

The
Moral Economy
of the **Peasant**

REBELLION AND SUBSISTENCE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA



James C. Scott

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For Mia, Aaron, and Noah

Preface

This study of the basis of peasant politics and rebellion begins with Tawney's metaphor describing "the position of the rural population" as "that of a man standing permanently up to the neck in water, so that even a ripple might drown him." It places the critical problem of the peasant family—a secure subsistence—at the center of the study of peasant politics, where I believe it belongs. I try to show how the fear of dearth explains many otherwise anomalous technical, social, and moral arrangements in peasant society.

The fact that subsistence-oriented peasants typically prefer to avoid economic disaster rather than take risks to maximize their average income has enormous implications for the problem of exploitation. On the basis of this principle, it is possible to deduce those systems of tenancy and taxation that are likely to have the most crushing impact on peasant life. The critical problem is not the average surplus extracted by elites and the state, but rather whose income is stabilized at the expense of whom. The theory is examined in the light of the historical development of agrarian society in Lower Burma and Vietnam. Both the commercialization of agriculture and the growth of bureaucratic states produced systems of tenancy and taxation that increasingly undermined the stability of peasant income and provoked fierce resistance. Two notable episodes of such resistance, the Saya San Rebellion in Burma and the Nghe-Tinh Soviets in Vietnam, are analyzed in some detail.

Throughout the volume, I have taken pains to emphasize the *moral* content of the subsistence ethic. The problem of exploitation and rebellion is thus not just a problem of calories and income but is a question of peasant conceptions of social justice, of rights and obligations, of reciprocity.

Since proofreading the final version of this manuscript I have come across a good many economic studies of Third World agriculture as well as archival material on rebellion which might have strengthened the argument and added a few nuances. In particular, I regret that Keith Griffin's *The Political Economy of Agrarian Change* and Jeffrey Paige's *Agrarian Revolution* were not available to me in the course of writing.

Readers will note that the study of the moral economy of the peasantry, while it begins in the domain of economics, must end in the study of peasant culture and religion. I have tried to indicate, especially when discussing the problem of false consciousness, the lines along which such an inquiry might proceed but I have only scratched the surface here. In

subsequent work I hope to explore more fully the cultural basis, within the peasantry's "little tradition," of moral dissent and resistance.

The contents of this book were drafted in 1973-74 when I had the good luck to land a National Science Foundation Grant and to accompany Louise Scott to Paris where she settled in to study nineteenth-century art. I took advantage of the year in Paris to read more widely the work of what is loosely known as the *Annales* school of historiography, particularly Marc Bloch and Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, as well as that of Robert Mandrou and R. C. Cobb on *mentalités populaires*. Something of the spirit of these works has found its way into this volume, although I would not want to tarnish their schools of thought by claiming membership in their fraternity. My appreciation of Marxist thought was considerably enhanced by occasional visits to the stimulating seminars of Nicos Poulantzas and Alain Touraine of the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes. Georges Condominas also welcomed me to his exciting weekly seminars for Southeast Asian specialists. Like many scholars before me, I profited from the facilities and atmosphere of the library of the Maison des Sciences de l'Homme to whose staff I am very grateful. The intellectual companionship I found there from scholars like Serafina Salkoff, Ezra Suleiman, and Yanne Barbé provided a welcome diversion from the essentially lonely task of writing. The Archives d'Outre Mer in Paris and the India Office Library in London, whose staff I should like to thank, were the sources for the case studies of Vietnam and Burma in this volume.

I would not have been in a position to write had it not been for a semester grant from the Southeast Asian Development Advisory Group of the Asia Society in the spring of 1973 which allowed me to organize thoughts that had been brewing for some time.

The intellectual debts I have amassed in thinking through this argument defy accounting and, for all I know, many of my silent partners would prefer to remain anonymous. Nevertheless I would like to thank James Roumasset, Barrington Moore, and Sydel Silverman, whose work was formative in structuring my own thought. Without the criticism and help of Gail Paradise Kelly, Sam Popkin, Ben Kerkvliet, and Alex Woodside I would undoubtedly have fallen into more errors of fact and analysis than I have. On the subject of deference and false consciousness, a treacherous ground under any circumstances, I have chosen to resist many of the criticisms of Ronald Herring, Thomas Bossert, Charles Whitmore, and Michael Leiserson. Their assaults on my argument have served to sharpen it considerably, though they may well regret that I went seeking reinforcements rather than abandon the position altogether. Some of that reinforcement came from the work of the bril-

liant Dutch scholar W. F. Wertheim, many of whose values and perspectives I have come to share.

Of all my prepublication critics, none were so searching as Clifford Geertz, Michael Adas, and an anonymous reader for Yale Press. Many arguments were rethought and reformulated as a consequence of their careful reading and although I have certainly not laid all the problems they raised to rest, whatever quality the final product has is due to their detailed comments. The Land Tenure Center at the University of Wisconsin, which is largely responsible for my education in peasant studies, was kind enough to provide summer support so that I might redraft the manuscript in line with the many helpful criticisms I had received.

My colleagues at the University of Wisconsin, particularly Don Emerson, Murray Edelman, and Fred Hayward have stimulated me in ways too diverse to pin down precisely. Above all, Edward Friedman, with whom I have given courses on peasant politics and revolution, has taught me more about demystifying scholarship, about Marx, and about the peasantry than I can ever repay. I only hope this volume does justice to his friendship and instruction.

Jenny Mittnacht did more than just type the manuscript; she repaired much of the damage caused by my early inattention to grammar and spelling bees.

At this point in the standard preface it is customary for the author to claim total responsibility for error and wrongheadedness and to absolve others of blame. I am not so sure I want to do that. While I am happy to stand or fall with what I have written, it is also clear that I have learned so much from so many scholars that a great many of us are implicated in this enterprise. If it should turn out that I am on the wrong track, I suspect that many of them are on the same errant train with me!

I wish also to report that my wife and children, who have their own scholarly and other concerns, had virtually nothing to do with this volume. They were not particularly understanding or helpful when it came to research and writing but called me away as often as possible to the many pleasures of a life in common. May it always remain so.

Madison, Wisconsin
May 26, 1976

J.C.S.

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Introduction

There are districts in which the position of the rural population is that of a man standing permanently up to the neck in water, so that even a ripple is sufficient to drown him.¹

Tawney was writing about China in 1931 but it would not stretch his graphic description much to apply it to the peasantry of Upper Burma, Tonkin and Annam in Indochina, or East and Central Java in the early twentieth century. Here too, lilliputian plots, traditional techniques, the vagaries of weather and the tribute in cash, labor, and kind exacted by the state brought the specter of hunger and dearth, and occasionally famine, to the gates of every village.

The particular ecological niche occupied by some sectors of the peasantry in Southeast Asia exposed them, more than most, to subsistence risks. Upper Burma's Dry Zone, always at the mercy of a capricious rainfall, suffered a catastrophic famine in 1856–57, shortly after Britain's conquest of Lower Burma. "The rains failed and the rice withered in the fields . . . and the people died. They died in the fields gnawing the bark of trees; they died on the highways while wandering in search of food; they died in their homes."² In Annam, in northeast Thailand, and elsewhere where nature is unkind, most adults must have experienced, within living memory, one or more times of great scarcity when the weak and very young died and when others were reduced to eating their livestock and seed paddy, to subsisting on millet, root crops, bran—on what they might normally feed their animals.

The great famine of 1944–45 experienced by the peasantry of North Vietnam, however, was of such magnitude as to dwarf other twentieth-century subsistence crises in the region. In the best of times, the cultivated land in Tonkin barely sufficed to feed its own population. The Japanese and their Vichy allies, nevertheless, converted much paddy land to jute and other war-machine crops. After the October 1943 harvest, the occupation forces literally scoured the countryside in armed bands, confiscating much of the crop. A near-famine became a total famine when a series of typhoons from May to September broke dikes and flooded much of Tonkin's paddy land, destroying the tenth-month

1. R. H. Tawney, *Land and Labor in China* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1966), p. 77.

2. From the *Government of Burma Report on the Famine in Burma 1896–97*, quoted by Michael Adas in *Agrarian Development and the Plural Society in Lower Burma* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1974), p. 45.

harvest in 1944. Even millet, potatoes, and rice bran were exhausted; potato leaves, banana roots, grasses, and the bark of trees remained. Those who tried to plant a few potatoes might find that they had been pulled out and eaten during the night. Starvation began in October 1944 and before the spring harvest in 1945 as many as two million Vietnamese had perished.³

Subsistence crises and periods of dearth for most Southeast Asians have typically been on a smaller scale: local droughts or floods, epidemics that destroyed plow animals, winds or rains at harvest that beat down or spoiled much of the grain, or birds, rats, or crabs that ravaged the crop. Often the shortage might be confined to a single family whose land was either too high and dry or too low and wet, whose working head fell ill at transplanting or harvest time, whose children were too many for its small patch of land. Even if the crop was sufficient, the claims on it by outsiders—rent, taxes—might make it insufficient.

If the Great Depression left an indelible mark on the fears, values, and habits of a whole generation of Americans, can we imagine the impact of periodic food crises on the fears, values, and habits of rice farmers in monsoon Asia?

The fear of food shortages has, in most precapitalist peasant societies, given rise to what might appropriately be termed a "subsistence ethic." This ethic, which Southeast Asian peasants shared with their counterparts in nineteenth-century France, Russia, and Italy, was a consequence of living so close to the margin. A bad crop would not only mean short rations; the price of eating might be the humiliation of an onerous dependence or the sale of some land or livestock which reduced the odds of achieving an adequate subsistence the following year. The peasant family's problem, put starkly, was to produce enough rice to feed the household, buy a few necessities such as salt and cloth, and meet the irreducible claims of outsiders. The amount of rice a family could produce was partly in the hands of fate, but the local tradition of seed varieties, planting techniques, and timing was designed over centuries of trial and error to produce the most stable and reliable yield possible under the circumstances. These were the *technical arrangements* evolved

3. For a description of this incredible winter, see Ngo Vinh Long's translation of Tran Van Mai, *Who Committed This Crime?*, in Ngo Vinh Long, *Before the Revolution: The Vietnamese Peasants Under the French* (Cambridge, Mass.: M.I.T. Press, 1973). Many peasants experienced the Viet Minh in this period as an organization that helped organize attacks on official granaries or on Japanese rice shipments and brought available grain from the periphery of the Delta. For a brief discussion of Vietnamese politics in this period, see Huynh Kim Khanh, "The Vietnamese August Revolution Reinterpreted," *Journal of Asian Studies* 30:4 (August 1971), 761–81.

by the peasantry to iron out the “ripples that might drown a man.” Many *social arrangements* served the same purpose. Patterns of reciprocity, forced generosity, communal land, and work-sharing helped to even out the inevitable troughs in a family’s resources which might otherwise have thrown them below subsistence. The proven value of these techniques and social patterns is perhaps what has given peasants a Brechtian tenacity in the face of agronomists and social workers who come from the capital to improve them.

The purpose of the argument which follows is to place the subsistence ethic at the center of the analysis of peasant politics. The argument itself grows out of a prolonged effort on my part to understand some of the major peasant rebellions which swept much of Southeast Asia during the Great Depression of the 1930s. Two of those insurrections, the Saya San Rebellion in Burma and what has been called the Nghe-Tinh Soviets in central Vietnam, are analyzed in some detail.

In a broad view of colonial history in Southeast Asia, these rebellions and others like them might be considered epiphenomena, though they were hardly trivial for the men and women who fought and died in them. Both uprisings were ultimately crushed; both failed to achieve any of the peasants’ goals; both are considered minor subplots in a political drama that was to be increasingly dominated by the struggle between nationalists and colonizers. In still another and more profound historical sense, these movements were marginal. They looked to a closed and autonomous peasant utopia in a world in which centralization and commercialization were irresistible. They were more or less spontaneous uprisings displaying all the trademarks of peasant localism in a world in which the big battalions of secular nationalism were the only effective opposition to the colonial state. Along with other backward-looking movements of peasants or artisans, they were, in Hobsbawm’s phrase, “inevitable victims” inasmuch as they ran “dead against the current of history.”⁴

Viewing from another perspective, however, we can learn a great deal from rebels who were defeated nearly a half-century ago. If we understand the indignation and rage which prompted them to risk everything, we can grasp what I have chosen to call their moral economy: their notion of economic justice and their working definition of exploitation—their view of which claims on their product were tolerable and which intolerable. Insofar as their moral economy is representative of peasants elsewhere, and I believe I can show that it is, we may move

4. E. J. Hobsbawm, “Class Consciousness in History,” in Istvan Mezaros, ed., *Aspects of History and Class Consciousness* (London, 1971), pp. 11–12.

toward a fuller appreciation of the normative roots of peasant politics. If we understand, further, how the central economic and political transformations of the colonial era served to systematically violate the peasantry's vision of social equity, we may realize how a class "of low classness"⁵ came to provide, far more often than the proletariat, the shock troops of rebellion and revolution.

One cautionary note is in order. This study is not primarily an analysis of the *causes* of peasant revolution. That task has been attempted, and with notable success, by Barrington Moore Jr. and Eric R. Wolf.⁶ A study of the moral economy of peasants can tell us what makes them angry and what is likely, other things being equal, to generate an explosive situation. But if anger born of exploitation were sufficient to spark a rebellion, most of the Third World (and not only the Third World) would be in flames. Whether peasants who perceive themselves to be exploited actually rebel depends on a host of intervening factors—such as alliances with other classes, the repressive capacity of dominant elites, and the social organization of the peasantry itself—which are not treated except in passing here. Instead, I deal with the nature of exploitation in peasant society as its victims are likely to see it, and what one might call the creation of social dynamite rather than its detonation. (I limit myself to this terrain not only out of respect for the fine work done on revolution by Moore and Wolf and a sense of the division of academic labor, but because exploitation without rebellion seems to me a far more ordinary state of affairs than revolutionary war.) In the final chapter, I try to indicate what the tragic options are for an exploited peasantry in the absence of rebellion.

The basic idea upon which my argument rests is both simple and, I believe, powerful. It arises from the central economic dilemma of most peasant households. Living close to the subsistence margin and subject to the vagaries of weather and the claims of outsiders, the peasant household has little scope for the profit maximization calculus of traditional neoclassical economics. Typically, the peasant cultivator seeks to avoid the failure that will ruin him rather than attempting a big, but risky, killing. In decision-making parlance his behavior is risk-averse; he minimizes the subjective probability of the maximum loss. If treating the peasant as a would-be Schumpeterian entrepreneur misses his key existential dilemma, so do the normal power-maximizing assumptions fail to

5. Theodor Shanin, "The Peasantry as a Political Factor," *Sociological Review* 14:1 (1966), 5.

6. See *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1966), and *Peasant Wars of the Twentieth Century* (New York: Harper and Row, 1969), respectively.

do justice to his political behavior. To begin instead with the need for a reliable subsistence as the primordial goal of the peasant cultivator and then to examine his relationships to his neighbors, to elites, and to the state in terms of whether they aid or hinder him in meeting that need, is to recast many issues.

It is this "safety-first" principle which lies behind a great many of the technical, social, and moral arrangements of a precapitalist agrarian order. The use of more than one seed variety, the European traditional farming on scattered strips, to mention only two, are classical techniques for avoiding undue risks often at the cost of a reduction in average return. Within the village context, a wide array of social arrangements typically operated to assure a minimum income to inhabitants. The existence of communal land that was periodically redistributed, in part on the basis of need, or the commons in European villages functioned in this way. In addition, social pressures within the precapitalist village had a certain redistributive effect: rich peasants were expected to be charitable, to sponsor more lavish celebrations, to help out temporarily indigent kin and neighbors, to give generously to local shrines and temples. As Michael Lipton has noted, "many superficially odd village practices make sense as disguised forms of insurance."⁷

It is all too easy, and a serious mistake, to romanticize these social arrangements that distinguish much of peasant society. They are not radically egalitarian. Rather, they imply only that all are entitled to a *living* out of the resources within the village, and that living is attained often at the cost of a loss of status and autonomy. They work, moreover, in large measure through the abrasive force of gossip and envy and the knowledge that the abandoned poor are likely to be a real and present danger to better-off villagers. These modest but critical redistributive mechanisms nonetheless do provide a minimal subsistence insurance for villagers. Polanyi claims on the basis of historical and anthropological evidence that such practices were nearly universal in traditional society and served to mark it off from the modern market economy. He concludes, "It is the absence of the threat of *individual* starvation which makes primitive society, in a sense, more human than market economy, and at the same time less economic."⁸

7. Michael Lipton, "The Theory of the Optimizing Peasant," *Journal of Development Studies* 4 (1969), 341, cited in Wolf, *Peasant Wars of the Twentieth Century*, p. 279.

8. Karl Polanyi, *The Great Transformation* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1957), pp. 163–64. Even the term seminal, applied as it is without discretion, is too weak a tribute for this book. His analysis of premarket and market economies has been formative for my own work. The emphasis in this quote has been added.

The provision of subsistence insurance was not confined to the village sphere; it also structured the moral economy of relations to outside elites. As Eric Wolf observed,

It is significant, however, that before the advent of capitalism . . . social equilibrium depended in both the long and short run on a balance of transfers of peasant surpluses to the rulers and the provision of minimal security for the cultivator. Sharing resources within communal organizations and reliance on ties with powerful patrons were recurrent ways in which peasants strove to reduce risks and to improve their stability, and both were condoned and frequently supported by the state.⁹

Again, we must guard against the impulse to idealize these arrangements. Where they worked, and they did not always work, they were not so much a product of altruism as of necessity. Where land was abundant and labor scarce, subsistence insurance was virtually the only way to attach a labor force; where the means of coercion at the disposal of elites and the state was sharply limited, it was prudent to show some respect for the needs of the subordinate population.

Although the desire for subsistence security grew out of the needs of cultivators—out of peasant economics—it was socially experienced as a pattern of moral rights or expectations. Barrington Moore has captured the normative tone of these expectations:

This experience [of sharing risks within the community] provides the soil out of which grow peasant mores and the moral standards by which they judge their own behavior and that of others. The essence of these standards is a crude notion of equality, stressing the justice and necessity of a minimum of land [resources] for the performance of essential social tasks. These standards usually have some sort of religious sanction, and it is likely to be in their stress on these points that the religion of peasants differs from that of other social classes.¹⁰

The violation of these standards could be expected to provoke resentment and resistance—not only because needs were unmet, but because rights were violated.

The subsistence ethic, then, is rooted in the economic practices and social exchanges of peasant society. As a moral principle, as a right to

9. Wolf, *Peasant Wars*, p. 279.

10. Moore, *Social Origins*, pp. 497–98. I believe the emphasis in most peasant societies is not so much on land per se as on the right to a share of the product of land; hence I have added “resources” in brackets.

subsistence, I believe I can show that it forms the standard against which claims to the surplus by landlords and the state are evaluated. The essential question is who stabilizes his income at whose expense. Since the tenant prefers to minimize the probability of a disaster rather than to maximize his average return, the stability and security of his subsistence income are more critical to his evaluation of the tenure system than either his average return or the amount of the crop taken by the landlord. A tenure system which provides the tenant with a minimal guaranteed return is likely to be experienced as less exploitative than a system which, while it may take less from him on the average, does not rate his needs as a consumer as primary. The same reasoning may be applied to the claim of the state. To the extent that that claim is a fixed charge which does not vary with the peasant's capacity to pay in any given year, it is likely to be viewed as more exploitative than a fiscal burden which varies with his income. The test for the peasant is more likely to be "What is left?" than "How much is taken?" The subsistence test offers a very different perspective on exploitation than theories which rely only on the criterion of surplus value expropriated. While the latter may be useful in classifying modes of expropriation, it is my contention that they are less likely to be an adequate guide to the phenomenology of peasant experience than the subsistence test. For it is the question of subsistence that is most directly related to the ultimate needs and fears of peasant life.

Two major transformations during the colonial period in Southeast Asia served to undermine radically the preexisting social insurance patterns and to violate the moral economy of the subsistence ethic. These were, first, the imposition of what Eric Wolf has called "a particular cultural system, that of North Atlantic capitalism"¹¹ and, second, the related development of the modern state under a colonial aegis. The transformation of land and labor (that is, nature and human work) into commodities for sale had the most profound impact. Control of land increasingly passed out of the hands of villagers; cultivators progressively lost free usufruct rights and became tenants or agrarian wage laborers; the value of what was produced was increasingly gauged by the fluctuations of an impersonal market. In a sense, what was happening in Southeast Asia was nothing more than a parochial recapitulation of what Marx had observed in Europe. "But on the other hand, these new freedmen became sellers of themselves only after they had been robbed of all their own means of production and of all the guarantees of existence afforded by the old feudal arrangements. And the history of

11. Wolf, *Peasant Wars*, p. 276.

this, their expropriation, is written in the annals of mankind in letters of blood and fire."¹² On the land in Lower Burma and in the Mekong Delta these "new freedmen" faced an increasingly implacable class of land-owners whose claims on the harvest varied less with the needs of their tenants than with what the market would bear. What had been a worsening situation throughout the early twentieth century became, with the onset of the world depression, a zero-sum struggle based as much on coercion as on the market. Peasants resisted as best they could and, where circumstances permitted, they rebelled.

The state was as much an actor in this drama as were the owners of the scarce factors of production. Not only did it provide the legal and coercive machinery necessary to ensure that contracts were honored and the market economy retained, but the state was itself a claimant on peasant resources. Much of its administrative effort had been bent to enumerating and recording its subjects and their land for tax purposes. Its fiscal advisors reasoned much as landlords: a stable income was preferable to a fluctuating income and therefore fixed head taxes and fixed land rates were preferable to a tax on actual income. When the economic crisis came, the state's receipts from customs duties and other variable sources of income fell dramatically and it accordingly bore down more heavily on its most steady revenue producer, the head tax. This claim, further burdening an already hard-pressed peasantry, also provoked resistance and rebellion.

It is possible to discern in all of this a strong parallel with the earlier creation of nation-states and the development of a market economy in Europe which produced similar resistance.¹³ There too the problem of subsistence income was exacerbated by market forces and by a more intrusive state. R. C. Cobb, in his masterful study of popular protest in eighteenth-century France, maintains that it can be understood only in terms of the problem of food supply, the danger of shortages, and their political meaning.

Attitudes to dearth conditioned popular attitudes to everything else: government, the countryside, life and death, inequality, deprivation, morality, pride, humiliation, self-esteem. It is the central theme in all forms of popular expression. Nor were the common

12. *Capital*, vol. 1 (New York: New World Paperbacks, 1966), p. 715.

13. See, for example, Polanyi, and Roland Mousnier, *Peasant Uprisings in Seventeenth-Century France, Russia, and China*, trans. Brian Pearce (New York: Harper and Row, 1970), and E. P. Thompson, "The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the Eighteenth Century," *Past and Present* 50 (February 1971).

people living in a world of myth and panic fear: for dearth and famine were in fact the biggest single threat to their existence.¹⁴

Despite the striking parallels, a good case can be made that the process of transformation was, if anything, more traumatic for colonial peoples. For one thing, it telescoped a process which had taken as much as three centuries in England or France into a forced march of mere decades. In Europe, moreover, as Polanyi eloquently shows, the indigenous forces which had much to lose from a full market economy (including, at times, the crown, portions of the aristocracy, artisans, peasants, and workers) were occasionally able to impede or at least restrict the play of market forces by invoking the older moral economy. In Germany and Japan the creation of strong conservative states allowed what Moore has called “a revolution from above” which kept as much of the original social structure intact as possible while still modernizing the economy. The results, while laying the ground for fascism and militarism at a later date, were somewhat less traumatic in the short run for the peasantry. But in the colonial world the political forces which would have opposed or moderated the full impact of the market economy had little or no capacity to make themselves felt except at the level of insurrection.

The problem for the peasantry during the capitalist transformation of the Third World, viewed from this perspective, is that of providing for a *minimum income*.¹⁵ While a minimum income has solid physiological dimensions, we must not overlook its social and cultural implications. In order to be a fully functioning member of village society, a household needs a certain level of resources to discharge its necessary ceremonial and social obligations as well as to feed itself adequately and continue to cultivate. To fall below this level is not only to risk starvation, it is to suffer a profound loss of standing within the community and perhaps to fall into a permanent situation of dependence.

The precapitalist community was, in a sense, organized around this problem of the minimum income—organized to minimize the risk to which its members were exposed by virtue of its limited techniques and the caprice of nature. Traditional forms of patron-client relationships, reciprocity, and redistributive mechanisms may be seen from this perspective. While precapitalist society was singularly ill-equipped to provide for its members in the event of collective disaster, it did provide household social insurance against the “normal” risks of agriculture through an elaborate system of social exchange.

14. R. C. Cobb, *The Police and the People: French Popular Protest Movements 1789–1820* (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), p. xviii.

15. I am grateful to Van Ooms for suggesting this.