt commercial activities which had engaged them...
Some became hacienda owners in an impressive way and converted themselves into fair imitations of

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And others, referring to the mining dominated regions of Mexico and Peru, have written:

Miners and merchants shifted investment to land and accelerated the formation of the latifundia. Without the incentive or stimulus coming from the mines, their output of silver, labor force and dependents, the large estates tended to become relatively self-sufficient.

The second argument states that the accumulation of land and labor continued at a rapid pace because the decline in the Indian population meant declining Indian agricultural production; therefore, the seventeenth century presented even greater commercial opportunities by way of supplying the population centers. Woodrow Borah has written:

The solution to the problem of Spanish food supply lay in decreasing or eliminating direct dependence upon the enfeebled Indian communities. The most obvious solution was to extend to other essential crops the system of Spanish-owned large estates which were already raising wheat and livestock for the cities.

Amongst those social scientists defining capitalism (or its absence) on the existence (or non-existence) of a market and commercial activity, this debate is basic to the characterization of the hacienda as pre-capitalist or capitalist. However, differences in the several

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90 Borah, New Spain's Century of Depression, pp. 30-44.

91 Ibid., p. 32.

arguments might be explainable in geographical terms, because they are based on research in separate regions; e.g. Chevalier's study focused on northern Mexico, while Borah focused on central Mexico.

What is significant in these developments is not that the impact of the seventeenth century generated different responses in different regions, which can be explained as the result of differing circumstances, but rather that it generated similar responses in different regions of differing circumstances, i.e. the responses to the crisis accelerated the development of seigneurial relations in societies already in the process of seigneurialization! And, regarding the issue of commercial orientation, the following quote of Eric Wolf seems to have captured it best:

The dual nature of the hacienda - its ability to retrench in times of adverse markets, its ability to increase production if demand rose - allowed it to adapt even to conditions which differed from those that gave it birth.93

Through a monopolization on landholding, the hacendado eliminated competition and attracted impoverished Indians to settle on the estate as peons. The best land of the estate served as the demesne and the less desirable lands were provided for the peons, often their own former lands,94 in return for a specified number of days of labor service. Thus, during normal times the peons provided for themselves and their labor service provided for the demesne production, "to furnish not only returns of capital invested, but also to furnish the funds needed to feed the owner and to support his aspirations for power

94Ibid., p. 215.
and prestige." When markets improved (or were depressed) it was only necessary to increase (or decrease) the peons' required labor services, and perhaps to alter the size of the demesne as well.

The Indians' movement from their communities to the landed estates was not only the development of seigneurialism at the expense of the colonial-tribute relations, but it also furthered the rise of the uniquely American mestizo racial classification:

There is no reason to doubt that the surge of the haciendas profoundly changed the structure of the rural population and that, at the same time, it accelerated rapidly the processes of miscegenation and transculturation.

The rising numbers of mestizos were due not only to the further mixing of the Indian and European races, but also because, at a certain stage in the growth of the mestizos' numbers, the "racial" characteristics differentiating amongst Indian, mestizo, and blanco became less significant (less distinguishable?) and differentiation was increasingly class based, i.e. more a social issue than a bio-racial issue. Thus:

...at least in the rural sector, the Indian was generally the member of a community that functioned according to the hispano-Indian norms established in the Laws of the Indies. while the peons of the hacienda were becoming mestizado.

In review, the "long sixteenth century" in the Spanish Empire in


97 Ibid., p. 125.
America was a formative period. The conquest and immediate colonization of the New World was a period of plunder and the creation of colonial relations combining the institutions of expansion developed in Iberia and the tribute relations found in America. However, the decline of the Indian populations, coupled with the growth of the Spanish demands for labor service for the mines, obrasjes, public works and agricultural production, instigated a competition between the colonial-tribute system and the seigneurial ambitions of the colonizers. Increasingly, the colonizers sought to acquire private, dependent labor forces for their holdings, at the expense of the colonial-tribute system and the Indian community upon which it was based. The demands on the tribute system came to depend more and more upon reduced community populations, making the Spanish estates appear as an increasingly preferable alternative to them. Attracted by a salary advance, and land to cultivate, the Indian peasants moved onto the Spanish lands, where they became peons, tied by debt and increasing material and psychological dependence.

The haciendas' development began in the sixteenth century and the crisis of the seventeenth century accelerated its formation. And:

When the depression of the seventeenth century came to an end in the economic upswing of the eighteenth century, the hacienda, too, participated in the renewed expansion.98

Not all of the Indian communities were absorbed, or even threatened by the growth of the landed estate; however, it is during this period that the struggle between the hacienda and the community (which was always weighted in favor of the estate) took on its

98 Wolf, Sons, p. 211.
traditional character.

The formation of seigneurialism in colonial Spanish America has thus far been examined with reference to Mexico (New Spain) and Peru, particularly the former. A further example of the development of seigneurialism, which is unique but similar, is the conquest and colonization of Chile.

The conquest of Chile followed upon that of Peru. Beginning in the mid-sixteenth century, it persisted into the seventeenth (and beyond) as the frontier was pushed further south at the expense of the Indians. In a fashion similar to the subjection of the Indians of prior conquests, the native population of Chile was parceled out to the colonizers in encomiendas. The encomienda system was, thus, introduced into Chile when it had already begun its decline in the older colonial regions.

Originally, as was thought to be the case in the other developing colonial societies, the encomienda system was assumed to be the origin of the landed estate and its dependent labor force:

The land which was assigned to a conqueror was called repartimiento and the Indians who lived on it and who were also assigned to him, encomienda, because he had them in his care... and he made them work.

However, research by Mario Gongóra has clarified the

99 "Diversity in similarity, similarity in diversity," a guiding phrase in Latin American studies.


encomienda-hacienda relationship in Chile by showing that it was not only that they were equivalent but that very often the encomendero also acquired land which he succeeded in locating near his labor force - and many times within the limits of the encomienda. Thus, land and labor do appear to have been united quite often under the same colonizer.

The Indian labor force was not acquired merely through encomienda. Additional labor was brought onto the land in the form of slaves, acquired in the constant Indian wars along the southern frontier. And "the Indian slaves worked and lived together with the Indians of the encomienda, there being no more than a juridical difference."103

The encomienda system persisted longer in Chile than in the other colonial societies. Although there were attempts to eliminate it in the late sixteenth century, it was not finally shorn of the labor service until 1635 - and it remained as a tribute system until 1791.104

The persistence of the encomienda led to the assumption that the dependent peasants, the inquilinos, of the nineteenth and twentieth century Chilean estates were the descendants of the encomienda and slave Indians.105 However, recent research by Góngora argues that the

102 Mario Góngora, Encomenderos y estancieros, pp. 4-16.


inquilinos have predominantly other origins.

Following the conquest and colonization of Chile in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, the further expansion of the frontier became limited. The military forces, composed of "poor Spanish" and mestizos were, therefore, unable to fulfill their seigneurial ambitions and were forced to resort to smallholdings. The small landholdings which they secured were obtained from the large landowners in return for a stipulated annual labor service. The landowners, resident in the urban centers, used their land for cattle-ranching, and the labor service they required of their tenants involved working at round-ups and rodeos. It is amongst these poor Spanish and mestizos, as well as the Indians in encomienda and slavery, that Góngora locates the origins of the inquilinos. In the eighteenth century, the Chilean economy responded to the opportunity of exporting wheat to Peru. The landowners converted grazing land to grain cultivation and exported the wheat to Peru. In their seigneurial fashion, the landowning aristocracy did not "modernize" the social relations of production, they merely increased the labor requirements of their tenants. Market production was thus accomplished by the landed aristocracy within the seigneurial regime they had established. Góngora has written:

In sum, then, the rural tenancies from the grants to inquilinaje had nothing to do with the encomienda or the Conquest. It proceeds from the second period of colonial history.107

106 Mario Góngora, Orígen de los inquilinos en Chile central (Santiago: Universidad de Chile, 1960).

107 Ibid., p. 116.
Thus, could it not be argued that the social relations of seigneurialism, characteristic of colonial Spanish America, were not dependent merely on the privileges of conquest and racialism, but even more so on the "sociology" of Spanish society and the transplantation to America of the seigneurial idea?

The development of colonial Spanish American society and agrarian Spanish America necessarily involves mention of the church, not only as the spiritual arm of the conquest and colonization, but also because of its role as a financial, landholding and welfare institution. It has been recognized by historians that the church, through its various units and chapters, was a major source of capital in colonial society and that, as a result of the mortgages it held, tithes it collected, and exemptions it possessed, the church was able to accumulate extensive holdings. The significance of the church as an economic institution, however, was not that it furthered economic development. Rather, the church's operation might be seen as having been "in certain respects...an economic burden upon the colonies."109

Ecclesiastical holdings were acquired through four means: mercedes, purchases, estate owners' obligations to the church, and mortgages.110 Mercedes and purchases were, of course, not unique to the church; however, estate owners' obligations and the great number

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108 Haring, The Spanish Empire, pp. 176-178, and Gibson, Spain, pp. 84-85.

109 Ibid., (Haring), p. 177.

110 By estate owners' obligations is meant the practice of placing encumbrances on landholdings to provide the church with an income to carry out pious works. See J. Vicens Vives, Historia económico y social de España y América (Barcelona: Editorial Teide, 1957), vol. III, pp. 511-514.
of mortgages held by the church were the result of the church's dual role as the dominant spiritual institution and the dominant credit institution of colonial society.

The non-capitalist - if not anti-capitalist - character of the church should be evident in that the "investments" it made included not only loans and purchases, but also such economically non-productive activities as church construction, missionary work, charitable foundations, etc.: "Even when its enterprises function according to capitalist canons they are subject to extra-economic goals." Therefore, when the leading financial institution and single property owner does not operate according to the "spirit of capitalism" how can the society be termed capitalist?

At the same time that the agrarian sector of the Spanish Empire in America was developing seigneurial relations of production, other non-agrarian sectors were also developing. These other sectors included mining, merchant operations, the obrajes, and artisanry. These sectors have been termed "embryos of capitalism." An elite of the potential bourgeoisie was the class of mineowners who produced - or rather, extracted - precious metals for export to Spain. Originally, the mineowners had depended on the labor service of the colonial tribute system to recruit workers; however, although large masses of laborers were never required (relative to agriculture), the mineowners increasingly turned to other more secure methods of labor recruitment, e.g. debt bondage. Seeking to clarify the

111Samo, Historia del capitalismo, p. 115. 112Ibid., p. 15.
113See Bakewell, Silver Mining, pp. 121-129.
mining sector's relation to land and labor, one historian has written:

It must not be forgotten that the majority of the mines are small enterprises enclosed within the haciendas... Generally the systems of extraction and processing are primitive and the workers are the same peons or Indians that are occupied in agriculture.114

However, with the resurgence in mining in the eighteenth century (and the longer separation of the workers from their community origins) the system of debt bondage appears to have given way to a more voluntary system of labor recruitment in some regions. Referring to New Spain, David Brading noted:

Mexican mineworkers, far from being the oppressed peons of legend constituted a free, well-paid geographically mobile labor force... The vast majority of Mexican mineworkers, they did not number more than 45,000 individuals, worked voluntarily.115

Although a significant source of colonial wealth, the capitalist social relationship developing between the mineowners and the mineworkers remained a quantitatively limited one in the colonial social structure (relative to agrarian pursuits). The mineowners attracted laborers from the communities - both by force and by salary advances, thus they weakened village cohesiveness. However, the mineowners did not challenge the seigneurial regime which was developing. There was no need to. Their wealth and future profits did not require a large consumer market because they were based on the export of precious metals. And the mineowners' enterprises provided them with the wealth they required to purchase estates and enter the colonial aristocracy:

114 Semo, Historia del capitalismo, p. 148.

"Wealthy merchants and miners employed excess capital for the purchase of rural estates, and needy hacendados contracted marriage alliances with willing merchant and mining families."\(^{116}\)

Another motivational factor in the mineowners' land purchases was that the mineowners were rarely permitted to entail their mineholdings, thus they purchased estates in order to establish mayorazgos.\(^{117}\)

The merchant-bourgeoisie of colonial society was very similar to the mineowning elite in its ambitions and behavior; and to its commercial counterpart in Spain. Like them, the merchants of colonial Spanish America were eager to protect their wealth and to "deliver it" intact to their heirs. Thus, they too purchased estates and placed them under entailment. "Such an arrangement coincided with the wealthy merchant's usual ambition to found a noble family."\(^{118}\) Clarence Haring has commented:

Land was the principal source of riches and prestige in a society which disdained trade and industrial pursuits, and the successful miner [and merchant] invested his income in farms and haciendas. Landed property was also an indispensable requisite for the exercise of the few political rights which the colonists enjoyed. A minority of fortunate landowning Creoles lived much like their Spanish ancestors, imbued with similar aristocratic prejudices, and with similar improvidence and lack of foresight.\(^{119}\)


\(^{117}\)Parry, *The Spanish*, p. 316.  
\(^{118}\)Brading, *Miners*, p. 103.

\(^{119}\)Haring, *The Spanish Empire*, p. 241. Genovese raised a similar issue on the Hispanic social psychology when he stated: "Those who would dismiss the historical debate on the "spirit of capitalism" as mere metaphysics, might ponder the combined effects of the pre-bourgeois Luso-Hispanic ideology and psychology." *The World The Slaveholders Made*, p. 59.
Another argument explaining the limited industrial development of colonial Spanish America has been Spanish mercantilism; however, as J.H. Elliott has written, referring to imperial policy:

...it could be cogently argued that it was precisely because of the lack of any consistently pursued mercantilist policies that the country [Spain] ran into such serious economic difficulties. There was no attempt at systematic exploitation of the resources of the New World other than those of the mines, and almost nothing was done to develop in the New World an economy which might complement that of Castile. It is true that the government ordered the destruction of the newly planted Peruvian vineyards and olive groves, for fear of their competition with...the exports of Andalusia; but colonial industries were allowed to develop unchecked, and Charles V gave specific encouragement to the silk industry of New Spain although this was an obvious competition to the silk industry of Granada.120

Haring does not so readily agree with Elliott's argument of limited restrictions:

Manufacturing industries had no extensive development in the colonies, in part because the Spanish government after the period of the conquest was inclined to discourage or forbid industries which competed with the manufacturers and trade of another country.121

And yet, he adds that: "Interference by the metropolis with colonial industry, however, was never very systematic.122

These conflicting arguments of Elliott and Haring indicate an inconsistency on the part of the crown regarding the relationship between Spain and its American colonies. Genovese has offered an interpretation of mercantilism which proposes that the mercantile policy of a state be viewed with respect to the "social bases of state

120Elliott, Imperial Spain, p. 196.
121Haring, The Spanish Empire, p. 242. 122Ibid.
power"\textsuperscript{123} i.e. that because the rise of absolutism was based on differing alliances in different states, the policies of those states would have reflected their class bases. Thus, while the mercantilisms of England and Holland were linked to the alliance of the state and the bourgeoisie, the mercantilism of Spain was not. The exploitation of the mineral wealth of the colony did not go to developing capitalist industry in Spain, but rather provided the funds to support Spanish imperialism in Europe and for "shoring up the decaying hidalguia."\textsuperscript{124} The inconsistency of the crown might then be understood as having been due, perhaps, to the contradictions involved in securing immediate revenues while keeping the colonies supplied. As opposed to "mercantilism in the sense of a league between the state and the capitalist interest,"\textsuperscript{125} Spanish mercantilism was the policy of a state based on an alliance with seigneurial nobles and merchant-seigneurs.

Within the limits of Spain's inconsistent policy, or "seigneurial mercantilism," there arose a guild system patterned after the one in Spain, and a textile industry based on the obrajes.

The guilds, or gremios, organized the artisans by their crafts: "silversmiths, goldbeaters, harness and saddle makers, potters, weavers, hatters, candlemakers,"\textsuperscript{126} "shoemakers, furniture makers, glassworkers and practitioners of other crafts."\textsuperscript{127} These guilds have been noted

\textsuperscript{123}Genovese, \textit{The World The Slaveholders Made}, p. 56.


\textsuperscript{125}Weber, \textit{General Economic History}, p. 257.

\textsuperscript{126}Haring, \textit{The Spanish Empire}, p. 252.  \textsuperscript{127}Gibson, \textit{Spain}, p. 127.
for their anti-capitalist orientation:

The small artisanal producer understands that his interests demand the preservation of his monopo­
listic position and for that reason he mobilizes his forces and those of the guild to prevent competi­tion. 128

Economically considered, the guilds were anti­
capitalist institutions because . . . the spirit of enterprise and individual initiative were absent . . . the members of the guilds were unable to invest in their businesses as potential indus­
trialists because the guild structure impeded it. 129

On the other hand, the obrajes represented a nascent capitalism developing in the midst of the seigneurial society and colonial economy. However, the obrajes were opposed by the guilds, 130 inhibited by the Atlantic trade which continued to supply the colonies with the manufactures desired by the dominant classes, and limited in its development by the limited size of the colonial market. Furthermore, the qualification of the obraje as nascent - or embryonic - capitalism is essential to an appreciation of it. Its origins depended on compul­sory labor service and debt bondage; and even in the late eighteenth and very early nineteenth centuries the relations of production between the obraje owners and their labor force were not very far removed from those origins. 131 Writing in the last few years of the

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On Peru, see Gustavo Adolfo Otero, La Vida social en el coloniaje (La Paz: Editorial Juventud, 1958), pp. 280-281.

130Ibid., (Carrera Stampa), p. 266.

131Diego G. López Rosada, Historia y pensamiento económico de México (Mexico: Instituto de Investigación Económica, Universidad Nacional, 1969), pp. 224-230; Fernando Silva Santisteban, Los Obrajes
colonial period, Alexander von Humboldt described the laboring situation of the obrajes:

Free men, Indians and men of color are confused with galley slaves whom the courts distribute to the shops to make them work... Each shop appears more or less like a jail; the doors, which are double, are always locked to prevent the workers from leaving, and those that are married only return home on Sundays. These obraje owners are like those of Quito and are similar to hacendados in their behavior.132

The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in the historical development of Spanish America were a formative period, in which the Spanish conquerors and colonizers sought to establish relations of production with the conquered peoples similar to those which existed in Spain. In spite of the inconsistent opposition of the crown and clergy, and the varying resistance of the Indian communities, the Spanish colonizers were extremely successful in establishing seigneurial relations in the New World. Thus, the colonial system in Spanish America was being transformed into a colonial society founded on the class relations of dominant landowners and dominated peasantry. The reforms of the eighteenth century did little to alter the direction of this process.133

The Spanish colonial system was based primarily on the

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exploitation of precious metals and the monopolization of imperial commerce by Spain - which served the function of the "merchant" between Western Europe and the colonies. Unlike the later colonial empires of Western Europe, which supported the capitalist-industrial development of the colonizing societies, Spain's colonial system did not support such change:

...the new colonial system which emerged in the middle of the seventeenth century became one of the chief elements...in the preparation of the industrial revolution. But - and this is the most important - the new colonial system only emerged fully in those countries which had no access to the old, and after the collapse of the old.134

Thus, while Spanish America was imprinted with the seigneurialism of Spain, neither did Spain itself experience capitalist development.

Weber recognized:

...that it depends entirely upon the nature of the labor system what tendency will result from an inflow of precious metal. The gold and silver from America, after the discovery, flowed in the first place to Spain, but in that country a recession of capitalist development took place parallel with the importation. There followed on the one hand the suppression of the comuneros [sic] and the destruction of the commercial interests of the Spanish grandees, and on the other hand, the employment of the money for military ends. Consequently, the stream of precious metals flowed through Spain scarcely touching it, and fertilized other countries, which in the 15th century were already undergoing a process of transformation in labor relations which was favorable to capitalism.135


CHAPTER IV

SPANISH AMERICAN SEIGNEURIALISM

The Spanish American Wars for Independence (1808-1826) were not social revolutions, and the political conflicts of the early national period, although infused with the competing ideologies of liberalism and conservatism, appear to have been merely elitist, intra-class battles for control of the State, rather than struggles over the structure of society.

In those colonial Spanish American societies of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries where the Indian peasantry and working classes had risen in rebellion against the increasing exactions of the creole\(^1\) and Spanish landowners, miners, and officials of the empire, the creoles and Spaniards had united to suppress them.\(^2\) However much the creoles might have begun to favor independence from Spain - motivated by the political and economic ideologies of the Enlightenment, the example of the successful United States War for Independence, the opportunity to expand commercial relations with North America and Europe, and the opportunity to eliminate the social

\(^1\)The creoles were those Spaniards who were born in America. (They were considered "inferior" to Spaniards born in Spain.)

\(^2\)For Peru and the Andes, see Daniel Valcárcel, Rebeliones indígenas (Lima: Editorial P.T.C.M., 1946), and La Rebelión de Tupac Amaru (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1947); for Mexico, see Hugh Hamill, The Hidalgo Revolt - Prelude to Mexican Independence (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1966).
and legal obstacles to their upward mobility in the governmental struc-
ture and the military\textsuperscript{3} - they were unwilling to support independence
movements which potentially challenged their current and future domina-
tion of the Spanish American societies. And when the creoles did
finally favor independence and seek to establish it, it was because they
recognized that they could no longer afford to depend on the power and
questionable will of Spain to secure them against the possibility of
social revolution by the laboring classes, or invasion by a foreign
power.\textsuperscript{4}

Undeniably, the ideas of the Enlightenment and the example of
the French Revolution influenced the Spanish American independence
movements; however, it was the less radical Anglo-American liberalism
and the example of the United States which became their ideological
style. John Lynch has explained:

\ldots embracing the principles of liberty and
applauding the rights of man. Equality was
another matter. Situated as they were between
the Spaniards and the masses, the creoles wanted
more than equality for themselves and less than
equality for their inferiors\ldots The more radical
the French revolution became and the better it
was known, the less it appealed to the creole
aristocracy\ldots The influence of the United
States was more benevolent and more enduring\ldots
its existence\ldots and its embodiment of liberty
and republicanism.\textsuperscript{5}

\textsuperscript{3} Robin Humphreys and John Lynch, eds., \textit{The Origins of the Latin

\textsuperscript{4} John Lynch, \textit{The Spanish American Revolutions, 1808-1826} (New
York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1973), pp. 20-24. Also, see F. Stirton
Weaver, "Political Disintegration and Reconstruction in 19th Century
Spanish America: The Class Basis of Political Change," \textit{Politics and

\textsuperscript{5} Ibid., (Lynch), pp. 28-29. As well as the liberal movement
towards independence there was, at the same time, a conservative
The Spanish American Wars for Independence, thus, ended three centuries of Spanish colonial rule. The dominant classes of Spanish America removed the Iberian-Spanish elite from politico-economic control and established republican governments; the control of which were to be fought over by rival factions of those "liberated" dominant classes.

But except for the removal of the Iberian-Spanish elite, whose political position was filled by members of the Creole aristocracy and whose economic position was filled both by Spanish Americans and newly arrived foreign merchants, the social structures of the Spanish American societies were little changed. Or, as the historian, Robin Humphreys, has written:

The hierarchical structure of society remained intact... The Indians were by far the largest element and after them the mestizos. But the coming of independence meant little or nothing to the Mexican peon, Peruvian Indian, or the Chilean inquilino, and the social and economic power of a small territorial aristocracy was in no way diminished.

**Liberalism and Agrarian Reform**

Although the Spanish American societies were not "structurally revolutionized" by the Wars for Independence, the formation of independent states and the creation of governments (whose politico-economic movement sometimes opposed, sometimes allied with, the liberals for independence. The achievement of independence led to the political battles between these two "parties" during the early national period.

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orientations were to be decided) did lead to significant changes, even - if not particularly - in the countryside. As well as the abolition of slavery (immediately in some countries and later in others)\(^8\) there were also agrarian reforms enacted, and often implemented, which greatly affected the Spanish American land tenure structures.

It may have been the liberalism and republicanism of the French Revolution and the United States which provided the ideology for the Spanish American Wars for Independence, but it was the economic liberalism of Britain which provided the Spanish American liberals with their ideology of political economy. However, British liberal economic theory had emerged as the ideology of the bourgeoisie of a developing capitalist and industrializing society,\(^9\) while the Spanish American societies had experienced almost three centuries as conquest and colonial societies, dependent on agriculture and mining, and dominated by admittedly commercial, but seigneurial, classes.

Liberalism, thus, appears incongruent as an ideology championed by a significant faction of the dominant classes of the Spanish American societies, particularly when one considers that the liberal ideology was directly opposed to "feudal" politico-legal property systems and relations of production, and that it posited the free, private landowning yeoman-farmer as the ideal agrarian class.\(^10\)

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\(^8\)Mellafe, Breve historia, pp. 141-168.


However, as we have seen, the Spanish American landowning classes were not "feudal nobilities" - aristocratic though they appeared. Rather, they were classes which remained open and available to successful members of the merchant and mining "bourgeoisies." That is, social mobility for the middle ranks of society\(^{11}\) (often, the creole heirs to the Spanish merchants who had established themselves in the colonies) into the dominant, landowning class was possible:\(^{12}\) "Independent Mexico, as in colonial times, saw large amounts of commercial capital channeled into large landed estates; constituting a new agrarian aristocracy of bourgeois origins."\(^{13}\) And in Chile, where "The great mass of the population was dominated by a small oligarchy of creoles..."

Some of the newer members of the creole oligarchy had made their money in trade, but used it to acquire estates, land being the basis of all wealth in the colony.\(^{14}\)

This is not to argue that those merchants abandoned their commercial enterprises, although some historians have argued that they did, but rather to recognize that the landed "aristocracies" of the Spanish American societies were continually strengthened by the

\(^{11}\)Using the term "middle ranks" loosely.

\(^{12}\)Some historians and sociologists have defined feudal societies in terms of "estates" rather than classes, emphasizing the improbability of social mobility; this is another reason why it has been argued that Spanish America cannot be defined as "feudal."

\(^{13}\)Francisco López Cámara, La Estructura económica y social de México en la época de la Reforma (Mexico: Siglo XXI, 1973), p. 206.

\(^{14}\)Simon Collier, Ideas and Politics in Chilean Independence, 1808-1833 (London: Cambridge University Press, 1967), p. 5. The creole merchants had continued to affirm Dobb's hypothesis that a merchant class "is likely to struggle to 'muscle in' upon an existing form of appropriating surplus labor, but it is unlikely to try to change this form." Dobb, Studies, p. 18.
admission of new families which had secured their entree to the power and privilege of landed status through wealth acquired in mercantile activities. Or, as one Latin American sociologist has commented: "The Latin American oligarchy is permanent, but its members change with each generation."15

Not "feudal nobles," the members of these dominant classes did not hold their estates by "feudal" prerogatives, but rather as individual private landowners. Thus, except for the institution of mayorazgo, i.e. the entailment of estates (which was abolished rather early everywhere but Chile) the Spanish American landowners would not be threatened by the enactment and implementation of liberal agrarian reforms, directed at "feudal" property systems. In fact, as we shall see, they could only benefit from such reforms.

Regarding the social relations of production between the Spanish American landowners and their work forces: Negro slavery was being abolished and the peasantry was legally free. That is, the peasants of the estates were not bound to them by any legally sanctioned servile status, as were their counterparts in Central and Eastern Europe. Neither was debt peonage, which was more common in some regions than in others, officially sanctioned; although both the Spanish Crown during colonial times, and the weak, landowner-dominated, governments of independent Spanish America lacked either the power or the will to suppress it. (And there were even those who would argue that indebted laborers were very dissimilar to serfs, because actually they were

merely laborers fulfilling contracts.)

Hypocrisy? Perhaps, but the landowners who favored a liberal political economy for their governments, and liberal agrarian reforms directed against supposedly "feudal" property systems, were not opposed by conservatives who challenged their mode of domination in the countryside; for they, too, as landowners, practised that same form of social control. However much the conservatives might oppose liberalism, they were either defeated by the liberals or were at least defeated long enough for liberal agrarian reforms to be enacted, enabling them to profit by them as well!

Varying according to their respective significance in each of the Spanish American countries, the "feudal" property systems which came under attack from the liberal agrarian reforms were the landholdings of the Church and its associated bodies, the communally-owned lands of the Indian peasantry, and the mayorazgos.

An attack on "feudal" property structures had, necessarily, to include ecclesiastical holdings, which, although often managed quite efficiently, represented a corporate monopoly on property.\(^{16}\) Furthermore, the church's role as mortgage-holder and credit institution generated increasing antagonisms, and the lack of financial resources of the newly-established Spanish American governments led the liberals, and conservatives alike, to recall the dictum of Adam Smith that "the richer the Church, the poorer the State."\(^{17}\)

\(^{16}\)Not to be confused with private business corporations and monopolies.

The desamortización, i.e. the alienation of ecclesiastical properties, which the liberals sought, was not without precedent. In the late eighteenth century, the Spanish crown had seen fit to expell the Order of Jesuits from the empire and put their numerous, and valuable, holdings up for sale, which were then purchased by merchants and miners, eager to enter the landed class, or by the already landed:

The removal of the Jesuits had several important short-term effects in Chile. It also strengthened the economic and social power of several creole families who were able to buy up Jesuit estates.

Through a variety of laws the Spanish Americans "liberated" ecclesiastical properties from entailment and religious encumbrances, or at least reduced the role of the church as a credit institution and mortgage-holder. In theory, the desired effect of this process was to generate a market in land, in order to give rise to the much idealized class of yeomen-farmers; however, the process of desamortización and related acts, followed a more predictable path. That is, rather than create a middle stratum of farmers, the disentailment of ecclesiastical holdings merely furthered the concentration of land-ownership in private hands. For example, in Mexico, where the alienation of ecclesiastical property was carried out on the broadest scale, the class which benefited most was the already landed, i.e. the hacendados, whose mortgages were reduced and encumbrances removed. Also able to take advantage of, and benefit from, the liberal agrarian

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18For example, revolutionary France, and even Spain.


20Collier, Ideas and Politics, p. 33.

21Bauer, "The Church," pp. 84-86.
reforms were the merchants, both native and foreign, and the urban professionals who aspired to landed status.  

The communal landholding systems of the Indian peasantries were also defined as "feudalistic" and obstacles to "modern" agriculture because the peasant's lands were entailed to the community; thus prohibiting the development of private landownership and the evolution of the more capable peasants into yeomen-farmers. At the same time, this issue was related to the greater social issue of "Indian integration."

The Spanish Crown, as we have seen, exhibiting the inconsistency evident in all colonial regimes, had sought to protect the Indian peasantries in their communities at the same time that it harnessed those Indian communities to serve as a mode of social control and as a system for colonial exploitation via the encomienda and the repartimiento. Thus, to favor the dissolution of the Indian peasantry's communal system and the subdivision of their communal lands into private landholdings represented not merely an attack on the system of communal-entailment, but also an attack on a remaining structure of the colonial regime, which had maintained the Indians in their "separate" and "unequal" status.

Opposition to the dissolution of the Indian peasant communities


23Hale, Mexican Liberalism, pp. 220-221; and Thomas M. Davies, Indian Integration in Peru (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1974), pp. 17-43. In Peru, the colonial tribute system persisted in several regions for much of the nineteenth century, in spite of laws against it.
and the subdivision of their lands was divided between those conservatives who wished to continue the "protective" policies of the former colonial regime and those liberals who recognized the contradictions in their own policies. They saw that to remove the "legal obstacles" to the development of private property amongst the Indian peasantry would also be to remove what little protection the Indian peasant landholders possessed. That is, the Indians would merely pass from a system of communal landholding to a condition of landlessness. However, the politically powerful of the Spanish American societies were the hacendados, supported by the urban commercial classes and professional stratum eager to become landowners.

The promulgation of laws disentailing the community landholding systems did not immediately lead to the peasantry's loss of their lands and their relocation onto the latifundia. The community landholding systems continued to persist through the strength of custom and in spite of the laws. (And, significantly, those communities which did lose their lands often persisted within the latifundia which had swallowed them up. Thus, the peasants ceased to own their lands, but they continued to possess them.) However, the reform laws did facilitate the encroachment, both illegally (by force) and legally (by purchase), by the hacendados and "would-be" hacendados on the communities' lands.


25 For Mexico, see Powell, El Liberalismo, pp. 74-100; for Bolivia, see Ramiro Condurco Morales, Zarate, el "temible" Wilka (La Paz, 1965), pp. 41-49; and for Peru, see Davies, Indian Integration, pp. 19-31.
The Indian peasantry did not necessarily accept the liberal reforms pacifically. Throughout the nineteenth century, and into the twentieth, the Mexican, Bolivian, and Peruvian countrysides experienced numerous peasant uprisings, generated by encroachment or the threat of encroachment on the lands of the communities.26

The legislative and physical encroachment on the lands of the Indian peasant communities was, of course, a significant issue only in those countries where the communities had survived the conquest and colonization. In Chile, where the Indian population had been greatly reduced in numbers, or limited to the southern territories, the peasantry was generally mestizo, and it had developed along with the estates. Neither was the issue of ecclesiastical landownership significant in Chile, compared to the other Spanish American countries, because the major ecclesiastical landholder had been the Order of Jesuits, whose lands had already been confiscated and sold off to private purchasers late in the eighteenth century. But what appear to have been more significant in Chile than elsewhere were the mayorazgos.

The legislative struggle over the mayorazgo issue followed the changing balance of conservative-liberal politics. In 1818, the Chilean independence leader, O'Higgins, had decreed the abolition of

26Jean Meyer, Problemas campesinos y revueltas agrarias (1821-1910), Sep Setentas no. 80 (Mexico: Secretaría de Educación Pública, 1973); Condarco Morales, Zarate; and Jean Piel, "The Place of the Peasantry in the National Life of Peru in the Nineteenth Century," Past and Present, no. 46 (February 1970), pp. 108-133. Of interest is the fact that during the Mexican conservatives' attempt to establish a monarchy with French support and an Austrian prince, the Indian peasantry of some regions gave their support to the conservatives because they hoped it would mean a return of the protectionist policy of the colonial period. (See Powell, El Liberalismo, chapter 4.)
the mayorazgo system, but his decree had no effect at all - except to further the split between liberals and conservatives. 27 Again abolished by the liberal constitution of 1828, it was restored by the conservatives in 1833. 28 It was not finally abolished until 1852. 29

The mayorazgo issue has traditionally been viewed by historians as part of a major socio-political struggle between the "landed aristocracy" and more progressive urban interests, 30 which one historian has updated to argue that the landed aristocracy was losing political sway to the merchant class. 31 However, most recently, it has been shown that the socio-economic and political significance of the mayorazgo issue has been exaggerated. That is, the issue was more an ideological one between conservatives and liberals than a socio-economic one, because mayorazgos were fewer in number than previously assumed and, thus, disentailment would not seriously threaten the landowners' estates. They would remain intact: "Mayorazgos went without a bang and barely a whimper, while the great landowners remained firmly in control of the countryside." 32 (Furthermore, considering the origins and ties of the landowning class, the "struggle" between it and the merchant class would have been more of a "family-feud" than inter-class

28Ibid., pp. 292, 324.
29Luís Galdames, A History of Chile, p. 292.
30Ricardo Donoso, Las ideas políticas en Chile (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1946), pp. 115-173, (chapter 5 "La lucha contra la aristocracia").
conflict.)

The attacks on and alienation of ecclesiastical property, the threats to and encroachment on many Indian peasant communities, and the less significant, but actual disentailment of mayorazgos, were supposed to give rise to a class of yeomen farmers. And yet, without doubt, the greatest obstacle to the development of such a class was the latifundia land tenure pattern. However, as private property, the haciendas were inviolable. Although there were critics of the land tenure pattern, the direction of the agrarian reforms, and the seigneurial mode of domination in the countryside, the liberal intelligentsia could not challenge the private property system they were so eager to further; nor would the liberal (and conservative) political chieftains have accepted such legislation, when their socio-economic strength and political power were based on their landownership. Thus, however successful the liberal legislators might be in their attacks against "feudal," entailed property systems, their goal was contradicted by their own ideology. And the reforms which were enacted, instead of changing the structure of rural Spanish America, had the effect of actually reinforcing and expanding seigneurialism in the countryside.33

Seigneurial Domination

The liberal agrarian reforms carried out in Spanish America during the nineteenth century - involving the disentailment of ecclesiastical holdings, Indian peasant communal lands, and mayorazgos,

33As we would expect: "...the liberal attack on latifundia was also undermined for social reasons, since most of the legislators themselves were landowners." Hale, Mexican Liberalism, p. 181.
furthered the concentration of private landownership and strengthened
the landed aristocracy by freeing the land from religious encumbrances,
and also, by permitting the entry of new families to landed status.

However, the concentration of landownership in the hands of a
single class does not necessarily constitute the formation and
persistence of a seigneurial regime. For although the class structure
of a society is based on those classes’ relations to the means of pro­
duction, those relations are not determined merely by the classes’
positions in relation to property. The relations themselves may vary.
That is, there may be extreme concentration of landownership, but the
landowner-laborer relationship may be that of capitalist-proletariat,
landowner-tenant, or landlord-peasant. Or, as Marx wrote:

The specific economic form in which unpaid surplus
labor is pumped out of the direct producers, deter­
mines the relation of domination and servitude as
it emerges directly out of production itself and
in its turn reacts upon production... It is always
the direct relation between the masters of the
conditions of production and direct producers which
reveals the innermost secret, the hidden foundation
of the entire social edifice... This does not prevent
an economic basis which in its principal characteris­
tics is the same, from manifesting infinite variations
and gradations, owing to the effect of innumerable
external circumstances, climatic and geographical
influences, racial peculiarities, historical
influences from the outside, etc. These variations
can only be discovered by analyzing the empirically
given circumstances.34

There was a definite similarity to the agrarian social relations
of production of the Spanish American societies. The terms peonaje
(Mexico), huasipunguaie (Ecuador), colonae and yanaconaje (Peru and

34Karl Marx from Capital (Vol. III), Karl Marx: Selected
Writings in Sociology and Social Philosophy, trans. and ed. T.B.
Bolivia), and *inquilinaje* (Chile) all referred to the relations of production in which the landowner ceded a parcel of land to the peasant in return for labor service on the estate itself. And yet, noting Marx, these seigneurial relationships existed within specific agrarian structures (and national societies, which to a greater or lesser extent were involved in the world economy) exhibiting their own structural features and variations.  

In Mexico, travelling from north to south, one passed through three agrarian regions. The northern region of Mexico was dominated by the great estate with its dependent labor force of peons. The Mexican peons were not maintained on the estates merely through their tenancy on a parcel of land granted by the hacendado. They were also often held on the land through a system of debts, which Marx termed slavery:

> In some states, particularly in Mexico...slavery is hidden under the form of peonage. By means of advances, repayable in labor, which are handed down from generation to generation, not only the individual laborer, but his family, become *de facto* the property of other persons and their families.  

Occasionally, on the more extensive latifundia, there were also tenant-farmers.

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35 The significance of the variations amongst and within the Spanish American agrarian structures directly affected the possibilities for and the course of peasant mobilizations and agrarian reforms, as we shall see in this and the next chapter.


In Central Mexico the hacienda continued to dominate the countryside, but more often it "coexisted" with numerous independent peasant villages whose members depended to differing degrees on the seasonal employment offered by the estates. And in the southern region, rural Mexico was characterized by Indian peasant villages which had survived the conquest and colonization alongside large, and ever-encroaching, but less overwhelming haciendas.

In Peru, regional variation in the agrarian structure existed between the Sierra and the Coast. The Peruvian Sierra (and the Bolivian highlands) were characterized by the symbiotic coexistence of the haciendas and the Indian peasant communities which were struggling to persist. The haciendas' labor forces consisted of the colonos, and often satellite Indian peasant communities resident on their own lands or their former lands, which had succumbed to the expanding latifundia. The Indian peasant communities - even when in possession of their own lands, often provided a reserve labor force for the estate by virtue of the hacienda's monopolization of local resources; which might range from additional grazing land to control of the water supply, or perhaps merely control of the path between the

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38 Powell, El Liberalismo, pp. 44-46.
village and the villagers' lands in the next valley, for which a "toll" might be levied.\textsuperscript{42} Of course, there were areas where the Indian peasant communities were not threatened nor dominated by haciendas; however, following the liberal agrarian reforms these areas were reduced in number.

Latifundia also dominated coastal Peru; however, the mode of production on the coastal estates\textsuperscript{43} was originally based on African slavery, introduced early in the colonial period.\textsuperscript{44} Negro slavery persisted in Peru even after independence and was not finally abolished until 1854. When it was finally abolished, the landowners responded by changing the relations of production from slavery to yanaconaje, i.e. the former slaves and additional Indian laborers were settled on the latifundia in a system similar to colonaje in the Sierra.\textsuperscript{45} A further change in the relations of production on the coastal latifundia was the "importation" of Chinese laborers to Peru, both to work in the guano deposits and on the plantations. These Chinese laborers were held on the plantations by a system of debt bondage. Thus, the coastal latifundia came to depend on two labor forces: the Negro and Indian yanacona and the indebted Chinese.\textsuperscript{46}

\textsuperscript{42}\textit{Ibid.}

\textsuperscript{43}Which have been called plantations from early on, because of the export orientation of sub-tropical and tropical produce, e.g. sugar and cotton.


\textsuperscript{45}\textsc{Piel}, "The Place of the Peasantry," pp. 122-124.

Chile, as we have seen, was conquered and colonized by the Spanish later than Mexico and Peru. And yet, there too, seigneurial relations of production had developed in the countryside: at first by locating the estate near the encomienda grant, or by relocating the Indians onto the estate itself; and later by inviting the settlement of mestizos and poor Spaniards onto the margins of the latifundia, for which they supplied a specified amount of labor service to the landowner. Also, in a manner similar to the hacendados of the other developing societies of Spanish America, the Chilean landowners responded to increased market demands and opportunities by enlarging the size of the demesne and increasing the required labor service of the peasantry (inquilinos).  

In addition to the resident labor force of inquilinos, the estate owners could also call upon a reserve labor force known as afuerinos.  

The afuerinos were peasants who lived outside the boundaries of the latifundia on smallholdings and yet depended for their subsistence on the seasonal employment offered by the estates.

The situation of the afuerinos in relation to the estates, although similar to that of the satellite Indian peasant communities of the Mexican and Peruvian haciendas, was not actually comparable to them, because the afuerinos were not bound together through any traditional communities as were the Indian peasantry:

47 Bauer, Chilean Rural Society, pp. 145-159.

48 The afuerinos are also referred to as peons by many writers; not to be confused with Mexican peonage.

49 Bauer, Chilean Rural Society, pp. 145-159.
The majority of them [afuerinos] lead an entirely nomadic life, rarely remaining in the same place and passing without hesitation from one province to another as if movement and change were their only necessity.\(^{50}\)

Nor were the inquilinos and afuerinos the only labor forces available to the landowners. There also developed a third peasant stratum in relation to the estates. This third stratum, the voluntarios, lived in the homes of the inquilinos and remained directly dependent on them. (Often, they were relatives of the inquilinos.) The inquilinos maintained the voluntarios so that, during the seasons when the inquilinos were required to render increased labor service on the estate, for example at harvest time, they were often able to send the voluntarios in their places.\(^{51}\) Thus, when the Chilean estate owners found it necessary, they were able to call upon the labor of their inquilinos, the marginal, yet dependent, afuerinos, and the voluntarios.

The Spanish American agrarian sectors were not, therefore, structurally uniform. Although the dominant social relations of production on the estate were based on the seigneurial relationship which had developed between the landowners and their dependent, resident labor forces, there was diversity amongst the agrarian structures of the Spanish American societies as well as variations within them. Mexico was regionally differentiated on the extent of the hacienda's

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expansion in relation to the Indian peasant communities.\textsuperscript{52} Peru's regional differentiation was between the coastal plantations with their yanacona and Chinese laborers, and the Sierra with its hacienda system of colono laborers and satellite Indian peasant communities.\textsuperscript{53} And the agrarian structure of Chile, which in the nineteenth century referred to central Chile (where Indian communities had all but ceased to exist), was dominated by latifundia, upon which three strata of peasantry depended: the inquilinos, afuerinos and voluntarios.

Nevertheless, even in its diversity, rural Spanish America - as the product of the conquest and colonization by Iberian Spain, followed by the liberal agrarian reforms, was characterized by latifundia and pre-capitalist modes of production. And yet, thus far we have merely explained the formation and described the structures of agrarian Spanish America, we have not explained those structures as "total" modes of domination and exploitation.

Eugene Genovese, whose own work has been extremely critical of those historians and social scientists who promote "economic determinism,"\textsuperscript{54} has explained that:

\begin{quote}
A particular base (mode of production) will generate a corresponding superstructure (political system, complex of ideologies, culture, etc.) but
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{52}Although we have been referring to them as Indian peasant communities, many of the Mexican peasant communities, particularly in the central region, had become mestizo, socio-culturally.

\textsuperscript{53}The agrarian structure of the Peruvian sierra, as we have indicated, was also characteristic of highland Bolivia.

that superstructure will develop according to
its own logic as well as in response to the
development of the base.\textsuperscript{55}

And along these lines, Alexander Gerschenkron, the economist,
has quoted one of his colleagues to the effect that: "Although Marxian
analysis claims to be most concerned with the economic infrastructure
it is actually more concerned with the superstructure."\textsuperscript{56} But, perhaps
Antonio Gramsci, the Italian political philosopher, has presented the
issue most clearly in his concept of the "historical bloc":

...in which precisely material forces are the
content and ideologies the form, though this
distinction between form and content has purely
didactic value, since the material forces would
be inconceivable historically without form and
the ideologies would be individual fancies
without the material forces.\textsuperscript{57}

Thus, to understand the seigneurialism of rural Spanish America
it is necessary to examine not only the "content" (material forces),
but also the "form" (ideologies) of the landlord-peasant relations of
domination and dependence.

Marx recognized the significant difference between the seigneu-
rial and capitalist modes of production. Although both are relations
of exploitation, the seigneurial mode of production differs from the
capitalist mode of production because it involves extra-economic ties
between the landowners and their dependents which bind them together
in personal relations beyond that of merely property owners and

\textsuperscript{55}Genovese, \textit{In Red and Black}, p. 322.

\textsuperscript{56}Gerschenkron, \textit{Economic Backwardness}, p. 96.

\textsuperscript{57}Antonio Gramsci, \textit{Selections from the Prison Notebooks}, trans.
and ed. Q. Hoare and G.N. Smith (New York: International Publishers,
laborers. That is, the relationship of exploiter and exploited of the seigneurial mode of production is embedded in more extensive personal relations; unlike the capitalist mode of production in which "...the relation between property owner and worker...[is] confined to the economic relationship of exploiter and exploited." 

Max Weber wrote that the power of a seigneurial lord was composed of three elements: "first, landholding (territorial power), second, possession of men (slavery), and third, appropriation of political rights." The landowning classes of Spanish America were very successful in living up to this ideal-type. One mid-nineteenth century traveller to Mexico wrote of the landowners' domination of the peasants:

The rich who rule everything - even the minds of the poor... They have the power to punish to almost any extent - even death, and are served with the most abject deference by their peons or slaves. (As slavery is not recognized the word servant is more proper.) They are bound to their masters for some debt, which the latter take care shall never be paid...neither mind nor hope above their present condition...when addressing their masters they take off their hats and speak in a hesitating and trembling manner as though they were in the presence of a Superior Being.

Jesús Silva Herzog, the Mexican historian, described the nineteenth century hacienda in the following terms:

The peon of the hacienda can't be called a serf,


59Ibid.


nor the landowner a lord, nor the agrarian structure feudal - strictly speaking; however, if one is seeking a certain analogy by which to compare the economic and socio-political structure of the Mexican countryside, then it is European feudalism: the great hacendado with the European lord of the seventeenth century and thepeon with a medieval serf.62

Similarly, the Peruvian writer, José Carlos Mariátegui, wrote of the latifundia of his own country:

The hacienda is run like a baronial fief. The laws of the state are not applied in the latifundium without the tacit or formal consent of the large landowners. The authority of political or administrative officials is, in fact, subject to the authority of the landowner in his domain. The latter considers his latifundium to be outside the jurisdiction of the state...63

And of Chile, resident foreigners and travellers noted that:

"The proprietor is a magistrate and has power to put a man in irons if he deems it necessary."64 and "These owners of haciendas are really and truly as much the owners of the peasantry as the feudal lord was of the serf."65

These and other descriptions of the domination of the landowners over the peasantry of the Spanish American estates refer also to the jails located on the estates, beatings and whippings of the peasantry by the landowners and their overseers, the customary right of the


64 Nevin O. Winter, Chile and Her People of Today (Boston: L.C. Page, 1912), p. 199.

landowners to pursue, capture and punish runaway peasants. One traveller, after describing the servile status of the peasants and their families on the estates of Andean South America, summed it up well in recalling the following episode: After witnessing a peasant receive a thrashing from the landowner he asked why the peasant deserved to be whipped:

Most courteously he responded that the Indian had run away from his home upon the landowner's estate in order to go to La Paz to be a workman. But he was caught and thrashed and brought back.66

According to these and other descriptions, the domination of the peasantry by the landowners could be harsh, if not brutal, and yet the domination by the Spanish American landowners depended on more than merely the "brutalization" of the peasantry. One authoress, after a residence in Peru, broadened the picture of domination - and tempered it, when she wrote:

The happiness of such Indians depends almost entirely on the disposition of their owner, for they, like their fields, belong to the master of the farm. Some hacendados bring sin and disgrace into the lives of their Indians, while others rule with gentle kindness.67

But even the recognition of individual variations is obviously still too incomplete for an historical appreciation of Spanish American seigneurialism. For, as Genovese has written, paraphrasing Gramsci:

"Historically, class hegemony is achieved and maintained by consent, not force."68

Marx wrote that a seigneurial lord's domination of his peasantry was both political "and even has an agreeable side." And Spanish American landowner-peasant social relations were characterized not only by the harshness of seigneurial domination, but also by the paternalism of seigneurial domination.

George McBride, the historical and social geographer, and author of two classic studies on rural Spanish America, recognized the duality of the landowners' domination of their work forces when he wrote in his work on Mexico:

Over this aggregation [the hacienda] the owner presides in a more or less patriarchal manner, the degree of paternal care or of tyranny varying...The life of a Mexican hacendado is a curious mixture of primitive rusticity and modern luxury, of self-indulgence and fatherly soliciutude for his dependents, of stern administration and paternal discipline...

Later, in his work on Chile, after describing the harshness of the peasant's life and condition, he wrote of the landowner-inquilino relationship:

...the traditional relationship that exists between the inquilino and the hacendado - between master and man - somewhat ameliorates the hardships of the inquilino's condition. The landowner is not only employer, he is also patrón. The system is quite patriarchal in its actual operation. The inquilino usually feels a sense of loyalty and even of devotion to the farm owner. The latter, in turn, looks upon the inquilinos as his wards, almost as his children. He regards them with solicitous care.

69Marx, Early Writings, p. 114.


71Ibid. (The Land Systems), pp. 28-29. 72McBride, Chile, p. 162.
Nor were the landowners of Peru unlike their fellow Spanish Americans in their mode of social control. Anthropologists working in the Peruvian Sierra recognized that paternalism was an essential element of landowner-peasant social relations:

The *patrón* of a Peruvian hacienda is likely to exhibit a great deal of personal kindness, to allow indulgences, so long as the work of his Indian laborers and tenants is carried out to his satisfaction.74

Another anthropologist noted that: "One very great advantage of the peon-hacendado relationship is the protection which the patrón may give to his Indian peons."75

In part because of the landowners' paternal domination, but also as a result of the peasants' having been born and raised on the estates, the peasants developed an attachment and sense of identification with the estates - which in turn lent support to the landowners' position of dominance.76 George McBride recognized this sense of attachment when he wrote on Mexico:

...many of these peons have proprietary claims on the land which they and their ancestors have occupied and cultivated for generations. While it is true, their tenure has no legal status,

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76See Marx, *Early Writings*, pp. 114-115, on the personal identification of the seigneurial estate owner with the land and the peasants' relationship to the estate owner.
it has generally been recognized by the owners of the haciendas and has survived in custom because it has proved advantageous to the landlord no less than to the native. Furthermore, the peons feel an attachment to the land that a stranger unacquainted with their psychology can hardly appreciate. Upon it their ancestors have lived for generations, have followed the one occupation of tilling these fields, and have looked to the owner as their patron. As a result, the peons not only feel that the land belongs to them, but that they belong to it, and a deep-rooted sentiment binds them to the estate.77

Similarly, it has been written of the Chilean estates - in a manner which highlights the way the peasants' sense of attachment inhibited class consciousness:

A principal duty of service tenants was to guard the estate against forasteros - the outsiders cafuerinos - and to ride in escort with the owner...Most came to identify with the estate itself; the land was his land, the cattle better, the bulls braver than on other haciendas. This attachment between inquilino and hacienda went deeper than the owner himself. Landowners bought and traded property with surprising frequency and someone has correctly pointed out that Chilean landowners appear to love the land but not any particular piece of it. This was not so with the service tenantry who often, in fact, had a longer history of residence than the owner.78

The peasantry's "attachment to place"79 and their identification with the estates and the estate owners not only inhibited class conflict by "softening" the landowners' domination, but also because it "subjectively" rounded out the "objective" differentiation of the

78Bauer, Chilean Rural Society, p. 164. Or, as one Latin American sociologist has commented: "Latin American paternalism is carried on by one changing and absolute minority." Guillén Martínez, "Paternalism," p. 86. Also, see McBride, Chile, p. 149.
79Ibid.
peasantry according to their respective positions in relation to the estates. That is, the Spanish American peasantry were not homogeneous classes, and their heterogeneity divided them, strengthening the landowners' domination.  

In Chile, as indicated in the above quote, the inquilinos' identification with the estates made them view the afuerinos with hostility. And their advantaged tenure position on the estates placed the voluntarios in a position of dependence, i.e. subordinate to the inquilinos. This differentiation increased the difficulties of peasant mobilization.

The differentiation of the peasantry in the Peruvian Sierra inhibited class action there, as well. One anthropologist noted the effect which differentiation of the peasantry in relation to the latifundia had on inter-village relations:

Some rivalry, perhaps even basic hostility, exists between the people of Huante and Monus. The latter look with some longing at the property and consequent freedom and independence of the former... on the other hand, Huante people are likely to resent the protected position of the peons.

And he added that the independent peasants "looked down" on the peons and called them serfs.

Differentiation of the peasantry in Mexico had a similar effect. Even in the midst of the Revolution (1910-1920), when the villagers of

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80 In fact, it might be argued that the term "peasantry" in Spanish America refers historically to several classes, not one, e.g. peasant-serfs of the estate, members of the Indian-peasant communities.


82 Stein, Hualcán, pp. 43-45. 83 Ibid.
the south were fighting to regain the lands they had lost to the haciendas, the peons of the estates (acasillados) were immobilizable. John Womack, in his work on the Zapatista movement of the Mexican Revolution, has written:

Only rarely did they recruit rebels among the gente de casa, who anyway preferred their bonded security, and nowhere evidently did they excite these dependent peons to rise up and seize the plantations they worked on. 84

And a team of Mexican researchers found that when the revolution arrived in a certain region, the peons of the estate remained on the estate so long as the landowner or his representative remained, but when the patron fled the estate, they did too! 85

In those regions of Mexico (and Spanish America) where the differentiation of the peasantry was colored by ethnicity, i.e. socio-cultural differences (e.g. mestizos on the estates and Indians in the communities) the division of the peasantry was accentuated. One historical anthropologist, in the study of a Mexican village during the Revolution, found that the acasillados "scorned everyone who spoke Tarascan," 86 and:

Mainly, because of cultural or economic ties, the acasillados initially sided with the hacendados, often hiring themselves out as militiamen or gunmen (pistoleros). 87


87 Ibid., p. 112. On the plantations of coastal Peru in the
Thus, the differentiation of the peasantry, as well as the paternalistic domination of the landowners and the peasants' "attachment to place," inhibited class action.

And yet, it must be added, that not all peasants accepted the landowners' domination and their seigneurial mode of social control. There were peasants who resisted, particularly in Mexico and Peru. Not only the peasants of the communal-landholding villages, but also social bandits - or, as Eric Hobsbawm has termed them: "primitive rebels" - were nuisances to the seigneurial regime. In a major work on nineteenth century Mexico, supervised by the historian, Daniel Cosío Villegas, it was written: "One of the manifestations of the peasant discontent is banditry: the runaways from the haciendas formed gangs of bandits, the social cancer of the Republic." And in some regions of the Peruvian Sierra, the "primitive rebels" disrupted the social order of the latter half of the nineteenth century so seriously as, on one occasion, to threaten the seigneurial regime itself: requiring the use of army troops to suppress them.

Nineteenth century, the landowners also practised "divide and rule" by exploiting the racial differences and when necessary the Indian and Negro yanacona and Chinese laborers were used to suppress each other. (Stewart, Chinese Bondage, pp. 100-101.)

88 See Eric J. Hobsbawm, Primitive Rebels (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1959), and Hobsbawm, Bandits (London: Penguin Books, 1972). The author writes: "The point about social bandits is that they are peasant outlaws whom the lord and state regard as criminals, but who remain within peasant society, and are considered by their people as heroes, as champions, avengers, fighters for justice, perhaps even leaders of liberation, and in any case as men to be admired, helped and supported." (Bandits, p. 17).


At the same time, the political significance of the social bandits can be too easily exaggerated. For, as the Peruvian sociologist, Aníbal Quijano Obregón, explained: "Even though clearly a form of social protest against the injustices of the most powerful, it never develops a "broader ideology" than revolt against specific abuses and oppression." Besides, the majority of Spanish American peasants continued to accept the seigneurial domination of the landowners, its harshness and its paternalism.

Thus, the end of Spanish colonial rule did not end Spanish American seigneurialism. The Spanish American societies persisted in their seigneurial molds, inherited from Spain, the conquest and the colonization. In fact, Spanish American independence enabled the landed aristocracies to expand their "ownership" of the countryside and their seigneurial mode of production and domination at the expense of the church and the Indian-peasant communities. And it strengthened the landowning class by permitting the entry of new families of "bourgeois" origins to landed status.

The historico-economic significance of the persistent strength of the pre-capitalist structure of society and the seigneurial domination of the countryside, has been recognized by development economists. Summarizing their conclusions, Genovese has written:

While the peasantry remains tied to the land, burdened with debt, and limited to minimal purchasing power, the labor recruitment and market preconditions for extensive manufacturing cannot emerge. Land reform - that is an agrarian revolution - constitutes the essential first step

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in the creation of an urban working class, the reorganization of agriculture to feed growing cities, and the development of a home market. 92

CHAPTER V

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

The Spanish American societies had been characterized historically by the hegemony of a seigneurial landowning class; and rural Spanish America had experienced the formation and continuous expansion of the latifundia land tenure pattern and the persistence of seigneurial social relations of production. That is, the Spanish conquest and colonization had transferred to America - enhanced and further elaborated - the Iberian "historical-bloc": the seigneurial mode of production and the norms and values of the Iberian superstructure. And the independence of the Spanish American societies, instead of reducing the hegemonic position of the landowning "aristocracies," led to the strengthening of their domination both in the countryside and in the national societies. The Steins, in their book, The Colonial Heritage of Latin America, have summed up the historical pattern of land tenure up to this century by writing:

Until the twentieth century, the basis of oligarchy in Latin America has been the monopolization of, and access to, landownership. In fact, the most significant feature of the history of land tenure there until recent decades has been the spread of the large estate into frontier areas, or the aggrandizement of long established estates, if not for control of cultivable lands or scarce water rights, then for control of scarce labor, agricultural manpower. In Latin America, the nineteenth century may be viewed as a period of acceleration in the rate of estate formation and estate owners' control of manpower.¹

And yet, since the 1930's the Spanish American societies - Mexico, Bolivia, Venezuela, Chile and Peru - have experienced land reforms which, unlike the reforms of the nineteenth century, which furthered the concentration of landownership and the landowners' seigneurial domination of the countryside, have seriously challenged - if not eliminated - that concentration.

The political histories of the Spanish American countries during this century are, of course, unique to the respective national societies. However, the fact that after four centuries of the formation, development and persistence of the latifundia land tenure pattern and seigneurial domination, there have occurred serious - if not decisive - challenges to the hegemony of the landowning classes of Spanish America leads the researcher to seek a common socio-historical experience and pattern in those changes. Thus, the question 'why did seigneurialism persist in rural Spanish America?' is now placed in relation to the question 'why have there recently been major changes in rural Spanish America?'

Eastern Europe,² which, as it has been shown, experienced the "second serfdom" historically parallel to the persistence of Spanish seigneurialism in the formation and development of seigneurialism in Spanish America, also experienced liberal agrarian reforms in the nineteenth century. Significantly, with respect to an extended comparison with Spanish America, the liberal reforms of Eastern Europe, although abolishing serfdom, left intact the latifundia, i.e. the socio-economic power base of the noble landowners; which meant that

²Excluding the Russian Empire.
seigneurialism might persist beyond the feudal politico-legal struc-
tures which had sanctioned it.

And yet, of further - and, perhaps, greater - historico-compara-
tive significance is that seigneurialism was not finally eliminated in
Eastern Europe by land reform, as had been the case in Spanish America,
but rather by the proletarianization of the peasantry.\(^3\)

Lenin wrote, prior to the Russian Revolution, that there had been
two paths to capitalist development in agriculture: "The survivals of
serfdom may fall away either as a result of the transformation of
landlord economy or as a result of the abolition of the landlord lati-
fundia..."\(^4\) He called the first path the "Prussian path" and the
second path the "American path" (though he might have been better
calling it the French path). That Eastern Europe tended towards the
first path while Spanish America has apparently tended towards the
second, considering the similarity in their historical development,
can provide a comparison by contrast.\(^5\)

**Persistence and Change in Eastern Europe**

The "development of underdevelopment" model advanced by Andre
Gunder Frank argues that the backwardness of rural areas of Spanish

\(^3\)Eastern European history was, of course, dramatically changed by
the Second World War, followed by Soviet domination, and collectivization.

\(^4\)V.I. Lenin, "The Agrarian Problem of the Social Democrats,"
*Collected Works of Lenin* (Moscow: Foreign Language Publishing House,

\(^5\)An interesting and suggestive article on this subject has been
written by Cristóbal Kay, "Comparative Development of the European
Manorial System and the Latin American Hacienda System," *Journal of
Peasant Studies*, vol. 2 no. 1 (October 1974), pp. 68-98. I wish to
thank Dr. Kay for encouraging me to pursue this issue further.
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America is a function of the development of the more advanced areas, and that the "underdevelopment" of Spanish America is, in fact, the result of its exploitation by the developed, capitalist economies.

Critical of Frank's model - though not rejecting all of its elements - F. Stirton Weaver, the economist, has written: "...frequently, too much stress has been laid on the effects of the political and economic hegemony exercised by the dominant capitalist nations." And he has proposed that the persistence of the pre-capitalist social structures of Spanish America may be due more to the "changes which have occurred in the internal dynamics of the industrialization process itself..."

It is Weaver's thesis that the "old evolutionary dialectic is dead." That is, the very success of the bourgeois revolutions in England and France and the industrial revolution initiated by England, meant that later industrialization and capitalist development would, necessarily, proceed differently. The historico-social variation between earlier and later capitalist-industrialist development can be seen in the following contrast:

6Frank's model pertains to all of Latin America.

7See F. Stirton Weaver, "Positive Economics, Comparative Advantage, and Underdevelopment."


9Ibid.

...in the first stages the main body of capital and more particularly of entrepreneurs that produced the upheavals of the industrial revolution was of modest and nearly always agricultural origins.\textsuperscript{11}

It would seem, however, that the later industrialization began, the greater was the contribution of the upper strata of the bourgeoisie, with occasional financial aid or even direct participation from the landed aristocracy.\textsuperscript{12}

According to Weaver, this historico-social variation between the early and late industrializers represents the changed nature of the industrialization process, i.e. changes in the economy and technology of industrialization.\textsuperscript{13} In those societies of early (in the case of England, original) industrialization, the process was generated by a numerous rising class of capitalists possessed of revolutionary significance: for examples, let us note the English and French revolutions.\textsuperscript{14} However, in those societies of later industrialization, the process was able to be imported at an already advanced level by a less numerous (already elite?) class of capitalists, and, as already indicated in the above quote, often with the participation of the landed aristocracy.

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\textsuperscript{13}See Weaver, "Relative Backwardness." An important work on this subject is David Landes, The Unbound Prometheus: Technological Change and Industrial Development in Western Europe from 1750 to the Present (London: Cambridge University Press, 1969).

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aristocracy. For examples, Weaver contrasts Germany with England:

...in Germany, unlike England during the early years of its industrial revolution, industrialization did not diffuse economic power among a large number of owner-operators from diverse backgrounds, but instead made for a new concentration of economic power controlled by those who had access to the considerable financial resources necessary for establishing an enterprise on an economically viable scale.15

And he noted that, in contrast to the earlier "liberal" capitalist development of England, France (and the United States), the later capitalist-industrial development of Germany was "conservative:"16 "Industrialization no longer had to come from below, transforming all dimensions of social life, but could come from above, preserving and strengthening traditional hierarchies and cultural forms."17 In Germany, although not without conflict between the bourgeoisie and the landed aristocracy - as evidenced by the Revolution of 1848,18 the less numerous capitalist entrepreneurs of later industrialization were more easily absorbed by the dominant class into a ruling bloc.19 Even the liberal elements of the bourgeoisie had to accept alliance with the landowning aristocracy because of the threatening proletarian

15Weaver, "Relative Backwardness," p. 75.
16Ibid., p. 79.
17Ibid., p. 89. It is interesting to note that Marx recognized a revolutionary path and a conservative path to capitalism. The revolutionary path occurred when the producer became capitalist, and the conservative path occurred when the merchant took possession of production. See Marx, Selected Writings (from Capital), p. 130.
19Weaver, "Relative Backwardness," p. 77.
movement.  

And yet, what was the significance of the changes in the nature of the industrialization process for rural Eastern Europe (and Spanish America)?

During the nineteenth century, Germany's independent kingdoms were being "pushed and pulled" towards unification. Moving west to east across the geography of Germany was to travel from Western to Eastern Europe. In fact, western Germany more closely resembled France than eastern Germany (Prussia), rural sociologically speaking. And, in turn, Prussia more closely resembled Eastern Europe than western Germany. Stated simply, this referred to "the small holdings of the west and the great estates of the east;" the former being similar to the French countryside and the latter to the countryside of Eastern Europe.

The contrasting land tenure patterns of western and eastern Germany were the product of the different histories of agricultural economy of the respective regions.

In the states of the west, the nobleman became increasingly an absentee landowner, deriving the bulk of his wealth from peasant dues. Since his rights as a feudal overlord were converted into annual dividends, his direct control over the soil weakened.

But in eastern Germany, on the other hand, the landed aristocracy (the Junkers) had been more directly active in the grain trade and,  

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20 See Hamerow, Restoration, on the workers' role in the Revolution of 1848. He points out that the proletariat was in formation, i.e. being displaced from artisanry and crafts due to the rapid development of industry. Thus, they were a conservative, anti-capitalist force; a potential ally of the landed aristocracy.

21 Ibid., p. 40. 22 Ibid., p. 50.
since the sixteenth century, rural Prussia had experienced the "second serfdom" characteristic of Eastern Europe.

Thus, because of the landed aristocracies' respective relationships to their lands and their peasants, the movement towards, and results of, the emancipation of the serfs differed.

In the west, from the late eighteenth to the middle of the nineteenth century, the gradual, historical trend towards peasant emancipation moved at a more rapid pace; under the liberalizing influence of the Enlightenment on the bourgeoisie which had been developing there, the disruption of the expansion of the French Revolution, and finally - but significantly - the strength of the peasant uprisings during the Revolution of 1848. In this process the peasants' proprietary rights to the lands they occupied were recognized and ratified. Thus, seigneurialism was finally eliminated with the emancipation of the peasantry and their victory in securing landownership.23

But in Prussia, where the countryside was dominated by large seigneurial manors, worked by both resident and non-resident peasant-serfs, laboring part-time on the lord's demesne and part-time on either land ceded to them by the lord or on their own lands, emancipation ratified the Junkers' property rights (and those of non-resident land-holding peasants). In fact, the Junkers gained in the process because the non-resident peasant-serfs had to redeem themselves and their land by cash payments or the cession of part of their own land to the lord.24 And a more subtle gain, though extremely significant in the long run, was that the process of emancipation furthered the social distance

23 Ibid., see chapters 6 and 9. 24 Ibid., pp. 50-52.
between the landholding peasants and the landless peasants of the estates, whom one historian has called the "real victims." This differentiation of the peasantry decreased the possibility of any unified peasant mobilization, for with the passage of time those peasants who survived the tranformation to agrarian capitalism (in the east and west of Germany) increasingly identified themselves with the estate owners, as agrarian entrepreneurs and employers of agricultural workers.

The Junkers also gained because the emancipation of the peasants from the burdens of serfdom also relieved the Junkers from the obligations of lordship. One historian has even commented that the process of peasant liberation "degenerated into a movement dominated by the great estateowners."26

In the Revolution of 1848 (the final blow to "servile dues") the Junkers - though threatened by an alliance of bourgeois, proletariat and peasant - were able to secure their landownership because the bourgeoisie had no intention of challenging a basic tenet of their ideology, i.e. the inviolability of private property. To do so would have set a very dangerous precedent.27


Thus, in the process of peasant emancipation, the Junker estates remained intact, which meant in addition that: "The former paternal authority could be retained within the 'manorial district,' thus carrying part of the old overlordship into the new era."^{28}

In the west of Germany, the historical pattern of land tenure and the course of the peasants' emancipation from servitude led to a countryside of predominantly peasant farms, while in the east:

Abolition of servitude, of monetary and labor dues, did not mean for the aristocracy, as in the west, the loss of the class basis of existence as hitherto known; on the contrary, it cleared the path from the old manorial to a capitalist system of large estates.^{29}

Increasingly, towards the end of the nineteenth century, with the rapid development of German industry and the creation of a national market, the Prussian estates made the transition to the capitalist mode of production, their labor forces reflecting the past and the future.^{30}

Writing late in the century, Max Weber, in his study of the agricultural situation of eastern Germany, reported the changes on the estates:

Capitalism had gnawed at the social character of the Junker and his laborers. In the first half of this last century, the Junker was a rural patriarch. His farm hands...were by no means proletarians...they did not receive wages, but a cottage, land and the right of pasturage [et cetera]... Thus they were... agriculturists with a direct interest in their lord's husbandry. But they were expropriated by the rising valuation of land;

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^{28}Conze, "The Effects of," p. 67. ^{29}Ibid.

the lord withheld pasture and land, kept his grain, and paid them wages instead. Thus, the old community of interests was dissolved, and the farm hands became proletarians.\textsuperscript{31}

Weber also noted that the estate owners were replacing their German workers with the cheaper, seasonal labor of Polish and Russian migrant workers: "...since the maintenance of idle hands throughout the year would be too heavy a burden."\textsuperscript{32}

It, thus, appears that the Junkers had responded and were continuing to respond to the expanding national market by "modernizing" the social relations of production on their estates, but this was not entirely the case. To understand the changes which were taking place in rural eastern Germany, it is necessary to place those changes back into the context of the national unification and the development of capitalism and industry in Germany, where this analysis began.

Weber indicated the socio-economic pattern of the national unification when he wrote: "The east continued to be, and henceforth became more and more, the seat of agrarian capitalism whereas industrial capitalism tooks its seat primarily in the west."\textsuperscript{33} That is, the west had been industrializing prior to, and continued to do so during and after, the unification period. Western Germany had not experienced the "second serfdom" and the consequent inhibition of the development of a bourgeoisie. During the later eighteenth and into the nineteenth centuries the west German bourgeoisie borrowed heavily

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\textsuperscript{32}Ibid. \textsuperscript{33}Ibid., p. 380.
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from British industrializing experience and foreign capital (British, French, Belgian, Swiss) was significant in the capitalization of German industries. The bourgeoisie of western Germany favored unification to increase the size of their "domestic market" and provide for a strong protective tariff for their industrialization against west European industries.

Eastern Germany, which, though benefiting from west German economic development and the growth of the national grain market, did not experience industrial development comparable to that of the west. The Junker landowners were, therefore, opposed to a protectionist policy which might jeopardize their grain exports to Western Europe. Nevertheless, the Junkers were fervent nationalists, because they were opposed to the influence, and possible political leadership of Austria in a German federation.

Thus, supported by the west German bourgeoisie, hopeful to enlarge its markets and protect them, and favored by the Prussian ruling class, eager to unify Germany in a national structure excluding Austria, unification proceeded. It was finalized in the 1870's with the creation of the German Empire - which coincided with the Junkers'
movement towards favoring a protectionist policy against the growing competition of American and Russian grains.  

And yet, there was a contradiction in the Junkers' support for national unification (and industrial development), for it indirectly furthered a growing threat to their own existence as a class. The threat came not from the peasantry, whom they continued to dominate, but from the increasingly wealthy bourgeoisie, who were purchasing estates both for capitalist agriculture and to acquire the prestige of landed status. Thus, a process of capitalist encroachment upon the property base of Junker seigneurialism was occurring; a continuous process paralleling the unification and development of capitalist-industrialization. Peter Stearns has pointed out:

In Prussia, a third of the Junker estates were bought by members of the middle class between 1815 and 1848 alone. By 1885 about 87 per cent of east Prussian estates had changed hands... [throughout Central and Eastern Europe] increasingly many estates were administered by the middle class on a commercial basis.  

The transition from seigneurialism to capitalism, therefore, was not merely the commercial response of the Junkers to expanding market opportunities, as it might appear, but rather it may also have been a matter of survival. Weber himself had indicated it:

He would like to be a feudal lord, yet he must become a commercial entrepreneur and a capitalist. Other powers, rather than the Junker, endeavor to snatch the role of the landlord.


The industrial and commercial capitalist begin increasingly to absorb the land.  

Many Junkers lost their lands and devoted their conservative energies to the military and government of the German Empire; others attempted to maintain their "old patriarchal way of life" though it was uneconomical in the capitalist society that had developed; still others made the transition to capitalism. At the same time, the bourgeois purchasers of estates were not necessarily anti-aristocratic. They joined the Junkers in supporting the entailment of estates, which represented the "aristocratization" of their wealth. For Weber, the "marriage of iron and rye" increasingly meant the "amalgamation between a landed aristocracy corrupted by money-making and a capitalist middle class corrupted by aristocratic pretensions."  

Barrington Moore has written of the transition to capitalism in Germany:

Marx and Engels in their discussion of the abortive 1848 revolution in Germany, wrong though they were on other major features, put their finger on this decisive ingredient: a commercial and industrial class which is too weak and dependent to take power and rule in its own right and which, therefore, throws itself into the arms of the landed aristocracy and the royal bureaucracy, exchanging the right to rule for the right to make money.  

The "Prussian path" (as Lenin termed it) to agrarian capitalism,

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42 Ibid., p. 40.  
43 Barrington Moore, Jr., Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Lord and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World (Boston: Beacon Press, 1966), p. 437. He adds: "...even if the commercial and industrial element is weak, it must be strong enough (or soon become strong enough) to be a worthwhile political ally."
whereby the estates remain intact and the peasantry is proletarianized, was the path followed by most of the Eastern European societies. And yet, though similar in that seigneurial estates were transformed into capitalist estates, the transition was made in differing "political" circumstances. That is, while Germany was experiencing national unification, the empires of Eastern Europe (the Austro-Hungarian, and the East-Central European sectors of the Russian and Ottoman) were challenged by rising nationalism.

In the latter part of the eighteenth century, influenced by the ideas of the Enlightenment, the Hapsburg Monarchy sought to stimulate economic growth and development as well as "modernize" the empire, particularly Austrian society. Thus, the first steps toward peasant emancipation were decreed and the crown instigated and supported the Austrian nobility to participate in commercial and industrial activities with foreign capitalists and the wealthy, but limited, Austrian bourgeoisie:

Germans, Swiss, Italians and Greeks were prominent in domestic and foreign trade and connected activities. At the same time, many industrial entrepreneurs were of the nobility. Not only because they had resources at their disposal, often under-employed manpower and natural wealth (in forests and mineral deposits)

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44 The path "which condemns the peasants to decades of most harrowing expropriation and bondage." Lenin, "The Agrarian Problem," p. 239.

45 In South-Eastern Europe, Serbia and Bulgaria gained independence from the Ottoman Empire in the nineteenth century and in the process removed seigneurialism. (On this period, see Rich, The Age of Nationalism.)

46 These first steps refer to the acts taken between 1740 and 1790 by Maria-Theresa and Joseph II. See Rudé, Europe in the Eighteenth Century, pp. 34-35.
for which they saw new opportunities of gainful activity; but also because they had easier access to government subsidies, grants, and loans. Nevertheless, their pioneering role, in many cases undertaken at the Empress's instigation, was also indicative of the retardation of the bourgeoisie.47

Thus, in the Austrian regions of the empire, capitalist development began in the late eighteenth century - instigated from above - with the active participation of the landed aristocracy: which might be termed the "embourgeoisment" of the nobility.

In the countryside, on their estates, the aristocracy also expanded their commercial activity and even began some petty-industrial activities there. At first demanding increased payment of servile dues mixed with wage labor, but increasingly threatened by peasant unrest and recognizing the economic advantages of free, wage laborers, the Austrian landowners, it has been argued, welcomed the outcome of the 1848 revolution, i.e. peasant emancipation, because it opened the path for the entrepreneurial landowners to transform their estates to the capitalist mode of production.48 Of course, the aristocracy's attitude toward the emancipation of the peasants was conditioned by the terms of it, which, though providing more lands on more favorable terms to the peasants than the reforms in Prussia, was similar to the Prussian reform in that the landed aristocracy maintained ownership over the body of the estates and received some compensation for the loss of


48See Jerome Blum, Noble Landowners and Agriculture in Austria, 1815-1848 (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1948).
"feudal incomes." 49

The agrarian reform in Austria, therefore, left the estates strongly intact and created a class of free peasant landowners. The peasant landowners either succeeded on their holdings and increasingly identified with the conservative estate owners, or failed to keep pace and lost their lands, in which case they either went to work in industry or as wage laborers on the large estates which were undergoing capitalist transformation. 50 In the latter half of the nineteenth century, wage labor became increasingly common on the Austrian estates. The changes were carried out either by a modernizing noble landowner or a bourgeois purchaser or leaseholder. 51 And in this manner, similar to Germany, the peasantry was increasingly split between those owning land and the landless, who were being proletarianized: "...it must be remembered that interests conflicted not only between lords and peasants but also between peasant owners and landless proletariat." 52

Furthermore, the weak alliance between the bourgeoisie and the peasantry easily broke down following the 1848 Revolution - again, for reasons similar to those of Germany - and the bourgeoisie and landed aristocracy formed a ruling bloc under the monarchy. 53

49 Ibid., pp. 203-238.


52 Ibid., (Gross), p. 256.

ruling bloc was also conservative, but unlike German conservatism which was nationalistic and developmental, Austrian conservatism was antinationalistic in opposition to the nationalisms which threatened the coherence of the empire. And it has been argued that this seriously inhibited Austrian development:

The most advanced bourgeoisie in the Monarchy thus became a partner of the supranational forces which held the Empire together, although these were mostly the very groups whose interests were endangered by capitalism in general and rapid industrialization in particular.54

And if capitalist development and industrialization were slowed by the persistent power of the aristocracy in alliance with a conservative bourgeoisie, as in Austria, what would be the situation in those societies where the bourgeoisie was even weaker—or barely existed at all—in relation to the power of the landed aristocracy?

In Hungary, a semi-autonomous state in the Hapsburg empire, where the emancipation of the serfs paralleled that of Austria, the landed aristocracy maintained its hegemony even more effectively because of the more dependent position of the commercial class. As a result of the weak bourgeois impulse the Magyar landed aristocrats persisted in their seigneurial mold and the transition to a capitalist mode of production on the estates was slower.55 Also, the land tenure pattern of the Hungarian countryside was more characteristically latifundia-minifundia than in Germany and Austria, accentuating the peasants' dependence on the estate owners and leading to the gradual


55Conze, "The Effects of," pp. 77-78.
proletarianization of those peasants whose parcels were insufficient.\textsuperscript{56}

Furthermore, (and significantly with comparative reference to Spanish America), the weaker bourgeoisie in Hungary, compared to Germany and Austria, and the greater capitalization required for industrial development to be competitive, meant that to an even larger extent capital development would depend on foreign capital in alliance with the landed aristocracy and its commercial dependents.\textsuperscript{57}

It has been commented that: "...the strongly enhanced export of capital from Western Europe in the closing decades of the nineteenth century became the principal factor in the economic transformation of these countries."\textsuperscript{58}

Not only Western European capital, but also German and Austrian capital was heavily involved in the capitalist development of Hungary. And yet, the initially less significant Hungarian role increased from the latter half of the nineteenth century to become the principal force in Hungarian capitalist development,\textsuperscript{59} due to the growth and participation of the bourgeoisie, as well as the ever-increasing participation of the landed aristocracy.\textsuperscript{60} At the same time, the Hungarian economy and society were not so rapidly "modernized:"

"...the advanced economic fields of industry and banking were really only islands in an ocean of backward agrarianism burdened by the weight of traditional farming."\textsuperscript{61}

An even more extreme case was Rumania, where the peasantry was

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\textsuperscript{56}Ibid. \textsuperscript{57}Berend and Ranki, \textit{Economic Development}, p. 99.

\textsuperscript{58}Ibid. \textsuperscript{59}Ibid., pp. 100-104. \textsuperscript{60}Ibid., pp. 163-165.

\textsuperscript{61}Ibid., p. 165. Such a description also appears representative of Spanish America.
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finally emancipated from serfdom in 1864, but the estates remained intact and seigneurialism persisted. It was more extreme because industrialization in Rumania was not only instigated originally by foreign capitalists, but also because, to a great extent, it was limited to the extraction and exportation of petroleum. That is, capitalist enterprise stimulated less change due to its high concentration and the nature of the industry, and "...rural stagnation which often preserved pre-capitalist conditions was compatible with the powerful monopoly organizations..." But "stagnation" does not refer to the absence of commercial activity, for while seigneurial social relations persisted in Rumania the beginning of the twentieth century witnessed the country's becoming the second largest oil producer in Europe and "...fourth among the world's grain exporters... exporting about 40 per cent of its grain."

Thus, to summarize, in Eastern Europe where the bourgeoisie found it convenient or necessary to accept an alliance with the landed

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63Berend and Ranki, Economic Development, pp. 106-107. Also, see the work edited by Doreen Warriner, Contrasts in Emerging Societies: Readings in the Social and Economic History of South-Eastern Europe in the Nineteenth Century (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1965). She notes in the Introduction: "Apart from Hungary, what plainly failed to occur in these countries was the general rise of a capitalistic class, capable of transforming social attitudes and acting as a dynamic force. Even in Hungary the growth of capitalistic industry did not undermine or rival the power of the landowner." (p. 18.)

64Berend and Ranki, Economic Development, p. 165.

65Mitrany termed it "neo-serfdom." See The Land and the Peasant, chapter 4, pp. 63-91.

66Warriner, Contrasts, p. 21.
aristocracy in a conservative ruling bloc, the path to agrarian capitalism was carried out on the latifundia, and gradually the former serfs were proletarianized. Through a temporary alliance between the peasants and the liberal elements of the bourgeoisie, serfdom was finally eliminated; however, pushing the revolution further was beyond the goals of the bourgeoisie and they moved towards the alliance with the aristocracy. The peasants, on the other hand, were split between those securing landownership and those left landless. The more successful peasants, as petty entrepreneurs and employers, played a conservative political role thereafter and the landless peasants, being proletarianized, continued to be dominated by the estate owners. Barrington Moore has noted: "By themselves the peasants have never been able to make a revolution." But he added: "The allies that peasant discontent can find depends upon the stage of economic development that a country has reached and more specific historical circumstances." which leads to the issue of a peasant-worker alliance.

Peter Stearns wrote: "...the discontented classes could not easily cooperate," in referring to unrest in Eastern Europe in the latter half of the nineteenth century. In addition to the problem of the urban-industrial worker as consumer and the peasant as supplier, was the issue of "proletarian strategy." The middle class leadership of the workers' organizations and their representative parties were opposed to an alliance with the peasantry, whom they believed would eventually disappear as a class, submerging into the proletariat. Also,

67Moore, Social Origins, p. 479. 68Ibid., p. 480.
69Stearns, European Society, p. 306.
their "orthodox" interpretation of Marx - as well as predicting the disappearance of the peasantry - considered the peasantry a conservative political force, which it often was. Thus, when the workers sought support in the countryside it was from the agricultural workers, i.e. the rural proletariat, which further alienated the richer peasantry. The workers and the peasants did not form an alliance.

The latifundia did persist, but not unchallenged. Following the First World War, there was increased agitation for land reform by peasants and urban political groups; however, except for Rumania, the land reforms which were attempted were immobilized by the aristocratic landowners and the bourgeoisie. The estates persisted, and in the 1930's the aristocrats supported the Fascist and authoritarian regimes emerging in Eastern Europe:

The aristocrats in eastern and southern Europe were not solely responsible for the development of authoritarian systems of government, but they played a major role. Everywhere they had been under new attack; their political traditions were affected and their land bases threatened. The reaction had been swift and effective. Although the class in most instances had to accept new types of regimes, it managed to preserve some political power and succeeded, for the most part, in saving the large estates.

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70On this issue in Eastern Europe, see David Mitrany, Marx Against the Peasant: A Study in Social Dogmatism (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1951).

71Which is not to say that such an alliance was impossible, as the Russian Revolution indicates.


73Ibid., (Stearns), p. 332.
Persistence and Change in Spanish America

In Eastern Europe, the capitalist classes were weaker and more politically and economically dependent upon the traditional ruling classes of landed aristocrats than had been the earlier bourgeoisies of Western Europe. And, in the nineteenth century - though a temporary alliance between the bourgeoisies and the peasantries finally eliminated servile dues - the landed aristocrats maintained their estates intact and the bourgeoisies and the aristocracies with foreign capital, technology and enterprise, carried out "modernization from above."

Thus, if the process of modernization from above is left to its own course, the peasantry is doomed in the long run. It is only when external political elements intervene, which present the possibility of liberation and, above all, of proprietorship to the peasantry and the elimination of the latifundia or the manorial estate, that the process can be different.\(^\text{74}\)

In the late nineteenth century, a process similar to that which had been occurring in Eastern Europe began in Spanish America. That is, capitalist enterprise developed alongside the seigneurial relations of production which dominated the countryside. However, even more so in Spanish America, the landed "aristocracy" seemed to maintain its traditional seigneurial mode of production and domination.

The capitalist development of Europe, and especially the industrial revolution of the nineteenth century, increased the demand for the resources which the Spanish American countries could provide. Thus, European (and eventually, North American) capitalists either established enterprises in Spanish America with or without the participation of the national commercial classes, or made commercial arrangements with the

\(^{74}\)Kay, "Comparative Development," p. 86.
Spanish American commercial and landed classes. There was also in this period the appearance of a new entrepreneurial group in Spanish America, immigrants from Europe.

The world economy experienced in this period what has been described by one Latin American economic historian as the 'emergence of an international division of labor.'\textsuperscript{75}

In Mexico, during the last few decades of the nineteenth and first decade of the twentieth centuries - a period known as the Porfiriato, after the dictator, Porfirio Diaz - great amounts of foreign capital were invested in the development of the country's infrastructure (for example, Mexico's railway system) and the exploitation of the country's resources, as well as industrial activities.\textsuperscript{76} The major sources of foreign investment in Mexico were the United States, Great Britain and France. The United States' investors and enterprises were heavily involved in mining activities and railway development; the British invested mostly in the railway system and public services, as well as in the nascent petroleum industry; and the French were most active in commerce and industry. German investors were also interested in Mexico, to a lesser extent, and most of their


investments were in manufacturing industries.  

Although many of the investments were initiated and directed from abroad, leading to the term neo-colonialism, much of the capitalist development was carried out by foreigners who were resident in Mexico, and who were often immigrants intending to remain, in association with Mexican commercial groups. For example, in the early decades of the national period, many French merchants had established themselves in Mexico and not only expanded their commercial activities, but during the Porfiriato, invested in industries serving the Mexican market - however limited it was.  

The Mexican economic historian, Fernando Rosenzweig, has written of the role of foreign capitalists in Mexico:

> It is evident that many of the capitalists who arose in Mexico were foreigners. From the days of Antunano there were foreign residents among the merchants, artisans and small industrialists, and even consular agents that supported the creation of factories... Among the nationalists represented there were Frenchmen, Englishmen, Spaniards, Germans and North Americans whose feeling for economic opportunities contributed decisively to the formation of a capitalist mentality.

Geographically, though much of the economic development was located in the central region of the country, it was during this period that the rapid development of northern Mexico, centered on Monterrey, began, generated by foreign residents, immigrants, the Mexican mercantile and mining class (who were often major landowners too!), and

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77 Ibid., (Cosío Villegas), pp. 1149-1167.
78 Ibid., pp. 1118-1119.
additional foreign investment. At the same time, the southern regions of the country did not experience capitalist development comparable to the center and north of Mexico.

Mexico, thus, experienced capitalist development in the late nineteenth century, based on the growth of the national infrastructure and the exploitation of its mineral resources. However, in addition to this capitalist development oriented to the industrializing countries of Europe and North America, there was also the development of industrial activity for the growing, though still limited, domestic market.

In Peru, capitalist enterprise also emerged and expanded in the late nineteenth century; however, it was even more limited to the extraction of resources for export - though not totally so.

The first major extractive "industry" in the nineteenth century was the exploitation of the guano deposits along the Peruvian coast, which began in the 1840's and continued until the 1880's, dominated by British companies. And yet, although dominated by British firms, which were able to supply the capital necessary for "ships, warehouses,

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81 See Kirsten Appendini and Daniel Murayama, "Desarrollo desigual en México (1900-1960)," in Barkin, ed., Los Beneficiarios, pp. 128-137.

82 Guano is bird excrement, which served as an excellent source of fertilizer.

transportation, lodging and wages," the Peruvian commercial class also profited from the expansion of commerce, and they often invested those profits in coastal sugar estates. Furthermore, the income generated by the exports of guano financed the construction of railroads ("...and by 1878 it was possible to say that Peru was ahead of all Latin American countries in terms of railways") and other infrastructural projects.

The guano deposits, however, were not in infinite supply, and by the 1880's they were depleted. Therefore, although stimulating infrastructural development and enriching the traditionally wealthy mercantile class centered in Lima, the ephemeral nature of the guano deposits did not generate the creation of a proletarian class, particularly since the labor force had been predominantly "imported" Chinese workers.

Nevertheless, Peru was increasingly penetrated by foreign corporations. And expanding trade opportunities continued to enrich the mercantile class. Also, foreign immigrants arrived with "money and training" with which they established small industrial operations. Especially significant were those immigrant-entrepreneurs who started

84 Ibid., p. 17.
86 Cortes Conde, The First Stages, p. 27.
87 Ibid.
88 See Stewart, Chinese Bondage.
90 Ibid.
the Peruvian textile industry based on domestic sources of cotton and wool.  

It was also in this period that Peru experienced what one historian has termed, the "renacimiento minero." Beginning late in the nineteenth century, and expanding rapidly in the twentieth, foreign corporations, particularly United States ones, purchased mines and lands in Peru to exploit the rich copper deposits there.

In the extreme south of Peru there were large nitrate deposits which began to be exploited as the guano deposits were depleted, however, they were lost to Chile in the War of the Pacific (1879). Thus, in the last two decades of the nineteenth century, and continuing until the end of the First World War, it was Chile which received the income generated by the exportation of nitrates. The actual exploitation of the nitrate fields was carried out by Chilean and British capital with Chilean laborers.

Prior to the nitrate boom, copper had been the dominant mining industry and major mineral export of Chile, but in the last few decades of the century, Chilean copper suffered from cheaper foreign competition. In the early part of this century, technological advances made

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94 Cortes Conde, *The First Stages*, pp. 66-69; Kinsbrunner, *Chile*, pp. 105-111. For an interesting article on this subject, see Harold Blakemore, "Limitations of Dependency: an historian's view and case study," *Boletín de estudios latinoamericanos y del Caribe*, no. 18 (junio de 1975), pp. 74-87.

the exploitation of Chilean copper competitive and profitable again; however, the technological advances required higher capitalization favoring foreign enterprise. Thus, the expansion of copper mining in Chile was dominated overwhelmingly by foreign capital. Also, to stimulate its rapid expansion, the government did not tax the mining enterprises for the first twenty years (1904-1925).  

Nevertheless, the income generated from the nitrate boom had provided capital for infrastructural development. Also, in the last few decades of the nineteenth and the first few decades of the twentieth centuries, Chile experienced, similar to Mexico and Peru, the arrival of foreign immigrants with varying amounts of capital and entrepreneurial ability who established their own enterprises or became active in already established Chilean and foreign-owned companies. Thus, in Chile too, capitalist development resulted from foreign investment and enterprise, foreign immigrants' capital and entrepreneurial talents, and the ever-growing wealth of the Chilean commercial and mining class.

In Mexico, Peru, and Chile, the renewed exploitation of the "traditional" mineral wealth, and newer exploitation of "non-precious" mineral wealth, led to the expansion of capitalist enterprise and social relations of production. In Bolivia, also, where the social structure closely resembled that of the Peruvian highlands, it was the

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96Ibid., pp. 214-227.


resurgence of mining activities that initiated capitalist development:

...from the middle decades of the century Bolivian and foreign entrepreneurs were able to draw on the capital being generated by the English and the Chileans in the copper, nitrate, and guano mines along the coast. By the late 1860's capital began pouring into the altiplano and almost overnight production [of silver] began to climb dramatically.99

The resurgence of the silver mines continued until late in the century and then declined in significance, "and its preeminent place in the Bolivian economy had been taken by tin," which was increasingly in demand due to the industrial growth in the United States and Europe.100 Mining expansion also instigated the modest development of a railway system and other infrastructural projects,101 which increased in number in the early decades of this century, with the continued growth of the tin mining industry.102 There were also some light industrial factories established in this period, but they were relatively insignificant.103

Nor was Venezuela unlike the other Spanish American countries where history and society had been dominated by seigneurial landowners of varying orientations and degrees of involvement in the local and world economies and a commercial class eager to enter the landed

100Ibid., p. 31.
102Ibid., (Klein), pp. 58-59.
103Ibid., p. 59.
Aristocracy. As a Venezuelan historian has written:

The new and significant of this period [the first decade of the twentieth century] in the economic structure of Venezuela is represented by the form of production instigated by the investment of petroleum capital, that is, the introduction of the capitalist mode of production in the global system of pre-capitalist and latifundia relations of production.

Thus, foreign capital and enterprise, the immigration of potential entrepreneurs, and the participation of the national commercial and mineowning classes generated capitalist development in the Spanish American societies. Although it was often limited to the expansion of the exploitation and exportation of mineral and natural resources, the development of the infrastructure (particularly a railway system), and significantly — but less frequently — the establishment of manufacturing industries, it did give rise to an "urban-industrial" proletariat.

At the same time, what was the impact of the expansion of the world economy, the industrialization of the United States and Europe, and the development of the capitalist mode of production in Spanish America on the Spanish American countryside and the national and rural hegemony of the landed aristocracy?

The expansion of mining operations, although increasingly modernized and carried out by advanced industrial techniques and a "modern" proletariat, had always been compatible with Spanish American seigneurialism, because the mineowners - who were often landowners


themselves - were not in need of a national market for their resource exports. And, although foreign capitalists might interfere in rivalries amongst political elites, they would not necessarily welcome socio-political revolution and upheaval which might threaten their investments.

Nor would the arrival of entrepreneurial-immigrants, and their economic activities represent a threat to the ruling bloc of landowners, merchants and miners. Limited in numbers and socio-economically distant from the Spanish American masses, they did not challenge the Spanish American regimes. If their enterprises were successful, they could be absorbed by the ruling bloc.106

In fact, referring to this period, one historian has written "The Creole landowning aristocrats...never had it so good."107

Similarly, Frederick Pike has commented:

In their endeavors to conserve the sort of social structure inherited from the colonial past, the privileged classes in Spanish America sensed that they could combine their traditional ideals and values with the advantages of foreign capital.108

This referred to the fact that foreign capitalists' activities in the Spanish American countries also benefited the traditional ruling bloc of landowners and merchants. For example, the income and revenue generated by foreign investments in mining and similar operations


provided capital for infrastructural projects, reducing the need to tax the national propertied classes (if that were possible). In turn, infrastructural development benefited the merchants eager to expand their commercial activities and the landowning aristocracy, which was not opposed to markets and profits furnished by others. As Paul Baran wrote on the Third World:

The interests of these two groups run entirely parallel with those of the feudal landowners powerfully entrenched in the societies of the backward areas. Indeed, these have no reason for complaints about the activities of foreign enterprise in their countries. In fact, these activities yield them considerable profits. Frequently, they provide outlets for the produce of landed estates, in many places they raise the value of the land, often they offer lucrative employment opportunities to members of the landed gentry.109

What was the response of the Spanish American landowning class to the growing commercial opportunities of the export and domestic markets? To a certain extent, although one historian has termed the period a "renacimiento minero," it might very well be termed a "renacimiento señorial" with reference to the countryside.

In Mexico, where the resurgence of mining activities, the spread of a national railway system and infrastructural projects, and the beginnings of industrialization were generating capitalist development, the agricultural sector was also affected by new commercial opportunities.110 There was not merely a growing demand for foodstuffs in the mining, commercial and industrial zones, but also a growing export


market for uniquely regional agricultural products; for example, cotton from irrigated zones in northern Mexico, sugar from Morelos, and henequen from the Yucatan.

However, although commercialization increased, it was generally carried out in the traditional manner. The physical expansion of the Mexican latifundia by encroachment upon the Indian peasant communal landholdings was accelerated by commercialization, generating increased peasant uprisings and rural discontent.\textsuperscript{111} The landowners not only absorbed the peasants' land, but also sought to absorb and attach the peasants themselves as laborers on the estates. That is, commercial expansion was generating seigneurial expansion!

There is evidence that in certain regions of Mexico there was an increasing use of wage labor, but in fact - except in the northern states\textsuperscript{112} - the "wage" labor was merely an extension of the system of debt peonage (bondage). In comparing the Porfirian hacienda to the previous land and labor situation in rural Mexico, Fernando Rosenzweig has written:

> The consolidation of the Porfirian hacienda with its private property, market production and wage labor signified a triumph over the old state of things, but [the old state] persisted in peonage, that restricted the free mobility of the worker, in extensive exploitation of the land held in monopolistic ownership...in consequence there was little capitalization and dynamism in agriculture within the market economy.\textsuperscript{113}

\textsuperscript{111}Meyer, Problemas campesinos, pp. 116-152.


\textsuperscript{113}Rosenzweig, "El Desarrollo," p. 427. Later he wrote of "The resistance and incapacity of Porfirian agriculture to adapt to the
Frank Tannenbaum commented that: "the hacienda kept Mexican agriculture from being modernized."

In the Yucatan, on the henequen plantations, the social relations of production were basically that of slavery. Yaqui Indians, who had lost their lands in northern Mexico were forcibly relocated to the Yucatan plantations and attached to them along with impoverished Mayan peasants of the region.

In Peru, as well, commercialization instigated further seigneurial expansion. Similar to the process of latifundia expansion in Mexico, the commercial opportunities presented by the export market accelerated the encroachment on the Indian peasantry's lands by the estate owners in the Peruvian highlands. Land was not so much acquired for cultivation as for the grazing and herding of sheep and cattle to supply the export market with wool, hides and meat. Also, as in Mexico, rural discontent grew and expressed itself in banditry and localized Indian peasant uprisings.

Again, commerce did not "revolutionize" the mode of production circumstances created by the ascent of capitalism in the country."

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117 Ibid., ("The Place of the Peasantry"), p. 126 ff.
of the estates. One social historian has written of this period: "The latifundia was maintained in a state of technical and social archaism ... its labor force in a servile condition."\textsuperscript{118} And, because the sheep herding and ranching activities required less labor than the Indian peasantry's primitive cultivation, there was labor displacement, which provided workers for the mines and coastal plantations.

On the Peruvian coast, there was also a resurgence of economic activity on the plantations in the last decades of the nineteenth century, following the War of the Pacific, which had ruined them. Because the Chinese labor source was no longer available, the plantation owners turned to a system of labor recruitment called enganche: "...a traffic in Indian labor which gave the spurious impression of being based on free contract."\textsuperscript{119} By this system, Indian peasants were brought down from the highlands by middle-men (enganchadores) for seasonal and/or permanent employment on the coastal plantations and held there for as long as they were needed, by debt.\textsuperscript{120}

The Chilean countryside was also affected by the changing world economy. In the 1840's and '50's, Chilean landowners experienced a rapid increase in demand for wheat from California and Australia;\textsuperscript{121} however, the Pacific export market was limited, compared to the export market of later decades:

\textsuperscript{118}Piel, "El Problema de la tierra," p. 17.
\textsuperscript{119}Piel, "The Place of the Peasantry," p. 131.
\textsuperscript{120}Klaren, Modernization, pp. 25-30.
\textsuperscript{121}See Sergio Sepúlveda G., El Trigo chileno en el mercado mundial (Santiago: Editorial Universitaria, 1959), pp. 37-54.
From about 1860 on, rail and steam put European markets in reach of the peripheral zones. Chilean exports to England grew steadily while at the same time the northern mining districts and Santiago increased their demand for food.\textsuperscript{122}

The landowners' response was to increase the inquilinos' labor service and to expand the land area under cultivation.\textsuperscript{123} Beyond that, the landowners absorbed additional numbers of peasant families onto the estates from the ranks of the afuerinos. Arnold Bauer has written of Chilean agriculture of this period, placing it in comparative perspective:

Within the countries that supplied Europe's food in the nineteenth century, expansion created wholly new agrarian societies in some cases and provoked deep reform in others. In Chile, expansion took place within a traditional society and the effect was to strengthen the institutions already present.\textsuperscript{124}

Similarly, on Venezuela, it has been commented that foreign investment in capitalist enterprise and increased export opportunities led to the "fortification of the rural-latifundist economic structure."\textsuperscript{125}

Thus, to borrow the phraseology of Raymond Carr: "the change in the classical agricultural structure of Spanish America was achieved by a rearrangement of the traditional economy, by its expansion in space, not by any fundamental change."\textsuperscript{126}

It appears, therefore, that the impact of the world economy in


\textsuperscript{123}Ibid., pp. 1074-1083. \textsuperscript{124}Ibid., p. 1083.

\textsuperscript{125}Brito Figueroa, \textit{Historia económica}, p. 397.

\textsuperscript{126}See Chapter 2, page 51.
the late nineteenth century and into the twentieth century, on the Spanish American societies had the combined effect of generating the development of capitalist social relations of production, at the same time that it strengthened seigneurial relations of production in the countryside. The Spanish American societies were, thus, characterized by the coexistence of seigneurial and capitalist social relations, in a manner not dissimilar to that in which Leon Trotsky had described pre-revolutionary Russia, which he called: "combined development;" that is, "a drawing together of the different stages of the journey, a combining of separate stages, an amalgam of archaic with more contemporary forces."\(^{127}\)

In Eastern Europe, capitalist development was carried out from above and the transition to agrarian capitalism followed the Prussian path. That is, capitalist development in the countryside involved the proletarianization of the peasantry on the estates. The transformation of the social relations of production was accomplished either by the landed aristocrats themselves or - often - by the purchases (or renting) of the estates by members of the bourgeoisie, which, in turn, instigated the landed aristocrats to modernize their mode of production. But in Spanish America, although the landed "aristocracy" was often of "bourgeois" origins, the relations of production on the estates, while affected by the world economy and capitalist development in the national societies, remained more characteristically seigneurial. There are a number of possible explanations.

First, is that capitalist development had begun earlier in

Eastern Europe, particularly in Germany and Austria where the national bourgeoisies were most active in manufacturing industries rather than in merely export-extractive industries typical of Spanish America. Most comparable to Spanish America in this respect was Rumania, both a leading grain producer and petroleum exporter, where a seigneurial mode of production persisted longest. Thus, the East European bourgeoisies were more "capitalistically" challenging to the seigneurialism of the landed aristocrats, and their purchases and modernization of estates pushed the transition to agrarian capitalism.

Second, is that the Revolutions of 1848 and the earlier attacks on serfdom and servile dues forced a more rapid transition to capitalist social relations in Eastern European agriculture. There was no similar movement in the Spanish American societies in the nineteenth century (except perhaps against slavery) because "serfdom" did not exist by law.

Still a third possible explanation was the strength of the landowners' hegemony. The landed "aristocracy," as we have stated, was more open and available to successful members of the middle strata because entry to the class was based more on the fact of landownership than "aristocratic heritage or noble birth," as was the case in Europe. Thus, the hegemony of the landed class was strengthened by that class' openness and, to a certain extent, this meant that the norms and values of the seigneurial superstructure permeated the middle strata more effectively. 128

128 Furthermore, although it must be admitted that it has not been adequately treated herein, the racial-ethnic dimension lent (and lends) additional strength to class domination in Spanish America.
And yet, even in Spanish America, the impact, challenges, and influences of foreign capitalist enterprise and the expansion of national capitalist development and social relations began to "diffuse" the capitalist mode of production through the countryside.

In Mexico, as already indicated, while debt peonage and seigneurialism characterized the relations of production in central and southern rural Mexico (and the Yucatan), it appears that the estates of far northern Mexico were making the transition to the capitalist mode of production. There are several possible explanations for the changes on the northern estates. Freidrich Katz has suggested that the northern estate owners had to modernize the labor system or risk the loss of their labor forces to the mining or industrial centers developing in that region, to which the peons could escape and where they could secure employment. Another alternative for the peons was provided by the proximity of the U.S. border. Katz added that this factor - the alternative presented by mining, industrial centers, and the United States - also instigated the landowners into experimenting with more "modern" forms of paternalism.

Another possible explanation is that the northern Mexican estate owners were experiencing a challenge to their class basis of existence similar to that which the Junkers had experienced. That is, northern Mexican lands and estates were being purchased by foreign entrepreneurs (particularly North American) and were being operated capitalistically. Thus, both because they were forced to compete


131On the extent of foreign landownership in Mexico during the Porfiriato, see Tannenbaum, The Mexican Agrarian Revolution, chapter
and because the more enterprising landowners recognized the advantages to the capitalist mode of production, the transformation was being made. And because many of the northern landowners were also mine-owners and participants in industrial activities, the capitalist mode of production was being introduced onto the estates.

At the same time, it should be remembered, that while the far northern peasantry was being proletarianized, the peasants in the central and southern regions were laboring as "serfs" or "slaves," or being absorbed as such by the expanding seigneurial estates.

In Peru, it was the coast which, at the outset of the twentieth century, was being transformed into a region of capitalist plantations. In the early 1870's, coastal Peru had begun to experience an increased demand for sugar exports, and the guano boom brought new investment to the coast. One historian has commented that:

Now, perhaps more than at any time since the early eighteenth century, the planter aristocracy of the valley...were able to enjoy the seignorial life that had long been the ideal of Hispanic-Peruvian society.

However, the collapse of the guano boom, followed by the War of the Pacific, severely damaged coastal agriculture and "Some four decades later...almost all of these prominent planter families had

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133 Klaren, Modernization, p. 3.
disappeared from the valley.  

The planter aristocracy attempted to revive the estates and introduced the system of enganche-labor, but they were incapable of overcoming the decadence. In their place appeared a new group of entrepreneurs, foreign immigrants who purchased and modernized the plantations, as well as foreign corporations, like W.R. Grace & Co. In the last decade of the nineteenth century, and particularly in the first decades of the twentieth, these new landowners modernized the plantations, expanded the labor force via the enganche system and basically "industrialized" coastal agriculture. In the process, the Indian peasants of the enganche system became a distinctly proletarian class.

The cotton plantations of the coast were also experiencing a transition to more characteristically capitalist social relations of production, but not so rapidly as the sugar plantations. At the outset of this century, the cotton estates utilized several modes of production: Indian peasant yanacona, Oriental sharecroppers, and Negro laborers. But in the 1940's, there began a definite trend towards mechanization and the transformation of the labor forces of the estates into a proletarian class.

\[\text{References}\]

134 Ibid.  
135 Ibid., pp. 6-23.  
Highland Peru had persisted in its seigneurial framework; in fact, commercialization had furthered the expansion of the seigneurial relations of production. However, in recent decades even the sierra had begun to be penetrated by the capitalist mode of production and the proletarianization of the peasantry.\textsuperscript{139} Noting the changes which had been taking place in the 1950's, one Peruvian anthropologist wrote that: "...the traditional Andean hacienda is acquiring a new social and economic physiognomy...in imitation of the coastal haciendas."\textsuperscript{140} It should be added that the transformation begun was gradual and was often the result of foreign enterprise and/or coastal plantation owners purchasing highland estates.\textsuperscript{141}

In Venezuela, too, there was the emergence of capitalist social relations of production on new estates formed during the 1920's. The expansion of commercial agriculture may have been the cause of capitalist estate formation at the same time that it furthered the expansion of the traditional, seigneurial estates.\textsuperscript{142}

And in Chile, in the 1930's, there also began a trend towards proletarianization of the estates' labor forces,\textsuperscript{143} which became most

\textsuperscript{139}Vázquez, Hacienda, chapter 8, "Cambios en la estructura de la hacienda," pp. 43-48.
\textsuperscript{140}Ibid., p. 43.
pronounced in the 1950's. (This is especially interesting because it occurred simultaneously with a rapid decline in demand for Chilean wheat in the export market, and continued during the period when Chilean agricultural production was stagnating and the country became an importer of grains and foodstuffs.)

The proletarianization process appears to have been related to a "turnover" of landownership in rural Chile, not dissimilar to what had occurred in Prussia in the nineteenth century: "...between 1925 and 1960 some 60 per cent of the arable land in Chile's fertile central valley changed hands." That is, urban, bourgeois and middle strata purchasers were becoming estate owners and the impact of their ownership was the proletarianization of the peasantry. The Chilean estates were being transformed "consciously" by the introduction of the capitalist mode of production and mechanization in this period and, in a more subtle way, by the "dilution" of seigneurial relations. Furthermore, population growth in the countryside was enlarging the rural proletariat relative to the inquilinos.

Thus, in Mexico, Peru, Venezuela and Chile - at least on a regional basis - a transition to capitalist social relations of production had begun in a manner similar to the process which had occurred

150Ibid., pp. 28-29.
in Eastern Europe. And yet, unlike Eastern Europe, land reforms have occurred since the 1930's in the Spanish American societies which have both seriously challenged seigneurialism and, apparently, halted the proletarianization process.151

To understand both the beginning of the proletarianization process and the land reforms which halted it, the Spanish American countrysides must be placed within the larger context of their respective societies and the world economy.

**Populism, Capitalism and Land Reforms**

Introduced in the form of a contradiction, it can be stated that the same force which generated the proletarianization process also generated the land reforms which halted it. That is, the capitalist development generated by foreign enterprise, in cooperation with the landed aristocracies and commercial bourgeoisies, also generated the development of classes in those societies which provided the Spanish American peasantries with the necessary alliances against the landowners.

Somewhat relevant to this issue is the comment by George Lichtheim:

...to say that monopolistic capital tries to exploit foreign countries is to say that indirectly it helps to develop them - unless one make the totally unrealistic assumption that exploitation can be permanently divorced

151 The qualification made by the use of the word "apparently" refers to the uncertainty of Chilean political society and economy and the land reforms which have taken place, as well as the persistence - by their exclusion from the reforms, of capitalist estates in regions of the other Spanish American countries!
from development. It might be argued - and it surely must be - that the nature of the capitalist development carried out by foreign enterprise has not been (nor is) necessarily the type of capitalist development which would have been most beneficial for the societies involved. Nevertheless, it was that capitalist development - however incomplete and limited - which gave rise to those classes which have been most instrumental in the formation of the Spanish American "populist" alliances.

The Spanish American "populist" alliances have been multi-class movements which were politically formalized into parties, involving - with historical variation, depending on the particular country - the peasantry, a sector of the bourgeoisie (which Octavio Ianni has called the bourgeoisie "in formation"), the middle class, and the proletariat. They have, again, with variation, presented themselves in opposition to the ruling blocs (most often referred to as oligarchies) of landowners and mercantile bourgeoisies, and, what they argued was excessive foreign ownership and control of their national economies.

154 Ibid., pp. 60-65.
155 Also, see Gino Germani, Torcuato S. di Tella, and Octavio Ianni, Populismo y contradicciones de clase en Latinoamérica (Mexico: Ediciones Era, 1973).
156 Ianni, La Formación, pp. 60-65. It should be restated that the political histories of the respective countries are, of course, unique to the respective societies, but, at the same time, an especially common characteristic of the Spanish American societies has been the formation of these populist alliances and political parties.
In Mexico, the populist alliance developed out of the Revolution (1910-1920) and was formalized in the 1930's, under the leadership of Lázaro Cárdenas, in the creation of the Partido de la Revolución Mexicana (PRM).\(^{157}\)

The origins of this populist alliance were in the Mexican Revolution.\(^{158}\) The Revolution was directed against the dictatorship of Porfirio Díaz (1876-1910) and the landowning and mercantile oligarchy which had been strengthened by the activities of foreign capitalists.

In the central and southern regions of the country, the Revolution was characterized by peasants seeking the restoration of their village lands from the haciendas, which had always dominated rural Mexico and were now threatening to convert the countryside into "one large estate."\(^{159}\) At the same time, in the industrial and mining centers of the north - as well as on the railroads - the proletariat had been attempting to organize unions but were prevented from doing so, often forcibly, by the Díaz government. Thus, they, too, were opposed to the Díaz regime and the foreign capitalists for whom they

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\(^{157}\) The forerunner to the PRM was the Partido Nacional Revolucionario (PNR), but it was greatly reorganized by Cárdenas into the PRM. In the 1940's, with some slight revision, it became the Partido Revolucionario Institucional, which it has remained. See, on the political sociology of Cárdenas' administration, Arnaldo Córdova, La Política de masas del cardenismo (Mexico: Ediciones Era, 1974).


In addition to peasant resistance and rebellion, and labor unrest, there was also growing dissent within the Mexican bourgeoisie and the middle sectors - particularly in the northern states. James Cockcroft has written:

In spite of a record of having collaborated with foreign capital, Mexico's bourgeoisie was not immune to the pressures of foreign competition and economic nationalism. While some Mexican businessmen profited from collaboration with foreigners, others suffered an economic squeeze.

Thus, many families of the northern Mexican bourgeoisie, mine-owners and industrialists, moved in opposition to the regime because of its links with foreign capitalists who, as far as they were concerned, were monopolizing the Mexican economy. Significantly, many of the families were also being challenged by foreigners (especially from the United States) who were purchasing land and competing for the regional and export markets. Nationalism intensified when the government sold off large tracts of public land in the north, enabling foreigners to purchase huge acreage. It was even further accentuated when the government made grants of land to those foreign companies building the railways.

162 Ibid., (Cockcroft), p. 52.
Although the peasants and the proletariat provided the armies of the Revolution, it was the urban middle class and the bourgeoisie which often provided the leadership. Still, in the Constitution of 1917, the rights of labor were guaranteed, land reforms for the peasants were promised, and the State was provided with greater authority over the national economy and resources. However, the contradictions, competitions, and conflicts of the multi-class (populist) alliance which had emerged from the Revolution, inhibited any action from being taken to implement the intentions of the new constitution. (For example, landowners from the north opposed wide-scale land reforms which the southern peasantry had fought for.) Except for isolated circumstances, like the rise of a radical state governor, little effort was made to implement land reform and break up the latifundía.

At the same time, although the national government was failing to carry out the reforms intended, the countryside was not peaceful. Unrest characterized many rural areas and battles continued to break out between peasants and hacendados. Furthermore, labor union organizers were increasingly able to mobilize workers in the extractive and industrial centers, and even began to mobilize peasants and agricultural workers into syndicates.


168 Ibid. Also, see Arturo Anguiano, El Estado y la política obrera del cardenismo (Mexico: Ediciones Era, 1975), pp. 22-29.
The world economic depression of the 1930's regenerated the populist alliance in Mexico (and, as we shall see, instigated similar movements in the other Spanish American societies). The export economy declined and, in turn, reduced Mexico's ability to import manufactured consumer products.\(^{169}\) (Ianni has referred to this period as a "grand crisis para las oligarquías.")

The resurgent populism in Mexico brought Lázaro Cárdenas to presidential power (1934-40) and under his leadership the populist coalition was consolidated at the same time that reforms were carried out. In fact, they were two sides of the same process.\(^{170}\) The peasants were organized into the Confederación Nacional Campesina (CNC), which became one of the corporate bodies of the PRM, and were supported against the landowners.\(^{171}\) The result of peasant mobilization with government support was a wide-scale land reform by expropriation, which, though not affecting all latifundia, effectively eliminated seigneurialism in Mexico.\(^{172}\)

The workers' movement, like that of the peasants, was strengthened by government support, and the workers' unions were mobilized into a single federation incorporated as a body into the PRM.\(^{173}\) The workers' demands were supported by the government against Mexican and foreign enterprises - particularly foreign ones. In fact, government support of labor led to the nationalization of the railways and

\(^{169}\) Furtado, Economic Development, pp. 39-42.

\(^{170}\) See Córdova, La Política de masas. \(^{171}\) Ibid., pp. 93-122.

\(^{172}\) Gutelman, Capitalismo y reforma agraria, pp. 105-111.

\(^{173}\) Córdova, La Política de masas, pp. 67-92; and Anguiano, El Estado y la política obrera.
foreign petroleum companies, which strengthened national capitalism.\textsuperscript{174}

Under Cárdenas, the Mexican bourgeoisie, which had dominated the populist alliance, was strengthened in its domination—though it had to accept the necessity of the populist reforms—and was enlarged through the admission of middle class elements.\textsuperscript{175} And it was during this period, i.e., the depression and the Cárdenas administration, that the government supported Mexican capitalists in order to stimulate industrialization via import-substitution.\textsuperscript{176} The bourgeoisie, as such, was not represented as a distinct body in the party, but is now represented formally, to the extent that it is necessary, in the "popular sector," i.e., a third corporate body consisting of middle class organizations, and in business leaders' associations.\textsuperscript{177}

Thus, the populist alliance which emerged from the Mexican Revolution, dominated by the Mexican "bourgeoisie in formation," harnessed the unrest of the peasantry to oppose the oligarchy of landowners and the commercial bourgeoisie. In this way, the peasants secured the alliance which enabled them to eliminate the seigneurial haciendas, and in the north prevent their proletarianization, by granting them proprietorship; which they were unable to accomplish by themselves. (It should be noted, however, that not all of the latifundia were

\textsuperscript{174}Cumberland, Mexico, pp. 308-317. See Howard F. Cline, The United States and Mexico (New York: Atheneum, 1963), pp. 226-238.

\textsuperscript{175}On Mexico and Cárdenas, see Frederick B. Pike, Spanish America, pp. 47-52.

\textsuperscript{176}Ibid., and Anguiano, El Estado, pp. 94-105.

\textsuperscript{177}See L. Vincent Padgett, The Mexican Political System (Boston Houghton Mifflin Co., 1966), pp. 123-136, on the "formal" organization of the middle class and bourgeoisie.
Many capitalist estate owners, particularly in the north, were able to maintain ownership of their lands by several means. These "neo-latifundists" manage their estates capitalistically, that is, they employ a propertyless agricultural proletariat, not an "attached" peasantry.\(^\text{178}\)

The populist alliance, formalized by Cárdenas in the PRM, has persisted, but it is no longer populist. Beginning under Cárdenas, the populist alliance has become a national corporate structure dominated by a public and private bourgeoisie. James Petras has described such a corporate structure:

\[\text{...the corporatist approach, whereby the government controls and directs lower-class associations and links them with existing economic elites in an attempt to encourage collaboration for national development.}\]^\text{179}

In 1952, Bolivia also experienced a populist revolution which finally challenged and eliminated seigneurialism in the countryside. There, even more than in Mexico and the other Spanish American societies, seigneurialism had persisted as the mode of domination and production. The capitalist development which had occurred in Bolivian society was based, in particular, on mining, and though there had been infrastructural and industrial development, it was limited. By the 1930's, the Bolivian ruling bloc:


\[^{179}\text{James Petras, Politics and Social Forces in Chilean Development (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969), p. 5. Also, see pp. 199-203 for a contrast of populism and corporatism.}\]
...consisted of hacendados, mine owners, leading merchants, bankers and the new industrialists, ...and made up a self-conscious oligarchy...which directed the socio-economic and political life of the nation... [and was] United by close ties of marriage, common absentee ownership of estates, etc.] 180

However, as Herbert Klein recognized, "...the oligarchy could not rule the nation alone, and depended for its political power on the constantly expanding numbers of the urban middle class." 181 And, 

With the development of the middle class there also emerged an urban proletariat...With the rise of light industry and heavy mining, the growth of government service and, most important, with the development of the communications and transportation network, a new type of industrial wage worker came into being. And with his emergence, almost exclusively confined to the urban and mining areas, there now appeared on the Bolivian scene a modern labour movement. 182

The hegemony of the oligarchy remained stable until the nineteen thirties; however, during that decade two events began to shake the foundation of that hegemony and generated challenges to its domination: the world economic depression, and the Chaco War (1932-35) with Paraguay.

The depression led to a decrease in demand for Bolivian tin in the world market and forced a further decline in its price, which had already been the trend since the end of the First World War. 183 This led to a slowdown in mining operations which resulted in growing unemployment amongst the Bolivian mineworkers. 184 Furthermore, the depression in the tin mining industry led to declining revenues upon

180 Klein, Parties and Political Change, p. 168.
181 Ibid. 182 Ibid., p. 60. 183 Ibid., pp. 107-108.
184 Ibid., pp. 117 ff.
which the government depended for its income and, in turn, the middle
class' position was weakened: "Increasingly, the economic situation
began to occupy the public mind, and added new cause for unrest..."185

Though the entry of Bolivia into the Chaco War at first reduced
social tension by creating nationalist fervor, Bolivia's defeat
generated increased unrest amongst the middle class and proletariat.
Robert Alexander has written that: "The Chaco War made the Revolution
of 1952 inevitable."186

Not only did the middle and working classes begin to question
the hegemony of the oligarchy, the war also had an impact on the
countryside. The mobilization of the peasantry to fill the ranks of
the army on the front line disrupted rural life and the seigneurial
mode of domination:

In the aftermath of the Chaco War the masses showed signs of increasing restlessness. Many
Indian conscripts into the Bolivian army, now
that they had been given some of the rudiments
of a primary education and afforded a new
vision of their country and their position in
it by being uprooted and forced out of the
confines of their native localities, proved
reluctant to revert to their old style of life
once the war ended.187

Peasant unrest had manifested itself previously (as, for example,
in the late nineteenth century, Indian peasant resistance to the
expanding haciendas); however, unlike previous periods of peasant
unrest, the peasantry now possessed "potential" allies - though by no

185Ibid., p. 108.
186Robert J. Alexander, The Bolivian National Revolution (New
187Pike, Spanish America, p. 63.
means guaranteed, as evidenced by Eastern Europe - in the middle and proletarian classes. Following the Chaco War, the first attempts were made to organize the peasants, carried out by mineworkers who still maintained their ties with their peasant-village origins, and by dissident members of the middle class.\textsuperscript{188}

In the urban and mining centers new political parties were formed, ranging from neo-fascist to neo-marxist (and combinations of the two!). The two most significant parties were the Movimiento Nacional Revolucionario (MNR) - based on middle class support and including dissatisfied army officers - and the Partido de la Izquierda Revolucionaria (PIR) - based on organized labor's support.\textsuperscript{189} The MNR was nationalistic, and included both neo-fascist and neo-marxist elements, while the PIR was marxist and radical nationalist.\textsuperscript{190}

The ruling bloc was under increasing political pressure from the middle and working classes. And yet, it succeeded in forming, via its own representative parties, temporary governing alliances with both of the new parties - first with the MNR, and then with the PIR. But what resulted, by the late 1940's, was increasing working class support for the MNR at the expense of the PIR, while the MNR "retained full support of its urban middle-class elements."\textsuperscript{191} Furthermore, during the same period of the nineteen forties, the MNR was active in the countryside


\textsuperscript{190}Ibid., pp. 338-341. \textsuperscript{191}Ibid., p. 383.
mobilizing the peasantry.\textsuperscript{192}

Thus, the MNR was becoming "a newly amalgamated party of middle-class and worker elements," and although dominated by the middle class, the incorporation of more radical working class demands into its program meant the MNR "represented a new type of radical populist movement."\textsuperscript{193} In 1952, the MNR staged what has become known as the Bolivian Revolution. Supported by the middle class and the proletariat the MNR took control of the government, and "to begin with...the entire tin industry was nationalized in October 1952."\textsuperscript{194} But what about the countryside?

Much more rapid and much less violent than the Mexican Revolution, the Bolivian Revolution had not mobilized the peasantry, and although the new MNR regime made some pronouncements about land reform, little serious action was taken to implement it. However, the rural organizing which had already taken place, and which was renewed at a more rapid pace now that the urban revolution had been effected, roused the peasantry to implement its own land reform through land invasions! In order to harness the peasant movement somewhat, and identify itself with the reforms begun by the peasantry, the MNR government rapidly approved a land reform law and gave full support to the peasants' actions.\textsuperscript{195} Thus, the latifundia were expropriated and seigneurialism


\textsuperscript{193}Ibid., (Klein), p. 401.  \textsuperscript{194}Ibid., p. 403.

was eliminated from rural Bolivia. 196

In Bolivia, as in Mexico, the populist alliance was dominated by elements of the bourgeoisie "in formation" and the middle class, though it was necessary to carry out the reforms demanded by the proletariat and the peasantry (or accept what had already been set in motion) in order to consolidate and maintain the alliance. Frederick Pike has written:

In revolutionary Bolivia, as in revolutionary Mexico, steps were taken to facilitate the growth of a new capitalist elite at the same time as the quiescence of the masses was assured... 197

However, by the early nineteen sixties, the inherent contradictions of the populist alliance - that is, meeting the demands of an aggressive workers' movement while, at the same time, furthering the development of a national bourgeoisie and national capitalism - caused its dissolution, and:

Rejecting its rather uneasy partnership with organized labor, the middle class has now aligned itself with the organized peasant groups in frank opposition to labor and the extreme left. 198

And, paralleling the collapse of the populist alliance was the


197 Pike, Spanish America, p. 69.

198 Klein, Parties and Political Change, p. 408. In a footnote the author states that: "The middle class was now composed of...: the merchants, industrialists, small miners, and a group which became known as...los nuevos ricos, the members of the MNR and their supporters who grew wealthy on the U.S. aid programmes and the vast increase in the government bureaucracy."
development of the corporate socio-political structure and political economy which now characterizes Bolivian society, similar to Mexican corporatism, except for the position of labor.\textsuperscript{199}

In Venezuela, a populist alliance also began to develop in the nineteen thirties and emerged in the political party Acción Democrática (AD).\textsuperscript{200} Under middle class leadership, Acción Democrática forged a populist alliance with labor, i.e. the workers in the foreign-owned petroleum industry, and with the peasantry and emerging rural proletariat.\textsuperscript{201}

The 1930's was a period of crisis for the Venezuelan ruling bloc, particularly the traditionally dominant landowning class. In addition to the death of the dictator, Juan Vicente Gómez, under whose dictatorship (1908-35) the ruling bloc had prospered due to the revenues on the foreign-owned petroleum companies and the growing demand for export crops produced by the Venezuelan latifundia, there was the crisis caused by the depression.\textsuperscript{202}

The commercialization of Venezuelan agriculture and the expansion of the latifundia had originally been accomplished by the incorporation of independent minifundist-peasants onto the estates in seigneurial


\textsuperscript{201}Ibid., pp. 255-286.

\textsuperscript{202}Ibid., pp. 255-286.
relations of production, and, as we have seen, during the 1920's there also appeared capitalist estates where the peasantry was being proletarianized. However, in the late nineteen twenties, and into the thirties, the depression halted the growth of Venezuelan agriculture and many estate owners began to lose their lands. John Duncan Powell has written:

Regardless of whether the estate operations that spread under Gómez were classic latifundia or rudimentary enserfment of increasing numbers of peasants meant that they were being drawn into an onerous relationship with a privileged class. When commercial agriculture began to fail in the 1920's and continued to decline during the 1930's, conditions on both types of operation undoubtedly grew worse. Wages were lowered, working hours extended, housing and feeding arrangements cut to a minimum cost to the owner. Faced with dropping prices and increased carrying costs for operational credits, landowners adopted these and other manipulative extractions to keep a desperate situation from getting even worse. Thus, the landowning class attempted to pass on the impact of the failure in commercial agriculture to the rural labor force.203

In the midst of the worsening situation in the countryside, there were reports of peasant unrest, social banditry, and even small-scale uprisings.204 This peasant unrest did not go unharnessed politically. Middle class political parties, which had begun to develop during the last few years of the Gómez dictatorship, became more active following his demise and Acción Democrática emerged in embryonic form. It was formally founded in 1941.205

It was in this period, and into the first half of the 1940's, that Acción Democrática began - successfully - to build a populist

base amongst the proletariat and the peasantry. And in 1945 the party participated in a coup with reformist elements of the military. Thus, it gained access to state power which it held only until 1948.\textsuperscript{206}

During those three years, AD initiated reforms characteristic of the populist alliance it represented. It negotiated and secured 50 per cent of the returns of the foreign-owned petroleum industry with which it funded a national development corporation to stimulate national capitalist-industrialization. At the same time, it supported the consolidation and expansion of the labor movement and workers' organizations. In the countryside, AD supported the organization of syndicates to represent the peasants in their demands against the landowners and, at the same time, harness the peasantry's political support for itself. Furthermore, and most significantly, AD outlined and initiated a land reform which involved the expropriation - with compensation - of privately owned lands.\textsuperscript{207} However, in late 1948, the oligarchy responded to the threat of reforms with a coup carried out by conservative elements of the military, and until 1958 the labor and peasant movements were suppressed and the first attempts at land reform were reversed.\textsuperscript{208}

And yet, the populist alliance survived a ten year, conservative military dictatorship and re-emerged in the late 1950's. The reaction in the countryside to the return of Acción Democrática to state power was peasant land invasions to restore the reforms which had begun ten

\textsuperscript{206}Ibid., pp. 49-80; and Powell, \textit{Political Mobilization}, pp. 50-64.

\textsuperscript{207}Ibid., (Martz), pp. 81-88; and (Powell), pp. 65-86.

\textsuperscript{208}Ibid., (Martz), pp. 89-96; and (Powell), pp. 87-99.
years previously and to carry them further. The governing coalition led by Acción Democrática sought to regain control of the peasant movement and the land reform - which it did - but first it had to accept the de facto reforms carried out by the peasants themselves.\textsuperscript{209}

After the initial reforms - often de facto recognition of the peasantry's efforts - between 1959 and 1961, the land reform process has slowed down and the peasantry has been harnessed and retained as a major class base of support for AD, along with much of the labor movement. Nevertheless, seigneurialism appears to have been seriously challenged as a result.

At the same time that the bourgeoisie "in formation" has consolidated its hegemony by carrying out a gradual land reform program financed by petroleum revenues, it has also been able to expand social services and finance further capitalist development from the same source. Thus, in Venezuela too, the elimination of seigneurialism has been the product of a populist alliance which provided the peasantry with class allies, enabling it to challenge the landowning class.

Unlike Mexico and Bolivia, however, Venezuela has not been characterized by a change from populism to corporatism - in part due, perhaps, to the luxury of the petroleum revenues.

Peru and Chile represent variations on the theme of Spanish American populist alliances and the elimination of seigneurialism.

The Peruvian political party, \textit{Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana} (APRA), which was founded in the 1920's and developed into a populist alliance during the decade which followed, though it served

\textsuperscript{209}Ibid., (Powell), pp. 103-114.
as the "classical" model for Spanish American populist parties, never
secured state power. And yet, it has remained a significant poli-
tical element in Peru. Significantly, it has been APRA's strongest
opponent, the Peruvian military, which has carried out the populist
reforms advocated by, and historically associated with, APRA itself.

Beginning as a small group of radical, middle class student
intellectuals who were driven into exile, or underground in the 1920's,
APRA arose during a period of Indian peasant rebellion in the highlands
(in resistance to the continuing encroachment of the latifundia upon
their lands) and attempts at organizing the agricultural proletariat
on the coastal plantations. But a dictatorship maintained the
oligarchical domination of Peruvian society, and revenues on foreign
capitalist enterprise operating in the country supported it.

APRA re-emerged in Peru in 1930, during the depression, which
had a severe effect on the Peruvian economy and weakened the hegemony
of the ruling bloc over the middle class and proletariat. In the
next few years, APRA sought to create a populist alliance under its
leadership, and began - quite successfully - to mobilize elements of
both the middle class, which was increasingly disenchanted with the

210Grant Hilliker, The Politics of Reform in Peru: The APRISTA
and Other Mass Parties of Latin America (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins

211Julio Cotler, "Political Crisis and Military Populism in
Peru," in Studies in Comparative International Development, vol. 6,
no. 5 (1970-71), pp. 95-118.

212Pike, Spanish America, p. 110; and Klaren, Modernization,
pp. 39-49.

213Ibid., (Pike), p. 112. Also, on the political history of this
period, see Pike, The Modern History of Peru, pp. 250-281.
ruling bloc of landowners and commercial bourgeoisie linked to foreign capitalists, and the proletariat, particularly the coastal plantation workers and industrial workers of the textile industry. APRA also began to penetrate the Peruvian highlands, and the possibility of an urban-peasant alliance grew.

However, APRA's attempts to achieve state power through a populist alliance, at first by elections and then via a violent uprising in northern coastal Peru, were prevented and suppressed, respectively, and APRA's leadership was again forced into exile, or underground. The oligarchy was so opposed to APRA - and, perhaps, fear "populist revolution" - that it even supported Communist Party activities amongst the workers to reduce APRA's strength.

From the late 1930's to the late 1950's, the oligarchy maintained its dominant position; however, the coastal-commercial bourgeoisie and plantation owners had become far more powerful than the seigneurial estate owners of the sierra and were steadily moving into the highlands. As has already been noted, capitalist social relations of production began to diffuse into the agrarian sector of the sierra.

But the proletarianization of the peasantry and continuing encroachment of the latifundia upon the peasantry's lands did not go

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217Chaplin, The Peruvian Industrial, p. 77.
unchallenged. In the early 1940's, and again in the late 1950's, APRA was permitted to participate openly in the political process (and during the other years had done so more subtly). Although APRA ceased to be a "revolutionary" party it remained essentially populist and active in the labor movement and even amongst the peasantry. In addition to APRA's work amongst the peasantry, there were more radical political groups becoming active in the sierra. And, similar to Bolivia, there was a "backwash" effect from the mining and urban industrial centers. That is, the workers provided experience - and often leadership - in labor organization and mobilization, which they brought back with them to the villages. (In the same way that the capitalist mode of production was being diffused through the rural highlands, so was working class organizational experience!)

The combination of the gradual proletarianization of the estate peasantry (which may be gradual on a regional basis, but can occur rather suddenly on the estate level!), and the persistent struggle between the Indian peasant villages and the estates, which were now not only losing ownership of their lands but also possession of them, with the peasants' growing awareness that the landowners' hegemony was weakening, led, in the late 1950's, to strikes on the haciendas and land occupations by the peasants. Increasing in intensity and

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219Huizer, *Peasant Rebellion*, pp. 73-83.


221Ibid., pp. 141-147; for a case study, see Giorgi Albert, "The Breakdown of Provincial Urban Power Structure and the Rise of Peasant Movements," in *Sociologia Ruralis*, vol. 12, no. 3-4 (1972), pp. 315-333.
territorial extent, by the early 1960's the Peruvian sierra was experiencing what seemed to be the beginning of a peasant revolution.\(^{222}\) However, the government utilized the military to suppress it.

And yet, Peruvian society had been changing since the nineteen twenties and thirties, and the military had also.\(^{223}\) The ruling bloc, though still composed of the landowning aristocracy and the coastal bourgeoisie, was no longer dominated by the seigneurial landowning class, but by the bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie itself was experiencing internal conflict between the commercial bourgeoisie and the bourgeoisie "in formation," composed of industrialists and developmental sectors of the middle class.\(^{224}\) And the Peruvian military, not unlike other Latin American militaries, was also becoming middle class.\(^{225}\)

> In many respects Peru's officer corps constituted a microcosm of the country's...middle sectors. By the 1960's, most of the officers, even generals, came from a middle-class background, and felt a sense of exclusion and frustration in their relations with the top social elite, which they began to refer to with increasing disdain as a plutocracy.\(^{226}\)

Thus, though the military suppressed the growing peasant revolution, it did not seek to restore seigneurialism in the highlands. At the same time that it restored order in the countryside, it supported

\(^{222}\)In addition to Huizer, Cotler and Portocarrero, and Hobsbawm, see Howard Handelman, *Struggle in the Andes: Peasant Political Mobilization in Peru* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1975).


\(^{226}\)Pike, *Spanish America*, p. 162.
a new "populist" political party, Acción Popular, in attempting to initiate reforms, (which also served to keep APRA from gaining hold of state power!). However, the populist-civilian government proved too inefficient and too slow to satisfy either the peasantry or the military.227 Peasant unrest continued to threaten, and compounded by other events, the military took power in 1969 and initiated the populist reforms which, as we have stated, were historically associated with APRA.228 A Peruvian sociologist, Julio Cotler, has written:

The Armed Forces saw the need to institute reformist measures which would attack the country's archaic structure and thereby neutralize the emerging popular masses - which might otherwise become an irrepressible force - while at the same time reducing foreign dependence.229

In Mexico, Bolivia, and Venezuela, populist political parties - dominated by the bourgeoisie "in formation," with the middle class - secured state power and initiated reforms, which included supporting the peasantry in eliminating the seigneurial latifundia. And in Mexico and Bolivia, populism gave way to corporatism. In Peru, the populist political party, APRA, never secured power and the quasi-populist party of the early 1960's, Acción Popular, failed to accomplish anything substantial. It was the military, in a "middle-class military coup," which carried out the populists' reforms.230 And


similar to Mexico and Bolivia, it has pursued the development of national capitalism through national corporatism.  

In the countryside, the military has instituted wide-scale reforms. The predominantly foreign-owned sugar plantations along the coast have been expropriated and are supposed to become workers' cooperatives (though, thus far, they appear to have become state farms) while in the sierra the latifundia have been turned over to the peasants and lands have been restored to the Indian peasant communities, which are being supported in efforts to form cooperatives.

However, former landowners do not lose everything in the reform process. They have received bonds as compensation which they have been encouraged by the government to invest in urban-industrial enterprises, while the peasants who receive the land are expected to pay for it over a period of time. This has led at least one observer to write:

The peasants will be bound more closely to the land, and will agree to pay up because of their desire for security, while the hacendados turn themselves into industrialists.

Nevertheless, seigneurialism has been eliminated from rural Peru.

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233A major problem, which also arose in Bolivia, was conflict over the land between colonos, i.e. peasants on the estates, and comuneros, i.e. Indian peasants whose lands had been lost to the estates.

Eric Hobsbawm has written, summing up the change in the countryside and the role of the peasantry:

In the early 1960s the land invasions were indeed sufficiently overwhelming in the central highlands and...sufficiently serious in other parts of the highlands to cause the highland hacienda system to collapse. But unlike Marx's proletariat, the spontaneous force of the peasantry, though capable of killing landlordism, was unable to dig its grave. It made Agrarian Reform inevitable. But it took an army coup, after several years of shilly-shallying, to bury the corpse of the highland haciendas.\(^{235}\)

What there had been on a populist alliance in Chile prior to the nineteen sixties and the emergence of the Christian Democratic Party, was a governmental coalition known as Frente Popular (Popular Front), which was formed in the late 1930's.\(^{236}\)

As we have seen, the Chilean ruling bloc, consisting of the landed aristocracy and the commercial and mining bourgeoisie (as well as the still limited industrial group), had formed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.\(^{237}\) At the same time, the capitalist development of the period had also created an urban middle class and proletariat.\(^{238}\)

Although the Chilean middle class "...on the whole remained content to serve as the guardians of the aristocracy,"\(^{239}\) it was


\(^{237}\)Pike, "Aspects of Class Relations"

\(^{238}\)An interesting, though brief, analysis of Chile in this century is, Oswaldo Sunkel, "Change and Frustration in Chile," in Claudio Veliz, ed., Obstacles to Change in Latin America (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), pp. 116-144.

\(^{239}\)Pike, Spanish America, p. 95.
represented in Chilean political life in a decidedly middle class political party, the Radical Party, which played an increasingly significant role in governmental alliances in the nineteen twenties and thirties. Meanwhile, the proletariat was struggling to organize itself into labor unions, which were often linked to a variety of socialist political parties. Thus, the middle class and the proletariat were incorporated into Chilean electoral politics in separate political parties. The peasantry, meanwhile, remained within the framework of the seigneurial mode of production and domination, and though their numbers were declining relative to the urban classes, they were an invaluable source of votes for the landowners' candidates.

The depression of the thirties, and the Communists' willingness to participate in anti-Fascist alliances, led the Radical party - now "...made up of largely middle-sector urban interests and including many powerful industrialists." - to form the Popular Front with a coalition of leftist-socialist parties. The Popular Front was dominated by the Radicals, thus, although it was a middle class and proletarian alliance, it resulted mostly in benefits for the middle class and the industrial bourgeoisie:

On the one hand, the Popular Front made considerable progress in creating an industrial infrastructure, broadening the base of social participation beyond a small elite, and increasing conscious government involvement in

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241 Petras, Politics and Social Forces, p. 262.

242 Pike, Spanish America, p. 97.
the development process.
On the other hand, these changes tended to enrich the upper and middle class in status, wealth, and power, at the expense of the workers and peasants.243

The Radical-dominated Popular Front sought to stimulate industrialization and established a governmental development agency (CORFO) which became a "partner" to private capitalist development.244 The labor movement also expanded during the Popular Front years (which lasted, with changes in the coalition, until 1950) through unionization, in great part due to the expansion of industry.245

In Mexico, Bolivia, Venezuela and Peru this period experienced populist alliances which included - or seriously threatened to include - the peasantry, but in Chile the Popular Front, though it represented a further decline in the landowning class' national political power, did not threaten the hegemony of the landowners in the countryside. And the bourgeoisie "in formation" became "socially and politically integrated into the old oligarchy" - if it was not derived directly from it.246

But neither did the middle class, nor proletariat pursue change in the countryside. As Arnold Bauer explains:

By the late 1930s and into the 1940s, organized labor threatened to extend its influence into the countryside and rural workers began haltingly

243Petras, Politics and Social Forces, p. 132.

244Weaver, "Growth Theory and Chile," p. 59; and Sunkel, "Change and Frustration," pp. 122, 135.

245Angell, Politics and the Labour Movement, p. 54.

to develop an 'exacting temperament' and push for better salaries and conditions. As this occurred, the landowners rattled the sabre of higher agricultural prices. It was obvious to urban politicians that if higher food prices were allowed they would cut into the earnings of the flourishing industrial sector and create political problems with the urban mass. Under these circumstances, the industrialists, the proletariat and the landowners struck a mutually beneficial bargain at the expense of the rural workers: the landowners agreed to accept controls on agricultural prices in return for a hands-off policy in the countryside. Rural workers were not permitted to organize; protests were squelched.247

The countryside was not experiencing widespread unrest. The peasant protests were extremely limited. However, that they occurred at all indicated that the impact of the capitalist classes was being felt in the countryside. That is, both socio-culturally, through increased communications, and socio-economically, as the bourgeoisie and the middle class purchased land and proletarianization gradually diffused through the countryside, seigneurialism was in decline.

That neither the bourgeoisie nor the middle class, nor the urban proletariat, supported peasant mobilization during this period, as in Mexico, Bolivia, Peru and Venezuela, indicates not only the extent of the integration of the bourgeoisie into the ruling bloc, but also shows that a populist alliance does not automatically involve the peasantry.

Thus, it appeared that the path to agrarian capitalism in Chile would take place on the estates, involving the proletarianization of the peasantry.

However, in the late 1950's and into the early 1960's, a new,

predominantly middle class, reform-oriented political party grew in strength. The origins of this party, the Christian Democratic, were in the conservative Falange of the 1930's, which had favored the creation of a corporate socio-political structure. By the early 1950's the party had come to include leading elements of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, and involved two, potentially contradictory ideological orientations: one corporatist and the other populist; however, during the mobilization process they were compatible.

The Christian Democratic party had emerged in opposition to both the pattern of capitalist development being pursued by the ruling bloc and to the socialist challenge to capitalist development presented by a Marxist coalition of the Socialist and Communist parties, the Popular Action Front.

As an alternative to the right and the left, the party grew rapidly and took office in the national elections of 1964. Its program included the "Chileanization" of major industries (particularly mining), support of further industrialization, improved conditions for the urban poor and residents of the rapidly expanding shanty towns, and eventually, workers' participation in industry. Furthermore, the Christian Democrats promised agrarian reform: land reform and peasant organization.

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248 Petras, Politics and Social Forces, p. 209.
249 Ibid., pp. 197-219.
251 Ibid.
252 Kaufmann, The Politics of Land Reform, pp. 86-97. The
The agrarian reform of the Christian Democratic government (1964-70) did initiate a land reform and dramatically increased peasant organization; however, the contradictions of the multi-class alliance and the increasingly opposed ideological orientations within the party (i.e. corporatist and populist) inhibited the pursuance of an aggressive land reform and, to a certain extent, the mobilization of the peasantry. The turnover of landownership in rural Chile, which had been taking place since the late 1920's, represented purchases of land by the bourgeoisie "in formation" and the middle class, which were the dominant elements of the Christian Democratic Party. Thus, the land reform could not have proceeded very far without the party's challenging its own class base.

The estates which were expropriated were often the more backward and inefficiently operated ones, which were most easily challenged due to the developmental orientations of the Christian Democratic government. But many landowners blocked expropriation in the courts. Nevertheless, the estates which were secured for the peasantry were organized into cooperatives, called asentamientos, whose members were the inquilinos of the estates. Neither the voluntarios nor the afuerinos (i.e. the rural proletariat) was included. Thus, the Christian Democratic agrarian reform was meant to be more than populist, it was also intended to improve the performance of Chilean agriculture which, unnecessarily, had been performing so poorly that Chile had become an importer of foodstuffs.

Christian Democratic reform was leaving the capitalist estates intact and converting the inquilino into a privileged peasant stratum, which employed the voluntarios and afuerinos, as an agricultural proletariat when additional labor was needed.  

While the land reform proceeded at an inhibited pace, the mobilization of the peasantry was moving rapidly. In the late nineteen fifties, peasant discontent increased in the countryside, due to declining seigneurialism and gradual proletarianization, which also meant a gradual, but steady, decline in living standards. It also meant that the totality of the landowners' domination of the peasantry was diminished, and with changes in the electoral law in 1958, the Christian Democrats and the parties of the Popular Action Front sought the support of the peasantry. The nineteen sixties was a period of even further and more rapid politicization and organization in the countryside, particularly during the years of the Christian Democratic regime when the political parties and the government were actively mobilizing the peasants.

The politicization of the countryside generated increased peasant unrest and gave rise to increasing work stoppages and land invasions.

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254 Ibid., (Lehmann), pp. 82-97.


And growing unrest in the urban-industrial and mining centers accentuated the contradictions in the Christian Democratic party. Finally, in the late 1960's, the party split. The populist sector of the party moved left to the Popular Action Front, and the more conservative and corporatist elements moved right to the traditionalist parties, and the 1970 elections produced a victory for the Popular Action Front, renamed Unidad Popular (Popular Unity).

The peasants as a class also divided, into the beneficiaries of the Christian Democratic reform and those who had yet to benefit - or who had been excluded from land reform altogether. With the election victory of Unidad Popular the peasantry pushed the land reform on their own through land invasions and occupations, and the government had to give its support. Thus, the latifundia, both seigneurial and capitalist, appeared to have been eliminated in favor of peasant proprietorship.

After three years in power, the Unidad Popular government was overthrown by the military, which proceeded to undo the attempts at socialist development which had begun. The future of the land reform is in jeopardy.

Significantly, in comparative perspective, there has been discussion of creating a national corporate socio-political structure, in order to develop and assure capitalist hegemony.

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260 See Ronald C. Newton, "Natural Corporatism and the Passing of
In Eastern Europe, capitalist development was carried out from above by the already dominant mercantile class, limited industrial bourgeoisie, and landed aristocracy. In the 1848 Revolutions, the peasantry was liberated from the remnants of serfdom and servile dues; but the estates remained basically intact in the possession of the landed aristocracy. Nevertheless, seigneurialism gave way to capitalist social relations on the estates and the peasantry was gradually proletarianized. When, particularly in the 1920's, the peasantry and the proletariat threatened the ruling bloc of the landowning aristocrats and the bourgeoisie, there emerged the Fascist and authoritarian regimes of the 1930's. Thus, in Eastern Europe, where the peasants' ally in the 1848 Revolutions, the bourgeoisie, had originally supported them in the elimination of serfdom, but was unwilling to challenge the aristocracy's proprietorship of the land, the elimination of seigneurialism meant the gradual proletarianization of the peasantry.

In Spanish America, capitalist development also began as a process carried out from above by the ruling bloc of landowners and mercantile and mining bourgeoisies in participation with foreign capitalist enterprise, or often by enterprising foreign immigrants. Thus, in Spanish America, as in Eastern Europe, the bourgeoisie "in formation" was not the classical revolutionary class of capitalists described by Marx and others.

However, in Spanish America, the persistence of seigneurialism led to the contradictions of combined, or heterogeneous development in

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which capitalist and seigneurial relations co-existed. That is, seigneurial-dominated peasantries co-existed with rapidly emerging working classes, organizing into labor movements, and urban middle classes which provided potential allies for the peasantries to challenge the landowners.

The historical conjuncture of growing peasant unrest against the traditionally dominant landowners, generated by the continued loss of peasant lands and/or the proletarianization process, and the emergence of populist alliances composed of elements of the bourgeoisies, the middle and working classes, against the patterns of capitalist development being carried out by the oligarchies enabled the populists to harness the peasants into their alliances and, in turn, provided the peasants with allies to challenge seigneurial domination and prevent their proletarianization by securing the lands for themselves.

Thus, it might be stated, that although - as F. Stirton Weaver has argued - the classical dialectic is dead, there has been a uniquely Spanish American dialectic in which the contradictions of combined, or heterogeneous, development generated populist alliances. The contradictions of the popular alliances appear to lead to the development of national corporatism as the path of capitalist development.
CONCLUSION

The first part of the thesis of this dissertation has been that the Spanish American societies have - until recently - been characterized by the domination of pre-capitalist ruling classes and that rural Spanish America has been characterized by the persistence of pre-capitalist, predominantly seigneurial social relations of production and domination.

It has been shown that Spanish American seigneurialism originated in Iberian Spain. Originally based on feudal-seigneurial prerogatives, but increasingly on landownership, it was further enhanced and elaborated through the process of conquest and colonization.

Comparatively with Eastern Europe, it has been argued that commercial expansion had a conservative impact on the formation and development of capitalism. Although there is no denying the capital accumulation by the mercantile and mining bourgeoisie, their wealth was most often applied towards the purchase of estates and their own seigneurialization; which had the effect of strengthening the hegemony of the landowning classes and their pre-capitalist domination of the Spanish American societies.

In the first half of the nineteenth century, the dominant classes of the Spanish American societies secured their independence from the Spanish Empire, while at the same time maintaining their pre-capitalist, seigneurial domination. Having established their independence, the Spanish American ruling classes proceeded to reduce
the landownership of the Church and the Indian peasantry by eliminating "feudally"-entailed properties, thereby expanding their seigneurial domination of the peasantry. It also further strengthened the hegemony of the landowning classes by permitting the entry of new families of "bourgeois" origins to landed status.

Although the Indian peasant communities often attempted to resist the encroachment of the seigneurial latifundia upon their lands they were generally unsuccessful, while the seigneurial mode of domination on the estates immobilized that sector of the peasantry. The hegemony of the Spanish American ruling classes was, therefore, based on the monopolization of landownership and the persistence of pre-capitalist social relations of production and domination, however commercially oriented the landowners might be.

The second part of the thesis presented in this study has been that the participation of the Spanish American societies in the changing and expanding world economy of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries had the combined effect of strengthening seigneurialism at the same time that it furthered the development of capitalism in those societies. Thus, the Spanish American societies experienced the contradictions of combined, or heterogeneous, development (i.e. the coexistent expansion of seigneurial and capitalist social relations of production), which, during the twentieth century - under the impact of the world crises - generated the populist (multi-class) alliances which have seriously challenged the pre-capitalist domination of the Spanish American societies and the persistence of seigneurialism in rural Spanish America.

Again, comparatively with Eastern Europe, it has been shown that
the early successes of capitalist development and the cumulative changes in the industrialization process meant that the capitalist-industrialization process itself could be imported at later, more advanced stages, into pre-capitalist societies, and, therefore, capitalist development could be carried out from above with decreased revolutionary significance. Thus, it appeared that the transition to capitalist social relations in the countryside would also be carried out from above, on the estates, involving the proletarianization of the peasantry. Which, as we saw, was what occurred in the Eastern European societies in the nineteenth century, carried out either by "modernizing" landed aristocrats or bourgeois purchasers of estates.

In Spanish America, even more than in Eastern Europe, the development of capitalism appears to have been the product of foreign capitalist enterprise and foreign immigrant entrepreneurs with or without the active participation of the dominant classes. And the extractive-export character of much of the capitalist development meant that the Spanish American societies would, again even more than the East European societies, experience the contradictions of combined, or heterogeneous, development, that is the coexistent expansion of seigneurial and capitalist social relations. And yet, even in the Spanish American societies, the development of capitalism began to diffuse gradually into some regions of the countryside, either due to the purchases of estates by foreign or national capitalists or the "embourgeoisment" of landed "aristocrats."

However, the development of capitalism also gave rise to those classes which "potentially" provided allies for the peasantry to challenge the persistent expansion of the seigneurial latifundia and
to prevent the gradual proletarianization process which was beginning. And, generated by the crises of this century, in particular the impact of the world depression upon the export-oriented economies of the Spanish American societies, there were formed populist alliances in opposition to the ruling blocs, or oligarchies, of landowning aristocrats and mercantile bourgeoisies; which, though by no means guaranteed, harnessed the growing unrest of the peasantry for their movements at the same time that they provided allies to the peasantry which enabled them to effectively challenge the landowners and secure the land for themselves. Thus, seigneurialism was finally eliminated through land reforms which also halted the process of proletarianization of the peasantry from above.

Finally, the third part of the thesis of this dissertation has been that the underdevelopment characteristic of Spanish America and, in particular, rural Spanish America, has not been due to the supposedly non-commercial orientation of the Spanish American landowning classes as argued by the dualist thesis. Nor has the participation of the Spanish American societies in the world economy - "although," to repeat the quote of Weaver: "inter-nation transfers of economic surplus is useful for understanding the benefits accruing to the developed capitalist trading and investing nations" - been the cause of Spanish America's underdevelopment, as argued by the development of underdevelopment thesis. Andre Gunder Frank has correctly pointed to the ahistoricity of Jacques Lambert's dualist thesis: rural Spanish America, although admittedly with historical and regional variation, has actively participated in the regional, national and world economies. However, while Frank is historically more accurate
than Lambert with reference to the commercial orientation of the Spanish American landowners, he has incorrectly attributed the cause of underdevelopment to that commercial activity. Rather, it has been argued, the underdevelopment characteristic of the Spanish American societies, and, in particular, rural Spanish America, has been the historical product of the domination of the pre-capitalist ruling classes and the persistence of pre-capitalist, predominantly seigneurial social relations of production and domination in the countryside, which inhibited the emergence of a national bourgeoisie and capitalist development.

The Spanish American populist alliances have tended to give way to socio-political structures and political economies which have been termed corporatist and, we would argue, appear to be attempts to pursue capitalist development and industrialization and to establish capitalist hegemony in those societies. From this perspective, there arises an interesting hypothesis in the context of the work done by Barrington Moore on "modernization."

Jonathan Weiner has summarized Moore's thesis:

Moore argues that there have been three different types of modernization distinguished by the changes in class structure that accompany development, and by the political costs and achievements of each in their contribution to increasing freedom and rationality.

The first type Moore calls "bourgeois revolution," in which a violent revolution abolished the domination of the traditional landed elite and brought capitalist democracy to England, France and the United States. The second is "revolution from above," the process in Germany and Japan by which the traditional landed elite defeated popular

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1See Barrington Moore, Jr., Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy.
revolution and preserved its dominant position during industrialization, a process which culminated in fascism. The third type is "peasant revolution," which in Russia and China saw the traditional elite abolished, not by a revolutionary bourgeoisie, but by a revolutionary peasantry which cleared the way for modernization.2

That is, according to Moore, there have been three paths to the "modern world," culminating, respectively, in: democratic capitalism, fascism, and communism. Thus, the hypothesis which might be formulated is that Spanish America appears to present a fourth path to the "modern world" = the populist path culminating in corporatism.3 Of course, the testing of such a hypothesis requires a number of things which are beyond the scope of this dissertation, but at the same time it does indicate the limitations and/or inadequacies of this study and suggests further areas of research.

A principal limitation of this study has been that it has, perhaps, overemphasized the similarity in the historical experiences of the Spanish American societies, for admittedly there have been, and are, great differences between them; for example, the most obvious differences between Bolivia and Chile. Thus, we would suggest that future comparative research based on class analysis focus on comparing the Spanish American societies amongst themselves,4 which might help in understanding why Venezuelan society has not moved towards corporatism.


4See, for example, Weaver, "Political Disintegration and Reconstruction in 19th Century Spanish America: The Class Basis of Political Change."
Such comparative study should also be expanded to include those Spanish and Latin American societies where populist alliances have either failed to materialize, e.g. Colombia, or have done so - but without mobilizing the peasantry - e.g. Argentina and Brazil.

Another area requiring further study - of both an historical and 'more contemporary' socio-political nature - which this dissertation has approached, but perhaps inadequately, is the issue of "hegemony;" that is, the manner in which a class maintains its rule by consent, not force.\(^5\)

Historically, this refers to the hegemony of the Spanish American landowning classes, both with respect to the dependent peasantry and the mercantile and mining classes which so eagerly seigneurialized themselves. In addition to the politico-economic links and social and family ties supporting hegemony, study should also focus on the ideological and cultural (i.e. superstructural) aspects of Spanish American seigneurial domination which served to legitimize it to both subordinate elites and the peasant and semi-proletarian classes. Within this area of research might be included the role of the Church as the major cultural institution of those societies.

Frederick Pike has recently presented a model of Spanish American "hegemony" in which he argues that the Spanish American societies have consisted historically of two cultures, i.e. a dominant and a subordinate culture, differentiated by their world views.\(^6\) He terms


\(^6\)See Pike, Spanish America. He does not use the term hegemony.
the dominant culture capitalistic and paternalistic (with which we must dissent and argue for the seigneurial thesis) and the subordinate culture non-capitalist and dependent. Although we would argue, that the Spanish American societies have, perhaps, not been so much culturally dualistic as that the dominant and subordinate aspects represent respective class orientations within the hegemony of the dominant class; nevertheless, Pike's model does give rise to some interesting hypotheses. For example, does the subordinate culture present a potential for opposing and challenging the dominant culture which would be other than conservative, as the Spanish American societies become increasingly capitalist?

With respect to "more contemporary" socio-political research and Spanish America's movement towards corporatism, in fact, does it merely represent an adaptation of the traditional culture by the dominant classes of the Spanish American societies in their attempts to establish their hegemony while, at the same time, carrying out capitalist development? And yet, if so, what will be the results and contradictions of seeking to maintain - or better, "carry-over" - the traditional superstructure while carrying out capitalist development and industrialization both with respect to the proletariat and the peasantry?

Finally, there remains the issue of the legacy of seigneurialism in the countryside. A significant feature of Spanish American

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7Ibid., pp. 9-14.

seigneurialism and the agrarian structure was the differentiation and division of the peasantry into, for example, Indian peasant villages and estate serfs which (particularly in this case, as the differentiation is both socio-economic and socio-cultural) inhibited the development of peasant movements. A legacy of this intra-class differentiation and division arose during the land reform processes. In Bolivia, to cite one example, Antonio García has written that, in addition to other problems of land reform: "Neither did it foresee the conflicts which were to arise between communities and ex-colonos over the lands of one and the same hacienda." Similar conflicts also arose in Peru and Chile. In fact, it might be asked, to what extent were peasant land occupations and seizures actually pre-emptive actions to the threat of land invasions by another peasant group?

Beyond the land reforms, what is the legacy of seigneurialism in the countryside with respect to the development of capitalism and industry? Although the peasantry, through the populist alliances, has apparently eliminated the seigneurial latifundia and prevented their proletarianization on the estates, it is difficult to imagine that this has opened the path to agrarian capitalism from below - nor was that the peasants' goal! That is, although the latifundia has been eliminated from the latifundia-minifundia complex, the minifundia remains

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9In this vein, it must be repeated that insufficient attention has been given to the racial/ethnic element as a dimension of class domination.


11In Chile, the inquilinos sought to exclude the voluntarios and afuerinos from the benefits of the reform.
and underdevelopment continues to characterize rural Spanish America. Thus, while the peasantry continues to support the populist and corporatist regimes, those regimes have not challenged the peasantry's conservatism by aggressively supporting the peasantry in rural development efforts. Rather, resources for agricultural production (not land) are monopolized by those capitalist estates which have remained intact.¹²

Not least of all due to population growth and pressure on the land, proletarianization proceeds from below - which is to be expected from capitalist development and historically has not been a "negative" feature in itself. However, as we have already seen, history has produced changes in the industrialization process such that industrial development is not necessarily labor-absorptive.¹³ Therefore, rural proletarianization, it appears, does not represent the transfer of peasants to industry as an urban proletariat, but the creation of a sub-proletariat; whose existence as a labor-reserve would seem to mean lower wages for the proletariat, and, at the same time, they appear to be the personification of what the economist, Joan Robinson, meant by: "...the misery of being exploited by capitalist is nothing compared to the misery of not being exploited at all."¹⁴ Thus, while

¹²On Mexico, see Stavenhagen, "Social Aspects of Agrarian Structure," pp. 247-257; and for Bolivia, see Burke and Malloy, "From National Populism to National Corporatism," pp. 56-60. And in Peru there are Peruvian-owned capitalist farms which are being left intact, see Zaldívar, "Agrarian Reform."

¹³For an interesting article which presents a dissenting view on the supposed impossibility of industrialization and capitalist development, see Bill Warren, "Imperialism and Capitalist Industrialization," New Left Review, no. 81 (September-October 1973), pp. 3-44.

capitalist-industrialization is pursued and a capitalist-estate sector threatens to command the agricultural economy, the peasantry of rural Spanish America continues to be characterized by a "pre-capitalist" mode of production.

And yet, if development is to be more than economic growth via industrialization - which has even been implicitly assumed herein - then the development issue itself must be reconstructed. That is, the question can no longer be "is capitalist development possible?" - which it is, as heretofore defined - but rather, "is there not an alternative to capitalist development which would not entail its own extremes of domination and exploitation?" But here we arrive at the point where historical social science ends and politics begin. And, to repeat the words of E.H. Carr:

A historically-minded generation is one which looks back, not indeed for the solutions which cannot be found in the past, but for those critical insights which are necessary both to the understanding of its existing situation and to the realization of the values which it holds.15

Keeping this in mind, the evidence and interpretation presented in this dissertation - that seigneurialism persisted and yet was finally overcome - affirm the proposition that 'history is a process of becoming' and, therefore, other modes of domination and exploitation can also be challenged.

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