Dedicated to the Memory of My Parents
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PART THREE

Feudalization and State Formation

Introduction

I

Survey of Courtly Society

1. The struggles between the nobility, the Church and the princes for their shares in the control and the produce of the land ran through the entire Middle Ages. In the course of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries a further group emerged as a partner in this play of forces: the privileged town-dwellers, the "bourgeoisie".

The actual course of this constant struggle, and the power relations among the contestants, varied widely between countries. But the outcome of the conflicts was, in its structure, nearly always the same: in all the larger continental countries, and at times in England too, the princes or their representatives finally accumulated a concentration of power to which the estates were not equal. The autarky of the majority, and the estates' share of power, were curtailed step by step, while the dictatorial or "absolute" power of a single supreme figure was slowly established, for a greater or lesser period. In France, England and the Habsburg countries this figure was the king, in the German and Italian regions it was the territorial ruler.

2. Numerous studies describe, for example, how the French kings from Philip Augustus to Francis I and Henry IV increased their power, or how the Elector Frederick William pushed aside the regional estates in Brandenburg, and the

Medici the patricians and senate in Florence, or how the Tudors did the same to the nobility and parliament in England. Everywhere it is the individual agents and their various actions that we see, their personal weaknesses and gifts that are described. And it is no doubt fruitful and even indispensable to see history in this way, as a mosaic of individual actions of individual people.

Nevertheless, something else is obviously at work here besides the fortuitous emergence of a series of great princes and the fortuitous victories of numerous individual territorial rulers or kings over numerous individual estates at approximately the same time. It is not without reason that we speak of an *age* of absolutism. What found expression in this change in the form of political rule was a structural change in Western society as a whole. Not only did individual kings increase their power but, clearly, the social institution of the monarchy or princedom took on new weight in the course of a gradual transformation of the whole of society, a new weight which at the same time gave new power chances to the central rulers.

On the one hand we might enquire how this or that man gained power and how he or his heirs increased or lost this power in the context of "absolutism".

On the other, we may ask on the basis of what social changes the medieval institution of the king or prince took on, in certain centuries, the character and power referred to by concepts such as "absolutism" or "despotism", and which social structure, which development in human relations, made it possible for the institution to sustain itself in this form for a greater or lesser period of time.

Both approaches work with more or less the same material. But only the second attains to the plane of historical reality on which the civilizing process takes place.

It is by more than a coincidence that in the same centuries in which the king or prince acquired absolutist status, the restraint and moderation of the affects discussed in Part Two, the "civilizing" of behaviour, was noticeably increased. In the quotations assembled earlier to demonstrate this change in behaviour, it emerged quite clearly how closely this change was linked to the formation of the hierarchical social order with the absolute ruler and, more broadly, his court at its head.

3. For the court, too, the residence of the ruler, took on a new aspect and a new significance in Western society, in a movement that flowed slowly across Europe, to ebb away again, earlier here and later there, at about the time we call the "Renaissance".

In the movements of this period the courts gradually became the actual model and style-setting centres. In the preceding phase they had had to share or even wholly relinquish this function to other centres, according to the prevailing balance of power, now to the Church, now to the towns, now to the courts of the great vassals and knights scattered across the country. From this time on, in German and particularly in Protestant regions, the courts of the central

authorities still shared their function with the universities turning out the princely bureaucracy, whereas in Romanic and perhaps in all Catholic countries—this latter point remains to be established—the importance of the courts as a social authority, a source of models of behaviour, far exceeded that of the universities and all the other social formations of the epoch. The early Renaissance in Florence, characterized by men like Masaccio, Ghiberti, Brunelleschi and Donatello, is not yet an unequivocally courtly style; but the Italian High Renaissance, and more clearly still the Baroque and Rococo, the style of Louis XV and XVI, are courtly, as finally is the "Empire", though in a more transitional way, being already permeated with industrial–bourgeois features.

At the courts a form of society was evolving for which no very specific and unequivocal term exists in German, for the obvious reason that in Germany this type of human bonding never attained central and decisive importance, except at most only in the final, transitional form it had at Weimar. The German concept of "good society", or more simply, of "society" in the sense of *monde*, like the social formation corresponding to it, lacks the sharp definition of the French and English terms. The French speak of *la société polie*. And the French terms *bonne compagnie* or *gens de la Cour* and the English "Society" have similar connotations.

4. The most influential courtly society was formed, as we know, in France. From Paris the same codes of conduct, manners, taste and language spread, for varying periods, to all the other European courts. This happened not only because France was the most powerful country at the time. It was only now made possible because, in a pervasive transformation of European society, similar social formations, characterized by analogous forms of human relations came into being everywhere. The absolutist-courtly aristocracy of other lands adopted from the richest, most powerful and most centralized country of the time the things which fitted their own social needs: refined manners and a language which distinguished them from those of inferior rank. In France they saw, most fruitfully developed, something born of a similar social situation and which matched their own ideals: people who could parade their status, while also observing the subtleties of social intercourse, marking their exact relation to everyone above and below them by their manner of greeting and their choice of words—people of "distinction" and "civility". In taking over French etiquette and Parisian ceremony, the various rulers obtained the desired instruments to express their dignity, to make visible the hierarchy of society, and to make all others, first and foremost the courtly nobility themselves, aware of their dependence.

5. Here, too, it is not enough to see and describe the particular events in different countries in isolation. A new picture emerges, and a new understanding is made possible, if the many individual courts of the West, with their relatively uniform manners, are seen together as communicating organs in European society at large. What slowly began to form at the end of the Middle Ages was not just one courtly society here and another there. It was a courtly aristocracy

embracing Western Europe with its centre in Paris, its dependencies in all the other courts, and offshoots in all the other circles which claimed to belong to the great world of "Society", notably the upper stratum of the bourgeoisie and to some extent even broader layers of the middle class.

The members of this multifarious society spoke the same language throughout the whole of Europe, first Italian, then French; they read the same books, they had the same taste, the same manners and—with differences of degree—the same style of living. Notwithstanding their many political differences and even the many wars they waged against each other, they orientated themselves fairly unanimously, over greater or lesser periods, towards the centre at Paris. And social communication between court and court, that is within courtly-aristocratic society, remained for a long time closer than between courtly society and other strata in the same country; one expression of this was their common language. Then, from about the middle of the eighteenth century, earlier in one country and somewhat later in another, but always in conjunction with the rise of the middle classes and the gradual displacement of the social and political centre of gravity from the court to the various national bourgeois societies, the ties between the courtly-aristocratic societies of different nations were slowly loosened even if they are never entirely broken. The French language gave way, not without violent struggles, to the bourgeois, national languages even in the upper class. And courtly society itself became increasingly differentiated in the same way as bourgeois societies, particularly when the old aristocratic society lost its centre once and for all in the French Revolution. The national form of integration displaced that based on social estate.

6. In seeking the social traditions which provide the common basis and deeper unity of the various national traditions in the West, we should think not only of the Christian Church, the common Roman–Latin heritage, but also of this last great pre-national social formation which, already partly in the shadow of the national divergences within Western society, rose above the lower and middle strata in different linguistic areas. Here were created the models of more pacified social intercourse which more or less all classes needed, following the transformation of European society at the end of the Middle Ages; here the coarser habits, the wilder, more uninhibited customs of medieval society with its warrior upper class, the corollaries of an uncertain, constantly threatened life, were "softened", "polished" and "civilized". The pressure of court life, the vying for the favour of the prince or the "great"; then, more generally, the necessity to distinguish oneself from others and to fight for opportunities with relatively peaceful means, through intrigue and diplomacy, enforced a constraint on the affects, a self-discipline and self-control, a peculiarly courtly rationality, which at first made the courtier appear to the opposing bourgeoisie of the eighteenth century, above all in Germany but also in England, as the epitome of the man of reason.

And here, in this pre-national, courtly-aristocratic society, a part of those

commands and prohibitions were fashioned or at least prepared that are perceptible even today, national differences notwithstanding, as something common to the West. Partly from them the Western peoples, despite all their differences, have taken the common stamp of a specific civilization.

That the gradual formation of this absolutist-courtly society was accompanied by a transformation of the drive-economy and conduct of the upper class in the direction of "civilization", has been shown by a series of examples. It has also been indicated how closely this increased restraint and regulation of elementary urges is bound up with increased social constraint, the growing dependence of the nobility on the central lord, the king or prince.

How did this increased constraint and dependence come about? How was an upper class of relatively independent warriors or knights supplanted by a more or less pacified upper class of courtiers? Why was the influence of the estates progressively reduced in the course of the Middle Ages and the early modern period, and why, sooner or later, was the dictatorial "absolute" rule of a single figure, and with it the compulsion of courtly etiquette, the pacification of larger or smaller territories from a single centre, established for a greater or lesser period of time in all the countries of Europe? The sociogenesis of absolutism indeed occupies a key position in the overall process of civilization. The civilizing of conduct and the corresponding transformation of the structure of mental and emotional life cannot be understood without tracing the process of state-formation, and within it the advancing centralization of society which first found particularly visible expression in the absolutist form of rule.

II

A Prospective Glance at the Sociogenesis of Absolutism

1. A few of the most important mechanisms which, towards the end of the Middle Ages, gradually gave increasing power chances to the central authority of a territory, can be quite briefly described at this preliminary stage. They are broadly similar in all the larger countries of the West and are particularly clearly seen in the development of the French monarchy.

The gradual increase of the money sector of the economy at the expense of the barter sector in a given region in the Middle Ages had very different consequences for the majority of the warrior nobility on the one hand, and for the king or prince on the other. The more money that came into circulation in a region, the greater the increase in prices. All classes whose revenue did not increase at the same rate, all those on a fixed income, were thus placed at a disadvantage, above all the feudal lords who received fixed rents from their estates.

The social functions whose income increased with these new opportunities were placed at an advantage. They included certain sections of the bourgeoisie, but above all the king, the central ruler. For the taxation apparatus gave him a share of the increasing wealth; a part of all the earnings in his area of rule came to him, and his income consequently increased to an extraordinary degree with the growing circulation of money.

As is always the case, this functional mechanism was only very gradually and, so to speak, retrospectively exploited consciously by the interested parties, being adopted at a relatively late stage by rulers as a principle of domestic politics. Its first result was a more or less automatic and constant increase in the income of the central lord. This is one of the preconditions on the basis of which the institution of kingship gradually gained its absolute or uncircumscribed character.

2. As the financial opportunities open to the central function grew, so too did its military potential. The man who had at his disposal the taxes of an entire country was in a position to hire more warriors than any other; by the same token he grew less dependent on the war services which the feudal vassal was obliged to render in exchange for the land with which he was invested.

This too is a process which, like all the others, began very early but only gradually led to the formation of more permanent institutions. Even William the Conqueror went to England with an army consisting only partly of vassals, the rest being paid knights. Between that time and the establishment of standing armies by the central lords, centuries intervened. A prerequisite for such armies, apart from the growing revenue from taxes, was surplus manpower—the discrepancy between the number of people and the number and profitability of jobs available in a particular society which we know today as "unemployment". Areas suffering from surpluses of this kind, e.g. Switzerland and parts of Germany, supplied mercenaries to anyone who could afford them. Much later, Frederick the Great's recruiting tactics showed the solutions open to a prince when the manpower available in his territory was not sufficient for his military purposes. The military supremacy that went hand in hand with financial superiority was, therefore, the second decisive prerequisite enabling the central power of a region to take on "absolute" character.

A transformation of military techniques followed and reinforced this development. Through the slow development of firearms the mass of common foot-soldiers became militarily superior to the numerically limited nobles fighting on horseback. This too was to the advantage of the central authority.

The king, who in the France of the early Capetian period, for example, was not much more than a baron, one territorial lord among others of equal power, and sometimes even less powerful than others, gained from his increasing revenues the possibility of military supremacy over all the forces in his country. Which noble family managed in particular cases to win the crown and thus gain access to these power chances depended on a wide range of factors including the

personal talents of individuals, and often chance. The growth of the financial and military power chances that gradually attached themselves to the monarchy was independent of the will or talents of individuals; it followed a strict regularity that is encountered wherever social processes are observed.

And this increase in the power chances of the central function was therefore the precondition for the pacification of a given territory, greater or smaller as the case may be, from a single centre.

3. The two series of developments which acted to the advantage of a strong central authority were in all ways detrimental to the old medieval warrior estate. Its members had no direct connection with the growing money sector of the economy. They could scarcely derive any direct profit from the new opportunities of income that offered themselves. They felt only the devaluation, the rise in prices.

It has been calculated that a fortune of 22,000 francs in the year 1200 was worth 16,000 francs in 1300, 7,500 francs in 1400, and 6,500 in 1500. In the sixteenth century this movement accelerated; the value of the sum fell to 2,500 francs, and the case was similar in the whole of Europe.[1]

A movement originating far back in the Middle Ages underwent an extraordinary acceleration in the sixteenth century. From the reign of Francis I up to the year 1610 alone, the French pound was devalued in approximately the ratio 5 to 1. The importance of this developmental curve for the transformation of society was greater than can be stated in a few words. While money circulation grew and commercial activity developed, while bourgeois classes and the revenue of the central authority rose, the income of the entire remaining nobility fell. Some of the knights were reduced to a wretched existence, others took by robbery and violence what was no longer available by peaceful means, others again kept themselves above water for as long as possible by slowly selling off their estates; and finally a good part of the nobility, forced by these circumstances and attracted by the new opportunities, entered the service of the kings or princes who could pay. These were the economic options open to a warrior class that was not connected to the growth in money circulation and the trade network.

4. How the development of war technology operated to the nobility's disadvantage has already been mentioned: the infantry, the despised foot-soldiers, became more important in battle than the cavalry. Not only the military superiority of the medieval warrior estate was thereby broken, but also its monopoly over weapons. A situation where the nobles alone were warriors or, in other words, all warriors were nobles, began to turn into one where the noble was at best an officer of plebeian troops who had to be paid. The monopoly control of weapons and military power passed from the whole noble estate into the hands of a single member, the prince or king who, supported by the tax income of the whole region, could afford the largest army. The majority of the nobility were

thereby changed from relatively free warriors or knights into paid warriors or officers in the service of the central lord.

5. These are a few of the most important lines of this structural transformation. There was another as well. The nobility lost social power with the increase in the money sector of the economy, while bourgeois classes gained it. But in general neither of the two estates proved strong enough to gain the upper hand over the other for a prolonged period. Constant tensions everywhere erupted in periodic struggles. The battle fronts were complicated and varied widely from case to case. There were occasional alliances between specific noble strata and specific bourgeois strata; there were transitional forms and even fusions between sub-groups from the two estates. But however that may be, both the rise and the absolute power of the central institution always depended on the continued existence of this tension between the nobility and the bourgeoisie. One of the structural preconditions for the absolute monarchy or princedom was that neither of the estates nor any group within them should gain the upper hand. The representatives of the absolute central authority therefore had to be constantly on the alert to ensure that this unstable equilibrium was maintained within their territory. Where the balance was lost, where one group or stratum became too strong, or where aristocratic and upper bourgeois groups even temporarily allied, the supremacy of the central power was seriously threatened or—as in England—doomed. Thus we often observe among rulers that while one protects and promotes the bourgeoisie because the nobility seems too powerful and therefore dangerous, the next inclines towards the nobility, this having grown too weak or the bourgeoisie too refractory, without the other side being ever quite neglected. The absolute rulers were obliged, whether they were entirely conscious of it or not, to manipulate this social mechanism that they had not created. Their social existence depended on its survival and functioning. They too were bound to the social regularity with which they had to live. This regularity and the social structure corresponding to it emerged sooner or later with numerous modifications in almost every country of the West. But it takes on clear delineation only if observed in the process of emergence through a concrete example. The development in France, the country in which this process, from a particular moment on, took place in the most direct form, will serve here as an example.

1

Dynamics of Feudalization

I

Introduction

1. If we compare France, England and the German Empire at the middle of the seventeenth century in terms of the power of their central authorities, the king of France appears particularly strong beside the English king and even more so beside the German emperor. This constellation was the outcome of a very long development.

At the end of the Carolingian and the beginning of the Capetian period the situation was almost the reverse. At that time the central power of the German emperors was strong as compared to the French kings. And England had yet to undergo its decisive unification and reorganization by the Normans.

In the German empire the power of the central authority crumbled persistently—though with occasional interruptions—from this time on.

In England, from Norman times on, periods of strong royal power alternated with the preponderance of the estates or parliament.

In France, from about the beginning of the twelfth century, the king's power grew—again with interruptions—fairly steadily. A continuous line led from the Capetians through the Valois to the Bourbons.

Nothing entitles us to assume that these differences were predetermined by any kind of necessity. Very slowly the different regions of the three countries

merged into national units. At first, as long as the integration of those areas which were later to become "France", "Germany", "Italy" and "England" was relatively slight, they did not weigh very heavily as social organisms in the balance of historical forces. And the main developmental curves in the history of these nations in this phase were incomparably more strongly influenced by the fortunes and misfortunes of individuals, by personal qualities, by sympathies and antipathies or "accidents", than later when "England", "Germany" or "France" had become social formations with a quite specific structure and a momentum and regularity of their own. At first the historical lines of development were co-determined very strongly by factors which, from the viewpoint of the later unit, had no inherent necessity.[2] Then, gradually, with the increasing interdependence of larger areas and populations, a pattern slowly emerged which, according to circumstance, either limited or opened opportunities to the whims and interests of powerful individuals or even of particular groups. Then, but only then, did the inherent developmental dynamics of these social units override chance or at least mark it with their stamp.

2. Nothing entitles us to presuppose any compelling necessity determining that it was the duchy of Francia, the "Isle de France", about which a nation would crystallize. Culturally, and also politically, the southern regions of France had much stronger ties with those of northern Spain and the bordering Italian regions than with the area around Paris. There was always a very considerable difference between the old, more Celto-Romanic regions of Provence, the *langue d'oc*, and the *langue d'oïl* parts, that is, regions with a stronger Frankish influence, above all those to the north of the Loire, together with Poitou, Berry, Burgundy, Saintonge and Franche-Comté.[3]

Moreover, the eastern frontiers established by the Treaty of Verdun (843) and then by the Treaty of Meerssen (870) for the western Frankish empire, were very different from the borders between what gradually emerged as "France" and "Germany" or "Italy".

The Treaty of Verdun fixed as the eastern frontier of the western Frankish empire a line leading from the present Gulf of Lions in the south, and approaching the western side of the Rhône, in an approximately northerly direction as far as Flanders. Lorraine and Burgundy—except for the duchy west of the Saône—and therefore also Arles, Lyons, Trier and Metz thus lay outside the borders of the western Frankish empire, while to the south the county of Barcelona was still within its frontiers.[4]

The Treaty or Meerssen made the Rhône the direct frontier in the south between the western and the eastern Frankish empires; then the frontier followed the Isère and, further north, the Moselle. Trier and Metz thus became frontier towns, as, to the north, did Meerssen, the place from which the treaty took its name. And the frontier finally ended north of the Rhine estuary in the region of southern Friesland.

But what such frontiers separated were neither states, nor peoples or nations, if by that we mean social formations that are in any sense unified and stable. At most they were states, peoples, nations in the making. The most striking feature of all the larger territories in this phase is their low level of cohesion, the strength of the centrifugal forces tending to disintegrate them.

What is the nature of these centrifugal forces? What peculiarity of the structure of these territories gave such forces their particular strength? And what change in the structure of society, from the fifteenth, sixteenth or seventeenth century onwards, finally gave the central authorities preponderance over all the centrifugal forces, and thus conferred on the territories a greater stability?

II

Centralizing and Decentralizing Forces in the Medieval Power Figuration

3. The immense empire of Charlemagne had been brought together by conquest. Certainly the basic, though not the only function of his immediate predecessors, and more so of Charlemagne himself, was that of army leader, victorious in conquest and defence. This was the foundation of his royal power, his renown, his social strength.

As army leader Charlemagne had control of the land he conquered and defended. As victorious prince he rewarded the warriors who followed him with land. And by virtue of this authority he held them together even though their estates were scattered across the country.

The emperor and king could not supervise the whole empire alone. He sent trusted friends and servants into the country to uphold the law in his stead, to ensure the payment of tributes and the performance of services, and to punish resistance. He did not pay for their services in money; this was certainly not entirely lacking in this phase, but was available to only a very limited extent. Needs were supplied for the most part directly from the land, the fields, the forests and the stables, produce being worked up within the household. The earls or dukes, or whatever the representatives of the central authority were called, also fed themselves and their retinue from the land with which the central authority had invested them. In keeping with the economic structure, the apparatus for ruling in this phase of society was unlike that of "states" in a later stage. Most of the "officials", it has been said of this phase, "were farmers who had 'official' duties only for certain set periods or in the case of unforeseen events, and so were most directly comparable to landowners having police and judicial powers".[5] With this legal and law-enforcing role they combined military functions; they were warriors, commanders of a warlike following and of all the other landowners

in the area the king had given them, should it be threatened by an external enemy. In a word, all ruling functions were drawn together in their hands.

But this peculiar power figuration—a measure of the division of labour and differentiation in this phase—again and again led to characteristic tensions arising from the nature of its structure. It generated certain typical sequences of events which—with certain modifications—were repeated over and again.

4. Whoever was once entrusted by the central lord with the functions of ruling in a particular area and was thus in effect the lord of this area, no longer depended on the central lord to sustain and protect himself and his dependants, at least as long as he was threatened by no stronger external foe. At the first opportunity, therefore, as soon as the central power showed the slightest sign of weakness, the local ruler or his descendants sought to demonstrate their right and ability to rule the district entrusted to them, and their independence of the central authority.

Over many centuries the same patterns and trends show themselves over and again in this apparatus for ruling. The rulers over parts of the central lord's territory, the local dukes or chieftains, are at all times a danger to the central power. Conquering princes and kings, being strong as army leaders and protectors against external foes, strive, successfully at first, to confront this danger within the area they control. Where possible they replace the existing local rulers with their own friends, relations or servants. Within a short time, often within a generation, the same thing happens again. The erstwhile representatives of the central ruler do their best to take over the area entrusted to them, as if it were the hereditary property of their family.

Now it is the *comes palatii*, once the overseers of the royal palace, who want to become the independent rulers of a region; now it is the margraves, dukes, counts, barons or officials of the king. In repeated waves the kings, strengthened by conquests, send their trusted friends, relations and servants into the country as their envoys, while the previous envoys or their descendants fight just as regularly to establish the hereditary nature and the factual independence of their region, which was originally a kind of fief.

On the one hand the kings were forced to delegate power over part of their territory to other individuals. The state of military, economic and transport arrangements at that time left them no choice. Society offered them no sources of money taxes sufficient for them to keep a paid army or paid official delegates in remote regions. To pay or reward them they could only allocate them land—in amounts large enough to ensure that they were actually stronger than all the other warriors or landowners in the area.

On the other hand the vassals representing the central power were restrained by no oath of allegiance or loyalty from asserting the independence of their area as soon as the relative power positions of the central ruler and his delegates shifted in favour of the latter. These territorial lords or local princes in effect own the land once controlled by the king. Except when threatened from outside, they

no longer need the king. They withdraw themselves from his power. When they need the king as military leader, the movement is reversed and the game starts all over again, assuming the central lord is victorious in the war. Then, through the power and threat emanating from his sword, he regains actual control over the whole territory and can distribute it anew. This is one of the recurring processes in the development of Western society in the early Middle Ages and sometimes, in somewhat modified form, in later periods too.

5. Examples of such processes are still to be found today outside Europe, in regions with a similar social structure. The development of Abyssinia shows such configurations in abundance, though they have latterly been somewhat modified by the inflow of money and other institutions from Europe. But the rise of Ras Tafari to the position of central ruler or emperor of the whole country was made possible only by the military subjugation of the most powerful territorial lords; and the unexpectedly quick collapse of opposition to Italy [in 1936] is explained not least by the fact that in this feudal and predominantly agrarian region, the centrifugal tendencies of the individual territories were multiplied as soon as the central ruler failed to fulfil his most important task, that of resisting the external enemy, thus showing himself "weak".

In European history traces of this mechanism are to be found as early as the Merovingian epoch. Here, already, are present "the beginnings of a development which changed the higher imperial offices into hereditary forms of rule".[6] Even to this period the principle applies that: "The greater the actual economic and social power of these officials became, the less could the monarchy contemplate transferring the office outside the family on the death of its incumbent."[7] In other words, large parts of the territory passed from the control of the central lord to that of the local rulers.

Sequences of this kind emerge more clearly in the Carolingian period. Charlemagne, much like the emperor of Abyssinia, replaced the old local dukes wherever he could by his own "officials", the counts. When, within Charlemagne's lifetime, these counts showed their self-will and their effective control over the territory entrusted to them, he despatched a new wave of people from his entourage as royal envoys, *missi dominici*, to supervise them. Under Louis the Pious the function of count was already beginning to become hereditary. Charlemagne's successors were no longer able "to avoid factual recognition of the claim to hereditariness".[8] And the royal envoys themselves lost their function. Louis the Pious was forced to withdraw the *missi dominici*. Under this king who lacked the military renown of Charlemagne, the centrifugal tendencies within the imperial and social organization emerged very clearly. They reached a first peak under Charles III, who in 887 could no longer protect Paris from his external enemies, the Danish Normans, by the power of the sword, and scarcely by the power of money. It is characteristic of this tendency that with the end of the direct line of the Carolingians, the crown went first to Arnulf of Carinthia,

the bastard son of Karlmann, nephew of Charles the Fat. Arnulf had proved his worth as a military leader in the border conflicts with the invading foreign tribes. When he led the Bavarians against the weak central ruler, he quickly gained the recognition of other tribes, the eastern Franks, the Thuringians, the Saxons and the Swabians. As army leader in the original sense, he was raised to the kingship by the warrior nobility of the German tribes.[9] Once again it is shown very clearly from where the function of kingship in this society derived its power and legitimation. In 891 Arnulf succeeded in repelling the Normans near Louvain. But when, confronted by a new threat, he hesitated only slightly to lead his army into battle, the reaction was immediate. At once centrifugal forces gained the upper hand in his weakly unified domain: "Illo diu morante, multi reguli in Europa vel regno Karoli sui patruelis excrevere," says a writer of the time.[10] Everywhere in Europe little kings grew up when he hesitated for a time to fight. This illustrates in one sentence the social regularities which set their stamp on the development of European society in this phase.

The movement was once again reversed under the first Saxon emperors. The fact that rule over the entire empire fell to the Saxon dukes again shows what was the most important function of the central ruler in this society. The Saxons were particularly exposed to pressure from the non-German tribes pushing across from the east. The first task of their dukes was to protect their own tribal territory. But in so doing they also defended the land of the other German tribes. In 924 Henry I managed to conclude at least a truce with the Hungarians; in 928 he himself advanced as far as Brandenburg; in 929 he founded the frontier fortress at Meissen; in 933 he defeated the Hungarians at Riade, but without destroying them or really averting the danger; and in 934 in Schleswig he succeeded in restoring the northern frontiers against the Danes.[11] All this he did primarily as a Saxon duke. These were victories of the Saxons over peoples threatening their frontiers and territory. But in fighting and conquering on their own frontiers, the Saxon dukes gained the military power and reputation that were needed to oppose the centrifugal tendencies within the empire. Through external victory they laid the foundation of a strengthened internal central power.

Henry I had by and large maintained and consolidated the frontiers, at least to the north. As soon as he died the Wends revoked their peace with the Saxons. Henry's son Otto drove them back. In the following years 937 and 938 the Hungarians advanced again and were likewise repelled. Then began a new and more powerful expansion. In 940 the German territory was extended to the Oder region. And, as always, as in the present day, the conquest of new lands was followed by the ecclesiastical organization which—then much more strongly than now—served to secure military domination.

The same thing happened in the south-east. In 955—still on German territory—the Hungarians were defeated at Augsburg and so driven out more or less finally. As a barrier against them the Eastern Marches, embryo of the later

Austria, were established with their frontier roughly in the region of Pressburg [Bratislava]. To the east, in the central Danube area, the Hungarians slowly began to settle permanently.

Otto's military successes were matched by his power inside the empire. Wherever he could he tried to replace the descendants of lords installed by earlier emperors, who now opposed him as hereditary local leaders, with his own relations and friends. Swabia went to his son Ludolph, Bavaria to his brother Henry, Lorraine to his son-in-law Conrad, whose son Otto was given Swabia when Ludolph rebelled.

At the same time he sought—more consciously, it seems, than his predecessors—to counteract the mechanisms which constantly weaken centralism. He did this on the one hand by limiting the powers of the local rulers he installed. On the other hand he and, more resolutely still, his successors, opposed these mechanisms by installing clerics as rulers over regions. Bishops were given the secular office of count. This appointment of high ecclesiastics without heirs was intended to put a stop to the tendency of functionaries of the central authority to turn into a "hereditary, landowning aristocracy" with strong desires for independence.

In the long run, however, these measures intended to counter decentralizing forces only reinforced them. They led finally to the conversion of clerical rulers into princes, worldly powers. The preponderance of centrifugal tendencies over centripetal ones that was rooted in the structure of this society emerged yet again. In the course of time the spiritual authorities showed themselves no less concerned for the preservation of their independent hegemony over the territory entrusted to them than the secular. It was now in their interests too that the central authority should not grow too strong. And this convergence of the interests of high ecclesiastical and secular dignitaries was a main contributory factor in keeping the actual power of the central authority of the German Empire low for many centuries, while the power and independence of the territorial rulers increased—the inverse of what happened in France. There the leading ecclesiastics hardly ever became great worldly rulers. The bishops, part of whose possessions were scattered among the lands of the various territorial lords, remained interested in preserving a strong central authority for their own security. These parallel interests of church and monarchy, extending over a considerable period, were not the least of the factors which, in France, gave the central power preponderance over centrifugal tendencies at a relatively early stage. At first, however, by the same process, the western Frankish empire disintegrated even more rapidly and radically than the eastern one.

6. The last, western Frankish, Carolingians were by all accounts[12] courageous and clear-thinking men, some of them gifted with outstanding qualities. But they were contending with a situation that gave the central ruler little chance,

and one which shows particularly clearly how easily, in this social structure, the centre of gravity could shift to the disadvantage of the central ruler.

Leaving aside his role as army leader, conqueror and distributor of new lands, the basis of the social power of the central lord consisted of his family possessions, the land he controlled directly and from which he had to support his servants, his court and his armed retainers. In this respect the central lord was no better off than any other territorial ruler. But the personal territory of the western Frankish Carolingians had in the course of long struggles been largely given away in exchange for services rendered. To obtain and reward support, their forefathers had had to distribute land. Each time this happened—without new conquests—their own possessions were reduced. This left the sons in a still more precarious position. All new help meant new losses of land. In the end the heirs had very little left to distribute. The retainers they were able to feed and pay became fewer and fewer. We find the last of the western Frankish Carolingians in a sometimes desperate position. To be sure, their vassals were obliged to follow them to war; but if they had no personal interest in doing so, only the open or concealed pressure of a militarily powerful liege lord could induce them to meet this obligation. The fewer vassals followed the king, the less threatening his power became and so even fewer vassals joined him. With military power as with land, therefore, these social mechanisms, once set in motion, progressively weakened the position of the Carolingian kings.

Louis IV, a brave man fighting desperately for survival, is sometimes called "le roi de Monloon", the king of Laon. Of all the family possessions of the Carolingians, little was left to him except the fortress at Laon. At times the last sons of the house had hardly any troops to fight their wars, just as they had hardly any land to support and pay their followers: "The time arrived when the descendant of Charlemagne, surrounded by landowners who were the masters of their domains, found no other means of keeping men in his service than by handing out territory to them with concessions of immunity, that is, attaching them to him by making them more and more independent, and continuing to reign by abdicating more and more."[13] Thus the function of the monarchy went irremediably downhill, and whatever its occupants did to improve their position in the end turned against them.

7. The former territory of the western Frankish Carolingians, the embryo of what was to become France, had at that time disintegrated into a number of separately ruled areas. After a prolonged struggle between various territorial rulers of roughly equal strength, a kind of equilibrium had been established. When the direct line of the Carolingians became extinct, the chieftains and territorial lords elected the one of their number whose house had outdone the others in the fight against the hostile Normans, and had thus long been the strongest rival of the weakening monarchy. In a similar way in the eastern Frankish regions, with the end of the Carolingians, the local princes who had successfully defended the

country against the invading peoples from the east and north, Slavs, Hungarians and Danes, that is, the dukes of Saxony, were made kings.

This had been preceded by a protracted struggle between the house of Francia and the last, western Frankish Carolingians.

When the crown went to the former in the person of Hugh Capet, they were themselves already somewhat weakened by a process similar to the one that had brought down the Carolingians. The dukes of Francia too had had to form alliances, and obtain services in exchange for land and rights. The territory of the Norman dukes who had settled and become Christianized in the meantime, the duchies of Aquitaine and Burgundy, the counties of Anjou and Flanders, Vermandois and Champagne, was scarcely smaller, and in some respects more important, than the family territory of the new royal house of Francia. And it was family power and territory that counted. The power available to the king through his family possessions was the real basis of his royal power. If his family possessions were no greater than those of other territorial rulers, then his power was no greater either. It was only from the family possessions and territory that he drew regular income. From other territories he drew, at the most, ecclesiastical dues. What he received beyond that in his capacity as "king" was minimal. Moreover, the factor which in the German territories constantly restored the preponderance of the centralizing royal function over the centrifugal tendencies of the territorial rulers, their function as military leaders in the struggle against external enemies and in the conquest of new land, ceased at a relatively early stage to be of importance in the western Frankish area. And this is one of the decisive reasons why the disintegration of the royal domain into independent territories occurred earlier here and, at first, in a more radical form. The eastern Frankish region was exposed for far longer to attack and threat by foreign tribes. Hence the kings not only constantly re-emerged as leaders in wars fought in common by a number of tribes to protect their lands, but they also had the opportunity of invading and conquering new lands, which they then distributed. So they were at first able to keep a relatively large number of retainers and vassals dependent on them.

In contrast, the western Frankish area, since the Normans had settled, had scarcely been threatened by outside tribes. In addition, there was no possibility of conquering new lands directly outside its borders, unlike the situation in the eastern Frankish region. This accelerated its disintegration. The prime factors giving the king preponderance over the centrifugal forces, defence and conquest, were lacking. Since there was virtually nothing else in the social structure that made the various regions dependent on a central ruler, the latter's domain was in fact reduced to little more than his own territory.

This so-called sovereign is a mere baron who owns a number of counties on the banks of the Seine and the Loire that amount to scarcely four or five present-day *départements*.

> The royal domain just manages to sustain his theoretical majesty. It is neither the largest nor the richest of the territories making up the France of today. The king is less powerful than some of his major vassals. And like them he lives on the income from his estates, duties from his peasants, the work of his bondsmen and the "voluntary gifts" from the abbeys and bishoprics in his territory.[14]

Soon after the crowning of Hugh Capet the weakening not of the individual kings but of the royal function itself, and with it the disintegration of the royal territories, began slowly and steadily to increase. The first Capetians still travelled throughout the whole country with their courts. The places where the royal decrees were signed give us an idea of the way in which they journeyed back and forth. They still sat in judgement at the seats of major vassals. Even in southern France they had a certain traditional influence.

At the beginning of the twelfth century the wholly hereditary and independent nature of the various territories previously subject to the king was an accomplished fact. The fifth of the Capetians, Louis the Fat (1108–37), a brave and belligerent lord and no weakling, had little say outside his own territory. The royal decrees show that he hardly ever travelled outside the borders of his own duchy.[15] He lived within his own domain. He no longer held court in the lands of his great vassals. They hardly ever appeared at the royal court. The exchange of friendly visits grew more infrequent, correspondence with other parts of the kingdom, particularly in the south, more sparse. France at the beginning of the twelfth century was at best a union of independent territories, a loose federation of greater and lesser domains between which a kind of balance had provisionally been established.

8. Within the German Empire, after a century filled with wars between the wearers of the royal and imperial crown and the families of powerful dukes, one of the latter, the house of Swabia, succeeded in the twelfth century in again subjugating the others and, for a time, bringing together the necessary means of power in the central authority.

But from the end of the twelfth century onwards the social centre of gravity moved ever more clearly and inevitably towards the territorial rulers in Germany too. However, while in the immense area of the German "Imperium Romanum" or "Sacrum Imperium", as it was later called, the territorial estates were consolidating themselves to the point that they could now for centuries prevent the formation of a strong central power and so the integration of the whole area, in the smaller area of France the extreme disintegration of the end of the twelfth century now began gradually and—some setbacks notwithstanding—fairly steadily to give way to a restoration of the central authority and the slow reintegration of larger and larger regions around one centre.

The scene of this radical disintegration must be envisaged as in a way the starting point if we are to understand how the smaller areas joined together to

form a stronger unit, and by which social processes were formed the central organs of the larger units of rule that we designate by the concept of "absolutism"—the ruling apparatus which forms the skeleton of modern states. The relative stability of the central authority and the central institutions in the phase we call the "Age of Absolutism" contrasts sharply with the instability of the central authority in the preceding "feudal" phase.

What was it in the structure of society that favoured centralization in the later phase but strengthened the forces opposing centralization in the earlier one?

This question takes us to the centre of the dynamics of social processes, of the changes in human interweaving and interdependence in conjunction with which conduct and drive structure were altered in the direction of "civilization".

9. What constantly gave the decentralizing forces in medieval, particularly early medieval, society their preponderance over the centralizing tendencies is not difficult to see, and has been emphasized by historians of that epoch in a variety of ways. Hampe, for example, in his account of the European High Middle Ages, writes:

> The feudalization of states everywhere forced rulers to provide their army leaders and officials with land. If they were to avoid being impoverished in the process, and to make use of the military services of their vassals, they were virtually driven to attempts at military expansion, generally at the expense of the power vacuums around them. At that time it was not economically possible to avoid this necessity by constructing a bureaucracy on the modern pattern.[16]

This quotation implicitly shows the basic dyamics of both the centrifugal forces and the mechanisms in which the monarchy was embroiled in that society, provided that "feudalization" is not understood as an external "cause" of all these changes. The various elements in this dilemma: the necessity of providing warriors and officials with land, the unavoidable diminution of the royal possessions unless new campaigns of conquest took place, the tendency of the central authority to weaken in times of peace—all these are parts of the great process of "feudalization". The quotation also indicates how indissolubly this specific form of rule and its apparatus of government were bound to a particular economic structure.

To make this explicit: as long as barter relationships predominated in society, the formation of a tightly centralized bureaucracy and a stable apparatus of government working primarily with peaceful means and directed constantly from the centre, was scarcely possible. The imminent tendencies we have described—conqueror-king, envoys sent by the central authority to administer the country, independence of these envoys or their descendents as territorial rulers and their struggle against the central power—correspond to certain forms of economic relationship. If in a society the production from a small or large piece of land was sufficient to satisfy all the essential everyday needs of its inhabitants

from clothing to food and household implements, if the division of labour and the exchange of products over longer distances were poorly developed, and if accordingly—all these are different aspects of the same form of integration—roads were bad and the means of transportation rudimentary, then the interdependence of different regions was also slight. Only when this interdependence grows considerably can relatively stable central institutions for a number of larger areas be formed. Before this the social structure simply offers no basis for them.

A historian of the period writes: "We can scarcely imagine how difficult it was, given medieval transportation conditions, to rule and administer an extensive empire."[17]

Charlemagne, too, supported himself and his court essentially from the produce of his old family estate scattered between the Rhine, the Maas and the Moselle. Each "Palatium" or manor—in Dopsch's convincing account[18]—was associated with a number of households and villages in the vicinity. The emperor and king moved from manor to manor in this relatively small area, supporting himself and his followers on the revenue from the surrounding households and villages. Trade over long distances was never entirely lacking even at this time; but it was essentially a trade in luxury goods, at any rate not in articles of daily use. Even wine was not, in general, transported over long distances. Anyone who wanted to drink wine had to produce it in his own district, and only his nearest neighbours could obtain any surplus through exchange. This is why there were in the Middle Ages vineyards in regions where wine is no longer cultivated today, the grapes being too sour or their plantations "uneconomic", for example in Flanders or Normandy. Conversely, regions like Burgundy which are for us synonymous with viniculture, were not nearly as specialized in winemaking as they later became. There, too, every farmer and estate had to be, up to a certain point, "autarkic". As late as the seventeenth century there were only eleven parishes in Burgundy where everyone was a wine-grower.[19] Thus slowly do the various districts become interconnected, are communications developed, are the division of labour and the integration of larger areas and populations increased; and increased correspondingly is the need for a means of exchange and units of calculation having the same value over large areas: money.

To understand the civilizing process it is particularly important to have a clear and vivid conception of these social processes, of what is meant by "barter or domestic economy", "money economy", "interdependence of large populations", "change in the social dependence of the individual", "increasing division of functions", and so on. Such concepts too easily become verbal fetishes which have lost all pictorial quality and thus, really, all clarity. The purpose of this necessarily brief account is to give a concrete perception of the social relationships referred to here by the concept of the "barter economy". What it indicates is a quite specific way in which people are bound together and dependent on each

other. It refers to a society in which the transfer of goods from the person who gets them from the soil or nature to the person who uses them takes place directly, that is without or almost without intermediaries, and where they are worked up at the house of one or the other, which may well be the same. This transfer very gradually becomes more differentiated. More and more people slowly interpose themselves as functionaries of processing and distribution in the passage of the goods from the primary producer to the final consumer. How and, above all, why this happens, what is the motive power behind this prolongation of the chains, is a question in itself. At any rate money is nothing other than an instrument which is needed and with which society provides itself when these chains grow longer, when work and distribution are differentiated, and which under certain circumstances tends to reinforce this differentiation. If the terms "barter economy" and "money economy" are used, it can easily appear as if an absolute antithesis exists between these two economic forms, and such an imagined antithesis has unleashed many a dispute. In the actual social process the chains between production and consumption change and differentiate very gradually, not to mention the fact that in some sectors of Western society economic communication over long distances and thus the use of money never entirely ceased. Thus, very gradually, the money sector of the economy increases again, as do the differentiation of social functions, the interdependence of different regions, and the dependence of large populations on one another; all these are different aspects of the same social process. And so too the change in the form and apparatus for ruling that has been discussed is nothing other than a further aspect of this process. The structure of the central organs corresponds to the structure of the division and interweaving of functions. The strength of the centrifugal tendencies towards local *political autarky* within societies based predominantly on a barter economy corresponds to the degree of local *economic autarky*.

10. Two phases can generally be distinguished in the development of such predominantly agrarian warrior societies, phases which may occur once only or alternate frequently: the phase of the belligerent expansionist central lords and that of the conserving rulers who win no new land. In the first phase the central authority is strong. The primary social function of the central lord in this society manifests itself directly, that of the army leader. When over a long period the royal house does not manifest itself in this belligerent role, when the king is either not needed as army leader or has no success as such, the secondary functions lapse as well, for example that of the highest arbitrator or judge of the whole region, and the ruler has at bottom no more than his title to distinguish him from other territorial lords.

In the second phase, when the frontiers are not threatened and the conquest of new land is impossible for one reason or another, centrifugal forces necessarily gain the upper hand. While earlier the conquering king has actually controlled

the entire country, in times of relative peace it increasingly slips away from his authority. Anyone with a piece of land regards himself as its first ruler. This reflects his actual dependence on the central lord which in more peaceful times is minimal.

At this stage, when the economic interdependence and integration of large areas is lacking or only beginning, a noneconomic form of integration appears all the more strongly: military integration, alliance to repel a common foe. Beside a traditional sense of community with its strongest support in the common faith and its most important promoters in the clergy—but which never prevents disintegration, nor of itself brings about an alliance, merely strengthening and guiding it in certain directions—the urge to conquer and the necessity of resisting conquest is the most fundamental factor binding together people in regions lying relatively far apart. For this very reason every such alliance in this society is, compared with later periods, highly unstable, and the preponderance of decentralizing forces very great.

The two phases of this agrarian society, the phases of conquering and of conserving rulers, or merely spurts in one direction or the other, may alternate, as has been noted. And this is what actually happened in the history of Western countries. But the examples of German and French development also show that despite all the countervailing movements in the periods of conquering rulers, the tendency for the larger dominions to disintegrate and for land to pass from the control of the central lord to that of his erstwhile vassals proceeded, up to a certain time, continuously.

Why? Had the external threat to the former Carolingian Empire, which really constituted the West at that time, abated? Were there yet other causes for this progressive decentralization of the Carolingian Empire?

The question of the motive forces of this process may take on new significance if seen in relation to a familiar concept. This gradual decentralization of government and territory, this transition of the land from the control of the conquering central ruler to that of the warrior caste as a whole is nothing other than the process known as "feudalization".

III

The Increase in Population after the Great Migration

11. For some time, understanding of the problem of feudalization has been undergoing a pronounced change which perhaps merits more explicit emphasis than it has received hitherto. As with social processes in general, the older mode of historical research has failed to come properly to grips with the process of

feudalization in the West. The tendency to think in terms of isolated causes, to look for individual creators of social transformations, or at most to see only the legal aspect of social institutions and to seek the examples on which they were modelled by this or that agent—all this has made these processes and institutions as inaccessible to our thought as natural processes were earlier to scholastic thinkers.

More recently historians have begun to break through to a new way of posing the question. Increasingly, historians concerned with the origins of feudalism are emphasizing that this is neither a deliberate creation of individuals, nor does it consist of institutions that can be simply explained by earlier ones. Dopsch, for example, says of feudalization: "We are concerned here with institutions that were not called into being deliberately and intentionally by states or the bearers of state power in order to realize certain political ends."[20]

And Calmette formulates still more clearly this approach to the social processes of history:

> However different the feudal system is from the preceding one, it results directly from it. No revolution, no individual will has produced it. It is part of a long evolution. Feudality belongs to the category of what might be called the "natural occurrences" or "natural facts" of history. Its formation was determined by quasi-mechanical forces and proceeded step by step.[21]

Elsewhere in his study *La société féodale* he says:

> To be sure, knowledge of antecedents, that is, of similar phenomena preceding a given phenomenon, is interesting and instructive to historians, and we shall not ignore it. But these "antecedents" are not the only factors involved and perhaps not the most important. The main thing is not to know where the "feudal element" comes from, whether its origins are to be sought in Rome or among the Germans, but why this element has taken on its "feudal" character. If these foundations became what they were, they owe this to an evolution whose secret neither Rome nor the Germans can tell us . . . its formation is the result of forces that can only be compared with geological ones.[22]

The use of images from the realm of nature or technology is unavoidable as long as our language has not developed a clear, special vocabulary for socio-historical processes. Why images are provisionally sought in these realms is readily explained: for the time being they express adequately the compelling strength of social processes in history. And however much one may thereby expose oneself to misunderstanding, as if social processes and their compulsions, originating in the interrelationships of men, were really of the same nature as, for example, the course of the earth about the sun or the action of a lever in a machine, the endeavour to find a new, structural manner of posing historical questions reveals itself very clearly in such formulations. The relation of later

institutions to similar institutions in an earlier phase is always of significance. But here the decisive historical question is why institutions, and also people's conduct and affective make-up *change*, and why they change in this particular way. We are concerned with the strict order of socio-historical *transformations*. And perhaps it is not easy even today to understand that these transformations are not to be explained by something that itself remains unchanged, and still less easy to realize that in history no isolated fact ever brings about any transformation by itself, but only in combination with others.

Finally, these transformations remain inexplicable as long as explanation is limited to the ideas of individuals written down in books. When enquiring into social processes one must look at the web of human relationships, at society itself, to find the compulsions that keep them in motion, and give them their particular form and their particular direction. This applies to the process of feudalization as to the process of increasing division of labour; it applies to countless other processes represented in our conceptual apparatus by words without process-character, which stress particular institutions formed by the process in question, for example, the concepts of "absolutism", "capitalism", "barter economy", "money economy" and so on. All these point beyond themselves to changes in the structure of human relationships which clearly were not planned by individuals and to which individuals were subjected whether willingly or not. And this applies finally to changes in the human habitus itself, to the civilizing process.

12. One of the most important motors of change in the structure of human relationships, and of the institutions corresponding to them, is the increase or decrease of population. It too cannot be isolated from the whole dynamic web of human relationships. It is not, as prevalent habits of thought incline us to assume, in itself the "first cause" of socio-historical movement. But amidst the intertwining factors of change this is an important element that should never be neglected. It also shows particularly clearly the compelling nature of these social forces. It remains to be established what role factors of this kind played in the phase under discussion. It may help understanding of them to recall briefly the last movements in the migration of peoples.

Up to the eighth and ninth centuries tribes migrating from the east, north and south pushed in recurrent spurts into the already populated areas of Europe. This was the last and biggest wave in a movement that had gone on over a long period. What we see of it are small episodes: the irruption of Hellenic "barbarians" into the populared areas of Asia Minor and the Balkan peninsula, the penetration by the Italian "barbarians" of the neighbouring western peninsula, the advance of the Celtic "barbarians" into the territory of the former who had now in their turn become to some extent "civilized" and whose land had become a centre of "ancient culture", and the definitive settling of these Celtic tribes to the west and partly to the north of them.

Finally the German tribes overran a large part of the Celts' territory, which in the meantime had likewise given rise to an "older culture". The Germans in their turn defended this "cultured" land they had conquered against new waves of peoples advancing from all sides.

Shortly after the death of Mohammed in 632 the Arabs were set in motion.[23] By 713 they had conquered the whole of Spain with the exception of the Asturian mountains. Towards the middle of the eighth century this wave came to a standstill at the southern frontier of the Frankish empire, as Celtic waves had earlier done before the gates of Rome.

From the east Slavonic tribes advanced against the Frankish empire. By the end of the eighth century they had reached the Elbe.

> If in the year 800 a political prophet had possessed a map of Europe as we can now reconstruct it, he might well have been misled into predicting that the whole eastern half of the Continent from the Danish peninsula to the Peloponnese was destined to become a Slavonic Empire or at least a powerful group of Slavonic countries. From the Elbe estuary to the Ionian sea ran an unbroken line of Slavonic peoples . . . this seems to mark the frontier of Germanic territory.[24]

Their movement came to a standstill somewhat later than that of the Arabs. Then the struggle long remained undecided. The frontier between Germanic and Slavonic tribes now moved somewhat forward, now back again. By and large the Slavonic wave was held at the Elbe from about 800 onwards.

What may be called the "originally settled territory" of the west had thus, under the rule and leadership of Germanic tribes, preserved its frontier against the migrating tribes. Representatives of earlier waves defended it against those following, the last waves of migration that passed across Europe. These, prevented from advancing further, slowly settled outside the borders of the Frankish empire. And so a fringe of populated regions formed about the latter in large areas in the interior of Europe. Previously nomadic tribes took possession of the land. The great migrations slowly came to rest, and the renewed intrusions of migrating peoples that occurred from time to time, by the Hungarians and finally the Turks, foundered sooner or later on the superior defensive techniques and the strength of those already in possession.

13. A new situation had been created. There were no longer any empty spaces in Europe. There was virtually no usable land—usable in terms of the agricultural techniques then available—that had not been pre-empted. By and large Europe, and above all its large interior regions, was now more completely populated than ever before, even if incomparably less densely than in the centuries that followed. And there is every indication that population increased to the same extent as the upheavals accompanying the great migrations abated. This changed the whole system of tensions between and within the various peoples.

In late antiquity the population of the "old cultural regions" declined more or

less rapidly. In consequence the social institutions corresponding to relatively large and dense populations disappeared also. The use of money within a society, for example, is bound up with a certain level of population density. It is an essential prerequisite for the differentiation of work and the formation of markets. If the population falls below a certain level—for whatever reasons—the markets automatically empty. The chains between the person producing a commodity from nature and its consumer grew shorter. Money lost its instrumental function. This was the direction of development at the end of antiquity. The urban sector of society grew smaller. The agrarian character of society increased. This development took place the more easily as the division of labour in antiquity was never remotely as great as, for example, in our own society. A proportion of urban households were always to a degree directly supplied, independently of commercial or manufacturing intermediaries, by the great slave estates. And as the overland transportation of goods over long distances was always extremely difficult, given the state of technology in antiquity, long-distance trade was essentially confined to waterborne transport. Large markets and towns and vigorous monetary activity developed in proximity to water. Inland areas always preserved a predominantly domestic type of economy. Even for the urban population, the autarkic household and economic self-sufficiency never declined to the extent that they have in modern Western society. With the fall in population this aspect of the social structure of antiquity regained prominence.

With the end of the migration of peoples, this movement was once again reversed. The influx and subsequent settling of so many new tribes provided the basis for a new and more comprehensive population of the whole European area. In the Carolingian period this population still had an almost completely domestic economy, perhaps even more so than in the Merovingian period.[25] One indication of this may be that the political centre moved still further inland, where hitherto—owing to the difficulties of overland transport—the political centres preceding those of the medieval West had never been situated, with few exceptions such as the Hittite Empire. We may assume that the population was beginning to increase very slowly in this period. We already hear of forest clearance, and that is always a sign that land is growing scarce, the density of population rising. But these were certainly only the initial stages. The great migrations had not yet entirely abated. Only from the ninth century onwards did the signs of a more rapidly increasing population multiply. And not very long afterwards there are already indications of overpopulation here and there in the former Carolingian regions.

Fall in population at the end of antiquity, slow rise once more under different circumstances in the aftermath of the migrations of peoples: a brief retrospective summary must be enough to recall to mind the curve of this movement.

14. Phases of perceptible overpopulation alternate in European history with

those of lower internal pressure. But the term "overpopulation" needs explaining. It is not a product of the absolute number of people inhabiting a certain area. In a heavily industrialized society with intensive utilization of the land, highly developed long-distance trade and a government favouring the industrial against the agrarian sector through import and export duties, a number of people can live more or less tolerably which, in a barter economy with extensive agricultural methods and little long-distance trade, would constitute overpopulation with all its typical symptoms. "Overpopulation" is therefore first of all a term for growth of population in a particular area to a point where, in the given social structure, the satisfaction of basic needs is possible for fewer and fewer people. We thus encounter "overpopulation" only relative to certain social forms and a certain set of needs, a social overpopulation.

Its symptoms in societies which have attained a certain degree of differentiation are, broadly speaking, always the same: increased tension within society; greater self-encapsulation by those who "have", i.e., in a predominantly barter economy, those who "have land", over against those who "have not", or at any rate not enough to support themselves in a manner conforming with their standards; and often, increased self-encapsulation, among the "haves", of those who have more than the rest; a more pronounced cohesion of people in the same social situation to resist pressure from those outside it or, inversely, to seize opportunities monopolized by others. In addition, increased pressure on neighbouring areas with lower population or weaker defences, and finally, an increase in emigration and in the tendency to conquer or at least settle in new lands.

It is difficult to say whether available sources can give an exact picture of population growth in Europe in the centuries following the migrations, and particularly of differences in population density between different regions. But one thing is certain: as the migrations slowly came to a standstill, once the major struggles among the different tribes had come to an end, one after another all the symptoms of such "social overpopulation" showed themselves—a rapid growth of population accompanied by the transformation of social institutions.

15. The symptoms of increasing population pressure first appeared clearly in the western Frankish empire. Here, about the ninth century, the threat from foreign tribes slowly receded, unlike the situation in the eastern Frankish empire. In the part of the empire named after them the Normans had grown peaceable. With the help of the western Frankish Church, they rapidly absorbed the language and the whole tradition about them, in which Gallo-Romanic and Frankish elements were mingled. They added new elements of their own. In particular, they brought about important advances in the administrative structure within the territorial framework. From now on they played a decisive part as one of the leading tribes in the federation of western Frankish territories.

The Arabs and Saracens caused occasional unrest on the Mediterranean coast,

but by and large they too, from the ninth century on, scarcely represented a threat to the survival of this empire.

To the east of France lay the German "Imperium" which under the Saxon emperors had again grown powerful. With minor exceptions the frontier between it and the western Frankish empire scarcely moved from the tenth to the first quarter of the thirteenth century.[26] In 925 Lotharingia was won back from the empire, and in 1034 Burgundy. Apart from this, tension along this line was not high until 1226. The empire's expansionist tendencies were directed essentially to the east.

The external threat to the western Frankish empire was therefore relatively slight. Equally slight, however, were the possibilities of expanding beyond the existing frontiers. The east in particular was blocked by both the population density and the military strength of the empire.

But within this area, now that the external threat had diminished, population began to increase markedly. It grew so strongly after the ninth century that by the beginning of the fourteenth century it was probably almost as large as at the beginning of the eighteenth.[27]

This movement certainly did not proceed in a straight line, but there is an abundance of evidence to show that, by and large, population increased steadily; this evidence has to be seen as a whole if the strength of the overall movement, and the meaning of each individual piece of evidence within it, are to be understood.

From the end of the tenth century onwards, and more so in the eleventh, the pressure on land, the desire for new land and greater productivity from the old, are more and more visible in the western Frankish region.

As mentioned, forests were already cleared in the Carolingian period and no doubt earlier too. But in the eleventh century the tempo and extent of the clearance accelerated. Woods were felled and marshlands made arable as far as the technology of the time permitted. The period from about 1050 to about 1300 was the great age of deforestation, of the internal conquest of new land, in France.[28] About 1300 this movement slowed down again.

IV

Some Observations on the Sociogenesis of the Crusades

16. The great onslaught from outside had subsided. The earth was fruitful. Population was growing. Land, the most important means of production, the epitome of property and wealth in this society, was becoming scarce. Deforestation, the opening up of new land within, was not nearly sufficient to offset this scarcity. New land had to be sought outside the frontiers. Hand in hand with

internal colonization went the external conquest of new territory elsewhere. By the beginning of the eleventh century Norman knights were going to southern Italy to hire themselves out as warriors to individual princes.[29] In 1029 one of them was enfeoffed for his services with a small piece of land on the northern boundary of the duchy of Naples. Others followed, among them other sons of a minor Norman lord, Tancrède de Hauteville. He had twelve sons in all; how were they to be sustained to a fitting standard on their father's land? Eight of them therefore went to southern Italy, and there obtained in time what was denied to them at home: control of a piece of land. One of them, Robert Guiscard, gradually became the acknowledged leader of the Norman warriors. He united the scattered estates or territories that individuals had won for themselves. From 1060 onwards they began under his leadership to advance into Sicily. By Robert Guiscard's death in 1085 the Saracens had been pushed back into the south-west corner of the island. All the rest was in Norman hands and formed a new Norman feudal empire.

None of this had actually been planned. At the outset we have the population pressure and the blocked opportunities at home, the emigration of individuals whose success attracts others; at the end we have an empire.

Something similar happened in Spain. In the tenth century French knights went to the aid of the Spanish princes in their struggles against the Arabs. As mentioned, the western Frankish area, unlike the eastern, did not border on an extensive area open to colonization and peopled by largely disunited tribes. To the east the empire prevented further expansion. The Iberian peninsula was the only direct way out. Up to the middle of the eleventh century only individuals or small bands crossed the mountains; then, they gradually became armies. The Arabs, split internally, offered slight, sporadic resistance. In 1085 Toledo was taken, and in 1094 Valencia under the leadership of El Cid, only to be lost shortly afterwards. The struggle was waged back and forth. In 1095 a French count was invested with the reconquered territory of Portugal. But it was only in 1147, with the aid of members of the Second Crusade, that his son finally succeeded in gaining control of Lisbon and there to some degree stabilizing his rule as a feudal king.

Apart from Spain, the only possibility of gaining new land near France lay across the Channel. Even in the first half of the eleventh century individual Norman knights had struck out in this direction. Then in 1066 the Norman Duke with an army of Norman and French knights crossed to the island, seized power and redistributed the land. The possibilities of expansion, the prospects of new land in the vicinity of France, grew more and more restricted. Eyes were cast further afield.

In 1095, before the great feudal lords began to move, a band led by the knight Walter Habenichts, or Gautier Senzavoir, set out for Jerusalem; it perished in Asia Minor. In 1097 a mighty army under the leadership of Norman and French

territorial lords advanced into the Holy Land. The Crusaders first had themselves invested by the Eastern Roman Emperor with the lands to be conquered, then advanced further, conquered Jerusalem and founded new feudal dominions.

There is no reason to assume that without the guidance of the Church and the religious link with the Holy Land, this expansion would have been directed to precisely that place. But nor is it probable that without the social pressure first within the western Frankish region and then in all the other regions of Latin Christendom, the Crusades would have taken place.

The tensions within this society were not only manifested in desire for land and bread. They exerted mental pressure upon the whole person. The social pressure supplied the motive force as a generator supplies current. It set people in motion. The Church steered this pre-existing force. It embraced the general distress and gave it a hope and a goal outside France. It gave the struggle for new land an overarching meaning and justification. It turned this into a struggle for the Christian faith.

17. The Crusades are a specific form of the first great movement of expansion and colonization by the Christian West. During the great migrations, in which for centuries tribes from the east and north-east had been driven in a western and south-western direction, the utilizable areas of Europe had been filled up with people to the furthest frontiers, the British Isles. Now the migrations had stopped. The mild climate, fertile soil and unfettered drives favoured rapid multiplication. The land grew too small. The human wave had trapped itself in a cul-de-sac, and from this confinement it strained back towards the east, both in the Crusades and within Europe itself, where the German-populated area slowly spread, through heavy conflicts, further and further east beyond the Elbe to the Oder, then to the Vistula estuary, and finally Prussia and the Baltic lands, even if it were only German knights, not German farmers, who succeeded in migrating so far.

But precisely this last fact shows very clearly one of the peculiarities distinguishing this first phase of social overpopulation and expansion from later ones. In general, with the advance of the civilizing process, and the concomitant constraint and regulation of human drives—and their advance is always stronger, for reasons to be discussed later, in the upper than in the lower classes—the birthrate slowly declines, usually less rapidly in the lower than in the upper strata. This difference between the average birthrate of the upper and lower classes is often highly significant for the maintenance of the standard of the former.

This first phase of rapid population growth in the Christian West is distinguished from the later ones, however, by the fact that in it the ruling stratum, the warrior class or nobility, increased hardly less rapidly than the stratum of bondsmen, tenants and peasants, in short, of those who directly worked the land. The struggle for the available opportunities which, with the

growth of population, necessarily shrank for each individual; the incessant feuds that these tensions unleashed; the high rate of infant mortality, illness and plague: all that may have eliminated a part of the human surplus. And it is possible that the relatively unprotected peasantry were harder hit than the warriors. Moreover, the freedom of movement of the former group was so limited and, above all, communications between different regions were so difficult, that the surplus labour power could not be quickly and evenly distributed. Thus in one area shortage of labour might result from feuds and pillage, plagues, the opening up of new land or the flight of serfs, while a surplus was accumulating in others. And in fact we have, for the same period, clear evidence of an excess of bondsmen in one area, and of efforts in others to attract free tenants, *hospites*[30]—that is, rulers offering labourers improved conditions.

Be that as it may, what is above all characteristic of the processes operating here is that not only was a "reserve army" of bondsmen or serfs forming in this society, but also a "reserve army" of the *upper class*, of knights without property, or without enough to maintain their standards. Only in this way can the nature of this first Western expansionist phase be understood. Peasants, the sons of bondsmen, were certainly involved in one way or another in the struggles for colonization, but the main impulse came from the knights' shortage of land. New land could only be conquered by the sword. The knights opened a way by force of arms; they took the lead and formed the bulk of the armies. The surplus population in the upper class gave this first period of expansion and colonization its special stamp.

The rift between those who had land and those who had none or too little, ran right through this society. On the one hand were the land-monopolists—warrior families, noble houses and landowners in the first place, but also peasants, bondsmen, serfs, *hospites*, who occupied a piece of land that supported them, however meagrely. On the other hand were those from both classes who had been deprived of land. Those from the lower classes—displaced by the shortage of opportunities or the oppression of their masters—played a part in the emigration or colonization, but above all they provided the population of the growing towns. Those from the warrior class, in short the "younger sons", whose inheritance was too small either for their demands or for their mere sustenance, the "have-nots" among the knights, appear down the centuries wearing the most disparate social masks: as Crusaders, as robber-leaders, as mercenaries in the service of great lords; finally they form the basis of the first standing armies.

18. The often-quoted dictum: "No land without a lord", is not only a basic legal principle. It is also a social watchword of the warrior class. It expresses the knights' need to take possession of every scrap of usable land. Sooner or later this had come about in all the regions of Latin Christendom. Every available piece of land was in firm ownership. But the demand for land continued and even increased. The chances of satisfying it diminished. The pressure for expansion

rose, as did the tension within society. But the specific dynamic which was thus imparted to society as a whole did not emanate solely from the malcontents; it was necessarily communicated also to those rich in land. In the poor, debt-ridden, declining knights the social pressure manifested itself as a simple desire for a piece of land and labourers to support them in keeping with their standards. In the richer warriors, the greater landowners and territorial lords, it was expressed likewise as an urge for new land. But what lower down was a simple desire for a means of subsistence appropriate to one's class, was higher up a drive for enlarged dominion, for "more" land and so more social power as well. This craving for enlarged property among the richer landowners, above all those of the first rank, the counts, dukes and kings, sprang not only from the personal ambition of individuals. We have already seen by the example of the western Frankish Carolingians, and also the first Capetians, how unremittingly, unless there was a possibility of conquering new land, even royal houses were forced into decline by a compelling social process centred on the ownership and distribution of land. And if, throughout this whole phase of outward and inward expansion, we see not only poor knights but also many rich ones striving after new land to increase their family power, this is no more than a sign of how strongly the structure and situation of this society imposed the same striving on all strata, whether simply to own land in the case of the dispossessed, or to own "more" land in the case of the rich.

It has been thought that this craving for "more" property, the acquisitive urge, is a specific characteristic of "capitalism" and thus of modern times. In this view medieval society was distinguished by contentment with the income appropriate to one's social standing.

Within certain limits this is no doubt correct, if the striving for "more" is understood as applying to money alone. But for a long period of the Middle Ages it was not ownership of money but of land which constituted the essential form of ownership. The acquisitive urge thus necessarily had a different form and a different direction. It demanded different modes of conduct to those of a society with a money and market economy. It may be true that only in modern times did there develop a class specializing in trade, with a desire to earn ever-increasing amounts of *money* through uninterrupted toil. The social structures which, in the predominantly barter economy of the Middle Ages, led to a desire for ever-increasing means of production—and it is structural features that are important in both cases—are less easy to perceive, because land not money was desired. In addition, political and military functions had not yet been differentiated from economic ones as they have gradually become in modern society. Military action and political and economic striving were largely identical, and the urge to increase wealth in the form of land came to the same thing as extending territorial sovereignty and increasing military power. The richest man in a particular area, i.e. the one with most land, was as a direct result the most

powerful militarily, with the largest retinue; he was at once army leader and ruler.

Precisely because estate owners were in a certain sense opposed to one another, just as states are today, the acquisition of new land by one neighbour represented a direct or indirect threat to the others. It meant, as today, a shift of equilibrium in what was usually a very labile system of power balances in which rulers were always potential allies and potential enemies of one another. This, therefore, is the simple mechanism which, in this phase of internal and external expansion, kept the richer and more powerful knights in motion no less than the poorer ones, each being constantly on guard against expansion by others, and constantly seeking to enlarge his own possessions. When a society has once been put in such a state of flux by the blockage of territorial expansion and population pressure, anyone who declines to compete, merely conserving his property while others strive for increase, necessarily ends up "smaller" and weaker than the others, and is in ever-increasing danger of succumbing to them at the first opportunity. The rich knights and territorial lords of that time did not view the matter quite so theoretically and generally as we have put it here; but they did see quite concretely how powerless they were when their neighbours were richer in land than they, or when others around them won new land and sovereignty. This could be shown in more detail in relation to the Crusade leaders, for example Godefroi de Bouillon, who sold and mortgaged his domestic possessions to seek larger ones far away, and in fact found a kingdom. In a later period this could be shown by the example of the Habsburgs, who even as emperors were possessed by the idea of extending their "family power", and were in fact, even as emperors, completely impotent without the support of their own family power. Indeed, it was precisely because of his poverty and powerlessness that the first emperor from the family was selected for this position by mighty lords jealous of their power. It could be illustrated particularly clearly by the importance which the conquest of England by the Norman Duke had for the development of the western Frankish empire. In fact, this growth in the power of one territorial ruler meant a total displacement of equilibrium within the alliance of territorial rulers comprising this empire. The Norman Duke who, in his own territory, Normandy, was himself no less affected by centrifugal forces than any other territorial ruler, did not conquer England for the Normans as a whole but solely to increase his own family power. And the redistribution of English soil to the warriors who came with him was expressly designed to counter centrifugal forces in his new domain by preventing the formation of large territorial dominions on English soil. That he had to allot land to his knights was dictated by the necessity of ruling and administering it; but he avoided allocating a large self-contained area to any individual. Even to the great lords who could demand the produce of large areas for their maintenance, he assigned lands dispersed throughout the country.[31]

At the same time he had automatically risen, with this conquest, to be the

most powerful territorial ruler in the western Frankish empire. Sooner or later there had to be a confrontation between his house and that of the dukes of Francia, who held the kingship—a confrontation in which the crown itself was at stake. And it is known how greatly developments in subsequent centuries were determined by this struggle between the dukes of Francia and Normandy, how the rulers of the Isle de France slowly restored the balance of power by the acquisition of new territories, and how these struggles on both sides of the Channel finally gave rise to two different dominions and two different nations. But this is certainly only one of many examples of the compelling processes in this dynamic phase of the Middle Ages, which impelled both rich and poor knights to seek new land.

V

The Internal Expansion of Society: The Formation of New Social Organs and Instruments

19. The driving force of this social expansion, the disproportion between rising population and land in fixed ownership, drove a large part of the ruling class to conquer new territory. This outlet was largely blocked to people of the lower, labouring strata. The pressures arising from the land shortage here led mainly in a different direction, to the differentiation of work. The bondsmen driven from the land comprised, as we have mentioned, material for the growing settlements of artisans which slowly crystallized around favourably situated feudal seats, the evolving towns.

Somewhat larger agglomerations of people—the word "town" perhaps gives the wrong impression—are already to be found in the society of the ninth century which operated a barter economy. But these were not the communities which "lived by crafts and trade instead of labour on the land, or had any special rights and institutions".[32] They were fortresses and at the same time centres of the agricultural administration of great lords. The towns of earlier periods had themselves lost their unity. They were juxtaposed pieces, groups often belonging to different knights and different dominions, some secular, others ecclesiastical, each leading its own independent economic life. The sole framework for economic activity was the estate, the domain of the territorial lord. Production and consumption took place at essentially the same place.[33]

But in the eleventh century these formations began to grow. Here too, as usually happened with knightly expansion but was now happening among bondsmen, it was at first unorganized individuals, surplus labourers, who were driven to such centres. And the attitude of rulers to the newcomers, who in each case had just left a different estate, was not always the same.[34] Sometimes they

gave them a modicum of freedom; but mostly they expected and demanded the same services and tributes as from their own bondsmen and tenants. But the accumulation of such people changed the power relationship between the lord and the lower class. The newcomers gained strength through numbers and gradually obtained new rights in bloody and often protracted struggles. These struggles broke out earliest in Italy, somewhat later in Flanders: in 1030 in Cremona, in 1057 in Milan, in 1069 at Le Mans, in 1077 at Cambrai, in 1080 at Saint-Quentin, in 1099 in Beauvais, in 1108–9 in Noyon, in 1112 in Laon, in 1127 in Saint-Omer. These dates, together with those of the knights' expansion, give a general impression of the internal tensions which kept society in motion in this phase. These were the first struggles for liberation by working town-dwellers. That they were able, after some defeats, in their struggles with the warrior class in the most diverse areas of Europe, to secure rights of their own, first a limited and then a substantial degree of freedom, shows how great was the opportunity that social development placed in their hands. And this peculiar fact, the slow rise of lower, working, urban strata to political autonomy and finally—first in the form of the professional middle classes—to political leadership, provides the key to almost all the structural peculiarities distinguishing Western societies from those of the Orient, and giving them their specific stamp.

At the beginning of the eleventh century there were, essentially, only two classes of free people, the warriors or nobles and the clergy; below them existed only bondsmen and serfs. There were "those who pray, those who fight, those who work".[35]

By about 1200, that is to say, in the course of two centuries or even only one and a half—for like forest clearance and colonial expansion this movement too accelerated after 1050—a large number of artisan settlements or communes had secured rights and jurisdiction, privileges and autonomy. A third class of free men joined the other two. Society expanded, under the pressure of land shortage and population increase, not only extensively but intensively as well; it became differentiated, generated new cells, formed new organs, the towns.

20. But with the increasing differentiation of work, with the new, larger markets that now formed, with the slow process of exchange over longer distances, grew the need for mobile and unified means of exchange.

When the bondsman or small tenant brought his tribute direct to his lord, when the chain between producer and consumer was short and without intermediaries, society needed no unit of calculation, no means of exchange to which all other exchanged objects could be related as to a common measure. But now, with the gradual severance of craftsmen from the economic unit of the household, with the formation of an economically independent artisanry and the exchange of products through several hands and down longer chains, the network of exchange-acts became more complicated. A unified object of exchange was needed. When the differentiation of labour and exchange grows more complex

and more active, more money is needed. Money is indeed an incarnation of the social fabric, a symbol of the network of exchange-acts and human chains through which a commodity passes on its way from its natural state to consumption. It is only needed when extended chains of exchange form within society, that is to say, at a certain level of population density and a higher level of social interdependence and differentiation.

It would take us too far afield to explore here the question of the gradual recession of the money economy in many areas in late antiquity and its resurgence from about the eleventh century onwards; but one observation on the question is necessary in connection with the foregoing.

It must be pointed out that money never went completely out of use in the older inhabited area of Europe. Over this whole period there were enclaves of money economy within the barter economy, and in addition, outside the Carolingian area there were large regions of the old Roman Empire where money traffic never receded to the same extent as it did here. One can, therefore, always and very rightly ask about the "antecedents" of the money economy in the Christian West, the enclaves in which it never disappeared. One can ask: where did the money economy originate? From whom was the use of money relearned? This kind of enquiry is not without value; for it is difficult to imagine that this instrument should have returned to use so relatively quickly had it not been so far developed in other, preceding or neighbouring civilizations, or if it had never been known.

But the essential aspect of the question concerning the revival of money traffic in the West is not answered in this way. The question remains why Western society needed relatively little money over a long stretch of its development, and why the need and use of money, with all the consequent transformations of society, gradually increased once more. Here again the enquiry must be directed toward the *moving*, the *changing* factors. And this question is not answered by examining the origins of money and the antecedents of the money economy. It is answered only by examining the actual social processes which, after the slow ebb of money traffic in declining antiquity, once again brought forth the new human relationships, the new forms of integration and interdependence, which caused the need for money to increase again: the cellular structure of society became more differentiated. *One* expression of this was the revival in the use of money. That it was not only internal expansion but also migration and colonization which—through the mobilization of property, the awakening of new needs, the establishment of trade relations over longer distances—played an important part in this revival is immediately evident. Each individual movement in the whole interplay of processes reacts on the others, either obstructing or reinforcing them, and the web of movements and tensions is from now on considerably complicated by the social differentiation. Single factors cannot be absolutely isolated. But without the differentiation within society itself, without the passing of the

land into fixed ownership, without the sharp increase in population, without the formation of independent communities of artisans and tradesmen, the need for money within society would never have risen so sharply, nor the money sector of the economy have grown so rapidly. Money, the decrease or increase of its use, cannot be understood by itself, but only from the standpoint of the structure of human relationships. It is here, in the changed form of human integration, that the prime movers of this transformation are to be sought; of course, when the use of money had once begun to grow, it helped in its turn to propel this whole movement—population increase, differentiation, growth of towns—still further, up to a certain point of saturation.

"The beginning of the eleventh century is still characterized by the absence of large-scale money transactions. Wealth is to a large extent immobilized in the hands of the Church and the secular territorial lords."[36]

Then the need for mobile means of exchange gradually increased. The existing coinage was no longer sufficient. First of all people made do with plate and ornaments in precious metal that were weighed to provide a unit of calculation; horses too could serve as measures of value; new money was minted to meet the growing demand—that is to say, pieces of precious metal of a certain weight gauged by authorities. And probably, with the growing need for mobile means of exchange, the process was repeated on various levels; perhaps exchange by barter, when the supply of coinage no longer met the increased demand, repeatedly gained new ground. Slowly the increasing differentiation and interweaving of human actions, the growing volume of trade and exchange, pushed up the volume of coinage and then the reverse took place. In between, disproportions continually arose.

By the second half of the thirteenth century, at least in Flanders, and somewhat earlier or later in other regions, mobile wealth was very considerable. It circulated fairly rapidly "thanks to a series of instruments that had been created in the meantime":[37] gold coinage minted within the country (hitherto even in France, as in Abyssinia to the present day [1936], no gold coinage had been minted; what was in use, and stored in the treasuries, was Byzantine gold coin) together with small money, the letter of exchange and measurement—all these are symbols of how the invisible network of chains of exchange was growing more and more dense.

21. But how could exchange relations between different areas, and differentiation of work extending beyond the local region be established, if transport was inadequate, if society was incapable of moving heavy loads over long distances?

Examples from the Carolingian period have already shown how the king had travelled with his court from one imperial palace to another in order to consume the products of his estates on the spot. No matter how small this court may have been in comparison to those of the early absolutist phase, it was so difficult to

move the quantities of goods that were needed for its sustenance that the people had to move to the goods instead.

But in the same period when population, the towns, interdependence and its instruments, were growing more and more perceptibly, transport too was developing.

In antiquity the harness of horses, as of all other beasts of burden, was little suited to the transportation of heavy loads over long distances. It is open to question what distances and loads it could cope with, but clearly this mode of conveyance was sufficient for the structure and needs of the inland economy of antiquity. Throughout the whole of that period land transport remained extraordinarily expensive, slow and difficult, in comparison to waterborne transport.[38] Virtually all major centres of trade were situated on the coast or on navigable rivers. And this centralization of transport about the waterways is very characteristic of the structure of the society of antiquity. Here, on the waterways and above all on the seacoasts, arose rich and sometimes very densely populated urban centres whose need for food and luxury articles was often met from very remote parts, and which formed central links in the highly differentiated chains of an extensive exchange traffic. In the enormous hinterlands, which by and large were open only to overland transport, that is, in by far the largest part of the Roman Empire, the population met their primary needs directly from the produce of their immediate environment. Here, short exchange chains predominated, in other words, what can be roughly called a "barter economy"; very little money circulated, and the purchasing power of this barter sector of the ancient economy was too low for the acquisition of luxury articles. The contrast between the small urban sector and the vast inland areas was thus very great. Like thin nerve strands the larger urban settlements along the waterways were embedded in the rural districts, drawing off their strength and the products of their labour until, with the decline of the centralized government, and partly through the active struggle of rural elements against the urban rulers, the agrarian sector freed itself from the domination of the towns. Then this narrow, more differentiated urban sector, with its extensive interdependencies, fell into decay, to be obliterated by a somewhat altered form of short, regionally limited exchange chains and barter-economy institutions. In this dominant urban sector of ancient society, however, there was clearly no need to develop overland transport further. Everything that its own country could not supply or only at a high transportation cost, could be more easily obtained from overseas.

But now, in the Carolingian period, the chief waterway of the ancient world, the Mediterranean, was closed, primarily through Arab expansion, to a large number of peoples. Overland transport and internal connections took on an entirely new significance. This generated a pressure for land transport to be developed to promote interdependence and exchange. And if subsequently, as in antiquity, sea connections such as those between Venice and Byzantium, the

Words, but little supporting evidence.

Flemish cities and England, again played a decisive part in the rise of the West, the specific character of Western development is no less determined by the fact that to the network of sea routes was attached an increasingly dense network of overland connections, and that major inland centres of trade were also gradually developed. The development of land transport beyond the level it had attained in the ancient world is a particularly clear illustration of this growing differentiation and social interweaving throughout the inland areas of Europe.

The use of the horse for haulage was, as has been mentioned, not very highly developed in the Roman world. The harness ran across the throat.[39] This was perhaps useful to the rider in guiding his horse. The thrown-back head, the "proud" posture of the horse frequently seen in ancient reliefs is connected with this mode of harnessing. But it made the horse or mule fairly unusable for haulage, particularly of heavy loads, which necessarily constrict its throat. The case is similar with the shoeing of the animals. The ancients lacked the nailed iron horseshoe without which the full power of the horse cannot be exploited.

Both states of affairs slowly changed from the tenth century onwards. In the same phase when the tempo of forest clearance was gradually increasing, when society was becoming differentiated and urban markets were being formed, when money was coming increasingly into use as a symbol of this interdependence, land transport too, in the form of devices for the exploitation of animal labour power, made decisive progress. And this improvement, insignificant as it may appear to us today, had scarcely less importance at that time than the development of machine technology in a later age.

"In a mighty constructive effort", it has been said,[40] the scope of use of animal labour was slowly extended in the course of the eleventh and twelfth centuries. The main load in haulage was transferred from the throat to the shoulders. The horseshoe appeared. And in the thirteenth century the modern haulage technique for both horses and oxen was created in principle. The foundation for the overland transport of heavy loads over long distances had been laid. In the same period the wheeled cart appeared and the beginnings of metalled roads. With the development of transport technology, the water-mill took on an importance it had lacked in antiquity. It was now profitable to transport grain to it over quite long distances.[41] That too was a step on the way to differentiation and interdependence, to the severance of functions from the closed sphere of the estate.

VI

Some New Elements in the Structure of Medieval Society as Compared with Antiquity

22. The change in conduct and drive-control that we call "civilization" is very closely related to the growing interweaving and interdependence of people. In

the few examples that it has been possible to give here, this interweaving can be seen as it were in the process of becoming. And even here, at this relatively early phase, the nature of the social fabric in the West is in certain respects different from that of antiquity. As the cellular structure of society began once again to become more differentiated, whatever institutions the preceding stage of high differentiation had left behind were used in many ways. But the conditions under which this renewed differentiation took place, and thus the nature and direction of the differentiation itself, diverged in certain respects from those of the earlier period.

People have spoken of a "renaissance of trade" in the eleventh or twelfth centuries. If this means that institutions of antiquity were now to a certain extent revived, it is certainly correct. Without the heritage of antiquity, the problems confronting society in the course of this development could certainly not have been successfully overcome in this way. In this respect it was a construction on earlier foundations. But the driving force of the movement did not reside in "learning from antiquity". It lay within the society itself, in its own inherent dynamics, in the conditions under which people had to accommodate themselves to one another. These conditions were no longer the same as in antiquity. There is a very widespread conception that the West only really regained and then surpassed the level attained by antiquity in the Renaissance. But whether or not we are here concerned with a "surpassing", with "progress", structural features and developmental tendencies departing from those of antiquity are visible not only in the Renaissance but already—at least to a certain extent—in the early phase of expansion and growth that has been discussed here.

Two such structural differences will be mentioned. Western society lacked the cheap labour of prisoners-of-war, slaves. Or when they were available—and they were not in fact entirely lacking—they no longer played any very significant part in the overall structure of society. This gave social development a new direction from the outset.

No less important was another circumstance that has already been mentioned. Resettlement did not take place as previously about a sea, or as exclusively along waterways, but very largely in inland areas by land transport routes. Both these circumstances, often in close interaction, confronted Western society from the start with problems that ancient society had not needed to solve and which guided social development into new paths. The fact that slaves played only a minor role in the working of estates may be explained by the absence of large slave reservoirs or by the sufficiency of the indigenous population of bondsmen for the needs of the warrior class. However that may be, the insignificance of slave labour is matched by the absence of the typical social patterns of a slave economy. And it is only against the background of these different patterns that the special nature of the Western structure can be fully appreciated. Not only do the division of labour, the interweaving of people, the mutual dependence of upper and lower

classes, and concomitantly, the drive economy of both classes, develop differently in a slave society than in one with more or less free labour, but also the social tensions and even the functions of money are not the same, to say nothing of the importance of free labour for the development of work-techniques.

It must be enough here to contrast to the specific processes of Western civilization a brief summary of the different processes operating in a society with highly developed slave markets. These are no less compelling in the latter than in the former. In a *résumé* of present-day research, the mechanisms of a society based on slave labour have been summarized as follows:

> . . . slave-labour interferes with the work of production by free-labour. It interferes in three ways: it causes the withdrawal of a number of men from production to supervision and national defence; it diffuses a general sentiment against manual labour and any form of concentrated activity; and more especially it drives free labourers out of the occupations in which the slaves are engaged. Just as, by Gresham's law, bad coins drive out good, so it has been found by experience that, in any given occupation or range of occupations, slave-labour drives out free; so that it is even difficult to find recruits for the higher branches of an occupation if it is necessary for them to acquire skill by serving an apprenticeship side-by-side with slaves in the lower.
>
> This leads to grave consequences; for the men driven out of these occupations are not themselves rich enough to live on the labour of slaves. They therefore tend to form an intermediate class of idlers who pick up a living as best they can—the class known to modern economists as "poor whites" or "white trash" and to students of Roman history as "clientes" or "faex Romuli". Such a class tends to emphasize both the social unrest and the military and aggressive character of a slave-state. . . .
>
> A slave society is therefore a society divided sharply into three classes: masters, poor whites and slaves; and the middle class is an idle class, living on the community or on warfare, or on the upper.
>
> But there is still another result. The general sentiment against productive work leads to a state of affairs in which the slaves tend to be the only producers and the occupations in which they engage the only industries of the country. In other words, ** the community will rely for its wealth upon occupations which themselves admit of no change or adaptation to circumstances, and which, unless they supply deficiencies of labour by breeding, are in perpetual need of capital. But this capital cannot be found elsewhere in the community. It must therefore be sought abroad: and a slave community will tend, either to engage in aggressive warfare, or to become indebted for capital to neighbours with a free-labour system. . . .[42]

The use of slaves tends to disincline free men from work as an unworthy occupation. Alongside the non-working upper class of slave-owners a *non-working middle class* forms. By the use of slaves society is bound to a relatively simple work structure, embodying techniques that can be operated by slaves and which for this reason is relatively inaccessible to change, improvement or adaptation to new situations. The reproduction of capital is tied to the reproduction of slaves, and thus directly or indirectly to the success of military campaigns, to the output

Words, but little supporting evidence

of the slave reservoirs, and is never calculable to the same degree as in a society in which it is not whole people who are bought for their lifetime but particular work services of people who are socially more or less free.

It is only against this background that we can understand the importance for the whole development of Western society of the fact that, during the slow growth of population in the Middle Ages, slaves were absent or played only a minor part. From the start society was therefore set on a different course than in Roman antiquity.[43] It was subjected to different regularities. The urban revolutions of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, the gradual liberation of the workers displaced from the land—the burghers—from the power of the feudal lord, is a first expression of this. From this a line of descent leads to the gradual transformation of the West into a society where more and more people earn a living through occupational work. The very small part played by slave imports and slave labour gives the workers, even as the lower stratum, considerable social weight. The further the interdependence of people proceeds and the more, therefore, land and its produce are drawn within the circulation of trade and money, the more dependent the non-working upper strata, warriors or nobility, become on the working lower and middle strata and the more the latter gain in social power. The rise of bourgeois strata to the upper strata is an expression of this pattern. In exactly the opposite way to that in which, in the ancient slave society, urban freemen were driven away from labour, in Western society, as a result of the work of freemen, the growing interdependence of all finally drew even members of the previously non-working upper strata more and more within the division of labour. And even the technical development of the West, the evolution of money to that specific form of "capital" which is characteristic of the West, presupposes the absence of slave labour and the development of free work.

23. The above is a brief sketch of one example of the specifically Western developments that run through the Middle Ages to modern times.

Hardly less significant was the fact that settlement in the Middle Ages did not take place around a sea. The earlier waves of migrating peoples had, as already mentioned, given rise to concentrated trade networks and to the integration of large areas in Europe, only along riverbanks and above all in coastal regions of the Mediterranean. This applies to Greece and above all to Rome. The Roman dominion slowly spread out around the Mediterranean basin and finally enclosed it on all sides. "Its outermost frontiers on the Rhine, the Danube, the Euphrates, and the Sahara formed an enormous defensive circle securing the coastal perimeter. Undoubtedly the sea was for the Roman Empire the basis both of its political and its economic unity."[44]

The German tribes too first drove from all sides towards the Mediterranean, and founded their first empires throughout the areas of the Roman Empire surrounding the sea, which the Romans had called "mare nostrum".[45] The Franks did not get so far; they found all the coastal regions already occupied. They tried

to break through by force. All these changes and struggles may well have begun to upset and loosen the communications encircling the Mediterranean. But of course the old importance of the Mediterranean as a means of transport and communication, as the basis and centre of all higher cultural development on European soil, was more thoroughly destroyed by the invasion of the Arabs. It was only this that finally ruptured the weakened connecting threads. The Roman sea became in good part an Arab one. "The bond uniting eastern and western Europe, the Byzantine Empire and the German Empires in the West, is sundered. The consequence of the Islamic invasion . . . was to place these Empires in circumstances which had never previously existed since the beginning of history."[46] To put it somewhat differently: at least in the inland parts of Europe, away from the major river valleys and the few military roads, no highly differentiated society and therefore no differentiated production system had so far developed.

It is still difficult to decide whether the Arab invasion alone created the conditions for a development concentrated inland. The filling up of the European lands by tribes during the great migration may also have played its part. But at any rate this temporary constriction of the hitherto main transport arteries had a decisive effect on the direction taken by the development of western and central European society.

In the Carolingian period a powerful territory was grouped for the first time around a centre situated far inland. Society was confronted by the task of developing inland communications more fully. When, in the course of centuries, it succeeded in doing so, the heritage of antiquity was in this respect also set under new conditions. The foundation was laid for formations unknown in antiquity. It is from this aspect that certain differences between the units of integration in antiquity and those which slowly formed in the West are to be understood. States, nations, or whatever we call these entities, were now to a large extent collections of people grouped around inland centres or capitals and connected by inland arteries.

If, subsequently, these Western centres not only colonized the coast or riverbanks, but also large inland regions, if indeed large stretches of the earth were occupied and settled by Western nations, the preconditions for this lay in the evolution of inland forms of communication, which were not tied to slave labour, within the mother countries themselves. The beginnings of this course of development, too, are to be found in the Middle Ages.

And if, finally, even the inland agrarian sector of society is today integrated into the complex division of labour and the extensive exchange networks as never before, the origins of this development are likewise to be sought there. No one can say today that Western society, once set on this course, necessarily had to continue on it. A whole constellation of levers that can not yet be clearly disentangled, contributed to maintaining and stabilizing it on this course. But it

is important to recognize that this society entered at this very early stage on a path on which it has remained up to modern times. One can readily imagine that, viewing the development of this whole period of human society, the medieval and modern periods together, later ages will see them as a single unified epoch, a great "Middle Age". And it is scarcely less important to observe that the Middle Ages in the narrower sense of the word were not the static period, the "petrified forest", which they are often taken to be, but that they contained highly dynamic phases and sectors moving in precisely the direction in which the modern age continued, stages of expansion, of advancing division of labour, of social transformation and revolution, of the improvement of the instruments of labour. Alongside these, admittedly, were sectors and phases in which institutions and ideas became more rigid and to a degree "petrified". But even this alternation of expanding phases and sectors with others where conservation is more important than growth and development, is by no means alien to modern times, even if the pace of social development and of this alternation has increased sharply since the Middle Ages.

VII SKIP, GO TO VIII

On the Sociogenesis of Feudalism

24. Processes of social expansion have their limits. Sooner or later they come to a halt. So, too, the movement of expansion that began about the eleventh century gradually reached a standstill. It became increasingly difficult for the western Frankish knights to open up new land by forest clearance. Land outside their frontiers was obtainable, if at all, only by heavy fighting. The colonization of the eastern Mediterranean coastal regions petered out after these first successes. But the warrior population continued to increase. The drives and impulses of this ruling class were less restrained by social dependencies and civilizing processes than in subsequent upper classes. The dominance of women by men was still unimpaired. "On every page in the chronicles of this time knights, barons and great lords are mentioned who have eight, ten, twelve or even more male children."[4] The so-called "feudal system" that emerged more clearly in the twelfth century and was more or less established in the thirteenth, is nothing other than the concluding form of this movement of expansion in the agrarian sector of society. In the urban sector this movement persisted somewhat longer in a different form, until it finally found its definitive form in the closed guild system. It became increasingly difficult for all those warriors within society who did not already have a piece of land and possessions to obtain them, and for families with small possessions to enlarge them. Property relations were ossified. It grew more and more difficult to rise in society. And accordingly class differences between warriors were hardened. A hierarchy within the nobility

corresponding to the differing magnitude of land ownership emerged more and more clearly. And the various titles that earlier had designated positions within service to the ruler, much as civil service grades do today, took on a new and increasingly fixed meaning: they were linked to the name of a particular house as an expression of the size of its estates and thus of its military power. The dukedoms were descended from the royal servants once sent to represent the king in a territory; they gradually became more or less independent liege lords over this whole territory and possessors of a more or less expensive unenfeoffed family property within it. The case is similar with counts. The viscounts were descendants of a man whom a count had placed as his delegate over a particular smaller region and who now controlled this land as his hereditary possession. The "seigneurs" or "sires" were descendants of a man whom a count had earlier installed as guardian of one of his castles or mansions, or who may have built himself a castle in the small area he had been appointed to superintend.[48] Now the castle and land around it had become the hereditary possession of his family in turn. Everyone held on to what they had. They relinquished nothing to those above them. And there was no room for anyone from below. The land was allocated. A society expanding internally and externally, in which social betterment, the acquisition of land or more land was not too difficult for a warrior, that is, a society with relatively open positions or opportunities, had become within a few generations a society in which most positions were more or less closed.

25. Transitions from phases with large possibilities of social improvement and expansion to those offering diminished satisfaction to these needs, in which the relatively deprived are sealed off and thus more strongly united with those in the same predicament—processes of this sort recur frequently in history. We are ourselves now in the midst of such a transformation, modified by the peculiar elasticity of industrial society which is able to open up new sectors when old ones are closed, and by the different levels of development of interdependent regions. But, taken as a whole, the situation is not only that each crisis marks a shift in one direction and each boom a shift in another: the overall trend of society points increasingly clearly towards a system with closed opportunities.

Such periods can be recognized from afar by a certain despondency of mind, at least among the deprived, by a hardening of social forms, by attempts to break them from below and, as already mentioned, by the stronger cohesion of those occupying the same position in the hierarchy.

The particular pattern of this process, however, is different in a barter economy from that in a money society, though no less strict. What above all seems incomprehensible to the later observer in the process of feudalization, is the fact that neither kings nor dukes nor any of the ranks below them were able to prevent their servants becoming independent owners of the fief. But precisely the universality of this fact shows the strength of the social regularity at work. We have already sketched the pressures which brought about the slow decline of the

royal house in a warrior society with a barter economy, once the crown no longer succeeded in expanding, that is, in conquering new lands. Analogous processes were at work, once the possibility of expansion and the external threat had diminished, throughout the warrior society. This is the typical pattern of a society built up on land ownership, in which trade did not play a major part, in which each estate was more or less autarkic, and in which military alliance for defence or attack was the primary form of integration of large regions.

Here the warriors lived relatively close together in relatively small tribal units. Then they slowly spread throughout the whole country. Their number grew. But with increase and dispersal across a large region the individual lost the protection once offered by the tribe. Single families ensconced in their estates and castles and often separated by long distances, the individual warriors ruling these families and a retinue of bondsmen and serfs, were now more isolated than before. Gradually new relationships were established between the warriors, as a function of the increased numbers and distance, the greater isolation of the individual and the intrinsic tendencies of land ownership.

With the gradual dissolution of the tribal units and the merging of Germanic warriors with members of the Gallo-Romanic upper class, with the dispersion of warriors over large areas, the individual had no other way of defending himself against those socially more powerful, than by placing himself under the protection of one of them. They in their turn had no way of protecting themselves against others with similarly large estates and military power, other than with the aid of warriors to whom they gave land or whose land they protected in exchange for military services.

Individual dependencies were established. One warrior entered an alliance with another under oath. The higher-ranking partner with the greater area of land—the two go hand in hand—was the "liege lord", the weaker partner the "vassal". The latter in turn could, if circumstances so required, take still weaker warriors under his protection in exchange for services. The contracting of such individual alliances was at first the only form in which people could protect themselves from one another.

The "feudal system" stands in strange contrast to the tribal constitution. With the latter's dissolution new groupings and new forms of integration were necessarily set up. There was a strong tendency towards individualization, reinforced by the mobility and expansion of society. This was an *individualization relative to the tribal unit*, and in part relative to the family unit too, just as there would later be movements of individualization relative to the feudal unit, the guild unit, the status unit, and, again and again, to the family unit. And the feudal oath was nothing other than the sealing of a protective alliance between individual warriors, the sacral confirmation of the individual relationship between the warrior giving land and protection and the other giving services. In the first stage of the movement the king stood on one side. As the conqueror he controlled the whole

Words, but little supporting evidence.

area and performed no services; he merely allocated land. The bondsman was at the other extreme of the pyramid; he controlled no land and merely performed services or—what comes to the same thing—paid dues. All the degrees between them at first had a double face. They had land and protection to distribute below them and services to perform above them. But this network of dependencies, the need of those higher up for services, particularly military, and of those lower down for land or protection, harboured tensions that led to quite specific shifts. The process of feudalization was none other than one such compulsive shift in this network of dependencies. At a particular phase everywhere in the West the dependence of those above on services was greater than that of their vassals on protection. This reinforced the centrifugal forces in this society in which each piece of land supported its owner. This is the simple structure of those processes in the course of which, throughout the whole hierarchy of warrior society, the former servants over and again became the independent owners of the land entrusted to them, and titles deriving from service became simple designations of rank according to size of property and military power.

26. These shifts and their mechanisms would not in themselves be difficult to understand if the later observer did not constantly project his own idea of "law" and "justice" upon the relations between the warriors of feudal society. So compulsive are the habits of thinking of our own society that the observer involuntarily asks why the kings, dukes and counts tolerated this usurpation of sovereignty over the land which they had originally controlled. Why did they not assert their "legal rights"?

But we are not concerned here with what are called "legal questions" in a more complex society. It is a prerequisite for understanding feudal society not to regard one's own "legal forms" as law in an absolute sense. Legal forms correspond at all times to the structure of society. The crystallization of general legal norms set down in writing, an integral part of property relations in industrial society, presupposes a very high degree of social integration and the formation of central institutions able to give one and the same law universal validity throughout the area they control and strong enough to enforce respect for written agreements. The power which backs up legal titles and property claims in modern times is no longer directly visible. In proportion to the individual it is so great, its existence and the threat emanating from it are so self-evident, that it is very seldom put to the test. This is why there is such a strong tendency to regard this law as something self-explanatory, as if it had come down from heaven, an absolute "right" that would exist even without the support of this power structure, or if the power structure were different.

The chains mediating between the legal system and the power structure have today grown longer, in keeping with the greater complexity of society. And as the legal system often *operates* independently of the power structure, though never completely so, it is easy to overlook the fact that the law here, as in any

society, was a function and symbol of the social structure or—what comes to the same thing—the balance of social power.[19]

In feudal society this was less concealed. The interdependence of people and regions was less. There was no stable power structure stretching across the whole region. Property relations were regulated directly according to the degree of mutual dependence and actual social power.*

There is in industrial society a kind of relationship which can in a certain sense be compared to the relationship between the warriors or liege lords in feudal society, and through which the pattern of this relationship can be clarified. It is the relation between states. Here, too, the decisive factor is quite nakedly social power, in which military power plays a relatively major part alongside the interdependencies arising from the economic structure. This military power is in

* *Note on the concept of social power.* The "social power" of a person or group is a complex phenomenon. As regards the individual it is never exactly identical with his individual physical strength and, as regards groups, with their sum of individual strength. But physical strength and skill can under some conditions be an important element in social power. It depends on the total structure of society and the place of the individuals in it, to what extent physical strength contributes to social power. The latter varies in its structure as much as does society itself. In industrial society, for example, extreme social power in an individual can go together with low physical strength, although there can be phases in its development when bodily strength again takes on increased importance for everyone as an ingredient of social power.

In the feudal warrior society considerable physical strength was an indispensable element in social power, but by no means its sole determinant. Simplifying somewhat, one can say that the social power potential of a man in feudal society was exactly equal to the size and productivity of the land and the labour force he controlled. His physical strength was undoubtedly an important element in his ability to control it. Anyone who was unable to fight like a warrior and commit his own body to attack and defence had in the long run little chance of owning anything in this society. But anyone who once controlled a large piece of land in this society possessed, as monopolist of the most important means of production, a degree of social power, that is to say a quantity of opportunities, transcending his individual personal strength. To others dependent on it he could give land, taking their services in exchange. That his social power equalled the size and productivity of the land he actually controlled also meant that his social power was as great as his following, his army, his military power.

But equally, it is obvious from this that he was dependent on services to maintain and defend his land. This dependence on followers of varying grades was an important element in the latters' social power. When this, his dependence on services, grew, his social power was reduced; when the need and demand for land grew among the propertyless, the social power of those controlling land was increased. The social power of an individual or group can be completely expressed only in proportions. The above is a simple example.

To investigate what constitutes "social power" in more detail is a task in itself. Its importance for understanding social processes in the past and present scarcely needs stating. "Political power", too, is nothing but a certain form of social power. One can therefore understand neither the behaviour nor the destinies of people, groups, social classes or states unless one finds out their actual social power regardless of what they themselves say or believe. Political life itself would lose some of its hazardousness and mystery if the structure of social power relationships in and between all countries were publicly analysed. To evolve more exact methods of doing so remains one of the many sociological tasks of the future.

its turn, however, much as in feudal society, largely determined by the size and productivity of a territory and the number and work potential of the people it can support.

There is no law governing the relations between states of the kind that is valid within them. There is no all-embracing power apparatus that could back up such an international law. The existence of an international law without a corresponding power structure cannot conceal the fact that in the long run the relationships between nations are governed solely by their relative social power, and that any shift in the latter, any increase in the power of a country within the various figurations of states in different parts of the world and now—with growing interdependence—within world society as a whole, means an automatic reduction of the social power of other countries.

And here too the tension between the "haves" and "have-nots", between those who do and those who do not have enough land or means of production to meet their needs and their standards, automatically increases the more world-wide bourgeois society approaches the state of a "system with closed opportunities".

The analogy that exists between the relationships among individual lords in feudal society and among states in the industrial world, is more than fortuitous. It has its basis in the developmental curve of Western society itself. In the course of this development, with its growing interdependence, relationships of an analogous kind are established, among them legal forms, at first between relatively small territorial units and then at higher and higher levels of magnitude and integration, even if the transition to groups of a different order of size does represent a certain qualitative change.

It will be shown later what importance the process which we have begun to delineate here, i.e. the establishment of increasingly large, internally pacified but externally belligerent units of integration, had for the change the social standard of conduct and the pattern of drive control—for the civilizing process.

The relations of the individual feudal lords to one another did indeed resemble those of present-day states. Economic interdependence, exchange, the division of labour between individual estates was, to be sure, incomparably less developed in the tenth and eleventh centuries than between modern states, and so the economic dependence between warriors was correspondingly less. All the more decisive in their relationships, therefore, was their military potential, the size of their following and the land they controlled. It can be observed over and over again that in this society no oath of allegiance or contract—as is the case between states today—could in the long run withstand changes in social power. The fealty of vassals was in the end regulated very exactly by the actual degree of dependence between the parties, by the interplay of supply and demand between those giving land and protection in exchange for services on the one hand and those needing them on the other. When expansion, when the conquest or opening up of new land grew more difficult, the greater opportunities were first of all on the side of those who

rendered services and received land. This is the background of the first of the shifts which now took place in this society, the self-enfranchisement of the servants.

Land, in this society, was always the "property" of the person actually controlling it, really exercising rights of possession and strong enough to defend what he possessed. For this reason those with land to invest in exchange for services always started off at a disadvantage to those who received it. The "liege lord" had the "right" to the invested land, to be sure, but the vassal actually controlled it. The only thing making the vassal dependent on the liege lord, once he had the land, was the latter's protection in the widest sense of the word. But protection was not always needed. Just as the kings of feudal society were always strong when their vassals needed their protection and leadership when threatened by external foes, and above all when they had freshly conquered lands to distribute, but were weak when their vassals were not threatened and no new territory was expected, so too the liege lords of lesser magnitude were weak when those to whom they had entrusted land did not happen to need their protection.

The liege lord at any given level could compel one or other of his vassals to fulfil his obligations, and drive him by force from his land. But he could not do this to all, or even to many. For, as there could be no thought of arming bondsmen, he needed the services of one warrior to expel another, or he needed new land to reward new services. But for his conquests he needed new services. In this way the western Frankish territory disintegrated in the tenth and eleventh centuries into a multitude of smaller and smaller dominions. Every baron, every viscount, every seigneur controlled his estate or estates from his castle or castles, like a ruler over his state. The power of the nominal liege lords, the more central authorities, was slight. The compelling mechanisms of supply and demand, which made the vassal actually controlling the land generally less dependent on the protection of his liege lord than the latter on his services, had done their work. The disintegration of property, the passing of land from the control of the king to the various gradations of the warrior society as a whole—and this and nothing else is "feudalization"—had reached its utmost limit. But the system of social tensions that was established with this mighty disintegration, contained at the same time the driving forces of a counterthrust, a new centralization.

VIII SKIP

On the Sociogenesis of *Minnesang* and Courtly Forms of Conduct

27. Two phases can be distinguished in the process of feudalization: the one of extreme disintegration just discussed, and then a phase in which this movement began to be reversed and the first, still loose, forms of reintegration on a

somewhat larger scale emerged. Thus began, if we take this state of extreme disintegration as the starting point, a long historical process in the course of which ever larger areas and numbers of people became interdependent and finally tightly organized in integrated units.

> In the tenth and eleventh centuries this fragmentation continues. It seems that no one will hold on to a portion of rule big enough to enable him to exert any effective action. Fiefs, the chances of ruling, and rights are split up more and more . . . from top to bottom, throughout the whole hierarchy, all authority is heading towards disintegration.
>
> Then, in the eleventh and especially the twelfth century, a reaction sets in. A phenomenon occurs that has been repeated in history several times in different forms. The liege lords who are better placed and have the greatest chances, sequestrate the feudal movement. They give feudal law, that has begun to become fixed, a new turn. They fix it to the disadvantage of their vassals. Their efforts are favoured by certain large historical connections . . . and this reaction serves in the first place to consolidate the situation just reached.[50] (Calmette)

After the gradual transition of the warrior society from a more mobile phase with relatively large opportunities for expansion and social betterment for the individual, to a phase with increasingly closed positions, in which everyone tried to retain and consolidate what he had, power once again shifted among the warriors scattered across the land and ensconced like *reguli* (like little kings) in their castles. The few richer and larger lords gained in social power relative to the many smaller ones.

The monopoly mechanism which thus slowly began to operate will be discussed in more detail later. Here we shall refer to only one of the factors that from now on acted more and more decisively in favour of the few greater warriors at the expense of the many lesser ones: the importance of slowly proceeding commercialization. The network of dependencies, the interplay of supply of and demand for land, protection and services in the less differentiated society of the tenth and even the eleventh century, was simple in its structure. Slowly in the eleventh, and more quickly in the twelfth century, the network grew more complex. At the present stage of research it is difficult to determine accurately the growth of trade and money circulating at this time. This alone would provide a possibility of really measuring the changes in social power relations. Suffice it to say that the differentiation of work, and the market and money sector of society, were growing, even though the barter form of economy continued to predominate as it would for a long time; and this growth in trade and money circulation benefited the few rich lords very much more than the many small ones. These continued by and large to live on their estates as they had done up to now. They consumed directly what their estates produced, and Words, but little supporting evidenc
their involvement in the network of trade and exchange-relationships was

minimal. The former, by contrast, not only entered the network of trade relations through the surplus produce of their estates; the growing settlements of artisans and traders, the towns, generally attached themselves to the fortresses and administrative centres of the great dominions, and however uncertain relations between the great lords and the communes within their territory may still have been, however much they wavered between mistrust, hostility, open struggle and peaceful agreement, in the end they too, and the duties flowing from them, strengthened the great lords as compared to the small ones. They offered them opportunities of escaping the perpetual cycle of land investiture in exchange for services, and subsequent appropriation of the land by the vassal—opportunities that counteracted the centrifugal forces. At the courts of the great lords, by virtue of their direct or indirect involvement in the trade network, whether through raw materials or in coined or uncoined precious metal, a wealth accumulated that the majority of lesser lords lacked. And these opportunities were supplemented by a growing demand for opportunities from below, a growing supply of services by the less favoured warriors and others driven from the land. The smaller society's possibilities of expansion became, the larger grew the reserve army from all strata, including the upper stratum. Very many from this stratum were well content if they could simply find lodging, clothing and food at the courts of the great lords through performing some function. And if ever, by the grace of a great lord, they received a piece of land, a fief, this was a special stroke of fortune. The story of Walther von der Vogelweide, well known in Germany, is typical in this respect of the lives of many men in France as well. And, realizing the underlying social necessities, we can guess what humiliations, vain supplications and disappointments may have lain behind Walther's exclamation: "I have my fief!"

28. The courts of the greater feudal lords, the kings, dukes, counts and higher barons or, to use a more general term, the territorial lords, thus attracted, by virtue of the growing opportunities in their chambers, a growing number of people. Quite analogous processes would take place again some centuries later at a higher level of integration, at the courts of the absolute princes and kings. But by that time the interweaving of social functions, the development of trade and money circulation were so great, that a regular income through taxation from the whole dominion and a standing army of peasants' and burghers' sons with noble officers financed by the absolute ruler from these taxes, could totally paralyse the centrifugal forces, the landed aristocracy's desire for independence, through the whole country. Here, in the twelfth century, integration, the network of trade and communications, was not remotely so far developed. In areas the size of a kingdom it was still quite impossible to oppose the centrifugal forces continuously. Even in territories the size of a duchy or a county it was still very difficult, usually only after hard fighting, to restrain vassals who wished to withdraw their land from the control of a liege lord. The increase in social power

fell firstly to the richer feudal lords on account of the size of their family property, their unenfioffed land. In this respect the bearers of the crown were no different from the other major feudal lords. The opportunities that they all derived, through their large holding of land, from trade and finance, gave them a superiority, including military superiority, over the smaller self-sufficient knights, first of all within the limits of one territory. Here, even with the poor travelling conditions of the time, access by the central authority was no longer very difficult. All this converged at this stage of development to give the rulers of medium-sized territories, smaller than kingdoms or "states" in the later sense of this word, and larger than the bulk of the knightly estates, a special social significance.

But this is by no means to say that at that stage a really stable governmental and administrative apparatus could be established even within a territory of this size. The interdependence of regions and the permeation of the country by money had not yet advanced remotely far enough to permit the highest and richest feudal lord of a region to establish a bureaucracy paid exclusively or even primarily in money, and thus a more strict centralization. A whole series of struggles was needed, struggles that were constantly rekindled, before the dukes, kings and counts could assert their social power even within their own territory. And whatever the outcome of these battles, the vassals, the smaller and medium knights, still retained the rights and functions of rule within their estates; here they continued to hold sway like little kings. But while the courts of the great feudal lords became more populated, while their chambers filled and goods began to pass in and out, the bulk of the small knights continued to lead their self-sufficient and often very restricted lives. They took from the peasants whatever was to be got out of them; they fed as best they could a few servants and their numerous sons and daughters; they feuded incessantly with each other; and the only way in which these small knights could get hold of more than the produce of their own fields was by plundering the fields of others, above all the domains of abbeys and monasteries, and then gradually, as money circulation and so the need for money grew, by pillaging towns and convoys of goods, and ransoming prisoners of war. War, rapine, armed attack and plunder constituted a regular form of income for the warriors in the barter economy, and moreover, the only one open to them. And the more wretchedly they lived, the more dependent they were on this form or income.

The slowly increasing commercialization and monetarization therefore favoured the few large landowners and feudal lords rather than the mass of the small. But the superiority of the kings, dukes or counts was not remotely as great as later, in the age of absolutism.

29. Analogous shifts, as already mentioned, have often taken place in the course of history. The increasing differentiation between the upper middle stratum and the petty-bourgeois strata is probably most familiar to the

twentieth-century observer. Here too, after a period of free competition with relatively good possibilities of social improvement and enrichment even for small and medium property owners, the preponderance within the bourgeoisie is gradually shifting to the disadvantage of the economically weaker and in favour of the economically stronger group. Anyone with small or medium-sized property, leaving aside a few growth areas, finds it increasingly difficult to attain major wealth. The direct or indirect dependence of the small and middle-sized on the great is growing, and while the opportunities of the former diminish, those of the latter almost automatically increase.

Something similar took place in the western Frankish knightly society of the late eleventh and twelfth centuries. The possibilities for expansion of the agrarian sector of society, predominantly a barter economy, were as good as exhausted. The division of labour, the commercial sector of society, was—despite many reverses—still spreading, in the grip of growth. The bulk of the knightly landowners profited but little from this expansion. The few great landlords had a part in it and profited. In this way a differentiation took place within feudal knightly society itself that was not without consequences for attitudes and styles of life.

> Feudal society as a whole [says Luchaire in his incomparable study of society in the age of Philip Augustus[51]] has, with the exception of an élite . . . scarcely altered its habits and manners since the eleventh century. Almost everywhere the lord of the manor remains a brutal and rapacious cutthroat; he goes to war, fights at tournaments, spends his peacetime hunting, ruins himself with extravagance, oppresses the peasants, practises extortion on his neighbours and plunders the property of the church.

The strata influenced by the slowly increasing division of labour and monetarization were in flux; the others remained stationary and were drawn only resistingly and, as it were, passively into the current of forces of change. It is no doubt never quite correct to say that this or that stratum is "without history". But what can be said is this: the living conditions of the lesser landlords or knights changed only very slowly. They played no direct or active part in the exchange network, the money flow, the quicker movement that passed with it through society. And when they felt the shocks and convulsions of these social movements, it was practically always in a form detrimental to them. All these things were disruptions which the landlords like the peasants usually failed to understand and often detested, until they were actually driven by them more or less violently from their autarkic base into the strata with a faster current. They ate what their land, their stables and the work of their bondsmen yielded. In this nothing had changed. If supplies were short or more was wanted, they were taken by force, through pillage and plunder. This was a simple, clearly visible and independent existence; here the knights, and very much later the peasants too, were and remained in a certain sense always the lords of their land. Taxes,

trade, money, the rise and fall of market prices, all these were alien and often hostile phenomena from a different world.

The barter sector of society which, in the Middle Ages and for long after, comprised the great majority of people, was certainly not entirely untouched even at this early stage by the social and historical movement. But despite all the upheavals, the pace of real changes in it was, compared to that in other strata, very small. It is not "without history"; but in it, for a very large number of people in the Middle Ages and for a smaller number even in recent times, the same living conditions were constantly reproduced. Here, uninterruptedly, production and consumption were carried on predominantly in the same place within the framework of the same economic unit; the supra-local integration in other regions of society was traceable only late and indirectly. The division of labour and work techniques which, in the commercialized sector, advanced more quickly, here changed only slowly.

It was only much later, therefore, that people's personalities were here subjected to the peculiar compulsions, the stricter controls and restraints which arise from the money network and the greater division of functions, with its increasing number of visible and invisible dependencies. Feeling and conduct undergo far more hesitantly a civilizing process.

As already stated, in the Middle Ages and long after, the agrarian barter sector of the economy with its low division of labour, its low integration beyond the local level and its high capacity to resist change, contained by far the largest portion of the population. If we are really to understand the civilizing process we must remain aware of this polyphony of history, the pace of change slow in one class, more rapid in another, and the proportion between them. The knights, the rulers of this large, ponderous, agrarian sector of the medieval world, were for the most part scarcely bound in their conduct and passions by money chains. Most of them knew only one means of livelihood—thus only one direct dependence—the sword. It was at most the danger of being physically overpowered, a military threat from a visibly superior enemy, that is to say direct, physical, external compulsion, that could induce them to restraint. Otherwise their affects had rather free and unfettered play in all the terrors and joys of life. Their time—and time, like money, is a function of social interdependence—was only very slightly subject to the continuous division and regulation imposed by dependence on others. The same applies to their drives. These were wild, cruel, prone to violent outbreaks and abandoned to the joy of the moment. People could be like this. There was little in the situations in which people found themselves to compel them to impose restraint upon themselves. Little in their conditioning forced them to develop what might be called a strict and stable super-ego, as a function of dependence and compulsions stemming from others transformed into self-restraints.

Words, but little supporting evidence, necessary for the argument

Towards the end of the Middle Ages, to be sure, a rather larger number of

2

On the Sociogenesis of the State

I

The First Stage of the Rising Monarchy: Competition and Monopolization within a Territorial Framework

1. The crown signified very different things in different phases of social development, even though all its wearers had in common certain actual or nominal central functions, above all that of military leader against external enemies.

At the beginning of the twelfth century the former western Frankish empire, hardly threatened any more by strong external foes, had finally decayed into a collection of discrete dominions:

> The bond that formerly united the "provinces" and the feudal dynasties with the monarchy, was as good as completely ruptured. The last traces of real dominance that permitted Hugh Capet and his son, if not to act in the large regions controlled by his vassals, then at least to appear in them, had disappeared. The feudal groups of the first rank . . . conducted themselves like independent states impervious to the king's influence and more so to his actions. The relations between the great feudal lords and the monarchs were reduced to a minimum. This change was reflected even in the

official titles. The feudal princes of the twelfth century ceased calling themselves "comtes du Roi" or "comtes du royaume".[73]

In this situation the "king" did what other great feudal lords did: he concentrated on consolidating his own possessions, increasing his power in the only region still open to him, the duchy of Francia.

Louis VI, king from 1108 to 1137, was preoccupied throughout his life with two tasks: to increase his own direct land ownership within the duchy of Francia—the estates and castles not yet, or only partly, enfeoffed, i.e., his own family property—and, within the same area, to subdue all possible rivals, every warrior who might equal him in power. One task assisted the other: from the feudal lords he had subdued or conquered he took all or part of their property without enfeoffing it to anyone else; thus by small steps he increased his family possessions, the economic and military basis of his power.

2. In this the monarch was, to begin with, no different from a great feudal lord. The means of power at his disposal were so small that medium and even lesser feudal lords—in alliance—could successfully oppose him. Not only had the preponderance of the royal house in the whole kingdom vanished with the decline of his function as the common army leader, and with advancing feudalization; even his monopoly power within his own hereditary territory had become extremely precarious. It was disputed by rival lords or warrior families. In the person of Louis VI, the Capetian house struggled against the houses of Montmorency, Beaumont, Rochefort, Montlhéry, Ferté-Alais, Puiset and many others,[74] just as centuries later the Hohenzollerns in the person of the Great Elector had to contend with the Quitzows and the Rochows. Only the Capetians had much less chance of success. The difference between the military and financial means of the Capetians and their opponents was smaller, given the less developed state of money, taxation and military technique. The Great Elector already had a kind of monopoly control of power within his territory. Louis VI was, leaving aside his support from the ecclesiastical institutions, essentially a great landowner who had to contend with lords with somewhat smaller possessions and military power; and only the victor of these battles could attain a kind of monopoly position within the territory, beyond the competition of other houses.

Only from reading contemporary reports can we judge by how little the military and economic means of the Capetians in this period surpassed those of other feudal houses in the duchy of Francia; and how difficult, given the low degree of economic integration, undeveloped transportation and communications, and the limitations of feudal military organization, was the "sovereign's" struggle for monopoly power even within this small area.

For example, there was the fortress of the Montlhéry family commanding the route between the two most important parts of the Capetian domain, the areas

around Paris and Orléans. In 1015 the Capetian king Robert had given this land to one of his servants or officials, the "grand forestier", with permission to build a castle on it. From this castle the "grand forestier's" grandson already controlled the surrounding area as an independent lord. This is a typical example of the centrifugal movements that were taking place everywhere in this period.[75] After laborious struggles Louis VI's father finally managed to reach a kind of understanding with the Montlhérys; he married a bastard son about ten years old to the Montlhéry heiress and thus brought the castle under the control of his house. Shortly before his death he said to his eldest son, Louis VI:

> Guard well that tower of Montlhéry, which by causing me so many torments has aged me before my time, and on account of which I have never enjoyed lasting peace or true repose . . . it was a centre for perfidious people from far and near and disorder came only through it or with its help . . . for . . . Montlhéry being situated between Corbeil on one hand and Châteaufort on the other, each time a conflict arose Paris was cut off, and communication between Paris and Orléans was impossible except by armed force.[76]

Problems of communications not unlike those which continue to play a role between states today, were at that earlier stage of social development no less troublesome on a different scale: in the relations between one feudal lord—whether he wore a crown or not—and others, and in regard to the comparatively microscopic distance between Paris and Orléans: Montlhéry is twenty-four kilometres from Paris.

A good part of Louis VI's reign was taken up by fighting for this fortress, until he finally succeeded in adding Montlhéry to the Capetian possessions. As in all such cases, this meant a military strengthening and economic enrichment of the victorious house. The Montlhéry estate brought in an income of two hundred pounds—a handsome sum for those times—and belonging to it were thirteen direct fiefs and twenty indirect ones depending on these,[77] whose tenants now swelled the military power of the Capetians.

No less protracted and difficult were the other battles Louis VI had to fight. He needed three expeditions in 1111, 1112 and 1118, to break the power of a single knightly family in the Orléans district;[78] and it cost him twenty years to deal with the houses of Rochefort, Ferté-Alais and Puiset, and add their possessions to those of his family. By this time, however, the Capetian domain was so large and well-consolidated that, thanks to the economic and military advantages conferred by such large property, its owners had outstripped all other rivals in Francia, where they now took up a kind of monopoly position.

Four or five centuries later, the monarch had emerged as the monopoly controller of enormous military and financial means flowing from the whole area of the kingdom. Campaigns such as that of Louis VI against other feudal lords within the framework of one territory represented the first step on the way to this later monopoly position of the monarchy. At first the house of the nominal

kings was scarcely superior to the feudal houses around it in terms of land ownership and military and economic power. The difference in property among warriors was relatively slight, as therefore was the social difference, no matter with what titles they adorned themselves. Then, through marriage, purchase or conquests, one of these houses accumulated more and more land and thus gained preponderance over its neighbours. The fact that it was the old royal house that succeeded in doing so in Francia may have been bound up—apart from the never inconsiderable possessions that made its new start possible—with the personal qualities of its representatives, the support of the church, and a certain traditional prestige. But the same differentiation of property among warriors was taking place at the same time, as has been mentioned, in other territories too. It was the same shift in the centre of gravity of warrior society, favouring the few large knightly families at the expense of the many small and medium ones, that was discussed earlier. In each territory sooner or later one family succeeded, by accumulating land, in attaining a kind of hegemony. That the crown, that Louis the Fat, should undertake the same thing looks like an abrogation of the royal function. But given this distribution of social power he had no choice. In this social structure, family property and control of the narrower hereditary area constituted the most important military and financial basis of even the king's power. By concentrating his forces on the small area of Francia, by creating a hegemony in the restricted space of territory, Louis VI laid the foundation for the subsequent expansion of his house. He created a potential centre for the crystallization of the greater area of France, even though we may certainly not assume that he had any prophetic vision of this future. He acted under the direct compulsions of his actual situation. He *had to* win Montlhéry if he were not to forfeit communication between parts of his own territory. He *had to* subdue the most powerful family in the Orléans region if his power there were not to dwindle. Had the Capetians not succeeded in gaining preponderance in Francia, it would sooner or later—like the other provinces of France—have fallen to another house.

The mechanism leading to hegemony is always the same. In a similar way—through the accumulation of property—a small number of economic enterprises in more recent times have slowly outstripped their rivals and competed with each other, until finally one or two of them control and dominate a particular branch of the economy as a monopoly. In a similar way—by accumulating land and thus enlarging their military and financial potential—states in recent times have struggled for preponderance in a particular part of the world. But whereas in modern society, with its higher division of functions, this process takes place in a relatively complex way, with a differentiation of the economic and the military and political aspects of hegemony, in the society of Louis VI, with its predominantly barter economy, these aspects remained undivided. The house that ruled a territory politically was at the same time by far the richest house in

this territory, with the largest area of land; and its political power would diminish if its military power, stemming from the size of its domanial revenues and the number of its bondsmen and retainers, did not exceed that of all the other warrior families within its territory.

Once the preponderance of one house was fairly secure in this small region, the struggle for hegemony in a larger area moved into the foreground—the struggle between the few larger territorial lords for predominance within the kingdom. This was the task confronting the descendants of Louis VI, the next generations of Capetians.

II

Excursus on some Differences in the Paths of Development of England, France and Germany

1. The task implied in the struggle for dominance, i.e. for both centralization and rule, was for a very simple reason different in England and France from that in the German-Roman Empire. The latter formation was very different in size to the other two; geographical and social divergences within it were also much greater. This gave the local, centrifugal forces a very different strength, and made the task of attaining hegemony and thus centralization incomparably more difficult. The ruling house would have needed a far greater territorial area and power than in France or England to master the centrifugal forces of the German-Roman Empire and forge it into a durable whole. There is good reason to suppose that, given the level of division of labour and integration, and the military, transportational and administrative techniques of the time, the task of holding centrifugal tendencies in so vast an area permanently in check was nearly insoluble.

2. The scale on which social processes take place is a not unimportant element of their structure. In enquiring why the centralization and integration of France and England was achieved so much earlier and more completely than in the German regions, we should not neglect this point. In this respect the trends of development in the three regions vary very widely.

When the crown of the western Frankish region fell to the Capetians, the area in which the house had real power extended from Paris to Senlis in the north and to Orléans in the south. Twenty-five years previously Otto I had been crowned Roman emperor in Rome. Resistance by other German chieftains he had ruthlessly put down, primarily supported, at first, by the experienced warriors of his own tribal area. At that time Otto's empire stretched roughly from Antwerp and Cambrai in the west, at least (i.e. without the margravates east of the Elbe) as far as the Elbe, and beyond Brno and Olomouc to the south-east; it stretched

to Schleswig in the north and to Verona and Istria in the south; in addition it included a good part of Italy and for a time Burgundy. What we have here, therefore, is a formation on an entirely different scale, and consequently one fraught with far greater tensions and conflicts of interest, than the western Frankish area, even if we include in the latter the Norman-English colony acquired later. The task confronting the dukes of Francia and Normandy or of the Angevin territory, as kings in the struggle for hegemony in this region, was entirely different to that with which every ruler of the German-Roman Empire had to contend. In the former area centralization or integration, despite numerous swerves to one side or the other, proceeded on the whole fairly continuously. In the latter incomparably larger area, one family of territorial rulers after another tried in vain to attain, with the imperial crown, a really stable hegemony over the whole empire. One house after another used up in this fruitless struggle what despite all else continued to be the central source of its income and power—their hereditary or domanial possessions. And after each unsuccessful bid by a new house, decentralization and the consolidation of centrifugal tendencies went a step further.

Shortly before the French monarchy gradually began to regain its strength in the person of Louis VI, the German-Roman Emperor Henry IV collapsed under the combined assaults of the great German territorial lords, the Church, the upper Italian cities and his elder son, that is to say, in face of the most diverse centrifugal forces. This provides a point of comparison with the early period of the French monarchy. Later, when the French King Francis I had his whole kingdom so completely in hand that he no longer needed to call assemblies of the estates and could raise taxes without asking the taxpayers, the Emperor Charles V and his administration had to negotiate even within his own hereditary lands with a whole multitude of local assemblies, before he could muster the duties needed to pay for the court, the army and the administration of the empire. And all this, including income from the overseas colonies, was not nearly enough to meet the cost of running the empire. When Charles V abdicated, the imperial administration was on the verge of bankruptcy. He too had exhausted and ruined himself in trying to rule such an enormous empire torn by such massive centrifugal forces. And it is an indication of the transformation of society in general, and of the royal function in particular, that the Habsburgs were nevertheless able to maintain themselves in power.

3. The mechanism of state-formation—in the modern sense of the word state—has been shown to be, in the European area at the time when society was moving from a barter economy to a money economy, in its main outlines always the same. It will be illustrated in more detail in relation to France. We always find, at least in the history of the great European states, an early phase in which units of the size of a territory play the decisive role within the area later to become a state. These are small, loosely structured dominions such as have arisen in many

parts of the world where division of labour and integration are slight, their size corresponding to the limits placed on the organization of rule by the prevalence of barter relationships in the economy. One example is the feudal territorial dominions within the German-Roman Empire which, with the advance of the money economy, were consolidated to form small kingdoms, duchies or counties; other examples are areas like the principality of Wales or the kingdom of Scotland, now merged with England in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland; and a further example is the duchy of Francia, whose development into a more tightly knit feudal dominion has just been discussed.

In its schematic outline, the process taking place *between* the different neighbouring territorial dominions took a very similar course to the one previously followed *within* a firmly established territory between the individual lords or knights, until one of them attained predominance and a rather more solid territorial dominion was formed. Just as, in one phase, a number of estates placed in competition experienced the need to expand if they were not to be subjugated by expanding neighbours, so in the next a group of units one degree larger, duchies or counties, found themselves in the same predicament.

It has already been shown in some detail how, in this society, the internal competition for land was intensified with the growth of population, the consolidation of land-ownership and difficulties of external expansion. It was shown how this drive for land was exerted in the poor knights as a simple desire for a mode of living appropriate to their status, and in the highest and richest as a spur to demand "more" land. For in a society with such competitive pressures, he who does not gain "more" automatically becomes "less". Here again we see the effect of the pressure running through this society from top to bottom: it set the territorial rulers against one another; and thereby set the monopoly mechanism in motion. At first the divergences of power were contained, even in this phase, within a framework that allowed a considerable number of feudal territorial dominions to remain in contention. Then, after many victories and defeats, some grew stronger through accumulating the means of power, while others were forced out of the struggle. The victorious few fought on and the process of elimination was repeated until finally the decision lay between only two territorial dominions swollen through the defeat and assimilation of others. All the rest—whether they were involved in the struggle or remained neutral—had been reduced by the growth of these two to figures of second or third rank, though they still retained a certain social importance. The other two, however, were approaching a monopoly position; they had outstripped the others; the issue lay between them.

In these "elimination contests", this process of social selection, the personal qualities of individuals and other "accidental" factors such as the late death of

one man or a ruling house's lack of male heirs, undoubtedly played a crucial part from time to time in deciding *which* territory triumphs, rises and grows.

The social process itself, however, the fact *that* a society with numerous power and property units of relatively equal size, tends under strong competitive pressures towards an enlargement of a few units and finally towards monopoly, is largely independent of such accidents. They can have an accelerating or retarding effect on the process. But no matter who the monopolist is, that a monopoly will sooner or later be formed has a high degree of probability, at least in the social structures that have existed so far. In the language of exact science this observation would perhaps be called a "law". Strictly speaking, what we have is a relatively precise formulation of a quite simple social mechanism which, once set in motion, proceeds like clockwork. A human figuration in which a relatively large number of units, by virtue of the power at their disposal, are in competition, tends to deviate from this state of equilibrium (many balanced by many; relatively free competition) and to approach a different state in which fewer and fewer units are able to compete; in other words it approaches a situation in which *one* social unit attains through accumulation a monopoly of the contended power chances.

4. The general character of the monopoly mechanism will be discussed in more detail later. It seems necessary to point out at this stage, however, that a mechanism of this kind is at work in the formation of states too, just as it was earlier involved in the formation of the smaller units, the territories, or will be later in the formation of yet larger ones. Only if we have this mechanism in mind can we understand which factors in the history of different countries modify or even impede it. Only in this way can we see with some clarity why the task facing a potential central ruler of the Germano-Roman Empire was incomparably more difficult than that which faced a potential ruler of the western Frankish region. In this empire too, through elimination struggles and the constant accumulation of territory in the hands of the victors, one territorial dominion would have had to emerge strong enough to absorb or eliminate all others. Only in this way could this disparate empire have been centralized. And there was no lack of struggles tending in this direction, not only those between the Guelfs and the Hohenstaufens but also between Emperor and Pope, with their special complications. But they all missed their mark. In an area as large and varied as this, the probability of a clearly dominant power emerging was very much less than in smaller areas, especially as at this stage economic integration was lower and effective distances were many times greater than later. In any case, elimination struggles within so large an area would need far longer than in the smaller neighbouring ones.

How, nevertheless, states finally managed to be formed in the Germano-Roman Empire is well known. Among the German territorial dominions—to disregard the analogous process in Italy—a house emerged which, above all

through expansion into the German or semi-German colonial region, slowly came into competition with the older Habsburgs: the Hohenzollerns. A struggle for supremacy ensued, leading to victory for the Hohenzollerns, to the formation of an unambiguous supremacy among German territorial rulers and eventually, step by step, to the unification of the German territories under a single ruling apparatus. But this struggle for supremacy between the two most powerful components of the empire, while leading to greater integration—to the formation of states within them—meant a further step towards the disintegration of the old empire. With their defeat the Habsburg lands left the union. This was in fact one of the l st stages of the slow and continuous decay of the empire. In the course of centuries more and more parts crumbled away to become independent dominions. As a whole, the empire was too large and diverse to be other than a hindrance to state-formation.

To reflect on why state-formation in the Germano-Roman Empire was so much more laborious and belated than in its western neighbours certainly helps understanding of the twentieth century. Modern experience of the difference between the longer-established, better balanced and more fully expanded western states, and the recently established states descended from the old empire, states which expanded comparatively late, gives this question topical importance. From a structural point of view it does not seem difficult to answer, at any rate not more so than the complementary question which is scarcely less important for an understanding of historical structures—the question why this colossus, despite its unfavourable structure and the unavoidable strength of centrifugal forces within it, held together so long, why the Empire did not founder earlier.

5. As a totality, it did indeed collapse late; but for centuries border areas of the empire—particularly to the west and south—had been crumbling away and going their own way, while incessant colonization and expansion of German settlements in the east to some extent compensated the losses in the west, though only to some extent. Up to the late Middle Ages, and to an extent even later, the empire spread to the west as far as the Maas and the Rhône. If we disregard the irregularities and consider only the general trend of this movement, we have the impression of the empire's constant attrition and diminution, accompanied by a slow shift in the direction of expansion, and a drift of the centre of gravity from west to east. The task remains to demonstrate this trend more exactly than is possible here. But purely in terms of area, the trend is still visible in the most recent changes in German territory proper:

The German Confederation before 1866	630,098 sq. km.
Germany after 1870	540,484 sq. km.
Germany after 1918	471,000 sq. km.

In England, and in France too, the trend is almost the reverse. The traditional

institutions first developed in relatively small and restricted areas and then extended their scope. The fate of the central institution, the structure and development of the whole government apparatus in these countries, cannot be understood, nor the difference between them and the corresponding formations in the states descended from the old empire explained, unless this simple factor, this slow growth from small to larger, is taken into account.

Compared to the German-Roman Empire, the island territory that the Norman Duke William conquered in 1066 was quite small. It reminds us roughly of Prussia under the first kings. It comprised, apart from small areas on the northern border with Scotland, present-day England, an area of about 131,764 square kilometres. Wales was completely united with England only at the end of the thirteenth century (England with Wales 151,130 sq. km.). Union with Scotland has existed only since 1603. Such figures are visible but very crude indications of structural differences. They remind us that the formation of the English nation, and then the British, took place within a framework which, compared with that of the great Continental nations, scarcely extended, in its decisive phase, beyond that of a territorial dominion. What William the Conqueror and his immediate successors built up was in fact nothing other than a large territory of the western Frankish empire, and not very different from those which existed at the same time in Francia, Aquitaine or Anjou. The task with which the struggle for supremacy confronted the territorial rulers of this area—through the sheer necessity of expanding to avoid domination by others—this task could not in any way be compared with that facing a potential central ruler of the Continental empire. This is true even of the first phase in which the island territory formed a kind of western Frankish colony, when its Norman or Angevin rulers also controlled considerable territories on the Continent and when they were therefore still struggling for supremacy in the western Frankish area. But it is true above all of the phase when they were thrown back on the island from the Continent, and had to unite it under one government on the basis of England alone. And if the royal function, like the relation of king to estates, took a different form here than in the Continental empire, one of the factors at work, though certainly not the only one, was the relative smallness and also, of course, the isolated position of the area to be united. The likelihood of major regional differentiation was very much less, and the struggle for supremacy between two rivals simpler, than between the many factions in the empire. The English parliament, as far as its manner of formation and therefore its structure is concerned, was in no way comparable to the German Imperial Diet, but rather with the regional estates. Much the same is true of all the other institutions. They grew, like England itself, from smaller to larger; the institutions of a feudal territory evolved continuously into those of a state and an empire.

In the British Empire too, however, centrifugal forces immediately began to

act again as soon as territory had been united beyond a certain point. Even with present-day integration and communications this empire is proving dangerously large. Only very experienced and flexible government is holding it together with great difficulty. Despite very different preconditions from those of the old German Empire, it still illustrates how a very large empire, brought together by conquest and colonization, finally tends to disintegrate into a number of more or less independent units, or at least to be transformed into a kind of "federal state". Seen thus at close quarters, the mechanism seems almost self-evident.

6. The native region of the Capetians, the duchy of Francia, was smaller than the English territory controlled by the Norman dukes. It was roughly the same size as the Electorate of Brandenburg at the time of the Hohenstaufens. But there, within the framework of the empire, it took five or six centuries for the small colonial area to become a power capable of confronting the old-established territories of the empire. Within the more limited framework of the western Frankish area, the power of such a territory, together with the material and spiritual help given by the Church to the Capetians, was enough to enable the house to begin the struggle for supremacy over larger areas of France at a very early stage.

The area left behind by the western Frankish empire, the basis of the later France, occupied a roughly midway position, as far as its size was concerned, between the Germano-Roman Empire and what was to become England. Regional divergences, and thus centrifugal forces, were less here than in the neighbouring empire and the task of the potential central ruler accordingly less difficult. But the divergences and attendant centrifugal forces were greater than on the British island.[79] In England, however, the very restrictedness of the territory facilitated, under certain circumstances, an alliance of the different estates and, above all, of warriors from the whole territory *against* the central ruler. Furthermore, William the Conqueror's distribution of land favoured contact and common interests among the land-owning class throughout the whole of England, at least as far as relationships to the central ruler were concerned. It remains to be shown how a certain degree of fragmentation and disparateness in a dominion, not enough to permit disintegration but enough to make a direct alliance of the estates throughout the country difficult, strengthened the position of the central ruler.

Thus the chances offered by the former western Frankish region, in terms of its size, were not unfavourable to the emergence of a central ruler and the formation of monopoly power.

It remains to be seen in detail how the Capetians took advantage of these opportunities and, in general, by what mechanisms monopoly rule was established in this territory.

III

On the Monopoly Mechanism

1. The society of what we call the modern age is characterized, above all in the West, by a certain level of monopolization. Free use of military weapons is denied the individual and reserved to a central authority of whatever kind,[80] and likewise the taxation of the property or income of individuals is concentrated in the hands of a central social authority. The financial resources thus flowing into this central authority maintain its monopoly of military force, while this in turn maintains the monopoly of taxation. Neither has in any sense precedence over the other; they are two sides of the same monopoly. If one disappears the other automatically follows, though the monopoly rule may sometimes be shaken more strongly on one side than on the other.

Forerunners of such monopoly control of taxes and the army over relatively large territories have previously existed in societies with a less advanced division of functions, mainly as a result of military conquest. It takes a far advanced social division of functions before an enduring, specialized apparatus for administering the monopoly can emerge. And only when this complex apparatus has evolved does the control over army and taxation take on its full monopoly character. Only then is the military and fiscal monopoly firmly established. From then on, social conflicts are not concerned with removing monopoly rule but only with the question of who are to control it, from whom they are to be recruited and how the burdens and benefits of the monopoly are to be distributed. It is only with the emergence of this continuing monopoly of the central authority and this specialized apparatus for ruling that dominions take on the character of "states".

Within them a number of other monopolies crystallize around those already mentioned. But these two are and remain the key monopolies. If they decay, so do all the rest, and with them the "state".

2. The question at issue is how and why this monopoly structure arose.

In the society of the ninth, tenth and eleventh centuries it definitely did not yet exist. From the eleventh century—in the territory of the former western Frankish empire—we see it slowly crystallizing. At first each warrior who controlled a piece of land exerted all the functions of rule; these were then gradually monopolized by a central ruler whose power was administered by specialists. Whenever he pleased, he waged wars to gain new land or defend his own. Land-acquisition and the governmental functions going with its possession were, like its military defence, left to "private initiative", to use the language of a later age. And since, with the increasing population of the area, hunger for land was extremely keen, competition for it throughout the country was rife. In this competition both military and economic means were used, in contrast to that of

the nineteenth century, for example, which, given the state monopoly of physical violence, was waged solely by economic means.

A reminder of the competitive struggles and the monopolization taking place directly under our own eyes is not without value for an understanding of monopoly mechanisms in earlier stages of society. In addition, consideration of the old in conjunction with the new helps us to see this social development as a whole. The later part of the movement presupposes the earlier, and the centre of both is the accumulation of the most important means of production of the time, or at least control over it, in fewer and fewer hands—earlier the accumulation of land, later that of money.

The mechanism of monopoly formation has already been briefly discussed.[81] It can be roughly summarized as follows: SEE Hoffmann **

If, in a major social unit, a large number of the smaller social units which, through their interdependence, constitute the larger one, are of roughly equal social power and are thus able to compete freely—unhampered by pre-existing monopolies—for the means to social power, i.e. primarily the means of subsistence and production, the probability is high that some will be victorious and others vanquished, and that gradually, as a result, fewer and fewer will control more and more opportunities, and more and more units will be eliminated from the competition, becoming directly or indirectly dependent on an ever-decreasing number. The human figuration caught up in this movement will therefore, unless countervailing measures are taken, approach a state in which all opportunities are controlled by a single authority: a system with open opportunities will become a system with closed opportunities.[82]

The general pattern followed by this sequence is very simple: in a social area there are a certain number of people and a certain number of opportunities which are scarce or insufficient in relation to the needs of the people. If we assume that to begin with all the people in this area fight one other for the available opportunities, the probability that they will maintain this state of equilibrium indefinitely and that no partner will triumph in any of these pairs is extremely small, if this is indeed a free competition uninfluenced by any monopoly power; and the probability that sooner or later individual contestants will overcome their opponents is extremely high. But if some of the contenders are victorious, their opportunities multiply; those of the vanquished decrease. Greater opportunities accumulate in the hands of one group of the original rivals, the others being eliminated from direct competition with them. Assuming that each of the victors now struggles with the others, the process is repeated: once again one group is victorious and gains control of the power chances of the vanquished; a still smaller number of people controls a still greater number of power chances; a still greater number of people are eliminated from the free competition; and the process is repeated until finally, in the extreme case, one individual controls all power chances and all the others are dependent on him.

In historical reality it is certainly not always individual people who become

embroiled in this mechanism; frequently it is large associations of people, for example territories or states. The course of events in reality is usually far more complicated than in this schematic pattern, and full of variations. It often happens, for example, that a number of weaker parties combine to bring down an individual who has accumulated too many possibilities and grown too strong. Should they succeed and take over the possibilities of this party, or some of them, they then fight among themselves for predominance. The effect, the shift in power balances, is always the same. In this way, too, an ever-increasing number of power chances tends to accumulate in the hands of an ever-diminishing number of people through a series of elimination contests.

The course and pace of this shift in favour of the few at the expense of the many depend to a large extent on the relation between the supply of and demand for opportunities. If we assume that the level of demand and the number of opportunities remain unchanged overall in the course of the movement, the demand for opportunities will increase with the shift in the power relations; the number of the dependents and the degree of their dependence will increase and change in kind. If relatively independent social functions are increasingly replaced by dependent ones in society—for example, free knights by courtly knights and finally courtiers, or relatively independent merchants by dependent merchants and employees—the moulding of affects, the structure of drives and consciousness, in short the whole social personality structure and the social attitudes of people are necessarily changed at the same time. And this applies no less to those who are approaching a monopoly position than to those who have lost the possibility to compete and fallen into direct or indirect dependence.

3. For this process should in no way be understood merely as one whereby fewer and fewer people become "free" and more and more "unfree", although in some phases it appears to answer this description. If the movement is viewed as a whole, we can recognize without difficulty that—at least in highly differentiated societies—dependence undergoes a peculiar qualitative change at a certain stage of the process. The more people are made dependent by the monopoly mechanism, the greater becomes the power of the dependent, not only individually but also collectively, in relation to the one or more monopolists. This happens not only because of the small number of those approaching the monopoly position, but because of their own dependence on ever more dependents in preserving and exploiting the power potential they have monopolized. Whether it is a question of land, soldiers or money in any form, the more that is accumulated by an individual, the less easily can it be supervised by this individual, and the more surely he becomes by his very monopoly dependent on increasing numbers of others, the more he becomes dependent on his dependents. Such changes in power and dependence relationships often take centuries to become perceptible, and centuries more to find expression in lasting institutions. Particular structural properties of society may place endless obstacles in the way

of the process, yet its mechanism and trend are unmistakable. The more comprehensive the monopolized power potential, the larger the web of functionaries administering it and the greater the division of labour among them; in short, the more people on whose work or function the monopoly is in any way dependent, the more strongly does this whole field controlled by the monopolist assert its own weight and its own inner regularities. The monopoly ruler can acknowledge this and impose on himself the restraints that his function as the central ruler of so mighty a formation demands; or he can indulge himself and give his own inclinations precedence over all others. In the latter case the complex social apparatus which has developed along with this private accumulation of power chances will sooner or later lapse into disorder and make its resistance, its autonomous structure, all the more strongly felt. In other words, the more comprehensive a monopoly position becomes and the more highly developed its division of labour, the more clearly and certainly does it move towards a point at which its one or more monopoly rulers become the central functionaries of an apparatus composed of differentiated functions, more powerful than others, perhaps, but scarcely less dependent and fettered. This change may come about almost imperceptibly by small steps and struggles, or through whole groups of dependents asserting their social power over the monopoly rulers by force; in one way or another the power first won through the accumulation of chances in private struggles, tends, from a point marked by an optimal size of possessions, to slip away from the monopoly rulers into the hands of the dependents as a whole, or, to begin with, to groups of dependents, such as the monopoly administration. The privately owned monopoly in the hands of a single individual or family comes under the control of broader social strata, and transforms itself as the central organ of a state into a public monopoly.

The development of what we today call a "national economy" is an illustrative example of this process. The national economy develops from the "private economy" of feudal ruling houses. More precisely, there is at first no distinction between what are later opposed as "public" and "private" income and expenditure. The income of the central rulers derives primarily from their personal family or domanial possessions; expenses for the ruler's court, hunts, clothes or presents are met from this income in exactly the same way as the cost of the relatively small administration, paid soldiers if any, or the building of castles. Then, as more and more land comes together in the hands of one ruling house the management of income and expenditure, the administration and defence of his property become increasingly difficult for the individual to supervise. But even when the direct possessions of the ruling house, its domanial estate, are no longer by any means the most important source of the ruler's income; even when, with the increasing commercialization of society, duties from the whole country flow into the "chambers" of the central ruler; and when, with the monopoly of force, the monopoly of land has become at the same time one of duties or taxes—even then

the central ruler at first continues to control this revenue as if it were the personal income of his household. He can still decide how much of it should be spent on castles, presents, his kitchen and the court, and how much on keeping the troops and paying the administration. The distribution of the income from the monopolized resources is his prerogative. On closer examination, however, we find that the monopolist's freedom of decision is restricted more and more by the immense human web that his property has gradually become. His dependence on his administrative staff increases and, with it, the influence of the latter; the fixed costs of the monopoly apparatus constantly rise; and at the end of this development the absolute ruler with his apparently unrestricted power is, to an extraordinary degree, governed by and functionally dependent on, the society he rules. His absolute sovereignty is not simply a consequence of his monopoly control of opportunities, but the function of a particular structural peculiarity of society in this phase, of which more will be said later. But however that may be, even the budget of French absolutism still made no distinction between the "private" and "public" expenditure of the king.

How the transformation into a public monopoly finally finds expression in the budget is well enough known. The wielder of central power, whatever title he may bear, is allocated a sum in the budget like any other functionary; from it the central ruler, king or president, meets the expenses of his household or court; expenditure necessary for the governmental organization of the country is strictly separated from that used by individuals for personal ends. Private monopoly rule has become public monopoly rule, even when in the hands of an individual as the functionary of society.

The same picture emerges if we trace the formation of the governmental apparatus as a whole. It grows out of what might be called the "private" court and domanial administration of the kings or princes. Practically all the organs of state government result from the differentiation of the functions of the royal household, sometimes with the assimilation of organs of autonomous local administration. When this governmental apparatus has finally become the public affair of the state, the household of the central ruler is at most one organ among others and finally hardly even that.

This is one of the most pronounced examples of the way in which private property becomes a public function, and the monopoly of an individual—won in contests of elimination and accumulation over several generations—is finally socialized.

It would take us too far afield to show here what is actually meant by saying that the "private" power of individuals over monopolized resources becomes "public", or "state", or "collective" power. As was said earlier, all these expressions have their full meaning only when applied to societies with extensive division of functions; only in such societies are the activities and functions of each individual directly or indirectly dependent on those of many others, and

only here is the weight of these many intertwined actions and interests so great that even the few with monopoly control over immense possibilities cannot escape its pressure. empires...

Social processes involving the monopoly mechanism are to be found in many societies, even those with relatively low division of functions and integration. There, too, every monopoly tends, from a certain degree of accumulation onwards, to escape the control of any single individual and to pass into that of entire social groups, frequently starting with the former government functionaries, the first servants of the monopolists. The process of feudalization is one example of this. It was shown earlier how, in the course of this process, control over relatively large territorial possessions and military power slips away from the monopoly ruler in successive waves, first to his former functionaries or their heirs, then to the warrior class as a whole with its own internal hierarchy. In societies with a lower degree of interdependence between social functions, this shift away from private monopoly control leads either to a kind of "anarchy", a more or less complete decay of the monopoly, or to its appropriation by an oligarchy instead of an individual dynasty. Later, such shifts in favour of the many do not lead to a disintegration of the monopoly, but only to a different form of control over it. Only in the course of a growing social interdependence of all functions does it become possible to wrest monopolies from arbitrary exploitation by a few without causing them to disintegrate. Wherever the division of functions is both high and increasing, the few who, in successive waves, claim monopoly power, sooner or later find themselves in difficulty, at a disadvantage in face of the many, through their need of their services and thus their functional dependence on them. The human web as a whole, with its increasing division of functions, has an inherent tendency that opposes increasingly strongly every private monopolization of resources. The tendency of monopolies, e.g. the monopoly of force or taxation, to turn from "private" into "public" or "state" monopolies, is nothing other than a function of social interdependence. A human web with high and increasing division of functions is impelled by its own collective weight towards a state of equilibrium where the distribution of the advantages and revenues from monopolized opportunities in favour of a few becomes impossible. If it seems self-evident to us today that certain monopolies, above all the key monopoly of government, are "public", held by the state, although this was by no means the case earlier, this marks a step in the same direction. It is entirely possible that obstructions may again and again be placed in the path of such a process by the particular conditions of a society; a particular example of such obstructions was shown earlier in the development of the old Germano-Roman Empire. And wherever a social web exceeds a certain size optimal for that particular monopoly formation, similar breakdowns will occur. But the impulsion of such a human web towards a quite definite structure, in which monopolies are administered to the advantage of the whole figuration, remains

perceptible, no matter what factors may repeatedly intrude as countervailing mechanisms to arrest the process in recurrent situations of conflict.

Considered in general terms, therefore, the process of monopoly formation has a very clear structure. In it, free competition has a precisely definable place and a positive function: it is a struggle among many for resources not yet monopolized by any individual or small group. Each social monopoly is preceded by this kind of free elimination contest; each such contest tends towards monopoly.

As against this phase of free competition, monopoly formation means on one hand the closure of direct access to certain resources for increasing numbers of people, and on the other a progressive centralization of the control of these resources. By this centralization, such resources are placed outside the direct competition of the many; in the extreme case they are controlled by a single social entity. The latter, the monopolist, is never in a position to use the profit from his monopoly for himself alone, particularly in a society with a high division of functions. If he has enough social power, he may at first claim the overwhelming part of the monopoly profit for himself, and reward services with the minimum needed for life. But he is obliged, just because he depends on the services and functions of others, to allocate to others a large part of the resources he controls—and an increasingly large part, the larger his accumulated possessions become, and the greater his dependence on others. A new struggle over the allocation of these resources therefore arises among those who depend on them. But whereas in the preceding phase the competition was "free"—that is, its outcome depended solely on who proved stronger or weaker at a given time—it now depends on the function or purpose for which the monopolist needs the individual to supervise his dominion. Free competition has been replaced by one that is controlled, or at any rate controllable, from a central position by human agents; and the qualities that promise success in this restricted competition, the selection it operates, the human types it produces, differ in the extreme from those in the preceding phase of free competition.

The difference between the situation of the free feudal nobility and that of the courtly nobility is an example of this. In the former, the social power of the individual house, a function of both its economic and military capacity and of the physical strength and skill of the individual, determines the allocation of resources; and in this free competition the direct use of force is indispensable. In the latter, the allocation of resources is finally determined by the man whose house or whose predecessors have emerged victoriously from the struggle by violence, so that he now possesses the monopoly of force. Owing to this monopoly, the direct use of force is now largely excluded from the competition among the nobility for the opportunities the prince has to allocate. The means of struggle have been refined or sublimated. The restraint of the affects imposed on the individual by his dependence on the monopoly ruler has increased. And individuals now waver between resistance to the compulsion to which they are

not the subject of the course, but important in the argument of the book

subjected, hatred of their dependence and unfreedom, nostalgia for free knightly rivalry, on the one hand, and pride in the self-control they have acquired, or delight in the new possibilities of pleasure that it opens, on the other. In brief, this is a new spurt in the civilizing process.

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The next step is the seizure of the monopolies of physical force and taxation, with all the other governmental monopolies based on them, by the bourgeoisie. The latter was at this stage a stratum which, in its totality, controlled certain economic opportunities in the manner of an organized monopoly. But these opportunities were still so evenly spread among its members that relatively large numbers of them could compete freely. What this stratum was struggling with the princes for, and what it finally attained, was not the destruction of monopoly rule. The bourgeoisie did not aspire to re-allocate these monopolies of taxation and military and police power to their own individual members; their members did not want to become landowners, each controlling his own military means and his own income from taxes. The existence of a monopoly for raising taxes and exerting physical violence was the basis of their own social existence; it was the precondition for the restriction to economic, non-violent means, of the free competition in which they were engaged with each other for certain economic opportunities.

What they were striving for in the struggle for monopoly rule, and what they finally attained was not, as noted before, a division of the existing monopolies but a different distribution of their burdens and benefits. That control of these monopolies now depended on a whole class instead of an absolute prince was a step in the direction just described; it was a step on that road which led the opportunities given by this monopoly to be allocated less and less according to the personal favour and interests of individuals, but increasingly according to a more impersonal and precise plan in the interests of many interdependent associates, and finally in the interests of an entire interdependent human figuration.

In other words, through centralization and monopolization, opportunities that previously had to be won by individuals through military or economic force, could now become amenable to planning. From a certain point of development on, the struggle for monopolies no longer aims at their destruction; it is a struggle for control of their yields, for the plan according to which their burdens and benefits are to be divided up, in a word, for the keys to distribution. Distribution itself, the task of the monopoly ruler and administration, changes in this struggle from a relatively private to a public function. Its dependence on all the other functions of the interdependent human network emerges more and more clearly in organizational form. In this entire structure the central functionaries are, like everyone else, dependent. Permanent institutions to control them are formed by a greater or lesser portion of the people dependent on this monopoly apparatus; and control of the monopoly, the filling of its key positions, is itself no longer decided by the vicissitudes of "free" competition, but by regularly

recurring elimination contests without force of arms, which are regulated by the monopoly apparatus, and thus by "unfree" competition. In other words, what we are accustomed to call a "democratic regime" is formed. This kind of regime is not—as simply looking at certain economic monopoly processes of our time might make it appear—incompatible with monopolies as such and dependent for its existence on the freest possible competition. On the contrary it presupposes highly organized monopolies, and it can only come into being or survive under certain conditions, in a very specific social structure at a very advanced stage of monopoly formation.

Two main phases can thus be distinguished in the dynamics of a monopoly mechanism, as far as we are at present able to judge. First, the phase of free competition or elimination contests, with a tendency for resources to be accumulated in fewer and fewer and finally in one pair of hands, the phase of monopoly formation; secondly, the phase in which control over the centralized and monopolized resources tends to pass from the hands of an individual to those of ever greater numbers, and finally to become a function of the interdependent human web as a whole, the phase in which a relatively "private" monopoly becomes a public one.

Signs of this second phase are not lacking even in societies with a relatively low division of functions. But, clearly, it can only attain its full development in societies with a very high and rising division of functions.

The overall movement can be reduced to a very simple formula. Its starting point is a situation where a whole class controls unorganized monopoly opportunities and where, accordingly, the distribution of these opportunities among the members of this class is decided by free competition and open force; it is then driven towards a situation where the control of monopoly opportunities and those dependent on them by one class, is centrally organized and secured by institutions; and where the distribution of the yields of monopoly follows a plan that is not exclusively governed by the interests of single individuals or single groups, but is oriented on the overall network of interdependencies binding all participating groups and individuals to each other and on its optimal functioning. For in the long run the subordination of the quest for the optimal functioning of the overall network of interdependencies to the optimation of sectional interests invariably defeats its own end.

So much for the general mechanism of competition and monopoly formation. This schematic generalization takes on its full significance only in conjunction with concrete facts; by them it must prove its worth.

When we talk of "free competition" and "monopoly formation" we usually have present-day facts in mind; we think first of all of a "free competition" for "economic" advantages waged by people or groups within a given framework of rules through the exertion of economic power, and in the course of which some

gradually increase their control of economic advantages while destroying, subjecting or restricting the economic existence of others.

But these economic struggles of our day do not only lead before our eyes to a constant restriction of the scope for really "monopoly-free" competition and to the slow formation of monopolistic structures. As has already been indicated, they actually presuppose the secure existence of certain very advanced monopolies. Without the monopoly organization of physical violence and taxation, limited at present to national boundaries, the restriction of this struggle for "economic" advantages to the exertion of "economic" power, and the maintenance of its basic rules, would be impossible over any length of time even within individual states. In other words, the economic struggles and monopolies of modern times occupy a particular position within a larger historical context. And only in relation to this wider context do our general remarks on the mechanism of competition and monopoly take on their full meaning. Only if we bear in mind the sociogenesis of these firmly established "state" monopoly institutions—which during a phase of large-scale expansion and differentiation, no doubt open the "economic sphere" to unrestricted individual competition, and thus to new private monopoly formations—only then can we distinguish more clearly amidst the multitude of particular historical facts the interplay of social mechanisms, the ordered structure of such monopoly formations.

How did these "state" monopoly organizations come to be formed? What kind of struggles gave rise to them?

It must be enough here to follow these processes in the history of the country where they took their course most undeviatingly, and which, partly as a result of this, was for long periods the foremost power in Europe, setting the example for others: France. In so doing we must not shy away from details; otherwise our general model will never take on the wealth of experience without which it remains empty—just as wealth of experience remains chaotic to those unable to perceive order and structures within it.

IV

Early Struggles within the Framework of the Kingdom

1. Within the former western Frankish territory there was a very high probability, in accordance with the inherent tendency of the monopoly mechanism, that sooner or later one of the rival warrior houses would gain predominance and finally a monopoly position; and that in this way the many smaller feudal territories would be welded into a larger unit.

That it would be this particular house, the Capetians, who emerged as victors from the elimination struggles, so becoming the executors of the monopoly

mechanism, was at first far less likely, even though a number of factors favouring this house can be readily discerned. It can be said that it was only the course of the Hundred Years' War that conclusively decided whether the descendants of the Capetians or of another house were to become the monopolists or central rulers of the emerging state.

It is not unimportant to bear in mind the difference between these two questions, between the general problem of monopoly and state formation, and the more specific question of why this particular house won and retained hegemony. It is with the former rather than the latter that we have been concerned and are still concerned here.

The first shift towards monopoly, after the general levelling of property relationships that carried on into the tenth and even the eleventh century, has been sketched above. It involved the formation of a monopoly within the framework of a territory. Within this small area the first elimination contests were fought, and in them the balance first moved in favour of a few and finally of a single contestant. One house—for a house or family is always the social unit that asserts itself, not an individual—won so much land that the others could no longer match its military and economic strength. As long as there was a possibility of competing with it, the relationship of liege lord to vassal was more or less nominal. With this shift in social power it took on a new reality. A new dependence of many houses on one was established, even though, in the absence of a highly developed central apparatus, it lacked both the continuity and strength that it later had in the framework of the absolutist regime.

It is characteristic of the rigour with which this monopoly mechanism operated that analogous processes were taking place at approximately the same time in practically all the territories of the western Frankish region. Louis VI, Duke of Francia and in name the King of the whole region, was, as we have pointed out, only one representative of this stage of monopoly formation.

2. If we look at a map of France in the period about 1032, we have a clear impression of the political fragmentation of the region into a multitude of greater MAP and lesser territories.[83] What we have in front of us is certainly not yet the France we know. This emerging France, the former western Frankish region, was bordered to the south-east by the Rhône; Arles and Lyons lay outside it in the kingdom of Burgundy; also outside it to the north lay the region of present-day Toul, Bar le Duc and Verdun, which belonged, like the areas around Aachen, Antwerp and, further north, Holland, to the kingdom of Lorraine. The traditional eastern and northern frontier of the former western Frankish region runs deep within present-day France. But neither this frontier of the nominal Capetian empire nor the borders of the smaller political units within it had at that time quite the same function or fixity as present-day state frontiers. Geographical divisions, river valleys and mountain ranges, together with linguistic differences and local traditions, gave the frontiers a certain stability. But as

each region, large or small, was the possession of a warrior family, what primarily decided the composition of a territorial unit was the victories and defeats, the marriages, purchases and sales of this family; and the shifts in hegemony over a given area were considerable.

Going from south to north we first see, north of the county of Barcelona, that is, north of the Pyrenees, the duchy of Gascony extending to the region of Bordeaux and the county of Toulouse. Then, to mention only the larger units, come the duchy of Guyenne, i.e. Aquitaine, the county of Anjou, the seat of the second Franco-English royal house, the counties of Maine and Blois, the duchy of Normandy, seat of the first Franco-English royal house, the counties of Troyes, Vermandois and Flanders, and finally, between the Norman dominions—the counties of Blois, Troyes and others—the small domain of the Capetians, the duchy of Francia. It has already been emphasized that this small Capetian dominion did not constitute, any more than other territories, a complete unity in the geopolitical or military sense of the word. It was made up of two or three fairly large adjoining regions, the Isle de France, Berry and the Orléans regions, as well as scattered smaller possessions in Poitou, in the south, and in the most diverse parts of France, that had come into the possession of the Capetians in one way or another.[84]

First stage

3. In most of these territories at the time of Louis VI, therefore, a particular house had gained predominance over the others by accumulating land. Conflicts between these princely houses and the smaller nobility within the dominion were constantly flaring up, and tensions between them long remained perceptible.

But the chances of successful resistance by the smaller feudal houses were no longer great. Their dependence on the liege lord or territorial ruler of the time slowly became more evident in the course of the eleventh century. The monopoly position of the princely houses within their territories was now only seldom shaken. And what from then on characterized society more and more was the struggle between these princely houses for predominance in a larger area. People were driven into these conflicts by the same compulsions as in the previous stage: when one neighbour grew larger and thus stronger, the other was threatened with being overpowered by him and made dependent; he had to conquer in order not to be subjugated. And though to begin with crusades and wars of expansion to some extent reduced the internal pressure, this grew all the more intense once the chances of outward expansion had diminished. The mechanism of free competition operated from now on within a more confined circle, namely between those warrior families which had become the central houses of territories.

4. The Norman Duke's conquest of England was, as we have mentioned, one of the expansionist campaigns characteristic of this time, one among many. It too bore witness to the general hunger for land that afflicted the growing population, particularly the warriors, whether rich or poor.

But this enrichment of the Norman Duke, this enlargement of his military and financial resources, was a grave disturbance to the previous equilibrium between the territorial rulers of France. The full extent of the shift did not become immediately apparent; for the Conqueror needed time to organize his power within his new dominion, and even when this had been done the threat emanating from this aggrandizement of the Norman dukes to other territorial rulers, given the low integration of the western Frankish territories, first made itself felt only in the direct vicinity of Normandy, i.e. in northern France, rather than further south. Felt it was, however, and most directly by the house with the traditional claim to predominance in the area neighbouring Normandy to the east, the house of the dukes of Francia, the Capetians. It is not unlikely that the threat from his stronger neighbour was a powerful factor impelling Louis VI in the direction that he adhered to tenaciously and energetically throughout his life, his urge to consolidate his power and defeat any possible rival within his own territory.

That he, the nominal king and liege lord of the western Frankish region was in fact, in keeping with the size of his possessions, far weaker than his vassal and neighbour, who now as ruler of England likewise wore a crown, was apparent in every conflict between them.

William the Conqueror, because he had recently conquered this island territory, had had the chance to create what was for his time a fairly centralized governmental organization. He distributed the land in a manner intended as far as possible to prevent the formation of houses and families as rich and mighty as his own, that might become rivals. The administration of the English central ruler was the most advanced of its time; even for money revenues there was already a special office.

The army with which William had conquered the island consisted only in part of his feudal retainers, the rest being mercenary knights driven by the same desire for new lands. Only now, after the conquest, was the Norman ruler's treasury large enough to engage paid soldiers; and quite apart from the size of their feudal following, this too gave the island rulers military superiority over their continental neighbours. Louis the Fat of Francia could not afford this any more than his predecessors. He had been accused of being covetous, seeking by every means at his disposal to take possession of money. In fact it was precisely at this time, as in many periods when money is relatively scarce and the disproportion between what is available and what is needed particularly keenly felt, that an urge or "greed" for money was particularly prominent. But Louis VI did indeed find himself in particularly difficult straits in face of his richer neighbour. In this respect, as in the question of organization, centralization and the elimination of possible internal rivals, the island territory set an example that continental rulers had to follow if they were not to succumb in the struggle for supremacy.

At the beginning of the twelfth century, therefore, the Capetian house was

noticeably weaker than its rival, which controlled land and people across the sea. Louis VI was defeated in practically every battle with his English rival, even though the latter did not succeed in penetrating the territory of Francia itself. This was the situation in which the ruler of Francia confined himself to enlarging the basis of his power, his family property, and to breaking the resistance of the smaller feudal lords within or between his territories. In so doing he was preparing his house for that great struggle, for those centuries of conflict for supremacy in the former western Frankish region, in the course of which more and more territories grew together into a single bloc in the hands of a single warrior house, a struggle in which from then on all the other tensions within the region became more or less entangled—the struggle for the French crown between the rulers of the Isle de France and the rulers of the English island.

5. The house that took up the struggle with the Capetians when William the Conqueror's family became extinct was that of the Plantagenets. Their family dominion was Anjou,[85] likewise a region neighbouring Francia. They made their way upwards at about the same time as the Capetians, and in almost the same manner. As in Francia under Philip I, so in neighbouring Anjou under Fulk, the Counts' actual power in relation to their vassals has become very slight. Like Philip's son, Louis VI, the Fat, Fulk's son, Fulk the Young, and his son, Geoffrey Plantagenet, slowly subdued the smaller and medium-sized feudal lords in their domain; and they, too, thus laid the foundation for further expansion.

In England itself, at first, the reverse process took place, showing the mechanisms of this warrior society from the other side. When Henry I, William the Conqueror's youngest son, died without male heirs, Stephen of Blois, the son of one of William's daughters, laid claim to the English throne. He gained the recognition of the secular feudal lords and the Church; but he was himself no more than a medium-sized, Norman feudal lord. His personal property, the family power on which he had to depend, was limited. And thus he was fairly impotent in the face of the other warriors, and also the clergy, of his region. With his accession to the throne, a disintegration of governmental power on the island immediately set in. The feudal lords built castle upon castle, minted their own money, levied taxes from their own regions; in short, they took over all the powers that hitherto, in keeping with their superior strength, had been a monopoly of the Norman central rulers. Furthermore Stephen of Blois committed a series of blunders, alienating the Church in particular, that a stronger man might perhaps have been able to afford, but not one needing the help of others. This helped his rivals.

These rivals were the counts of Anjou. Geoffrey Plantagenet had married the daughter of the last Norman–English king. And he had the power to back the claim he based on this marriage. He slowly gained a foothold in Normandy. His son, Henry Plantagenet, united Maine, Anjou, Touraine and Normandy under his rule. And with this power base he could undertake to reconquer the English

dominions of his grandfather as the Norman Duke had done before him. In 1153 he crossed the Channel. In 1154, at the age of twenty-two, he became king, and a king who, by virtue both of his military and financial power, and of his personal energy and talent, became a strong centralizing force. Two years previously, moreover, he had become, through his marriage with the heiress of Aquitaine, the ruler of this region in southern France. He thus combined with his English lands a territory on the mainland, beside which the Capetian domain appeared small indeed. The question whether the western Frankish territories were to be integrated around the Isle de France or Anjou was wide open. England itself was conquered territory and to begin with an object of politics rather than a subject.[86] It was—if one will—a semi-colonial part of the loose federation of western Frankish territories.

MAP

The distribution of power at that time bore a distant resemblance to that currently existing in the Far East. A small island territory and a dominion many times its size on the Continent were under one rule. The whole southern part of the former Capetian realm belonged to it. The chief southern area not belonging to the Plantagenet dominions was the county of Barcelona. Its rulers were caught up in a similar expansionist movement and had become kings of Aragon, likewise on the basis of marriage. Slowly, and at first almost unnoticed, they disengaged themselves from the union of western Frankish territories.

Geopolitics of today

Also outside the Angevin–English dominion in the south—apart from a smaller clerical territory—was the county of Toulouse. Its rulers, like smaller lords north of the Aquitainian region, began, in face of the threatening supremacy of the Angevin realm, to incline towards the rival power centre, the Capetians. The characteristic power balances found in figurations such as these tend always to determine the conduct of people in the same way; in the smaller sphere of the western Frankish territorial federation, their operation was little different from that determining the politics of states in modern Europe for example, and even, incipiently, across the whole globe. As long as no absolutely dominant power has emerged, no power that has unequivocally outgrown all competition and taken up a monopoly position, units of the second rank seek to form a bloc against the one which, by uniting numerous regions, has come closest to the position of supremacy. The formation of one bloc provokes another; and however long this process may oscillate back and forth, the system as a whole tends to consolidate larger and larger regions about a centre, to concentrate real power of decision in ever fewer units and finally at a single centre.

The expansion of the Norman Duke created a bloc which displaced the balance in his favour at first in northern France. The expansion of the house of Anjou built on this and took a step further; the bloc of the Angevin realm called into question the equilibrium of the whole western Frankish region. However loosely connected this bloc may have been, however rudimentary the centralizing government within it, nevertheless the movement by which, under the pressure

of the general hunger for land, one house constantly drove another to unite with it or to seek "more" land, manifests itself clearly enough in these formations. Apart from the south, a broad band comprising the whole of western France now belonged to the Plantagenets' dominion. Formally the king of England was vassal to the Capetian kings in respect of this mainland area. But "law" counts for little when it is not backed by corresponding social power.

When in 1177 Louis VI's successor, Louis VII of Francia, now an old and weary man, held a meeting with the representative of the rival house, Henry II, the young King of England, he told him:

> Oh Sire, since the beginning of your reign and earlier you have heaped outrages upon me, trampling underfoot the loyalty you owed me and the homage you have done me; and of all these outrages the gravest and most flagrant is your unjust usurpation of Auvergne which you hold to the detriment of the French Crown. To be sure, old age is on my heels and robs me of the strength to recover this and other lands; but before God, before these Barons of the Realm and our loyal subjects, I publicly protest and uphold the rights of my Crown, most notably to Auvergne, Berry, and Chateauroux, Gisors and the Norman Vexin, beseeching the King of Kings who has given me an heir, to accord to him what he has denied to me.[87]

Vexin—a kind of Norman Alsace-Lorraine—was a contested borderland between the domain of the Capetians and the Norman dominion of the Plantagenets. Further south the frontier between the Capetian and Angevin dominions ran through the Berry region. The Plantagenets were clearly strong enough already to seize parts of the Capetian domain. The struggle for supremacy between Capetians and Plantagenets was in full spate; and the Angevin ruler was still far stronger than the ruler of Francia.

Accordingly, the demands the Capetian made of his opponent were really very modest; he wanted to be given back a few pieces of land that he counted among his own dominions. For the time being he could contemplate nothing more. The glory of the Angevin rule and the paucity of his own he fully realized. "We French," he once said, comparing himself with his rival, "have nothing but bread, wine and contentment."

6. But this manner of ruling did not yet possess great stability. It was in fact a "private enterprise"; as such it was subject to the inherent social dynamics of a struggle between freely competing units, which in any given case was much more strongly influenced by the personal capacities of the competitors—their age, their succession and similar personal factors—than were political formations of a later phase, when not only the person of the owner of the monopoly but a certain division of functions, a multiplicity of organized interests and a more stable governmental apparatus, held together larger units.

In 1189 a Capetian again confronted the Plantagenet. Almost all the contested areas had in the meantime been won back to Capetian rule. And now the

Plantagenet was an old man, the Capetian younger; he was Louis VII's son, Philip II, surnamed Augustus. Age, as noted above, meant much in a society where the incumbent of power is not yet able to delegate military leadership, where very much depends on his personal initiative and where he must attack or defend in person. Henry II, personally a strong ruler who still has the control of his large domains securely in his hands, was now plagued—along with age—by the rebellions and even the hatred of his eldest son Richard, surnamed Coeur-de-Lion, who sometimes even made common cause against his father with the rival Capetians.

Exploiting the weakness of his adversary, Philip Augustus took back Auvergne and the parts of Berry mentioned by his father. One month after they faced each other at Tours, Henry II died at the age of fifty-six.

In 1193—Richard the Lion Heart lying in prison—Philip seized the long-contested Vexin. His ally was John, the younger brother of the prisoner.

In 1199 Richard died. Both he and his brother and successor John, who was soon to be John Lackland, had squandered much of the basis of their power, the family possessions and treasure of their father. Facing John as his rival, however, was a man who had felt to the quick the whole humiliation and constriction of Capetian power by the growth of the Angevin-English, and whose whole energy, stirred by this experience, was channelled in a single direction: more land, more power. More and yet more. He—like the first Plantagenet before him—was obsessed by this craving. When John Lackland enquired whether he might not have back some of the land lost to Philip for payment, Philip answered by asking if he did not know anyone else willing to sell land; he himself would rather buy more. And at this time Philip was already a man rich in land and power.

Clearly, this is not yet a struggle between states or nations. The whole history of the formation of later monopoly organizations, of nation states, remains incomprehensible until the special character of this preceding social phase of "private initiative" has been understood. This was a struggle between competing or rival houses which, following a general movement of this society, drove each other, first as small and then as larger and larger units, to expand and strive for more possessions.

CRITICAL

The Battle of Bouvines in 1214 provisionally decided the issue. John of England and his allies were defeated by Philip Augustus. And as so often in feudal warrior society, defeat in an external battle meant an internal weakening as well. Returning home, John found the barons and clergy in revolt, and their demand was the Magna Carta. Conversely, for Philip Augustus the victory in the foreign war strengthened his power within his dominion.

MAP

As his father's heir, Philip Augustus took over essentially the small inland district of Paris and Orléans, together with parts of Berry. He added—to mention only his major acquisitions—Normandy, then one of the largest and richest territories in the whole realm; the regions of Anjou, Maine and Touraine;

important parts of Poitou and Saintonge; Artois, Valois, Vermandois; the region of Amiens and a large part of the region around Beauvais. "The lord of Paris and Orléans has become the greatest territorial lord in northern France."[88] He had made "the Capetian house the richest family in France".[89] His domain had gained outlets to the sea. In other territories of northern France, in Flanders, Champagne, Burgundy and Brittany, his influence was increasing in proportion to his power. And even in the south he already controlled a not inconsiderable area.

This Capetian dominion was still anything but an integrated territory. Between Anjou and the Orléans region lay the domain of the Count of Blois. In the south the coastal districts around Saintes and, further east, Auvergne, were as yet scarcely connected to the northern regions. But the latter, the old family domain together with Normandy and newly conquered areas stretching beyond Arras to the north, already constituted a fairly unified bloc in a purely geographical sense.

Even Philip Augustus did not yet have "France" in our sense in view, and his real dominion was not this France. What he aimed at above all was the territorial, military and economic expansion of his family power and the subjugation of its most dangerous competitors, the Plantagenets. In both these aims he succeeded. On Philip's death the Capetian dominions were roughly four times as large as at his accession. The Plantagenets, by contrast, who had lived hitherto more on the continent than on the island—and whose administration in England itself was made up as much of continental Normans and people from their other mainland possessions as of natives of the island—now controlled on the mainland merely a part of the former Aquitaine, the area north of the central and western Pyrenees along the coast as far as the Gironde estuary under the name of the duchy of Guyenne; apart from that there were a few islands off the coast of Normandy. The balance had shifted against them. Their power had decreased. But thanks to their island dominion it was not broken. After a time the balance on the mainland shifted back in their favour. The outcome of this struggle for hegemony in the former western Frankish area long remained undecided. It appears that Philip Augustus regarded as his chief rivals after the Plantagenets the counts of Flanders; and that a new power centre had indeed come into existence there is shown by the whole subsequent history of France. Philip is reputed to have once said that either Francia would become Flemish or Flanders French. He certainly did not lack awareness that in all these conflicts among the lesser territorial houses, what was at issue was supremacy or the loss of independence. But he could still imagine Flanders equally well as Francia as dominating the whole area.

7. Philip Augustus' successors at first held firm to the course that he had set: they sought to consolidate and further extend the enlarged dominion. No sooner was Philip Augustus dead than the barons of Poitou turned back to the

Plantagenets. Louis VIII, Philip Augustus' son, secured this region afresh for his own dominion, as he did Saintonge, Aunis and Languedoc, part of Picardy and the county of Perche. Partly in the form of a religious war, the struggle against the Albigensian heretics, the Capetian house began to advance south into the sphere of the only great territorial lord in that part who could, beside the Plantagenets, rival the power of the Capetians, the domain of the counts of Toulouse.

The next Capetian, Louis IX, the Saint, had once again to protect his rapidly conglomerated possessions against every kind of internal and external attack. At the same time he went on building, uniting parts of Languedoc north-east of the Pyrenees, the counties of Mâcon, Clermont and Mortain, and some smaller areas, with his family possessions. Philip III, the Bold, seized the county of Guines between Calais and Saint-Omer, only to lose it twelve years later to the heirs of the Count. He acquired through purchase or promise of protection every minor possession in his vicinity that offered itself; and he prepared the assimilation of Champagne and the great territory of Toulouse into the dominions of his house.

There was by now scarcely a single territorial ruler in the whole western Frankish area who could, without allies, stand up to the Capetians, with the exception of the Plantagenets. The latter, to be sure, were no less preoccupied than the Capetians with enlarging their sphere of power. On the continent their rule had once again extended beyond the duchy of Guyenne. Across the sea they had subdued Wales and were in the process of conquering Scotland. They still had possibilities of expansion that did not lead to a direct collision with the Capetians. The latter, too, still had scope for expansion in other directions. At the same time, under Philip the Fair, their dominion was expanding to the frontiers of the Germano-Roman Empire, on one side as far as the Maas, which at that time was usually considered as the natural and—in remembrance of the partition of the Carolingian Empire in 843—the traditional frontier of the western Frankish area; on the other side—further south—it extended as far as the Rhône and the Saône, that is, as far as the regions of Provence, Dauphiné and the county of Burgundy, which likewise did not belong to the traditional confederation of western Frankish territories. Through marriage Philip acquired Champagne and Brie with many annexed areas, some of them in the territory of the German-Roman Empire itself. From the Count of Flanders he obtained the dominions of Lille, Douai and Béthune; the county of Chartres and the estate of Beaugency he took from the counts of Blois. In addition he acquired the counties of Marche and Angoulême, the ecclesiastical properties of Cahors, Mende and Puy, and further south the county of Bigorre and the viscountcy of Soule.

His three sons, Louis X, Philip V and Charles IV, died one after the other without leaving a male heir; the family possessions and crown of the Capetians passed to a descendant of a younger son of the house who owned the county of Valois as an apanage.

Up to this point a continuous effort had been made in more or less the same direction throughout generations: to accumulate land. It must be enough here to summarize the results of this effort. Nonetheless, even this summary, even the mere naming of the many lands which step by step were brought together, gives an idea of the perpetual, open or concealed struggle in which the various princely houses were engaged, and in which one of these houses after another, conquered by one more powerful, disappeared. Whether or not one fully realizes the meaning of these names, they give an impression of the strength of the impulse emanating from the social situation of the Capetian house, an impulse which passed in the same direction through such widely differing individuals.

At the death of Charles IV, the last Capetian who came to the throne in direct succession, the great French Capetian dominions—i.e. the complex grouped directly around the duchy of Francia—extended from Normandy in the west to Champagne in the east and to the river Canche in the north; the Artois region, adjoining this to the north, had been given away as an apanage to a member of the family. Somewhat further south—separated by the apanaged region of Anjou—the county of Poitiers was part of the area directly controlled by the Paris princes; still further south the county of Toulouse belonged to them, as did parts of the former duchy of Aquitaine. All this already constituted a mighty complex of lands; but it was not yet a cohesive region. It still had the typical appearance of a territorial family domain, the individual parts of which were held together less by their reciprocal dependence, or through any division of function, than by the person of the owner, through "personal union", and the common administrative centre. The separate identity of each region, the special interests and character of each territory, were still very strongly felt. However, their union under one and the same house and partly under the same administration, did remove a whole series of obstacles in the way of fuller integration. It corresponded to the tendency towards an extension of trade relations, the intensification of links beyond the local level, which was already discernible in small parts of the urban population, even though this tendency did not play remotely the same role as a driving force in the union or expansion of princely houses as it played later, in the nineteenth century, for example, at an entirely different stage in the development of urban bourgeois strata. Here, in the eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the struggle for land, the rivalry between an ever-smaller number of warrior families, was the primary impulse behind the formation of larger territories. The initiative lay with the few rising warrior families, the princely houses; under their protection the towns and trade flourished. Both profited from the concentration of power; no doubt they also contributed to it, as will be discussed later. And quite certainly urban strata, once larger regions were united under one rule, played an important part in the consolidation of a territorial union even at this time. Without the help of the human and financial resources flowing to the princes from urban strata and growing commercializa-

tion, neither the expansion nor the governmental organization of these centuries would be conceivable. But the significance of towns and commercialization for the integration of larger areas was still mainly indirect, in so far as they were instruments or organs of the princely houses. This integration meant first and foremost the conquest of one warrior house by another, that is, the absorption of one by another or at least its subjection, its dependence on the victor.

Looking at the area from this point of view as it appeared at the beginning of the fourteenth century at the extinction of the direct Capetian line, the direction of change is readily perceived. The struggle of lesser and medium warrior houses for land or more land had certainly not stopped; but these feuds no longer played remotely the part they played at the time of Louis VI, not to speak of his predecessors. At that time the lands were distributed relatively evenly among many; to be sure, there were differences between possessions which may have seemed very considerable to contemporaries. But even the possessions, and thus the power, of the nominal princely houses were so small that a large number of knightly families in their neighbourhood could try their arm with them as rivals for land or power. It was left to the "private initiative" of all these houses to decide how far they participated in this general struggle. Now, in the fourteenth century, these many warrior houses were no longer individually a force to be reckoned with; at most they carried a certain social weight collectively, as an estate. But the real initiative now lay with the very few warrior houses that had emerged for the time being as victors from the preceding conflicts, and had accumulated so much land that all the other houses could no longer challenge them, but act only in dependence on them. To these others, the majority of warriors, the possibility of winning new land on their own initiative in free competition was by and large foreclosed, and with it the chance of rising independently in society. Every warrior house must at most remain on the rung of the social ladder it had reached, unless one or other of its members succeeded in moving higher through the favour of one of the great lords, and thus through dependence on him.

The number of those who were still able to compete independently for land and power in the western Frankish region had steadily diminished. No independent duke or house of Normandy now existed and none of Aquitaine; assimilation or suppression had overtaken—to mention only the very largest—the counties of Champagne, Anjou and Toulouse. There now existed, beside the house of Francia, only four other houses that mattered in this region: the duchies of Burgundy and Brittany, the county of Flanders and—most powerful of all—the kings of England, dukes of Guyenne and lords of several smaller areas. A warrior society with relatively free competition had become a society where competition was restricted in the manner of a monopoly. And even out of the five great houses that still possessed some degree of competitive power, and preserved a certain corresponding independence, two houses again rose as the most

powerful, the Capetians and their succession, the kings of France, and the Plantagenets, kings of England. The confrontation between them must decide who would ultimately control monopoly power in the western Frankish region, and where the centre and the boundaries of the monopoly would lie.

V

The Resurgence of Centrifugal Tendencies: The Figuration of the Competing Princes

8. However, the formation of the monopoly of rule was not accomplished by any means as straightforwardly as appears merely from consideration of the accumulation of land. The larger the area became that was gradually united and centralized by the Capetians, the more strongly did a countervailing movement make itself felt; and the stronger, once again, grew the tendency towards decentralization. This tendency was still represented first and foremost by the closest relations and vassals of the monopoly ruler, as in the preceding phase where the barter economy was more intact, and as in the Carolingian period. But the mode of action of the decentralizing social forces had changed considerably. Money, crafts and trade now played an appreciably greater role in society than at that time; groups who concerned themselves specially with all this, the burghers, had taken on a social importance of their own. Transport had developed. All this offered the ruling organization of a large territory opportunities that were lacking earlier. The servants a central ruler sent into the country to administer and supervise his possessions no longer found it so easy to make themselves independent. Moreover, a growing proportion of these helpers of the central ruler now came from urban strata. The danger of such burghers developing into rivals of the ruler was incomparably less than before, when he had to take some of his aides from the warrior class, and when even bondsmen that he patronized could very rapidly acquire, thanks to the land with which he rewarded their services, the power and social rank of a warrior or noble.

However, a particular social category of people still posed a real threat to the cohesion of very large dominions under single rule, even though their power might have diminished and their mode of action changed. Even under the changed social circumstances, they became over and over again the chief exponents of decentralization. These were the closest family members of the ruler, that is, his uncles, his brothers, his sons or even, though far less so, his sisters or daughters.

A dominion and the monopoly of rule within it were not really, at this time, the possession of a single individual; they were very much a family possession, the property of a warrior house. All the closest relations of this house had and

asserted a claim to at least parts of this property. This was a claim which the head of the house was, for a long period, less willing or able to refuse, the larger the family possessions grew. It was certainly not a "legal claim" in the later sense of the word. In this society there were hardly more than the rudiments of a general, all-embracing "law" to which even the great warrior rulers were subject. For there was as yet no all-embracing power that could enforce such a law. It was only in conjunction with the formation of monopolies of rule, with the centralization of the ruling functions, that a common legal code was established for large areas. To provide for children was a social obligation that we often find set down in the *coutumes*. Undoubtedly it was only the better-endowed families that could adhere to this custom. For just this reason it carried prestige value. How could the richest house of the land, the royal house, have escaped this prestigious obligation?

The territorial possessions of a house continued to be, if in an increasingly restricted sense, what we would call private property. The head of the house controlled it in just as unrestricted a fashion, and perhaps even more freely, than a great landowner controls his property today, or the head of a major family firm its capital, income and branches. Just as the landowner can split off one or other of his estates for the benefit of a younger son or the dowry of a daughter, without asking its tenants whether their new lord is agreeable to them; just as the head of the firm can withdraw capital for his daughter's dowry or install his son as director of a subsidiary, without owing his employees the slightest explanation—in the same way the princes of that earlier phase disposed of villages, towns, estates and territories of their realm. And the impulse causing the owner of large properties to provide for his sons and daughters is more or less the same in all these cases. Quite apart from a ruler's possible preference for one of his younger children, to endow them in a fitting manner was necessary for the preservation and public display of the social status of a house; and—at least apparently, at least in a short-term view—it increased the house's chances of gaining power and permanence. That this splitting up of possessions and functions of rule for the benefit of relations very often precisely endangered the power and permanence of the house, is a fact which frequently only entered the consciousness of princes after long and painful experience. In France Louis XIV was really the first to draw the full and ultimate conclusion from such experience. With implacable severity he kept all family relations—even the heir to the throne, as far as this was possible at all—far from all ruling functions and independent positions of power. ok, but also before Richelieu

9. At the beginning of this line of development, in that early phase when the family possessions of the Capetians were scarcely larger than those of many other warrior families in the land, the danger implicit in any fragmentation of this property is immediately obvious. The direct threat from neighbouring feudal families seldom abated. This caused each family to hold its people together as

well as its property. No doubt there were quarrels, fights within the household as everywhere else. But at the same time, all—or at least part—of the family worked constantly to defend or expand the family possessions. The relatively small estates of the royal family, like those of all warrior houses, were essentially autarkic; they lacked any larger social importance and had indeed very much the character of a small family enterprise. The brothers and sons, even the mothers and wives, of heads of families had a say in the running of the estate which varied with their personal qualities and circumstances. But it hardly occurred to anyone to sever any significant part from the family possessions and hand it over to a member of the family. The younger sons might receive a small estate here and there, or they might marry into a small property; but we also hear of one or other of the younger sons of a royal family leading a fairly penurious existence.

This changed completely as the royal house grew rich. Once the Capetians had become the richest family in the whole territory or indeed the entire country, it was impossible to let the younger sons of the house live like petty knights. The reputation of the royal house demanded that all its members, even the younger sons and daughters of the king, receive a fitting endowment, that is to say a sizeable area over which to rule, and from which they could live. In addition, now that the Capetians far surpassed most other families in the country in property and wealth, the danger from severing a portion from their possessions was no longer so keenly felt. And so the enlargement of the Capetian dominion was accompanied by the steadily increasing size of the areas passing as apanages to the younger children of the kings. Disintegration set in on a new basis.

Louis VI, the Fat, gave his son Robert the not very extensive county of Dreux. Philip Augustus, who brought about the family's first great rise from straitened circumstances, held his hard-won possessions together with a firm hand; the only thing he gave up was a small estate, St Riquier, as his sister's dowry.

Louis VIII, however, laid down in his will that the counties of Artois, Poitiers, Anjou and Maine—that is to say, considerable portions of the family possessions, though never its heartland—should pass as apanages to his sons.

Louis IX gave his sons Alençon, Perche and Clermont as apanages; Philip III endowed a younger son with the county of Valois. But Poitiers, Alençon and Perche returned to the Capetian possession when their princely owners died without male heirs.

In 1285 five counties—Dreux, Artois, Anjou, Clermont and Valois—were split off as apanages, and on the death of Charles the Fair in 1328 the number rose to nine.

When Philip of Valois inherited the estates and crown of the Capetians, the apanages of his house, Valois, Anjou and Maine, were reunited with the larger possessions of the ruling family. The county of Chartres returned to the crown estates with the death of another Valois. Philip himself gained a few new smaller dominions as well, among them Montpellier, which he bought from the King of

Majorca. Under him, however, it was above all Dauphiné that came into Capetian hands. Thereby Capetian expansion took a major step eastwards beyond the traditional frontiers of the western Frankish empire, into the former Lotharingian region—an expansion that Philip the Fair had begun by acquiring the archbishopric of Lyons and through a closer association with the bishoprics of Toul and Verdun.

The manner in which Dauphiné came into the possession of the Parisian rulers, however, was less characteristic of the relation between the centralizing and decentralizing forces of this period than of the importance of apanages. Dauphiné belonged to the Arlesian or Burgundian realm that arose, following the Lotharingian interregnum, east of the Rhône and the Saône. Its last ruler, Hubert II, bequeathed or, more exactly, sold his possessions to the Capetian heir, following the death of his only son, on a number of conditions. They included the payment of his considerable debts, and also the stipulation that Philip's second son, not his eldest, should receive Dauphiné. Clearly the Dauphiné's owner wished to give his land to someone rich enough to pay the sums he needs; by bequeathing it to the ruler of Francia he protected it from becoming a bone of contention for other neighbours after his death, for the Paris kings were strong enough to defend their acquisitions. And this is certainly not the only example of the attraction which the immense power of the Capetians held for weaker neighbours; the need for protection of those less strong was one of the factors that furthered the process of centralization and monopolization once it had reached a certain level.

But at the same time the old ruler whose heir had died clearly wished to prevent his land, Dauphiné, from losing its independence entirely on passing into French ownership. This is why he demanded that his domain should be given to the king's second son as apanage. That demand obviously implied an expectation that this region should become a ruling house in its own right and so preserve an independent existence. At that time apanaged regions were indeed beginning to develop more and more clearly in that direction.

Philip of Valois, however, did not abide by this agreement. He gave Dauphiné not to his younger but to his eldest son, John, the heir to the throne, "in recognition", so his nomination declares, "that Dauphiné lies on the frontier, that a good and strong rule in Dauphiné is necessary for the defence and security of the Kingdom, and that if we acted otherwise, great danger to the future of the Kingdom might arise".[90] The danger attending the separation of districts for younger sons was thus fairly clearly perceived at this time; this is attested by a large number of pronouncements. But the need for the king to provide fittingly for his younger sons persisted. He withheld Dauphiné from his younger son for security reasons; but in its place he gave him the Orléans region as a duchy and a number of counties as well.

And his eldest son, John the Good, the very man who received Dauphiné in

this way, went a good deal further once he was king of the entire region on his father's death: he spread bounty unstintingly. First he gave away two counties, then four viscountcies. He endowed his second son Louis with Anjou and Maine, his younger son received the county of Poitiers, then Mâcon. Still larger gifts followed.

10. John the Good came to power in 1350. Under his predecessor, the long latent tension between the two largest powers and mightiest warrior houses in the western Frankish region had erupted; in 1337 began the chain of military conflicts known as the "Hundred Years' War". To the Plantagenets, the island rulers, all further expansion on the mainland was blocked; even their existing mainland possessions were under constant threat until they had destroyed Capetian rule and prevented the formation of another leading power on the Continent. Equally, further expansion by the Parisian rulers was very restricted and their position permanently threatened until the island-dwellers were subdued or at least expelled from the mainland. It was the strict compulsion of genuine competition which drove these houses and their dependents against one another, and which—since for a long time neither of the antagonists can decisively defeat the other—made the struggle so protracted. Hundred Years War

To begin with, however, the Paris kings were for a variety of reasons at a disadvantage. John the Good was captured by the English heir, the Prince of Wales, in the Battle of Poitiers in 1356 and sent to England. Immediately the tensions latent in his territory, now ruled as regent by the Dauphin Charles, who was not yet twenty years old, broke out: revolution in Paris, peasant revolts, and knights plundering the countryside. The English troops, in alliance with another descendant of the Capetian house, the owner of previously apanaged regions, the King of Navarre, occupied large areas of western France; they even reached the vicinity of Paris. John the Good, to free himself, concluded a treaty with the Plantagenets and their allies handing over to them the whole mainland area that Richard the Lion Heart had last controlled at the end of the twelfth century. But the States General of the French dominions, summoned in 1356 by the Dauphin, declared that this treaty should be neither approved nor carried out and that the only fitting answer was a well-fought war. And this was without doubt a clear expression of how strong interdependence had become within the great dominion of the Capetian heirs, of the autonomy and self-interest of the ruled that would slowly deprive the monarchy of its private monopoly character. At this stage, however, the development was only beginning. The war was begun anew and the Treaty of Brétigny, by which it was provisionally concluded in 1359, was somewhat more favourable to the Valois than the first concluded by John himself in England. Nevertheless roughly a quarter of what Philip the Fair had possessed had to be relinquished to the Plantagenets, above all Poitou, Saintonge, Aunis, Limousin, Périgord, Quercy, and Bigorre south of the Loire, together with a few other districts making up, with the older English possession Guyenne, the

kingdom of Aquitaine; and further north Calais, the counties of Guines, Ponthieu and Montreuil-sur-Mer; in addition, three million golden crowns, instead of the four million demanded by the London treaty, as ransom for the king. But the latter, a worthy and chivalrous man, returned from prison clearly oblivious of the extent of his defeat. His conduct in this situation shows clearly to what extent he was still the sole authority in control of the territory remaining to him, which was one day to become "France", a state and a nation. He felt that his house must now all the more ostentatiously demonstrate its glory. The sense of inferiority resulting from defeat led him to overemphasize his own prestige. And he considered that the dignity and glory of his house could find no better expression than by all his sons figuring as dukes at the ratification of the peace treaty. One of his first acts after his return from prison was therefore to make duchies from parts of his dominion as apanages for his sons. His eldest was already Duke of Normandy and Dauphin, the next; Louis, he made Duke of Anjou and Maine; to the next, John, he gave Berry and Auvergne as his duchy; and to the youngest, Philip, Touraine. This was in the year 1360.

A year later, in 1361, the young, fifteen-year-old Duke of Burgundy died. Two years previously he had married Margaret, the daughter and sole heir of the Count of Flanders; but he died without leaving children. It was a large region that found itself without a ruler on the unexpected death of the young Duke; it consisted not only of the duchy of Burgundy proper, but also the counties of Boulogne and Auvergne, together with the county of Burgundy, the Franche-Comté and other areas beyond the traditional frontiers of the western Frankish empire. On grounds of somewhat complex family relationships, John the Good claimed this whole estate for himself. There was no one to contest it with him and in 1363 he gave it to his youngest son Philip, whom he particularly loved; Philip fought especially bravely at his side in the Battle of Poitiers and accompanied him to prison. This was to be his apanage in place of Touraine, "we being mindful," said the King, "that we are enjoined by nature to give our children enough to allow them to honour the glory of their origin, and that we must be especially generous to those who have particularly merited it".[91]

Both the fact of these apanages and their motivation show unmistakably how far French territorial power still had the character of a family possession in this period; but they also show how this promoted fragmentation. No doubt strong tendencies were already operating in the opposite direction, tendencies restricting the private or domanial character of rule; the groups representing these opposed tendencies at the court will be discussed shortly. The personal character and individual fortunes of John the Good no doubt played a part in his particular propensity for richly endowing all the royal sons for the sake of family prestige. But this tendency clearly owed no less to the heightening of competition that found expression in the Hundred Years' War and which, after the Capetians' defeat, gave rise to a particularly insistent demonstration of the wealth of their

heirs. At any rate, under John a specific tendency of large family possessions was merely reinforced, a tendency which, once their possessions had reached a certain size, none of the preceding representatives of the Capetian house had been able to resist. Its consequences are clear.

When John the Good died, the existence and occupancy of the central function, despite the debilitation and the defeat, were in no way in doubt. This is an indication of how firmly the power of the central ruler was already founded on social functions other than that of army leader. The Dauphin, a physically weak man, but shrewd and experienced from the trials of his youth, assumed power under the name of Charles V. He was head of all the possessions left to the Capetians by the Treaty of Brétigny, including the apanaged ones. But looking closely at the distribution of power we can see clearly how, beneath the veil of the king's sovereignty, the centrifugal tendencies had gained renewed strength. Once again, a number of territorial formations were emerging within the Capetian dominion that aspired more or less obviously to autonomy, and between which there was rivalry. But what gave this rivalry within the western Frankish region its special character was the fact that almost all those involved were descendants of the Capetian house itself. With few exceptions, it was apanaged men or their offspring who now faced each other as potential competitors. There were, certainly, other major territorial rulers who were not members of the royal house, or at least not directly. But in the struggle for supremacy they were no longer protagonists of the first order.

Among these at the time of John the Good was Charles the Bad, King of Navarre. His father, Philip of Evreux, was a grandson of Philip III, a nephew of Philip the Fair and of Charles of Valois; his mother was a granddaughter of Philip the Fair, a daughter of Louis X; in addition he himself was the son-in-law of John the Good. To him belonged, besides the Pyrenean territory of Navarre, a number of previously apanaged regions from the Capetian possessions, notably the county of Evreux and parts of the duchy of Normandy. His possessions thus extended dangerously close to Paris itself.

Charles the Bad of Navarre was one of the first proponents of this struggle among apanaged family members of the Capetian house for supremacy in the western Frankish region, and ultimately for the crown. He was the chief mainland ally of the Plantagenets in the first phase of the Hundred Years' War. During this war he was for a time the military commander of Paris (1358); even the burghers of the city, even Étienne Marcel, was temporarily on his side; and his dream of wresting the crown from the other Capetian heir seemed close to realization. To this end his membership of the King's family gave him an impetus, powers and claims that others lacked.

The Plantagenet with whom he allied himself, Edward III, was likewise, though only from the female line of descent, a close relation of the Capetians. He too was a grandson of Philip III, a nephew of Philip the Fair and of Charles of

Valois; his mother was a daughter of Philip the Fair, a niece of Charles of Valois, and he was thus at least as closely related to the Capetians as the French King opposing him, John the Good, the grandson of Charles of Valois.

Adjoining the mainland territory of the Plantagenets to the north were the regions that John the Good had given his younger sons, the territories of Louis, Duke of Anjou, John, Duke of Berry, and of Philip the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, together with the land of Louis, Duke of Bourbon. He, the Duke of Bourbon, was descended from the Capetians through a brother of Philip III, Robert, Count of Clermont, who married Beatrice, the heiress of Bourbon; his mother was a Valois, his sister the wife of Charles V; and he himself was thus on his mother's side an uncle of Charles VI, as the Dukes of Anjou, Burgundy and Berry were on the paternal side. These were the main actors in the struggles of the period of John the Good, Charles V and Charles VI. Apart from the Plantagenets and the Bourbons, they were all owners of apanaged parts of the Capetian inheritance, who were now for their part struggling to increase their family's power and finally to win supremacy.

The balance within these tensions first tilted, under Charles V, to the reigning Valois. When he died, his son and successor was only twelve years old. Here, as always, circumstances—accidents from the point of view of the whole
** development—favoured certain tendencies already inherent in the structure of society. The youth and weakness of the ruling Valois strengthened the centrifugal forces that had long been gathering, and released the pent-up pressures.

Charles V had absorbed Dauphiné once and for all into his family possessions; he had recovered the Norman territories of the King of Navarre as well as a number of other apanaged lands like the duchy of Orléans and the county of Auxerre. But on his death there were already seven great feudal lords in the land, descended from St Louis (Louis IX) and thus from the Capetian house; at the time they were called "princes des fleurs de lis"; and there were now—apart from a number of smaller and medium lords who had long ceased to play an independent part in the struggles for power[92]—only two major houses besides the Plantagenets whose members were not in direct male line of descent from the Capetian house: the dukes of Brittany and the counts of Flanders. But the Count of Flanders at this time had only one child, a daughter. For her hand and the future ownership of Flanders there arose, after the death of the young Duke of Burgundy to whom she was originally betrothed, an inevitable conflict between the Plantagenets and the Capetian heirs. After much vacillation the hand of the heiress of Flanders finally went, with the help of the head of the Valois, Charles V, to the latter's younger brother Philip, who through his father's intervention had already become Duke of Burgundy. The marriages of great feudal lords were arranged from what we would today call a purely "business" point of view, for the sake of expansion and success in the territorial competition. Philip the Bold thus united, after the death of the Count of Flanders, the latter's possessions with

Burgundy; and of the great older feudal houses on the mainland only the duchy of Brittany remained. This older stratum, however, had now been replaced by a smaller circle of territorial rulers, stemming from offshoots of the Capetian house, and these were now driven into conflict by the mechanism of territorial competition. The compulsions which—owing to the low degree of integration or division of functions in any society with a barter economy, and particularly a warrior society—threaten the existence of a monopoly of power and possessions over large regions, tending to disintegrate property and reinforce centrifugal tendencies, had begun their work anew. Once again there occurred one of those shifts towards disintegration such as had led centuries earlier to the dissolution of the Carolingian dominions and then to the feudal social order of the twelfth century. Once again people to whom the central ruler had given land from his own large possessions, tended to make themselves independent and become rivals of the weakened central house. But the possibility of entering the competition was now limited to a few descendants of the original central house, a clear indication of how far the structure of human relations had changed in this society, how far this human network had already become, at least in its agrarian sector, a system with closed opportunities.

11. The rivalry between the most powerful "princes des fleurs de lis" erupted immediately after the death of Charles V in the struggle for the regency and guardianship of the heir to the throne, who was still a minor. Charles V had appointed his brother Louis, Duke of Anjou, as regent, his brother Philip, Duke of Burgundy, and his brother-in-law Louis, Duke of Bourbon, as guardians of his son. This was clearly the only thing he could do to prevent power passing entirely into the hands of a single man. But it was precisely complete power that Louis of Anjou, and Philip as well, were really pursuing. They wished to unite guardianship and regency. And the conflicts between the rival members of the royal house filled the whole reign of Charles VI, who possessed little power of decision and finally succumbed to a kind of madness.

The leading figures in the struggle for supremacy among the King's relations changed from time to time. The place of Louis of Anjou as the strongest rival of the Burgundian Duke, for example, was taken at a certain stage in the struggle by the younger brother of Charles VI, Louis, who ruled the duchy of Orléans as his apanage. But no matter how the persons changed, the network of compulsions impelling them remained the same: again and again two or three people within this, by now, very small circle of competitors came face to face, none of them prepared or able—on pain of annihilation—to allow any of the others to become stronger than himself. These conflicts between relations of the King, however, necessarily became intertwined with the larger conflict of the time, which was still very far from being decided—the struggle with the Plantagenets, whose offshoots likewise became embroiled in similar rivalries by reason of analogous mechanisms.

The situation of these members of the royal house must be visualized: all their life they were second or third. Their feelings told them often enough that they might be better and stronger monarchs than the man who happened to be the legitimate heir to the crown and the main possessions. Between them and their goal often stood only one person, or only two or three. And there is no lack of examples in history of two or more such people dying in quick succession, opening the way to power to the next in line. But even then, there would often be hard struggles with their rivals. In this situation the less powerful man hardly ever attained the throne if he belonged to only a secondary line of the family, though he might have the best claim. There were nearly always others who contested his claim; their claim might be worse but they would win if they were stronger. So those next in line to the throne, who already ruled apanaged territories of various sizes, were preoccupied with creating and extending their basis of support, increasing their possessions, their income, their power. If they had no direct access to the throne, their rule should be at least no less rich, mighty and ostentatious than that of their rivals, if possible outshining even the King's, who after all was no more than the greatest among all the rivals or competitors.

This was the situation and attitude of the closest relations of the weak Charles VI, his uncles—not all, but some of them—and also his brother. And with certain changes, with ever-diminishing chances for the second and third in line, this attitude, this situation, these tensions around the throne were transmitted through individuals of the most diverse talents, down to the time when, with Henry of Navarre, a relatively small territorial ruler for the last time became King of France; and as we have said, traces of these tendencies are to be found right up to the time of Louis XIV.

The strongest contestant among the "*princes des fleurs de lis*" was Philip the Bold, the youngest son of John the Good. To begin with he had only the duchy of Burgundy as his apanage. Then he united with it—primarily through his marriage—the counties of Flanders, the Artois region, the county of Nevers and the barony of Dôncy. His second son Antoine, Duke of Brabant and Lord of Antwerp, became by marriage Duke of Luxembourg. His son married the heiress of Hainaut. These were the first steps of the Burgundian lords towards expansion in their own right, towards the foundation of a secure realm lying at least in part outside the sphere of the Paris kings, in the territory of present-day Holland.

A similar course of action was adopted by Charles VI's brother, Louis, the strongest rival of Philip the Bold in the struggle for supremacy in France. Both built on their own family power with considerable haste and determination. Louis first received as apanage the duchy of Orléans, which under Charles V, after the death of his uncle, Philip V of Orléans, had been reunited with the crown possessions.

Then Louis obtained three or four counties and large estates in Champagne.

He further acquired by purchase—with the aid of a large dowry from his wife Valentina Visconti—several counties including that of Blois. Finally, through his wife, he owned the county of Asti in Italian territory, and he had the reversion of a number of other Italian territories. The Burgundian expanded in the direction of Holland, Orléans into Italy. Within the former western Frankish territory itself, relations of ownership had been consolidated; the major parts of this region belonged either to the London or to the Paris kings; and between them even a "*prince des fleurs de lis*" could only assert himself, only compete with one or other for supremacy, if he managed in one direction or another to build up a large domestic power of his own. As the earlier elimination struggles within the large area of post-Carolingian feudality had done previously, so now analogous tensions impelled members of the far narrower circle of the great Capetian territorial lords to expand their land, to crave incessantly for more possessions. But as means to expansion, marriage, inheritance and purchase now played at least as important a part as war and feud. It was not only the Habsburgs who married into greatness. Since relatively large property units with correspondingly great military potential had by now formed in this society, individuals, and individual warrior houses who wanted to rise at this stage, could only hope to survive a military confrontation if they had already gained control over territorial possessions which made them militarily competitive. And this too shows, therefore, how sharply the possibilities of competing in the sphere of major territorial ownership had diminished in this phase, and how the structure of tensions between people necessarily gave rise to the formation of monopolies of rule in regions above a certain order of size.

The Franco-English area at this time was still an interdependent territorial system. Every change in social power to the advantage or disadvantage of one of the rival houses, sooner or later affected the others and thus the equilibrium of the whole system. At any given time one can say with considerable accuracy where the central and where the less central tensions lie; the balance of power and its dynamics, its developmental curve, can be traced fairly precisely. And thus the Hundred Years' War is to be considered not only as the war-games of a few ambitious individual princes—although it was that too—but as one of the inevitable discharges of tension within a tension-laden society consisting of territorial possessions of a certain size, as the competitive struggles between rival houses within an interdependent system of dominions with a very unstable equilibrium. The houses of Paris and London, gradually represented by two offshoots—Valois and Lancaster—of the earlier royal houses were, through the size of their possessions and military potential, the two main rivals. Sometimes the aspirations at least of the London rulers—occasionally even those in Paris—went as far as the wish to unite the whole western Frankish area, the mainland

territories and the extended island realm, under one rule. Only in the course of these struggles themselves did it become unmistakably clear how great, at this stage of social development, were the resistances to the military conquest, and above all the subsequent internal cohesion, of so large and disparate a territory under the same rule and the same governmental machinery. The question may be raised whether, at this stage of social development, the creation of a central monopoly and the permanent integration of mainland and island territories under London rule would have been possible even if the Valois had been completely defeated by the island kings and their allies. However that may be, it was at any rate the houses of Paris and London that primarily competed for supremacy in the same area, and all the other competitive tensions within this area, above all those between the different branches of the Paris house itself, crystallized about this main tension of the whole territorial system; thus the Burgundian Valois, for example, were sometimes on one side of this central struggle, sometimes on the other.

But the growth of the division of functions, and of interdependence beyond the local level, not only brought the different units of the enlarged western Frankish territorial society closer together as friend and foe. Less obviously, but unmistakably nevertheless, interdependencies and shifts in the territorial balance began at this time to be discernible over the larger area of western Europe as a whole. The Franco-English territorial society gradually became, in the course of this growing integration, more and more a partial system within the encompassing European one. In the Hundred Years' War this growing interdependence within larger areas, which doubtless was never entirely absent, manifested itself clearly. German and Italian princes were already throwing their interests and power into the scales in the struggle within the Anglo-French sector, even though as yet they played only a peripheral role. This is the first sign of what was to show itself much more fully a few centuries later in the Thirty Years' War; the European continent as a whole began to become an interdependent system of countries with its own dynamic equilibrium, within which each shift of power directly or indirectly involved every unit, every country. A few further centuries on, in the 1914–18 war, the first "World War" as it has been called, we can see early signs of how tensions and shifts of balance within the same ever-advancing process of integration now affected units over a far wider area, countries in distant parts of the world. The nature and stages of the monopolization towards which the tensions of this worldwide interweaving are moving, like their possible outcome, the larger units of rule that may arise out of these struggles—all this appears only vaguely to us, if it has even risen above the horizon of our consciousness at all. But it was scarcely different with the territorial houses and groups of people enmeshed in the Hundred Years' War; there, too, each unit felt

only the direct threat that the size or expansion of others meant for it; for the larger units that slowly came into being in these struggles, France and England as we call them, were scarcely more present in the consciousness of those forming them than "Europe" as a political unit is for us.

How the individual tensions between rival groups and houses were resolved, how the balance between the main protagonists, the English Lancasters, the French Valois and the Burgundian Valois, tilted first this way and then that, how the English seized a yet larger portion of French land and even the French kingship, and how finally, through the appearance of Joan of Arc, all the forces supporting the French Valois gathered themselves in successful resistance and brought back the weak king first to Rheims for his coronation and then as victor to Paris—accounts of all this are readily available elsewhere.

What was decided in this way was the question of whether London and the Anglo-Norman island, or Paris and the dominion of the rulers of Francia,were to become the centre of crystallization of the former western Frankish region. The issue was decided in favour of Paris. London's rule was confined to the island. The Hundred Years' War accelerated and made irreversible the breach between the mainland territory, that really only now became "la France", that is, the domain of the rulers of Francia, and the overseas region that previously was nothing but a colonial territory of mainland rulers. The first consequence of this war was thus a disintegration. The islanders, the descendants of the Continental conquerors and the natives, had become a separate society going their own way, forming their own specific institutions of government, and developing their mixed language into a specific entity of a new kind. Neither of the contending rivals had succeeded in gaining and keeping control of the whole area. The French kings and their people had finally lost their claim to the island realm; the English kings' attempt to defeat their Paris rivals and recolonize the mainland had failed. If the people of the island needed new land, new areas to colonize, new markets, they must from now on seek them further afield. The English kings were eliminated from the mainland struggles for the French crown. It is a process not unlike that which, centuries later, in the community of German territorial states, ended with the victory of Prussia over Austria. In both cases, as a result of a disintegration, integration was confined to a smaller area and thus made very much easier.

But through the repulsion of the English from the mainland, the elimination of the English kings from the struggle for supremacy there, the tension and balance within this area were altered. As long as the London and Paris kings roughly balanced each other, and as long as the contest between them constituted the main axis of tension, rivalries between the various territorial rulers on the mainland had only secondary importance. They could have considerable influ-

ence on whether the main struggle was decided in favour of the Paris or the London rulers; but they could not directly cause any of the other competitors to take first place.

Now, with the departure of the English, the competition between the various mainland territorial rulers, above all the rivalry between different branches of the Capetian house itself, became the dominant tension. The outcome of the Hundred Years' War did not decide, or at any rate not finally, by which of these branches and within which frontiers the integration of the mainland territories of the former western Frankish regions was to be accomplished. In this direction, therefore, the struggles continued.

In the last years of Charles VII there were, besides the Paris house, at least eight other large houses which could pit their weight in the decisive struggles for supremacy. They were the houses of Anjou, Alençon, Armagnac, Bourbon, Burgundy, Brittany, Dreux and Foix. Each of these houses was itself already represented by several branches; the mightiest was the house of Burgundy which, based on Burgundy and Flanders as the core of its family power, was working with great tenacity and single-mindedness to establish a major dominion, related to the earlier Lotharingia, between the empire and France. The rivalry between Burgundy and the Paris kings now formed the main axis of the system of feudal territories from which, with the latter's victory, "France" was finally to emerge. But to begin with, the houses of Bourbon and Brittany were also power-centres of major importance.

With the exception of the latter, the ducal house of Brittany, the members of all the houses named were descendants and relations of people apanaged by the Capetian house, and therefore its offshoots. Seigneurial, post-Carolingian feudality has "contracted", as one writer has put it, to a "princely", a Capetian feudality.[93] From the conflicts of the many great and small warrior houses of the western Frankish region, a single house had emerged victorious. The region had now become, by and large, the monopoly of descendants of the Capetians.

But in the course of generations the family and its accumulated territorial possessions had again become dispersed; and now the different branches of the family were struggling for supremacy. Monopoly formation does not happen in quite such a straight line as appears at first sight. What we have before us here—in the period following the Hundred Years' War—is not yet a complete concentration or centralization of power in one place and in one pair of hands, but a stage on the way to absolute monopoly.

A state of highly restricted competition had been established. For all those who did not belong to a particular family, the chance of acquiring and owning a major dominion, or enlarging their existing one, and thus taking part in further elimination struggles, had become extremely small.

VI

The Last Stages of the Free Competitive Struggle and Establishment of the Final Monopoly of the Victor

In this section, only glance at the yellowed bits of text.

12. What here gave the monopolizing process its special character—and what later observers, particularly those of the twentieth century, of course, must bear in mind in looking back—is the fact that social functions which have become separated in recent times were still more or less undifferentiated in that earlier phase. It has already been stressed that the social role of the great feudal lord, or prince, the function of being the richest man, the owner of the largest means of production in his region, was at first completely indistinguishable from that of being the owner of military power and jurisdiction. Functions today represented by different people and groups of people connected through the division of labour, e.g. the functions of great landowner and of head of government, formed here, inseparably bound together, a kind of private property. This is partly explained by the fact that in this society, which still had a primarily if diminishingly barter-based economy, land was the most important means of production, whereas in later society it has been supplanted in this role by money, the incarnation of the division of functions. It is explained no less, however, by the fact that in the later phase the key to all monopoly power, the monopoly of physical, of military violence, is a firmly established social institution extending over large areas, whereas in the preceding stage it only slowly developed through centuries of struggle, first of all in the form of a private, family monopoly.

We are accustomed to distinguish two spheres, "economics" and "politics", and two kinds of social function, "economic" and "political" ones. By "economic" we mean the whole network of activities and institutions serving the creation and acquisition of means of consumption and production. But we also take it for granted, in thinking of "economics", that the production and, above all, the acquisition of these means normally takes place without threat or use of physical or military violence. Nothing is less self-evident. For all warrior societies with a barter economy—and not only for them—the sword is a frequent and indispensable instrument for acquiring means of production, and the threat of violence an indispensable means of production. Only when the division of functions is very far advanced; only when, as the result of long struggles, a specialized monopoly administration has formed that exercises the functions of rule as its social property; only when a centralized and public monopoly of force exists over large areas, can competition for means of consumption and production take its course largely without the intervention of physical violence; and only then do the kind of economy and the kind of struggle exist that we are

accustomed to designate by the terms "economy" and "competition" in a more specific sense.

The competitive relationship itself is a far more general and all-encompassing social fact than appears when the concept of "competition" is restricted to economic structures[9-1]—usually those of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. A situation of competition arises whenever a number of people strive for the same opportunities, when demand exceeds the possibilities of satisfaction, whether these possibilities are controlled by monopolists or not. The particular kind of competition that has been discussed here, so-called "free competition", is characterized by the fact that demand is directed at opportunities not yet controlled by anyone who does not himself belong to the circle of competitors. Such a phase of "free competition" occurs in the history of many societies, if not all. A "free competitive struggle" thus arises also, for example, when land and military opportunities are so evenly distributed among several interdependent parties that none of them has clearly the best chance, the greatest social power. It arises, therefore, in that phase in the relationship between feudal warrior houses or between states, when none of the parties has clearly outgrown its rivals, and when no organized, centralized monopoly of power exists. Likewise, a "free competitive struggle" arises when the financial opportunities of many interdependent people are fairly evenly distributed; in both cases, the struggle is intensified with the growth of population and demand, unless the opportunities grow at the same rate.

The course taken by these free competitive struggles, moreover, is relatively unaffected by the fact that, in one case, they are brought about by the threat and use of physical violence and, in the other, only by the threat of social decline, through loss of economic independence, financial ruin or material distress. In the struggles of the feudal warrior houses, the two forms of violence that we distinguish as physical/military and economic force, acted together more or less as one. These feudal conflicts have, indeed, a functional analogy within modern society both in free economic competition, such as the struggles of a number of firms for supremacy in the same commercial field, and in the struggles of states for predominance within a particular territorial system, conflicts that are resolved by physical violence.

In all these cases what manifests itself as struggles within the sphere not yet monopolized is only one layer of the continuous, general competition for limited opportunities pervading the whole of society. The opportunities open to those engaged in free competition, that is, competition free of monopoly, themselves constitute an unorganized monopoly from which all others are excluded who are unable to compete because they have far smaller resources. These others are thus directly or indirectly dependent on the "free" competitors, and are engaged among themselves in an unfree competition for their limited opportunities. The pressure exerted within the relatively independent section stands in the closest

functional relationship to that exerted on all sides by those already dependent on monopolized opportunities.

In feudal as in modern times, free competition for chances not yet centrally organized and monopolized, tends through all its ramifications towards the subjugation and elimination of an ever-increasing number of rivals, who are destroyed as social units or fall into dependence; towards the accumulation of possibilities in the hands of an ever-diminishing number of rivals; towards domination and finally monopoly. Again, the social event of monopolization is not confined to the processes which normally come to mind today when "monopolies" are mentioned. The accumulation of possibilities that can be converted into sums of money, or at least expressed as such, represents only one historical shift among many others in the process of monopolization. Functionally similar processes—that is, tendencies towards an overall structure of human relationships in which individuals or groups can, by direct or indirect threat of violence, restrict and control the access of others to certain contested possibilities—such processes occur in a variety of forms at very different points in human history.

In the struggles in both these periods, the actual social existence of all the participants is at stake. That is the compulsion behind these struggles. That is what makes such struggles, and their outcome, so inescapable wherever the basic situation of free competition arises. Once a society has embarked on a movement of this kind, each social unit in the sphere not yet monopolized, whether these units are knightly families, economic enterprises, territories or states, is always confronted by the same choice.

Either they can be conquered—whether they choose to struggle or not. In extreme cases this means: imprisonment, violent death or material distress, perhaps starvation. In the mildest cases it means social decline, loss of independence, absorption by a larger social complex; and thereby the destruction of what gave their lives meaning, value and continuity, even if these things appear to their contemporaries, or to those coming after them, as contrary to their own meaning, social existence and "continuity", and thus as entirely deserving of destruction.

Or they may repel and conquer their nearest rivals. Then their life, their social existence, their striving attains fulfilment; they seize the contested opportunities. The mere preservation of social existence demands, in the situation of free competition, this constant enlargement. Whoever does not rise, falls back. Victory, therefore, means in the first place—whether this is intended or not—dominance over one's closest rivals and their reduction to a position of dependence. The gain of one is here necessarily the other's loss, whether in terms of land, military capacity, money or any other resource of social power. But beyond this, victory sooner or later means confrontation and conflict with a rival of the new size; once again the situation enforces the expansion of one, and the

absorption, subjugation, humiliation or destruction of the other. The shift in power relationships, the establishment of domination, may be accomplished by open military or economic force, or by peaceful agreement; but however it comes about, all these rivalries are impelled, whether slowly or quickly, through a series of downfalls and aggrandisements, rises and descents, fulfilments and destructions of meaning, in the direction of a new social order, a monopoly order that none of the participants has really intended or foreseen, and which replaces free competition by competition subject to monopoly. And it is only the formation of such monopolies that finally makes it possible to regulate the distribution of opportunities—and thus the conflicts themselves—in the interest of the smooth-functioning collaboration into which people are, for better or worse, bound with each other.

Alternatives of this kind confronted the warrior families of medieval society too. And the resistance of the great feudal lords, and finally of Capetian or princely feudality, to the increase of royal power is to be understood in this sense. The king in Paris was, both in fact and in the minds of the other territorial rulers, one of themselves, not more; he was a rival, and from a certain time on the most powerful, most threatening rival. If he won, their existence, social if not physical, was destroyed; they lost what in their eyes gave their life meaning and splendour, their independent rule, the control of their family possessions; their honour, their rank, their social standing was at worst annihilated, at best diminished. If they won, centralization, domination, monopoly, the state were for a time obstructed; Burgundy, Anjou, Brittany, and so on, remained for the time being more or less independent dominions. This may appear senseless to some contemporaries, above all the royal officials, and even to us in retrospect; for by virtue of our different state of social integration we tend not to identify with such limited geographical units. For them, the rulers of Burgundy or Brittany and a large number of their dependents, however, it was extremely worthwhile to prevent the formation of an over-mighty central government in Paris, for this meant their downfall as independent social units.

But if they win, sooner or later the victors confront each other as rivals; and the ensuing tensions and conflicts cannot end until once again a clearly superior power has emerged. *Just as, in the capitalist society of the nineteenth and, above all, the twentieth century, the general impulsion towards economic monopolization shows itself clearly, regardless of which particular competitor triumphs and outgrows the others; just as, concurrently, an analogous tendency towards the clearer domination that precedes each monopolization, each larger integration, is becoming ever more apparent in the contest of "states", first of all in Europe; in the same way the struggles between medieval warrior houses and later the great feudal and territorial rulers, show a general impulsion towards monopoly formation.* The only difference is that, there, the process took place in a sphere in which land ownership and rule formed an inseparable unity, whereas later—with the increasing use of money—it has taken on the combined form of

centralization of taxes and of control of all the instruments that serve physical subjugation.

13. It was in an intermediate period between these two stages that, in the second half of the fifteenth century, following the death of Charles VII, the rivalry between the French branch of the Valois, the Burgundian branch together with the remainder of Capetian feudality, and the last representative of the great pre-Capetian feudality, the Duke of Brittany, came to a head. Once again the centrifugal forces gathered themselves for a common assault on the Parisian Valois, Louis XI, whose wealth and power were now particularly dangerous to them all, following the elimination of his chief opponent hitherto, the King of England. As the centre of gravity inclined ever more threateningly towards the French ruling complex, the Burgundian Valois, Charles the Bold, once stated quite clearly what most of the King's competitors must have felt and desired in the face of this threat to their social existence: "Instead of one king I wish we had six!"[95]

Louis XI himself by no means identified with his royal task from the first. On the contrary. As crown prince he acted very much in the same way and in the same spirit as the other great Capetian feudal lords who were working for the disintegration of the French territorial complex; and he lived for a time at the court of the strongest rival of the Paris monarchy, the Duke of Burgundy. This is certainly bound up with facts that may be called personal, above all with the peculiar hatred existing between Louis and his father. But it is also further evidence of the specific individualization of the richest house in the land, which in its turn is bound up with the apanaging of each and every prince. Whatever the earlier causes of Louis's hatred for his father may have been, the control of a territory of his own united his feelings and actions in a common front with his father's other rivals. Even after his accession to the throne, he first thought of avenging himself on those who had been hostile to him as Dauphin, including many loyal servants of the monarchy, and of rewarding those who has showed friendship for him then, including many opponents of the monarchy. Power was still, to a considerable extent, private property dependent on the personal inclinations of the ruler. But it also had, like any very large possession, a very strict regularity of its own that its wielder could not contravene without destroying it. Very soon the enemies of the monarchy became the enemies of Louis; those supporting the monarchy became *his* friends and servants. His personal ambitions became one with the traditional ambitions of the central ruler in Paris, and his personal qualities—his curiosity, his almost pathological desire to penetrate all the secrets around him, his cunning, the undeviating violence of his hatred and of his affection, even the naïve and intense piety that caused him to woo saints, and especially the patron saints of his enemies, with gifts, as if they were venal human beings—all this now unfolded in the direction in which he was impelled by his social position as ruler of the French territorial

possessions; the struggle against centrifugal forces, against the rival feudal lords, became the decisive task of his life. And the house of Burgundy, the friends from his time as crown prince, became—as the immanent logic of his royal function demanded—his main opponents.

The struggle thus confronting Louis XI was by no means an easy one. At times the Paris government seemed on the verge of collapse. But at the end of his reign—partly through the power which his great possessions put at his disposal, partly through the skill with which he wielded it, and partly through a number of accidents that came to his aid—his rivals were more or less definitively beaten. In 1476 Charles the Bold of Burgundy was defeated at Granson and Murten by the Swiss, whom Louis had incited to oppose him. In 1477 Charles was killed while attempting to conquer Nancy. Thus the chief rival of the French Valois among the competing Capetian heirs—and, after the elimination of the English, their strongest rival of all—was himself eliminated from the conflict between the western Frankish territorial lords. Charles the Bold left an only daughter, Marie, for her hand and inheritance Louis competed with the power which was now gradually emerging in the larger European context as the main rival of the Parisian monarchy, the house of Habsburg. As the elimination contests within the western Frankish area drew to an end with the predominance and monopoly of a single house, rivalry between this victorious house, which now began to become the centre of the whole country, and powers of a similar magnitude outside the country, moved into the foreground. In the competition for Burgundy the Habsburgs won their first victory; with the hand of Maria, Maximillian gained a large part of the Burgundian inheritance. This created a situation that fed the rivalry between the Habsburgs and the Paris kings for more than two centuries. However, the duchy of Burgundy itself, and two further direct annexations from Burgundian lands, returned to the crown estates of the Valois. The parts of the Burgundian inheritance that were particularly needed to round off French territory were incorporated in it.

There were now only four houses left within the western Frankish region that controlled territories of any significance. The most powerful or, more exactly, the most important and traditionally most independent, was the house of Brittany. But none of these houses could now match the social power of Paris; the French king's rule had now grown beyond the reach of competition from neighbouring territorial rulers. He took up a monopoly position among them. Sooner or later, by treaty, violence or accident, they had all become dependent on him and lost their autonomy.

It was—if one will—fortuitous that towards the end of the fifteenth century a Duke of Brittany left an only daughter on his death, as the Duke of Burgundy had done before him. The conflict which this accident unleashed shows very exactly the existing constellation of forces. Of the remaining territorial rulers of the old western Frankish area, none was now strong enough to contest the Breton

inheritance with the Paris ruler. As with the Burgundian inheritance, the rival for this also came from outside. Here, too, the question was whether a Habsburg or a Valois should take Brittany by marriage, whether Charles VIII, the young son of Louis XI, or Maximillian of Habsburg, the Holy Roman Emperor and lord of Burgundy, whose hand had again become free through the death of the Burgundian heiress. As in the case of Burgundy, the Habsburg again succeeded in marrying the young Anne of Brittany, at least provisionally. But after much contention—finally decided by the opinion of the Breton Estates—the heiress's hand went after all to Charles of France. The Habsburgs protested, there was war between the rivals and finally a compromise: the Franche-Comté, which lay outside French territory and did not belong to the traditional western Frankish complex of lands, was ceded to the Habsburgs; in exchange Maximillian recognized Charles VIII's acquisition of Brittany. And when Charles VIII died childless, his successor, Louis XII, a Valois from the Orléans branch, promptly had his existing marriage annulled by the Pope and married the twenty-one-year-old widow of his predecessor, in order to preserve her inheritance, Brittany, for the crown estates which had now become his. When this marriage produced only daughters, the king married his eldest, who would receive Brittany as heiress to her mother, to the heir-apparent to the throne, the nearest living descendant of the family, Count Francis of Angoulême. The danger that this important territory might fall into the hands of a rival, above all a Habsburg, always led to the same course of action. And so, under the pressure of the competitive mechanism, the last territory in the western Frankish region that had preserved its autonomy throughout all the elimination struggles, was slowly integrated into the dominion of the Paris king. At first, when the heir to the apanage of Angoulême became king under the name of Francis I, Brittany retained a certain autonomy. The independent-mindedness of its Estates remained very much alive; but the military power of a single territory was now far too small to withstand the great dominions now surrounding it. In 1532 the incorporation of Brittany into the French domain was institutionally confirmed. Only the duchy of Alençon, the counties of Nevers and Vendôme, and the dominions of Bourbon and Albret[96] now remained in the former western Frankish region as independent territories, that is, areas not belonging either to the Paris kings or—like Flanders and Artois—to the Habsburgs. Even though some of their rulers, such as the lord of Albret or the house of Bourbon, may still have worked as best they could to enlarge their dominions, and might still dream of royal crowns,[97] their regions were really no more than enclaves within the dominions of the French kings. The wearers of the crown were now entirely beyond the competition of these other territorial lords. The houses that once existed here had lapsed into dependence or disappeared. Within the former western Frankish region the Paris kings were now finally without rivals; from now on their position took on more and more clearly the character of an absolute

monopoly. But outside the western Frankish region similar processes had been taking place, even though the monopoly process and the elimination struggles had nowhere advanced to the point they had reached in France. All the same, the Habsburgs, too, had now assembled family possessions which, in military and financial potential, far surpassed most of the other dominions on the European mainland. What earlier revealed itself through the Burgundian and Breton successions now emerged, from the beginning of the sixteenth century onwards, more and more clearly: the house of the Habsburg emperors and the House of the French kings, represented at this stage by Charles V and Francis I, now stood face to face as rivals on a new scale. Both held, to slightly varying degrees, monopoly power over a very large area; they were competing for opportunities and supremacy within a large sphere which as yet had no monopoly ruler, and were thus in a situation of "free competition". And accordingly, the rivalry between them now became, for a long period, a main axis within a larger evolving European system of tensions.

14. In size the French dominion was considerably smaller than that of the Habsburgs. But it was far more centralized and, above all, self-contained, better protected militarily by "natural frontiers". Its western boundaries were the Channel and the Atlantic; the whole coastal area as far down as Navarre was now in the hands of the French kings. The southern boundary was the Mediterranean; here too the whole coast—with the exception of Roussillon and the Cerdagne—belonged to the French rulers. To the east the Rhône formed the frontier with the county of Nice and the duchy of Savoy; for the time being the frontier projected beyond the Rhône as far as the Alps only in Dauphiné and Provence. North of this, opposite the Franche-Comté, the Rhône and the Saône continued to form the frontier of the kingdom; in its middle and lower parts the Saône was somewhat overstepped. In the north and north-east the frontiers fell further short of those of present-day France; only by taking possession of the archbishoprics of Metz, Toul and Verdun did the kingdom approach the Rhine; but these were for the time being enclaves, outposts within the German Empire; the frontier with it lay only slightly to the west of Verdun and further north, roughly in the region of Sedan; like the Franche-Comté, Flanders and Artois belonged to the Habsburgs. One of the first issues to be decided in the struggle for supremacy against them was how far the frontier would move in this area. For a considerable period French rule was contained within these limits. Only in the years between 1610 and 1659 were the Artois region, together with the area between France and the three archbishoprics and—a new enclave within the empire—upper and lower Alsace, assimilated to France; only now did France approach the Rhine.[98] A great part of the territory forming France today had now been assembled under a single rule. All that was in question was the extent of this unit's possible expansion, the question whether and where it would finally find "natural", i.e. easily defensible, frontiers within the European system of tensions.

Anyone looking back from within a state, a society with a stable and centralized monopoly of physical violence, a Frenchman living in France or a German in Germany, is apt to take for granted the existence of this monopoly of violence, and the unification of areas of this size and kind, as something natural and useful, to regard them as something consciously planned; and consequently, he tends to observe and evaluate the particular actions which led up to them in terms of their direct use to an order that seems to him self-evident and self-justifying. He is inclined to be less concerned with the actual dilemmas and necessities out of which groups and persons acted formerly, less with their direct plans, wishes and interests, than with the question whether this or that was good or bad for the thing with which he identifies. And, just as if the actors of the past already had before their eyes a prophetic vision of that future which is to him so self-evident and, perhaps, so emphatically affirmed, he praises or condemns these actors, awards them marks according to whether their actions did or did not lead directly to the desired result.

But through such censures, through such expressions of personal satisfaction, through this subjectivistic or partisan view of the past, we usually block our access to the elementary formative regularities and mechanisms, to the real structural history and sociogenesis of historical formations. These formations always develop in the struggle between opposed or, more exactly, in the resolution of ambivalent interests. What finally meets its end in such conflicts or merges into new formations, as the princely dominions merged into the royal ones and royal power into the bourgeois state, is no less indispensable to these new formations than the victorious opponent. Without violent actions, without the motive forces of free competition, there would be no monopoly of force, and thus no pacification, no suppression and control of violence over large areas.

The convolutions of the movement leading to the integration of ever-larger regions around the duchy of Francia as the centre of crystallization, illustrate how much the final integration of the western Frankish area was the outcome of a series of elimination contests in a compelling process of interweavings, and how little it resulted from a prophetic vision or a rigorous plan to which all the individual parties adhered.

"Unquestionably," Henri Hauser once said,[99] "there is always something slightly artificial in placing oneself in an *a posteriori* position and looking at history from back to front, as if the administrative monarchy and the centralized France of Henry II had been destined since the beginning of time to be born and to live within determined limits. . . ."

Only if we are transported for a moment into the landscape of the past, and see the struggles between the many warrior houses, their vital necessities, their immediate goals; only if, in a word, we have the full precariousness of their struggles and their social existence before our eyes, can we understand how

probable was the formation of a monopoly within this area, but how uncertain its centre and its boundaries.

To some extent the same is true of the French kings and their representatives as was once said of the American pioneer: "He didn't want all the land; he just wanted the land next to his."[100]

This simple and precise formulation expresses very well how, from the interweaving of countless individual interests and intentions—whether tending in the same direction or in divergent and hostile directions—something comes into being that was planned and intended by none of these individuals, yet has emerged nevertheless from their intentions and actions. And really this is the whole secret of social figurations, their compelling dynamics, their structural regularities, their process character and their development; this is the secret of sociogenesis and of relational dynamics.

The representatives of the French monarchy no doubt possessed, by virtue of their more central position in the later phases of the movement, rather larger intentions and radii of action within the process of integration than the individual American pioneers. But they, too, saw distinctly only the next few steps and the next piece of land that they had to obtain to prevent it going to another, and to prevent a troublesome neighbour or rival from growing stronger than themselves. And if some among them did harbour an image of a larger realm, this image was for a long period rather the shadow of past monopolies, a reflection of the Carolingian and western Frankish monarchies; more a product of memory than of prophecy or a new concept of the future. Here, as always, from the tangle of innumerable individual interests, plans and actions, a single development emerged, a regularity governing the totality of these entangled people and intended by none of them, and giving rise to a formation that none of the actors had really planned, a state: France. For this very reason the understanding of a formation of this kind requires a breakthrough to a still little-known level of reality: to the level of the immanent regularities of social relationships, the field of relational dynamics.

SKIP AND GO TO SECTION VIII (P. 344)

VII

The Power Balance within the Unit of Rule: Its Significance for the Central Authority—the Formation of the "Royal Mechanism"

15. Two main phases have been distinguished in the development of monopolies: the phase of free competition tending to the formation of private monopolies, and the gradual transformation of "private" into "public" monopolies. But on closer consideration this movement does not consist of a simple

succession of tendencies. Even though the "societalization" or "collectivization" of monopolies in the course of such change only reaches its full extent and becomes dominant at a late stage, the structures leading up to it were already present and active in the phase in which, through numerous struggles, the power monopoly slowly emerged in the form of a private possession.

Certainly the French Revolution, for example, represents a massive step on the way to the opening-up of the monopoly of taxation and physical force in France. Here, these monopolies did indeed pass into the power, or at least the institutionally secured control, of broad social classes. The central ruler, whatever title he may bear, and all those exercising monopoly power, became more unequivocally than before functionaries among others within the whole web of a society based on the division of functions. Their functional dependence on the representatives of other social functions has become so great that it is clearly expressed in the organization of society. However, this functional dependence of the monopolies and their incumbents on other functions of society was already present in the preceding phases. It was merely less developed, and for this reason was not expressed in a direct and unconcealed way in the organization and institutional structure of society. And for this reason the power of the monopoly ruler had at first more or less the character of a "private possession".

16. As noted above tendencies towards a kind of "societalization" or "collectivization" of the monopoly of a single family show themselves under certain conditions—namely, when the area it controls or its possessions begin to grow very large—even in societies with a barter economy. What we call "feudalism", what was described above as the work of centrifugal forces, is no more than an expression of such tendencies. They indicate that the functional dependence of a lord on his servants or subjects, that is, on broader strata, is increasing; they lead to the transfer of control of land and military power from the hands of a single warrior family and its head, first to the hierarchy of its closest servants and relations, and then in some cases to the whole warrior society. It has already been pointed out that in feudal society the "societalization" or "collectivization", as a result of the peculiarities of land-ownership and the instruments of violence, means a dissolution of the centralized—even if only loosely centralized—monopoly; it leads to the transformation of a single large monopoly possession into a number of smaller ones, and so to a decentralized and less organized form of monopoly. As long as land ownership remains the dominant form of ownership, new shifts in this or that direction can take place: the establishment of supremacy within free competition, the assembly of large areas of land and masses of warriors under a single central lord; waves of decentralization under his successors, new struggles in different strata of their servants, their relations or their subjects, new attempts to gain supremacy. And this whole ebb and flow of centralization and decentralization can sometimes—depending on geographical or climatic factors, on particular economic forms, on the kind of animals and

plants on which the life of people depends, and always in conjunction with the traditional structure of organized religion—all this can lead to a complex medley of social deposits from the various shifts. The history of other, non-European, feudal societies everywhere follows the same pattern in this respect. But however much this kind of ebb and flow is detectable in the development of France, in comparison with most other societies the movement here follows a relatively straight path.

This rhythm that over and over again threatens the dissolution of the great monopolies of power and possessions is modified and finally broken only to the extent that, with the growing division of functions in society, money rather than land becomes the dominant form of property. Only then is the large centralized monopoly, in passing from the hands of one ruler or a small circle into the control of a larger circle, not broken up into numerous smaller areas as was the case in each advance of feudalization; instead, it slowly becomes, centralized as it is, an instrument of functionally divided society as a whole, and so first and foremost a central organ of what we call the state.

The development of money and exchange, together with the social formations carrying them, stands in a permanent reciprocal relationship to the form and development of monopoly power within a particular area. These two series of developments, constantly intertwining, drive each other upwards. The form and development of power monopolies are influenced on all sides by the differentiation of society, the advancing use of money and the formation of classes earning and possessing money. On the other hand, the success of the division of labour itself, the securing of routes and markets over large areas, the standardization of coinage and the whole monetary system, the protection of peaceful production from physical violence and an abundance of other measures of co-ordination and regulation, are highly dependent on the formation of large centralized monopoly institutions. The more, in other words, the work processes and the totality of functions in a society become differentiated, the longer and more complex the chains of individual actions which must interlock for each action to fulfil its social purpose, the more clearly one specific characteristic of the central organ emerges: *its role as supreme co-ordinator and regulator for the functionally differentiated figuration at large*. From a certain degree of functional differentiation onward, the complex web of intertwining human activities simply cannot continue to grow or even to function without co-ordinating organs at a correspondingly high level of organization. Their role is certainly not entirely lacking in the central institutions of more simply organized and less differentiated societies. Even a society as loosely bound together as that of the many autarkic estates of the ninth and tenth centuries needed a supreme co-ordinator under certain conditions. If a powerful enemy threatened from outside, necessitating war, someone was needed to ensure the collaboration of the many knights, to co-ordinate their activity and to take the final decisions. In this situation the

interdependence of the many scattered rulers re-emerged more clearly. Each individual was threatened if the whole army failed to co-operate. And as, in this situation, the dependence of all on a central ruler, the king, increased considerably, so too did his importance, his social power—provided he fulfilled his social function, provided he was not beaten. But when the external threat or possibility of expansion lapsed, the dependence of individuals and groups on a supreme co-ordinating and regulating centre was relatively slight. This function only emerges as a permanent, specialized task of the central organ when society as a whole becomes more and more differentiated, when its cellular structure slowly but incessantly forms new functions, new professional groups and classes. Only then do regulating and co-ordinating central organs for maintaining the whole social network become so indispensable that while alterations in the power structure can change their occupants and even their organization, they cannot dissolve them, as happened earlier in the course of feudalization.

17. The formation of particularly stable and specialized central organs for large regions is one of the most prominent features of Western history. As we have said, there are central organs of some sort in every society. But as the differentiation and specialization of social functions have attained a higher level in the West than in any other society on earth—and as they begin to reach this level elsewhere only through an impetus coming from the West—it is in the West that specialized central organs first attained a hitherto unknown degree of stability. However, the central organs and their functionaries do not necessarily gain social power corresponding to their rising importance as supreme social co-ordinators and regulators. One might suppose that, with advancing centralization and the stricter control and supervision of the whole social process by stable authorities, the rift between rulers and ruled would be deepened. The actual course of history shows a different picture. Western history is certainly not lacking in phases when the powers of the central authority are so great and wide that we may speak with some justice of the hegemony of single central rulers. But precisely in the more recent history of many Western societies there are also phases when, despite their centralization, the control of the centralized institutions themselves is so dispersed that it is difficult to discern clearly who are the rulers and who the ruled. The scope for decision vested in the central functions varies. Sometimes it increases; then the people exercising these functions take on the aspect of "rulers". Sometimes it diminishes, without centralization, or the importance of the central organs as the highest centre of co-ordination and regulation, being reduced. In other words, in the case of the central organs as of all other social formations, two characteristics must be distinguished: *their function within the human network to which they belong, and the social power that is vested in the function.* What we call "rule" is, in a highly differentiated society, no more than the special social power with which certain functions, above all the central functions, endow their occupants in relation to the representatives of other functions. Social

power, however, is determined, in the case of the highest central functions of a highly differentiated society, in exactly the same way as with all others: it corresponds—if these functions are not allied to permanent control of individual hereditary monopoly power—solely to the degree of dependence of the various interdependent functions on one another. Growth in the "power" of the central functionaries is, in a society with a high division of functions, an expression of the fact that the dependence of other groups and classes within this society on a supreme organ of co-ordination and regulation is rising; a fall in the latter appears to us as a limitation of the former. Not only the earlier stage in the formation of states which is central to the present study, but also the contemporary history of the Western figuration of states, offers examples enough of such changes in the social power of the central functionaries. They are all sure indications of specific changes in the system of tensions within the society at large. Here again, beneath all the differences between the social structures, we find certain mechanisms of social interweaving which—at least in more complex societies—tend very generally towards either a reduction or an increase in the social power of the central authorities. Whether it is the nobility and the bourgeoisie, or the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, whether, in conjunction with these larger divisions, it is smaller ruling circles, such as competing cliques within a princely court or within the supreme military or party apparatus, that form the two poles of the decisive axis of tension at a given time within society, it is always a quite definite set of social power relationships which strengthens the position of the authority at their centre, and a different set that weakens it.

It is necessary to deal here briefly with the figurational dynamics which determine the power of the central authority. The process of social centralization in the West, particularly in the phase when "states" were formed, remains incomprehensible, like the civilizing process itself, as long as the elementary regularities of figurational dynamics are disregarded as a means of orientation and as a guide to both thought and observation. This "centralization" or state-formation has been shown in the preceding sections from the point of view of the power-struggle between various princely houses and dominions, i.e. from the point of view of what we would today call the "foreign affairs" of such dominions. Now the complementary problem poses itself; we face the task of tracing the figurational processes *within* one of the units which give the central authority—as compared with the preceding phase—a special power and durability, and thus endow the whole society with the form of an "absolutist state". In historical reality these two processes—shifts in power between classes *within* a unit and displacements in the system of tensions *between* different units—constantly intertwine.

In the course of the struggle between different territorial dominions *one* princely house—as we have shown—slowly outgrew all the others. It thus assumed the function of supreme regulator for a larger unit; but it did not create

this function. It appropriated it by virtue of the size of its possessions accumulated in the course of the struggles, and its monopoly control of army and taxes. The function itself derived its form and power from the increasing differentiation of functions within society at large. And from this aspect it seems, at first sight, thoroughly paradoxical that the central ruler in this early phase of state-formation should attain such enormous social power. For, from the end of the Middle Ages onwards, with the rapid advance of the division of functions, the monarchy became more and more perceptibly dependent on the other functions. At precisely this time the chains of action based on division of functions took on ever wider scope and ever greater durability. The autonomy of social processes, the central authority's character as a functionary, which gradually received clearer institutional expression after the French Revolution, were by this time far more prominent than in the Middle Ages. The dependence of the central lords on the revenues from their dominions was a clear indication of this. Beyond doubt, Louis XIV was incomparably more tightly bound to this vast and autonomous network of chains of actions, than, for example, Charlemagne. How, therefore, did the central ruler in this phase have, to begin with, such scope for decision and such social power that we are accustomed to call him an "absolute" ruler?

It was not only the prince's monopoly control of military power which held the other classes within his territory, and especially the powerful leading groups, in check. Owing to a peculiar social constellation, the dependence of precisely these groups on a supreme co-ordinator and regulator of the tension-ridden structure was so great at this phase that, willingly or not, for a long period they renounced the struggle for control and participation in the highest decisions.

This peculiar constellation cannot be understood unless we take account of a special quality of human relationships which was likewise emerging with the increasing division of functions in society: *their open or latent ambivalence.* In the relations between individuals, as well as in those between different functional strata, a specific *duality or even multiplicity of interests* manifests itself more strongly, the broader and denser the network of social interdependence becomes. Here, all people, all groups, estates or classes, are in some way dependent on one another; they are potential friends, allies or partners; and they are at the same time potential opponents, competitors or enemies. In societies with a barter economy there are sometimes unambiguously negative relationships, of pure, unmoderated enmity. When migrant nomads invade a settled region, there need be in their relations with the settlers no trace of mutual functional dependence. Between these groups exists pure enmity to the death. Far greater, too, in such societies, is the chance of a relationship of clear and uncomplicated mutual dependence, unmixed friendships, alliances, relationships of love or service. In the peculiar black-and-white colouring of many medieval books, which often know nothing but good friends or villains, the greater susceptibility of medieval

reality to relationships of this kind is clearly expressed. No doubt, at this stage the chains of functional interdependencies are relatively short; hence rapid switches from one extreme to another, an easy changeover from firm friendship into violent enmity also occur more frequently. As social functions and interests become increasingly complex and contradictory, we find more and more frequently in the behaviour and feelings of people a peculiar split, a co-existence of positive and negative elements, a mixture of muted affection and muted dislike in varying proportions and nuances. The possibilities of pure, unambiguous enmity grow fewer; and, more and more perceptibly, every action taken against an opponent also threatens the social existence of its perpetrator; it disturbs the whole mechanism of chains of action of which each is a part. It would take us too far afield to explore in detail this fundamental *ambivalence of interests*, its consequences in political life or psychological make-up, and its sociogenesis in relation to the advancing division of functions. But the little that has already been said shows it to be one of the most important structural characteristics of more highly developed societies, and a chief factor moulding civilized conduct.

Increasingly ambivalent, with the growing division of functions, are the relations between different units of power. The relations between the states of our own time, above all in Europe, offer a clear example of this. Even if integration and the division of functions *between* them have not yet advanced as far as the division of functions *within* them, nevertheless every military exchange so threatens this highly differentiated network of nations as a whole, that in the end the victor himself finds himself in a seriously shaken position. He is no longer able—or willing—to depopulate and devastate the enemy country sufficiently to settle a part of his own population in it. He must, in the interests of victory, destroy as far as possible the industrial power of the enemy, and at the same time, in the interests of his own peace, try within limits to preserve or restore this industrial apparatus. He can win colonial possessions, frontier revisions, export markets, economic or military advantages, in short, a general advance of his power; but just because, in the struggles of highly complex societies, each rival and opponent is at the same time a partner at the production line of the same machinery, every sudden and radical change in one sector of this network inevitably leads to disruption and changes in another. To be sure, the mechanism of competition and monopoly does not for this reason cease to operate. But the inevitable conflicts grow increasingly risky for the whole precarious system of nations. However, through these very tensions and discharges the figuration moves slowly towards a more unequivocal form of hegemony, and towards an integration, perhaps at first of a federative kind, of larger units around specific hegemonial centres.

And the relationship between different social classes *within* a dominion becomes, with the advancing division of functions, more and more ambivalent in the same way. Here, too, within a far more restricted space, groups whose social

existence is mutually dependent through the division of functions, are struggling for certain opportunities. They too are at once opponents and partners. There are extreme situations in which the existing organization of a society functions so badly, and the tensions within it grow so large, that a large portion of the people and classes within it "no longer care". In such a situation the negative side of the ambivalent relationships, the opposition of interests, may so gain the upper hand over the positive side, the community of interests arising from the interdependence of functions, that there are violent discharges of tensions, abrupt shifts in the social centre of gravity, and reorganization of society on a changed social basis. Up to this revolutionary situation, the classes bound together by the division of functions are cast back and forth between their split and contradictory interests. They oscillate between the desire to win major advantages over their social opponents and their fear of ruining the whole social apparatus, on the functioning of which their actual social existence depends. And this is the constellation, the form of relationships, that harbours the key to an understanding of the changes in the social power of the central functionaries. If the co-operation of the powerful functional classes gives rise to no special difficulties, if their conflicts of interest are not great enough to conceal from them their mutual dependence and to threaten the functioning of the entire social apparatus, the scope of the central authority is restricted. It tends to increase when the tension between certain leading groups of society grows. And it attains its optimum level when the majority of the various functional classes are still so concerned to preserve their social existence in the established form that they fear any major disturbance of the total apparatus and the concomitant upheaval within their own existence, while at the same time the structural conflict of interests between powerful groups is so great that an ordered voluntary compromise can scarcely be reached, and troublesome social skirmishes without a decisive outcome become a permanent feature of social life. This is most acutely the case in phases when different groups or classes of a society have attained roughly the same power, and hold each other in balance, even though, like the nobility and the bourgeoisie, or the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, they may be institutionally on a quite unequal footing. Someone who, in this constellation, in a society wearied and disturbed by inconclusive struggles, can attain power over the supreme organs of regulation and control, has the chance of enforcing a compromise between the divided interests in order to preserve the existing social distribution of power. The various interest groups can move neither apart nor together; this makes them dependent on the supreme central co-ordinator for their social existence to a quite different degree from when the interdependent interests are less divergent and direct agreements between them more easily reached. When the situation of the bulk of the various functional classes, or at least their active leading groups, is not yet so bad that they are willing to put their social existence at risk, and yet when they feel themselves so threatened by

each other, and power is so evenly distributed between them, that each fears the slightest advantage of the other side, they tie each other's hands: this gives the central authority better chances than any other constellation within society. It gives those invested with this authority, whoever they may be, the optimal scope for decision. The variations on this figuration in historical reality are manifold. That it only emerges in a clearly delineated form in more highly differentiated societies, and that in less interdependent societies with lower division of functions it is above all military success and power that form the basis of a strong central authority over large areas, has already been stated. And even in more complex societies, success in war or conflicts with other powers undoubtedly plays a decisive part for strong central authorities. But if for the time being we disregard these external relations of a society and their influence on the internal balance, and ask how a strong central authority is possible in a richly differentiated society, despite the high and evenly distributed interdependence of all functions, we always find ourselves confronted with that specific constellation which can now be stated as a general principle: *the hour of the strong central authority within a highly differentiated society strikes when the ambivalence of interests of the most important functional groups grows so large, and power is distributed so evenly between them, that there can be neither a decisive compromise nor a decisive conflict between them.*

It is a figuration of this kind to which here the term "royal mechanism" is applied. In fact the central authority attains the optimal social power of an "absolute" monarchy in conjunction with such a constellation of social forces. But this balancing mechanism is certainly not only the sociogenetic motive force of a powerful monarchy; we find it in more complex societies as the foundation of every strong one-man rule, whatever its name might be. The man or men at the centre are always balanced on a tension between greater or lesser groups who keep each other in check as interdependent antagonists, as opponents and partners at once. This kind of figuration may appear at first sight extremely fragile. Historical reality shows, however, how compellingly and inescapably it can hold in bondage the individuals who constitute it—until finally the continuous shift of its centre of gravity that accompanies its reproduction through generations makes possible more or less violent changes in the mutual bonds of people, so giving rise to new forms of integration.

18. The regularities of social dynamics place the central ruler and apparatus in a curious situation, the more so the more specialized this apparatus and its organs become. The central ruler and his staff may have reached the top of the central administration as proponents of a particular social formation; or they may be recruited primarily from a certain class of society. But once someone has attained a position in the central apparatus and held on to it for any time, it imposes its own regularities upon him. It distances him in varying degrees from all the other groups and classes of society, even the one which has brought him to power and from which he originates. His specific function gives the central ruler of a

differentiated society specific interests. It is his function to superintend the cohesion and security of the whole of society as it exists, and he is thus concerned to balance the interests of the other functional groups. And this task, with which he is simply confronted by daily experience and which conditions his whole view of society—this task itself distances him from all the other groups of functionaries. But he must also, like any other person, be concerned for his own social survival. He must work to ensure that his social power is not reduced, but, if anything, increased. In this sense he, too, is a party within the play of social forces. Insofar as his interests, through the peculiarity of his function, are bound up with the security and smooth functioning of the whole social structure, he must favour some individuals within this structure, he must win battles and enter alliances within it with a view to strengthening his personal position. But in this the interests of the central ruler never become *quite* identical with those of any other class or group. They may sometimes converge with those of one group or another, but if he identifies too strongly with one of them, if the distance between himself and any group diminishes too far, his own social position is sooner or later threatened. For its strength depends, as noted above, on the one hand on the preservation of a certain balance between the different groups, and a certain degree of co-operation and cohesion between the different interests of society; but it also depends on the persistence of sharp and permanent tensions and conflicts of interest between them. The central ruler undermines his own position in using his power and support to make one group clearly superior to others. Dependence on a supreme co-ordinator, and thus his own functional dominance, necessarily shrink when a single group or class of society unequivocally has the upper hand over all others, unless this group is itself torn by internal tensions. And the central ruler's position is no less weakened and undermined if the tensions between the leading groups of society are so reduced that they can settle their differences between themselves and unite in common actions. This is true at least for relatively peaceful times. In time of war, when an external enemy of the whole of society, or at least of its most important groups, must be repulsed, a reduction of internal tensions can be harmless and useful even to the central ruler.

To put the matter in a few words, the central ruler and his apparatus form within his society a centre of interests of its own. His position often urges an alliance with the second most powerful group rather than identification with the most powerful; and his interest requires both a certain co-operation and a certain tension between society's parts. Thus, his position not only depends on the nature and strength of the ambivalence between the different formations making up society; his relationship to each of these formations is itself ambivalent.

The basic pattern of society that emerges in this way is very simple. The single ruler, the king, is always as an individual incomparably weaker than the whole society whose ruler or first servant he is. If this whole society, or even a

considerable part of it, stood together against him, he would be powerless as every individual is powerless in face of pressure from a whole network of interdependent people. The unique position, the abundance of power inhering in a single person as the central ruler of a society is to be explained, as we have said, by the fact that the interests of people in this society are partly alike and partly opposed, that their actions are both adjusted to and contrary to each other's needs; it is explained by the fundamental ambivalence of the social relationships within a complex society. There are conditions in which the positive side of these relationships grows dominant or is at least not smothered by the negative side. But on the way towards dominance of the negative side there are transitional phases in which antagonisms and conflicts of interest grow so strong that the continuing interdependence of actions and interests is obscured to the consciousness of the participants without quite losing its importance. The constellation that thus comes into being has already been described: different parts of society hold each other roughly in balance in terms of social strength; the tensions between them find expression in a chain of major or minor skirmishes; but neither side can conquer or destroy the other; they cannot settle their differences because any strengthening of one side will threaten the social existence of the other; they cannot split wholly apart because their social existence is interdependent. This is a situation that gives the king, the man at the top, the central ruler, optimal power. It shows unmistakably where his specific interests lie. Through this interplay of strong interdependencies and strong antagonisms there arises a social apparatus which might be considered a dangerous invention, at once important and cruel, were it the work of a single social engineer. Like all social formations in these phases of history, however, this "royal mechanism" which gives a single man extraordinary power as supreme co-ordinator, arises very gradually and unintentionally in the course of social processes.

This apparatus can be brought to mind most vividly and simply by the image of the tug-of-war. Groups, social forces, that hold each other roughly in check, stretch a rope. One side pits itself with all its might against the other; both heave incessantly; but neither side can dislodge the other appreciably from its position. If in this situation of utmost tension between groups pulling the same rope in opposite directions and yet bound together by this rope, there is a man who belongs entirely to neither of the two contending groups, who has the possibility of interposing his individual strength now on the side of one group, now of the other, while taking great care not to allow the tension itself to be reduced or either of the sides to obtain a clear advantage, then he is the one who actually controls this whole tension; the minimal power at the disposal of a single man, who alone could set neither of the groups in motion and quite certainly not both combined, is sufficient, with this arrangement of social forces, to move the whole. The reason why it is sufficient is clear. Within this balanced apparatus enormous forces are latent but bound; without someone to release

them they can have no effect. At the touch of a finger an individual releases the forces of one side; he unites himself with the latent forces operating in one direction so that they gain a slight advantage. This enables them to become manifest. This type of social organization represents as it were a power-station which automatically multiplies the smallest effort of the person in control. But an extremely cautious manipulation of this apparatus is called for if it is to function for any length of time without disruption. The man in control is subject to its regularities and compulsions to exactly the same degree as everyone else. His scope for decision is greater than theirs, but he is highly dependent on the structure of the apparatus; his power is anything but absolute.

This is no more than a schematic outline of the arrangement of social forces that gives the central ruler optimal power. But this sketch shows clearly the fundamental structure of his social position. Not by chance, not whenever a strong ruling personality is born, but when a specific social structure provides the opportunity, does the central organ attain that optimal power which usually finds expression in a strong autocracy. The relatively wide scope for decision left open in this way to the central ruler of a large and complex society comes about through his standing in the crossfire of social tensions, so being able to play on the variously directed interests and ambitions counterpoised in his dominion.

Of course, this outline simplifies the actual state of affairs to a certain extent. Equilibrium in the field of tensions making up every society always arises in differentiated human networks through the collaboration and collision of a large number of groups and classes. But the importance of this multi-polar tension for the central ruler's position is no different from that of the bi-polar tension outlined above.

The antagonism between different parts of society certainly does not only take the form of conscious conflict. Plans and consciously adopted goals are far less decisive in producing tensions than anonymous figurational dynamics. To give one example, it was the dynamics of advancing monetarization and commercialization, far more than the conscious attacks of bourgeois-urban circles, which pushed the bulk of the knightly feudal lords downhill at the end of the Middle Ages. But however the antagonisms arising with the advance of the money network may be expressed in the plans and goals of individual people or groups, with them grew the tension between the urban classes who are gaining strength and the functionally weakening lords of the land. With the growth of this network and this tension, however, grew the room to manoeuvre of those who, having won the struggle between initially freely competing units, had become the central rulers of the whole—the kings, until finally, balanced between the bourgeoisie and the nobility, they attained their optimal strength in the form of the absolute monarchy.

19. We asked earlier how it is possible at all for a central authority with absolute power to evolve and survive within a differentiated society, despite the

fact that this central ruler is no less dependent on the working of the entire mechanism than the occupants of other positions. The pattern of the royal mechanism provides the answer. It is no longer his military power or the size of his possessions and revenues *alone* that can explain the social power of the central ruler in this phase, even though no central authority can function without these two components. For the central rulers of a complex society to attain such optimal power as they had in the age of absolutism requires, in addition, a special distribution of forces within their society.

In fact the social institution of the monarchy attained its greatest power at that phase in history when a weakening nobility was already being forced to compete in many ways with rising bourgeois groups, without either side being able decisively to defeat the other. The quickening monetarization and commercialization of the sixteenth century gave bourgeois groups increased impetus; it appreciably pushed back the bulk of the warrior class, the old nobility. At the end of the social struggles in which this violent transformation of society found expression, the interdependence between parts of the nobility and parts of the bourgeoisie had grown considerably. The nobility, whose social function and form was itself undergoing a decisive transformation, now had to contend with a third estate, whose members had become, in part, far stronger and more socially ambitious than hitherto. Many families of the old warrior nobility died out, many bourgeois families took on aristocratic character and within a few generations their descendants themselves upheld the interests of the transformed nobility against those of the bourgeoisie, interests which by then, in keeping with the closer integration, were more inescapably opposed.

But the objective of this bourgeois class, or at least of its leading groups, was not—like that of substantial parts of the bourgeoisie in 1789—to eliminate the nobility as a social institution. The highest goal of individual bourgeois was, as we have mentioned, to obtain for themselves and their family an aristocratic title with the attendant privileges. The representative leading groups of the bourgeoisie as a whole set out to seize the privileges and prestige of the military nobility; they did not want to remove the nobility as such, but at most to take their place as a new nobility supplanting or merely supplementing the old. Incessantly, this leading group of the third estate, the *noblesse de robe*, in the seventeenth and above all in the eighteenth century, emphasized that their nobility was just as good, important and genuine as that won by the sword. And the rivalry thus expressed certainly did not manifest itself only in words and ideologies. Behind it was a continuous, if more or less concealed and indecisive struggle for power positions and advantages between the representatives of the two estates.

As has been stressed above, understanding of this social constellation will be blocked if we start from the presupposition that the bourgeoisie of this phase was roughly the same formation as today or at least yesterday—if, in other words, we

regard the "independent merchant" as the most typical and socially most important representative of the bourgeoisie. The most representative and socially influential example of the bourgeois in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was, at least in the larger continental countries, the middle-class servant of princes or kings, that is, a man whose nearer or more distant forefathers were indeed craftsmen or merchants, but who himself now occupied a quasi-official position within the governmental apparatus. At the top of the third estate, before merchant classes themselves formed the leading groups of the bourgeoisie, there were—to speak in our language—bureaucrats.

The structure and character of official posts varied widely in particular countries. In old France the most weighty representative of the bourgeoisie was a peculiar mixture of *rentier* and official; he was a man who had bought a position in the state service as his personal and, as it were, private property, or, which comes to the same thing, had inherited one from his father. Through this official position he enjoyed a number of quite specific privileges; for example, many of these posts carried exemption from taxes; and the capital invested bore interest in the form of fees, a salary or other income which the post brought in.

It is men of this kind, men of the "robe", who during the *ancien régime* represented the bourgeoisie at the assemblies of the estates, and were in general, even outside these assemblies, its spokesmen, the exponents of its interests *vis-à-vis* the other estates and the kings. And whatever social power the third estate possessed was expressed in the demands and political tactics of this leading group. Undoubtedly, the interests of this bourgeois upper class were not always identical with those of the other bourgeois groups. Common to them, however, was one interest above all others: the preservation of their various privileges. For it was not only the social existence of the noble or official which was distinguished by special rights and privileges; the merchant of this time was likewise dependent on them; so, too, were the craft guilds. Whatever these privileges might consist of in particular cases, the bourgeoisie, as far as it carried any social weight, was, up to the second half of the eighteenth century, a social formation characterized and maintained by special rights in exactly the same way as the nobility itself. And here, therefore, we come upon a particular aspect of the machinery by virtue of which this bourgeoisie was never able to deliver a decisive blow against its antagonist, the nobility. It may have contested this or that particular privilege of the nobility; but it could and would never eliminate the social institution of privilege as such, which made the nobility a class apart; for its own social existence, the preservation of which was its main concern, was likewise maintained and protected by privileges. It was only when bourgeois forms of existence no longer based on class privileges emerged more and more in the tissue of society, and when as a result an ever-larger sector of society recognized these special rights guaranteed or created by the government as a serious impediment to the whole functionally divided network of processes—

only then were social forces in existence which could decisively oppose the nobility, which strove to eliminate not only particular noble privileges, but the social institution of noble privileges itself.

But the new bourgeois groups who now opposed privileges as such thereby lay hands, knowingly or otherwise, on the foundation of the old bourgeois formations, the bourgeois estate. Its privileges, its whole organization as an estate, had a social function only as long as a privileged nobility existed in opposition to it. The estates were hostile or, more precisely, ambivalent siblings, interdependent cells of the same social order. If one were destroyed as an institution, the other automatically fell, and with it the whole order.

In fact, the Revolution of 1789 was not simply a struggle of the bourgeoisie against the nobility. By it the middle-class estate, particularly that of the robe, the privileged officials of the third estate and also those of the old craft guilds, were destroyed no less than the nobility. And this common end illuminates at a stroke the whole social entanglement, the specific constellation of forces of the preceding phase. It illustrates what was said earlier in general terms about the interdependence and ambivalence of the interests of certain social classes, about the balanced mechanism that arose with them, and about the social power of the central authority. The politically relevant parts of the bourgeoisie which did not constitute an estate and emerged very slowly from the earlier one, these older bourgeois groups were bound in their interests, their actions and thoughts, entirely to the existence and the specific equilibrium of an order based on estates. For this reason, in all their conflicts with the nobility and also, of course, with the first estate, the clergy, they were always being caught, like the latter, in the trap of their ambivalent interests. They never dared advance too far in their struggle with the nobility without cutting into their own flesh; any decisive blow against the nobility as an institution would shake the whole state and social structure and thus knock down like skittles the social existence of this privileged bourgeoisie. All the privileged classes were equally concerned not to push the struggle between them too far; they all feared nothing more than a profound upheaval and shift of weight within the social structure as a whole.

But at the same time they could not entirely avoid conflict with each other; for their interests, parallel in one direction, were diametrically opposed in many others. Social power was so distributed between them and their rivalry so great, that one side felt threatened by the slightest advantage of the other and by anything that might give the other the least superiority of power. Accordingly, there was on the one hand no lack of courteous and even friendly relationships between members of the different groups; but on the other their relations, above all between the leading groups, remained extremely strained throughout the whole of the *ancien régime.* Each feared the other; each observed the other's steps with constant if concealed mistrust. Moreover, this main axis of tension between the nobility and bourgeoisie was embedded in a multitude of others no less

ambivalent. The official hierarchy of the secular governmental apparatus was in constant open or latent competition for power and prestige with the clerical hierarchy. The clerics in turn were forever colliding for one reason or another with this or that circle of the nobility. So this multi-polar system of equilibrium constantly gave rise to minor explosions and skirmishes, to social trials of strength in various ideological disguises and for the most diverse and often quite incidental reasons.

The king or his representatives, however, steered and controlled this whole mechanism by pitting his weight now in one direction, now another, and his social power was so great precisely because the structural tension between the main groups in the social network was too strong to allow them to reach direct agreement in their affairs and thus to make a determined common stand against the king.

As we know, it was in only one country during this period that bourgeois and noble groups took such a stand successfully against the king—in England. Whatever may have been the special structural characteristics of English society that permitted the tension between the estates to relax and stable contacts between them to be established—the social constellation which, after considerable tribulations, led in England to a restriction of the central ruler's powers, makes clear to us once more the different basic constellation which in other countries maintained the social power and the absolutist form of the central authority.

During the sixteenth and even the early seventeenth century, there was no lack, in France too, of attempts by people of the most different social origins to combine against the menacing increase in royal power. They all failed. These civil wars and revolts reveal quite nakedly how strong even in France was the desire among the various estates to restrict the powers of the kings and their representatives. But they show no less clearly how strong were the rivalries and conflicts of interest between these groups, which impeded a common pursuit of this objective. Each of them would have liked to limit the monarchy in its own favour, and each was just strong enough to prevent others from doing so. They all held each other in check, and so they finally found themselves resigned to their common dependence on a strong king.

There was, in other words, within that great social transformation which made bourgeois groups functionally stronger and aristocratic ones weaker, a phase when both groups—despite all the tensions both between them and third parties and within themselves—by and large balanced each other out in social power. Thus was established for a greater or lesser period that apparatus that was described above as the "royal mechanism": the antitheses between the two main groups were too great to make a decisive compromise between them likely; and the distribution of power, together with their close interdependence, prevented a decisive struggle or the clear predominance of one or the other. So, incapable of

uniting, incapable of fighting with all their strength and winning, they must leave to a central ruler all the decisions that they could not bring about themselves.

This apparatus was formed, as we have said, in a blind, unplanned way in the course of social processes. Whether it was controlled well or badly, however, depended very much on the person exercising the central function. Reference to a few particular historical facts must be enough here to show how the apparatus was formed, and to illustrate what has been said in general terms about the absolutist royal mechanism.

20. In the society of the ninth and tenth centuries there were two classes of free men, the clerics and the warriors. Below them, the mass of the more or less unfree, who were generally excluded from bearing arms, played no leading role in social life, even though the existence of society depended on their activities. We have noted that under the special conditions of the western Frankish area, the dependence of the warriors, practically autarkic lords on their estates, on the co-ordinating activity of a central ruler was only slight. The dependence of the clerics on the king, for the most diverse reasons, was far greater. The Church in the western Frankish area never attained major secular power as it did in the empire. Archbishops did not here become dukes. The ecclesiastical peers remained by and large outside the system of competing territorial lords. Thus their centrifugal interests directed at weakening the central ruler were not particularly strong. The possessions of the clerics lay scattered amongst the dominions of secular lords. They were constantly exposed to attacks and encroachment by the latter. The Church therefore desired a central ruler, a king, who had enough power to protect her against secular violence. The feuds, the major and minor wars that were incessantly flaring up across the whole region, were often highly unwelcome to the monks and other clerics who, while certainly more militarily competent and even bellicose than later, at any rate did not live on or for war. These feuds and wars often enough took place at their expense. And over and again priests and abbeys throughout the country, mistreated, injured, deprived of their rights, appealed to the king as judge.

The strong, only occasionally troubled, association between the first Capetian kings and the Church was in no way fortuitous; nor did its cause lie solely in the strong personal faith of these first Capetians. It also expressed an obvious constellation of interests. The dignity of the monarchy in this phase, whatever else it may have been, was always an instrument of the priests in their conflict with the warrior class. The royal consecration, anointment and coronation were influenced more and more by Church investiture and ceremony. The monarchy took on a kind of sacral character; it became in a certain sense an ecclesiastical function. That this link, unlike what happened in other societies, did not go beyond these mere beginnings of a merging of worldly and ecclesiastical central authority, and was very soon broken off, resulted not least from the structure of

the Christian Church itself. This Church was older and its organization more firmly established than most secular dominions of the time; and it had its own head, who aspired more and more clearly to combine spiritual pre-eminence with worldly supremacy, a central authority transcending all others. Sooner or later, therefore, a competitive situation arose, a struggle for supremacy between the Pope and the worldly central lord of a given area. This struggle everywhere ended with the Pope being thrown back on his spiritual predominance, with the worldly character of emperor and king re-emerging more clearly, and with the latters' incipient assimilation to the Church hierarchy and ritual regressing without entirely disappearing. But the fact that there were even the beginnings of such an assimilation in the West is worthy of note—especially in comparing historical structures and in explaining differences between social processes in various parts of the world.

The western Frankish kings, for their part, at first collaborated quite closely with the Church, in keeping with the structural regularity governing their function, discussed earlier. They derived support from the second strongest group in their conflict with the stronger and more dangerous. They were nominally the liege lords over all warriors. But in the domains of the other great lords they were, to begin with, virtually powerless, and even within their own territory their power was sharply restricted. The close association of royal house and Church turned the monasteries, abbeys and bishoprics in the lands of other territorial lords into bastions of the monarchy; it put a part of the Church's spiritual influence throughout the country at their disposal. And the kings derived numerous advantages from the writing skills of the clergy, the political and organizational experience of the Church bureaucracy, and not least its finance. It is an open question whether the kings of the early Capetian period received, over and above the revenues from their own territory, any actual "royal income", that is, duties from the whole western Frankish kingdom. If they had such income, it was hardly a significant addition to what they received from their own domestic estates. But one thing is certain: they received duties from Church institutions in regions outside their own territory, for example the income of a vacant diocese or occasional subsidies in extraordinary situations. And if anything gave the traditional royal house an advantage in power over the competing houses, if anything contributed to the fact that in these early elimination struggles beginning within their own territory, the Capetians were the first to begin to rebuild their power, it was this alliance of the nominal central rulers with the Church. From this alliance above all, in a phase of powerful centrifugal tendencies, sprang those social forces which worked independently of the individual kings for the continuity of the monarchy, and in the direction of centralization. The importance of the clergy as a motive force of centralization receded, without entirely disappearing, in proportion as the third estate advanced. But even in this phase it is apparent how the tensions between

different social groups, beginning with that between the priestly class and the warrior class, benefitted the central ruler; but it is clear, too, how he was bound by these tensions, imprisoned by them. The excessive power of the many military lords drove king and Church together, even though minor conflicts between them were not lacking. But the first major difference between king and Church, the first real power struggle between them, occurred only when more abundant human and financial resources were beginning to flow to the king from the bourgeois camp, in the period of Philip Augustus.

21. With the formation of a third estate, the network of tensions became more complex and the axis of tension within society moved. Just as in an interdependent system of competing countries or territories, particular tensions become predominant at different times, all the other antagonisms being subordinated to them until one of the main power centres establishes preponderance, similarly there were, within each dominion, certain central tensions about which numerous smaller ones crystallize, and which gradually shift in favour of one side or the other. If these central tensions included, up to the eleventh and twelfth centuries, the ambivalent relationship between the warriors and the clergy, from then on the antagonism between the warriors and the urban–bourgeois groups slowly but steadily moved into the foreground as the central internal tension. With it, and with the whole differentiation of society that it expressed, the central ruler gained new importance: the dependence of all parts of society on a supreme co-ordinator grew. The kings who, in the course of the struggles for predominance, detached themselves more and more from the rest of the warrior class as their dominions expanded, also distanced themselves from the other warriors through their position within the tension between the latter and the urban classes. In this tension they were not by any means unequivocally on the side of the warriors, to whom they belonged by origin. Rather, they applied their weight now to one side of the scales, now to the other.

The towns' attainment of communal rights was the first milestone on this road. The kings of this phase, above all Louis VI and VII, like their representatives and all the other feudal lords, regarded the growing communes with mistrust and, to say the least, "partial hostility",[101] particularly within their own domain. Only gradually did the kings grasp the uses of these unfamiliar formations. As always, a certain time was needed for them to perceive that the emergence of a third estate within the fabric of society meant an immense enlargement of their own scope. But from then on they promoted the interests of this third estate with the utmost consistency, as far as these accorded with their own. Above all they fostered the financial, taxable power of the bourgeoisie. But they emphatically opposed, whenever they had the power to do so, the towns' claims to governmental functions, claims which could not fail to arise with the growing economic and social power of the urban classes. The rise of the monarchy and that of the bourgeoisie were connected in the closest functional

interdependence; partly consciously, partly unwittingly, these two social positions elevated each other; but their relations always remained ambivalent. There was no lack of animosity and conflict between them nor, at first, of occasions when the nobility and bourgeoisie attempted jointly to restrict the sovereign powers of the kings. Throughout the entire Middle Ages, the kings found themselves repeatedly in situations where they had to seek the approval of the assembled representatives of the estates for certain measures; and the course taken by these assemblies, both the smaller regional ones and the larger ones representing broad areas of the kingdom, shows clearly how different the structure of tensions in society still was, despite all its fluctuations, from that existing in the absolutist period.[102] The parliaments of the estates—to use their English name—were able to function, not unlike the party parliaments of bourgeois-industrial society, as long as direct agreement between the representatives of different classes over particular objectives was possible. They functioned less well the more difficult direct compromise became, and the greater the tensions within society; and to the same degree the potential power of the central ruler rose. Given the low degree of monetary and commercial integration in the medieval world, at first neither the interdependence nor the antagonisms between the land-owning warrior class and the urban bourgeois class were such that they needed to hand over the regulation of their relations to the central ruler. Each estate, the knights and the burghers, like the clergy, despite their contacts, lived far more within their own confines than later. The different estates did not yet compete so frequently or directly for the same social opportunities; and the leading bourgeois groups were still far from being strong enough to challenge the social pre-eminence of the nobility, the warriors. Only at one point in society did rising bourgeois elements, with the help of the monarchy, gradually displace knights and clergy directly from their positions: within the governmental apparatus, as officials.

22. The functional dependence of the monarchy on what went on in society at large is manifested particularly clearly in the development of the machinery of government, in the splitting-off of all those institutions which first of all were not much more than parts of the royal domestic and domanial administration. When the society of free men consisted essentially only of knights and clergy, the government apparatus, too, was made up above all of knights and clergy; the clergy or clerks, as already mentioned, usually being loyal servants and proponents of royal interests, while the feudal lords, even at court and within the royal administration, were often enough rivals of the king, more concerned with developing their own power positions than with consolidating his. Then, as the warrior class outside the governmental apparatus became more complex, as in the course of the elimination struggles major and minor feudal lords were more sharply differentiated, this constellation was mirrored in the structure of a growing governmental machine: clerics and members of minor warrior houses

formed its staff while major feudal lords found themselves confined to very few positions, for example as members of the great assembly or the smaller council.

Even in this phase men from the stratum below the warriors and priests were certainly not lacking in the royal administration, even if elements of unfree origin did not play the same role in the development of the French central apparatus as they did in the development of the German. Perhaps that is connected with the fact that in the former case, urban communities, and thus a third estate of freedmen, had risen somewhat earlier to independent significance than in the latter. In France the participation of urban groups in the royal administration rose with the growth of the towns, and as early as the Middle Ages members of these groups gradually permeated the governmental apparatus to an extent that was not reached in the majority of German territories until well into the modern period.

They entered this apparatus by two main routes:[103] first through their growing share of secular posts, that is, positions previously filled by nobles; and secondly through their share of ecclesiastical posts, that is as clerks. The term *clerc* began slowly to change its meaning from about the end of the twelfth century onwards; its ecclesiastical connotation receded and it referred more and more to a man who had studied, who could read and write Latin, though it may be that the first stages of an ecclesiastical career were for a time a prerequisite for this. Then, in conjunction with the extension of the administrative apparatus, both the term *clerc* and certain kinds of university study were increasingly secularized. People no longer learned Latin exclusively to become members of the clergy, they also learned it to become officials. To be sure, there were still bourgeois who entered the king's council simply on account of their commercial or organizational competence. But the majority of bourgeois attained the higher regions of government through study, through knowledge of canon and Roman law. Study became a normal means of social advancement for the sons of leading urban strata. Bourgeois elements slowly pushed back the noble and ecclesiastical elements in the government. The class of royal servants, of "officials", became—in contrast to the situation in Germany—an exclusively bourgeois formation.

> From the time of Philip Augustus onwards at the latest . . . the lawyers, true "knights of law" (*chevaliers ès lois*) appeared: they were to take on the task of amalgamating feudal with canon and Roman law to make up monarchic law. . . . A small army of thirty scribes in 1316, 104 or 105 in 1359, about sixty in 1361, these chancellery clerks gained numerous advantages from constantly swelling their ranks in the proximity of the king. The broad mass was to become privileged notaries; the élite (three under Philip the Fair, twelve before 1388, sixteen in 1406, eight in 1413) would give birth to the privy clerks or financial secretaries . . . The future was theirs. Unlike the grand officers of a palatinate, they had no ancestors, but were themselves to be ancestors.[104]

With the growth of the royal possessions a class of specialists was formed whose social position depended first and foremost on their place in royal service, and whose prestige and interests were largely identical with those of the monarchy and the governmental apparatus. As the Church had done earlier, and still did to some extent, members of the third estate now upheld the interests of the central function. They did so in the most diverse capacities, as scribes and councillors to the king, as tax administrators, as members of the highest courts. And it was they who sought to ensure the continuity of royal policy beyond the life of a particular king and quite often against his personal inclinations. Here too, bourgeois classes elevated the monarchy, and the monarchs elevated the bourgeois classes.

23. With this almost total expulsion of the nobility from the governmental apparatus, in the course of time the bourgeoisie attained a power position which was of the utmost importance to the overall balance of power in society. In France, as already mentioned, it was not, almost till the end of the *ancien régime*, the rich merchants or the guilds who directly represented the bourgeoisie in conflicts with the nobility; it was the bureaucracy in its various formations. The weakening of the social position of the nobility, the strengthening of the bourgeoisie, is most clearly expressed in the fact that the upper bureaucracy lay claim, at least from the beginning of the seventeenth century onwards, to equal social status with the nobility. At this time the interweaving of interests and the tensions between nobility and bourgeoisie had indeed reached a level which secured exceptional power for the central ruler.

This permeation of the central apparatus by sons of the urban bourgeoisie is one of the strands within that process indicating most clearly the close functional interdependence between the rise of the monarchy and of the bourgeoisie. The bourgeois upper stratum, which gradually evolved from the families of the higher "royal servants", in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries attained such increased social power that the central ruler would have been at its mercy, had it not had counterweights in the nobility and clergy, whose resistance neutralized their strength; and it is not difficult to obse ve how the kings—above all, Louis XIV—played constantly on this system of tensions. In the preceding phase, however, the nobility and clergy—despite all the ambivalence already inhering in their relationship—were still, at first, far stronger opponents of the central authority than the urban bourgeoisie. For this very reason the bourgeois eager for social advancement were as welcome helpers of the king as they were willing. The kings allowed the central apparatus to become a monopoly of people from the third estate, because this was still socially weaker than the first and second estates.

This interdependence between the growth of the power of king and bourgeoisie, and the weakening of nobility and clergy, is seen from a different aspect if we consider the financial connections between the social existence of the

various parties. It has already been stressed that this shift to the disadvantage of the nobility is to be attributed only in small part to conscious and systematic actions by bourgeois circles. It was, on the one hand, a consequence of the competitive mechanism by which the bulk of the nobility sank into dependence on a single noble house, the royal house, and thus in a sense to the same level as the bourgeoisie. On the other, it was a consequence of advancing monetary integration. Hand in hand with the rise in the volume of money went a constant depreciation. This increase and depreciation of money accelerated in the sixteenth century to an extraordinary extent. And the nobility who lived on the income from their estates, which they could not increase to keep pace with devaluation, were impoverished.

The religious wars—to mention only this final act—had the same significance for the weakening nobility as civil wars so often have for declining classes: they concealed from them, for a time, the inevitability of their fate. The uproar and unrest, the self-assertion in fighting, the possibility of pillage and the facility of gain, all this encouraged the nobility to believe they could maintain their threatened social position and save themselves from downfall and impoverishment. Of the economic upheavals whirling them back and forth, those embroiled in them had scarcely an inkling. They saw that money was increasing, prices rising, but they did not understand it. Brantôme, one of the courtly warriors of the period, captured this mood:

> . . . far from having impoverished France, this (civil) war has positively enriched her, in so far as it has uncovered and placed in full view an infinity of treasures previously hidden underground, where they served no purpose. . . . It has placed them so well in the sun, and turned them into such quantities of good money, that there were more millions of gold to be seen shining in France than there had been millions of silver pounds before, and there appeared more new, subtle silver coins, forged from these fine hidden treasures, than there had been coppers before. . . . And that is not all: the rich merchants, usurers, bankers and other niggards down to the priests, kept their coin locked in their coffers and neither enjoyed it themselves nor lent it except at gross interest and with excessive usury, or by the purchase or mortgage of land, goods or houses at a wretched price; so that the noble who had been impoverished during the foreign wars and had pawned or sold his goods, was at his wits' end, without even the wood to keep himself warm, for these scamps of usurers had pocketed everything—this good civil war restored them to their rightful place. So I have seen gentlemen of high birth who, before the civil war, went about with two horses and a footman, recover to such effect that during and after it they were seen travelling the country with six or seven good horses. . . . *And that is how the honest nobility of France has been restored by the grace or, one might say, by the grease of the good civil war.*[105]

In reality the majority of the French nobility, on their return from this "good" civil war, found themselves debt-ridden and ruined once more. Life grew more expensive. Creditors, along with rich merchants, usurers and bankers, and above

all high officials, men of the robe, clamoured for repayment of the money they had lent. Wherever they could, they possessed themselves of the noble estates, and quite often the titles too.

The nobles who held on to their estates very soon found their income no longer sufficient to cover the increased cost of living:

> The lords who had ceded land to their peasants against duties in cash, continued to collect the same revenue but without the same value. What had cost five sous in the past cost twenty at the time of Henry III. The nobles grew poor without knowing it.[106]

24. The picture of the distribution of social power seen here is fairly unambiguous. The change in the social structure which had long been working against the warrior nobility in favour of bourgeois classes, accelerated in the sixteenth century. The latter gained in social weight what the former lost. Antagonisms in society grew. The warrior nobility did not understand the process forcing them out of their hereditary positions, but they saw it embodied in these men of the third estate with whom they now had to compete directly for the same opportunities, above all for money, but also, through money, for their own land and even their social pre-eminence. Thereby the equilibrium was slowly established which gave optimal power to one man, the central ruler.

In the struggles of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries we come across bourgeois corporations which have become wealthy, numerous and powerful enough to confront the warrior nobility's claims to dominance and power with firm resistance, but neither able nor strong enough to make the warriors, the military class, directly dependent on them. We find a nobility still strong and belligerent enough to represent a constant threat to the rising bourgeois classes, but already too weak, above all economically, to control directly the town-dwellers and their taxes. The fact that at this time the nobility had already entirely lost the functions of administration and jurisdiction, these being now in the hands of bourgeois corporations, contributes in no small way to the nobility's weakness. Nevertheless, no part of society was yet able to attain a lasting and decisive preponderance over the others. In this situation the king again and again appeared to each class or corporation as an ally against the threats from other groups which they could not master on their own.

Of course, the nobility and bourgeoisie themselves consisted of various groups and strata whose interests did not always run in the same direction. Into the primary tension between these two classes were woven numerous other tensions, whether within these groups or between one or other of them and the clergy. But at the same time all these groups and strata were more or less dependent for their existence on the others; none was at this stage strong enough to overthrow the established order as a whole. The leading groups, the only ones which could exert a certain political influence within the framework of the existing institutions,

were the least disposed to radical change. And this multiplicity of tensions strengthened all the more the potential power of the kings.

Of course, each of these leading groups, the highest nobles, the "great ones" at court, as much as the top of the bourgeoisie, the parliaments, would have liked to restrict the royal power in their own favour. Efforts, or at least ideas, tending in this direction recur throughout the whole of the *ancien régime*. These social groups with opposed interests and wishes were also divided in their attitude to the monarchy. There was no lack of occasions on which this became clear; there were even a number of temporary alliances between noble and urban-bourgeois groups, above all the parliaments, against the representatives of the monarchy. But if anything shows up the difficulty of such direct reconciliation, and the strength of the tensions and rivalries existing between the parties, it is the fate of such occasional alliances.

Take, for example, the *Fronde*. Louis XIV was still a minor. Mazarin was governing. Once more, for the last time for a long period, the most disparate social groups united to assail royal omnipotence represented by the Minister. Parliaments and broad nobility, urban corporations and men of the high nobility, all tried to exploit the monarchy's moment of weakness, the regency of the Queen exercised by the Cardinal. But the picture presented by this rising shows clearly enough how tense were relationships between all these groups. The *Fronde* is a kind of social experiment. It exposes once again the structure of tensions which gave the central authority its strength, but which remained concealed from view as long as this authority was firmly established. No sooner did one of the competing allies seem to gain the slightest advantage than all the others felt threatened, deserted the alliance, made common cause with Mazarin against their erstwhile ally, and then partly switched back to his side. Each of these people and groups wanted to curtail royal power; but each wanted to do it to his own advantage. Each feared that another's power might grow at the same time. Finally—not least thanks to the skill with which Mazarin took advantage of this mechanism of tensions—the old equilibrium was re-established in favour of the existing royal house. Louis XIV never forgot the lesson of these days; far more consciously and carefully than all his predecessors, he nurtured this equilibrium and maintained the existing social differences and tensions.

25. For a long period of the Middle Ages the urban classes, through their social position, were decidedly weaker than the warrior nobility. In this period the community of interests between the king and the bourgeois section of society was considerable, if not so great that friction and even conflicts between towns and the central ruler were entirely absent. One of the most visible consequences of this community of interests, as we have noted, was the expulsion of the nobility from the monarchy's governmental organization, and its permeation by people of bourgeois origin.

Then, as the relative social power of the nobility diminished with the advance

of monetary integration and monopolization, the kings shifted some of their weight back to the side of the nobility. They now secured the existence of the nobility as a privileged class against the bourgeois assault, and they did so to just the degree necessary to preserve the social differences between nobility and bourgeoisie and thus the equilibrium of tensions within the realm. So, for example, they secured for the bulk of the nobility exemption from taxes, which the bourgeoisie would have liked to see abolished or at least reduced. But this was certainly not enough to give the economically weak landowners a sufficient basis on which to satisfy their claim to be the upper class and their need to cultivate a demonstratively affluent mode of life. Despite their tax exemption, the mass of the landed nobility throughout the *ancien régime* led a thoroughly restricted life. They could hardly compete in material prosperity with the upper strata of the bourgeoisie. *Vis-à-vis* the authorities, above all the courts, their position was far from favourable; for the posts in the latter were held by people of bourgeois origin. In addition, the kings, supported by a section of aristocratic opinion, upheld the rule that a noble who engaged directly in commerce should renounce both his title and all his noble privileges, at least for the duration of this activity. This rule certainly served to maintain the existing differences between bourgeoisie and nobility, which the kings no less than the nobles themselves were concerned to preserve. But at the same time it blocked the nobility's only direct access to greater prosperity. Only indirectly, through marriage, could a noble profit from the wealth that stemmed from commerce and official posts. The nobility would have had nothing of the splendour and social prestige they still enjoyed in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; they would unfailingly have succumbed to the increasingly prosperous bourgeoisie and perhaps to a new bourgeois nobility, had they not—or at least a small section of them—obtained with the king's help a new monopoly position at court. This both permitted them a mode of life adequate to their social station, and preserved them from involvement in bourgeois activities. The court offices, the many and various official positions within the royal household, were reserved to the aristocracy. In this way hundreds and finally thousands of nobles found relatively highly paid posts. Royal favour, attested by occasional gifts, was added for good measure; and proximity to the king gave these posts high prestige. And so from the broad mass of the landed aristocracy there arose a stratum of nobles, the courtly nobility, which could counterbalance the upper bourgeoisie in wealth and influence. Just as earlier, when the bourgeoisie was weaker than the aristocracy, posts in the royal administration had been made a bourgeois monopoly with the king's help, now that the nobility was weakening, the court positions, likewise with royal assistance, became a preserve of the nobility.

The exclusive filling of court posts by nobles did not happen at one stroke or by the design of a particular king, any more than the reservation of all the other state posts to the bourgeoisie had been earlier.

Under Henry IV. and still under Louis XIII, court positions, like the majority of military appointments and, still more, like administrative and judicial offices, were purchasable and thus the property of their occupant. This was even true of the post of *gouverneur*, the military commanders of particular regions of the kingdom. To be sure, in particular cases the occupant of such a post could only exercise his office with the king's approval, and it naturally happened, too, that this or that position was awarded solely through royal favour. But in general the purchase of offices had by this time gained the upper hand over their nomination through favour. And since the majority of the nobility were no match for the upper bourgeoisie in terms of wealth, the third estate, or at least families sprung from it and only recently ennobled, slowly but visibly took over the court and military posts as well. Only the great noble families still had enough revenue, partly thanks to the size of their lands and partly through pensions paid to them by the king, to hold on to positions of this kind in face of such competition.

Nevertheless, a willingness to help the nobility in this situation is quite unmistakable in Henry IV, just as it is in Louis XIII and Richelieu. None of them forgot for a moment that they were themselves aristocrats. Moreover, Henry IV attained the throne at the head of an army of nobles. But apart from the fact that even they were largely impotent in face of the economic processes working against the nobility, the royal function had necessities of its own, and its relation to the nobility was ambivalent. Henry IV, Richelieu and all their successors, in order to secure their own position, were anxious to keep the nobility as far as possible from positions of political influence; but at the same time they were obliged to preserve the nobility as an independent social factor in the internal balance of forces.

The double face of the absolutist court corresponded exactly to this split relationship of king to nobility. This court was at the same time an instrument for controlling the nobility and a means of sustaining it. In this direction it gradually developed.

Even Henry IV took it for granted that the king lived within an aristocratic circle. But it was not yet his strict policy to demand permanent residence at court of those members of the nobility who wished to remain in royal favour. No doubt he also lacked the means to finance as enormous a court, and to distribute court offices, favours and pensions as lavishly, as Louis XIV was able to do later. In his time, moreover, society was still in an extreme state of flux. Noble families were declining, bourgeois rising. The estates were surviving, but their occupancy was being drastically transformed. The wall dividing the estates was riddled with holes. Personal qualities or lack of them, personal fortune or misfortune, often played as large a part in a family's destiny as its origin in this or that estate. Even the gates to the court and court offices were still fairly wide open to people of bourgeois origin.

This the nobility deplored. It was they who desired and proposed that these

offices be reserved to them. And not only these offices. They desired a share in many others; they sought to win back their lost positions in the governmental machine. In 1627 they addressed to Louis XIII, under the title "Requests and Articles for the Restoration of the Nobility", a petition with precise proposals to this effect.[107]

The petition began by saying that, after divine help and the sword of Henry IV, it was the nobility who were to be thanked for the preservation of the crown at a time when the majority of other classes had been incited to insurrection; yet the nobility were "in the most pitiable state they had ever known . . . crushed by poverty . . . rendered vicious by idleness . . . reduced by oppression almost to despair."

Here, in a few words, a picture of the declining class is sketched. It corresponds closely to reality. Most landed estates were overburdened with debt. Many noble families had lost all their possessions. The youth of the aristocracy was without hope; the unrest and social pressure emanating from these displaced people was felt everywhere in the life of this society. What was to be done?

Among the reasons for this state of affairs, express mention is made of the mistrust which a number of noblemen had aroused in the king through their arrogance and ambition. This had finally led the kings to believe it necessary to reduce the power of such nobles by excluding them from official positions which they had perhaps misused, and by elevating the third estate; so that since that time the nobles had been stripped of their judicial and fiscal duties, and expelled from the king's councils.

Finally, in twenty-two articles, the nobility demanded, among other things, the following: in addition to the military command of the various *gouvernments* of the kingdom, the civil and military functions of the royal house—that is, the skeleton of what was later to make the court a sinecure for the nobility—should cease to be purchasable and become reserved to the nobility.

In addition, the nobility demanded a certain influence on provincial administration and access for a number of particularly eligible aristocrats to the high courts, the parliaments, at least in an advisory capacity and without emoluments; and they demanded, finally, that a third of the membership of the financial and military councils, and other parts of the royal government, should come from their ranks.

Of all these demands, if we disregard a few minor concessions, only one was fulfilled: court posts were closed to the bourgeoisie and reserved to the nobility. All the others, insofar as they involved participation by the nobility, however modest, in government or administration, remained unfulfilled.

In many German territories, nobles sought and received administrative and judicial offices as well as military ones; at least since the Reformation, they had therefore been found in the universities.[108] Most of the higher offices of state remained virtually a monopoly of the nobility; elsewhere, nobles and bourgeois

normally balanced each other *within* many state offices according to a precise formula of allocation.

In the French central government, as we have mentioned, the tension and the constant open or latent struggle between the two estates was expressed in the fact that the whole administration remained a monopoly of the bourgeoisie, while the whole court in the narrower sense, which had always been largely staffed by nobles but was threatened by bourgeoisification when offices were made purchasable, in the seventeenth century became once and for all a noble monopoly.

Richelieu, in his will, had recommended that the court should be closed to all those who "have not the good fortune of a noble origin".[109] Louis XIV then restricted access to court offices by bourgeois to the utmost; but even he did not completely close them. Thus, after many preparatory movements in which the social interests of the nobility and the monarchy were, so to speak, weighing up and testing each other, the court was given its clear role as an asylum for the nobility on one hand, and a means of controlling and taming the old warrior class on the other. The untrammelled knightly life was gone forever.

For most of the nobility, not only were their economic circumstances from now on straitened, but their horizons and scope for action were narrowed. With their meagre revenues they were restricted to their country seats. Escape from this in military campaigns was, to a large extent, blocked. Even in war they no longer fought for themselves as free knights, but as officers in a strict organization. And special luck or connections were needed to escape permanently from the landed nobility to the wider horizons and greater prestige of the noble circle at court.

This smaller part of the nobility found at court, and in and around Paris, a new, more precarious homeland. Up to the time of Henry IV and Louis XIII it was not difficult for a noble belonging to the court circle to spend time at his country seat or that of another noble. There was, to be sure, a courtly nobility distinct from the broad country gentry; but this society was still relatively decentralized. Louis XIV, having learned his lesson early through the *Fronde*, exploited the nobility's dependence on him to the full. He wanted "to unite directly under his eyes all those who are possible leaders of risings, and whose *châteaux* could serve as focal points for rebellion . . .".[110]

The construction of Versailles corresponded perfectly to both the intertwined tendencies of the monarchy: to provide for and visibly elevate parts of the nobility while controlling and taming them. The king gave liberally, particularly to his favourites. But he demanded obedience; he kept the nobles constantly aware of their dependence on the money and other opportunities he had to distribute.

> The King [Saint-Simon records in his *Mémoires*[111]] not only saw that the high nobility were present at his court, he demanded it also of the petty nobles. At his *Lever* and his

Coucher, at his meals, in his gardens at Versailles, he was always looking about him, noticing everyone. He took it amiss if the most distinguished nobles did not reside permanently at court, and if the others came only seldom, and total disgrace awaited those who showed themselves hardly or not at all. If one of these had a request, the king would say proudly: "I do not know him." And his judgement was irrevocable. He did not mind if a person enjoyed living in the country, but he had to show moderation in this and take precautions before longer absences. Once in my youth when I went to Rouen on some legal business, the king had a minister write to enquire my reasons.

This surveillance of everything that went on is very characteristic of the structure of this monarchy. It shows clearly how strong were the basic tensions which the king had to observe and master in order to maintain his rule, not only within his society but outside it as well. "The art of governing is not at all difficult or unpleasant", Louis XIV once said in his instructions to his heir. "It consists quite simply in knowing the real thoughts of all the princes in Europe, knowing everything that people try to conceal from us, their secrets, and keeping close watch over them."[112]

> The king's curiosity to know what was going on around him [Saint-Simon writes in another place[113]] grew more and more intense; he charged his first valet and the governor of Versailles to enrol a bodyguard. These received the royal livery, were dependent only on those just mentioned, and had the clandestine task of wandering the corridors by day and night, secretly observing and following people, seeing where they went and when they came back, overhearing their conversations and reporting everything exactly.

Hardly anything is as characteristic of the peculiar structure of the society which makes possible a strong autocracy, as this necessity of minutely supervising everything that goes on within the realm. This necessity shows up both the immense tensions and the precariousness of the social apparatus without which the co-ordinating function would not endow the central ruler with so high a power ratio. The tension and equilibrium between the various social groups, and the resulting highly ambivalent attitude of all these groups to the central ruler himself, was certainly not created by any king. But once this constellation had been established, it was vitally important for the ruler to preserve it in all its precariousness. This task demanded exact supervision of his subjects.

For good reasons Louis XIV had a particularly watchful eye on people closest to him in rank. The division of labour and the interdependence of everyone, including dependence of the central ruler on the masses, were not yet so advanced that pressure from the common people was the greatest threat to the king, even though popular unrest, above all in Paris, was certainly not without danger; one of the reasons for the removal of his court from Paris to Versailles lies here. But whenever, under Louis's predecessors, dissatisfaction among the masses led to uprisings, it was members of the royal family or the high nobility who

placed themselves at their head and used the factions and discontent for their own ambitions. Here, in his closest circle, the monarch's most dangerous rivals were still to be found.

It was shown earlier how, in the course of monopolization, the circle of people able to compete for the chance to rule was gradually reduced to the members of the royal house. Louis XI finally conquered these princely feudal lords and restored their territories to the crown; but in the religious wars different parties were still headed by branches of the royal family. With Henry IV, after the extinction of the main branch, a member of a secondary one again came to the throne. And the princes of the blood, "the great ones", the dukes and peers of France, continued to wield considerable power. The basis of this power is fairly clear. It was primarily their position as *gouverneurs*, military commanders of provinces, and their fortresses. Slowly, with the consolidation of monopoly rule, these possible rivals of the kings took on the character of functionaries in a powerful government apparatus. But they resisted this change. The natural brother of Louis XIII, the Duke of Vendôme, Henry IV's bastard son, rose against the central authority at the head of a faction. He was governor of Brittany and believed he had an hereditary right to this province on grounds of marriage. Then it was the governor of Provence from whom the resistance came, then the governor of Languedoc, the Duke of Montmorency; and even the Huguenot nobility's attempts at resistance had their basis in a similar power position. The army was not yet completely centralized; the commanders of fortresses and captains of strongholds still had a high degree of independence. The governors of provinces regarded their purchased and salaried positions as their property. So there were renewed flickerings of centrifugal tendencies in the land. Under Louis XIII they were still perceptible. The king's brother, Gaston, Duke of Orléans, rose, like many royal brothers before him, against the king. He formally renounced friendship for the Cardinal after taking over the leadership of the faction hostile to him, and went to Orléans to begin his struggle against Richelieu and the King from a strong military position.

Richelieu finally won all these battles, not least with the aid of the bourgeoisie and the superior financial means they put at his disposal. The resisting lords died vanquished, some in prison, some in exile, some in battle; Richelieu let even the king's mother die abroad.

> The belief that as sons or brothers of the King, or princes of his blood, they may disturb the realm with impunity, is mistaken. It is far more judicious to secure the realm and monarchy than to respect impunity endowed by rank.

So he writes in his memoirs. Louis XIV reaped the benefit of these victories; but a sense of threat from the nobility, particularly the high nobility closest to him, was second nature to him. The lesser nobility he forgave an occasional absence from court if reasons were given. Towards "the great ones" he was

implacable. And the court's role as a place of detention emerged particularly clearly in relation to them. "The surest place for a son of France is the heart of the King", he replied when his brother asked him for a governorship and a fortress, a *place de sûreté*. That his eldest son held separate court at Meudon he viewed with the utmost displeasure. And when the heir to the throne died, the king hastily had the furniture of his *château* sold in case the grandson who inherited Meudon should make the same use of it and once again "divide the court".[114]

This fear, says Saint-Simon, was quite groundless. For none of the king's grandsons would have dared to displease him. But when it was a matter of maintaining his prestige and securing his personal rule, the king's severity made no distinction between his relations and other persons.

Monopoly rule, centred on the monopolies of taxation and physical violence, had thus attained, for this particular stage as the personal monopoly of an individual, its consummate form. It was protected by a fairly efficient organization of surveillance. The land-owning king distributing land or tithes had become a money-owning king distributing salaries: this gave centralization a power and solidity unattained hitherto. The strength of the centrifugal social forces had been finally broken. All possible rivals of the monopoly ruler had been brought into an institutionally secured dependence on him. No longer in free competition but in one restricted by monopoly, only a section of the nobility, the courtly section, competed for the opportunities distributed by the monopoly ruler, and was at the same time under constant pressure from a reserve army of country aristocracy and rising bourgeois elements. The court was the organizational form of this restricted competition.

But even if at this stage the king's personal control of the monopolized opportunities were great, it was anything but unlimited. In the structure of this relatively private monopoly there were already unmistakable elements which would finally lead from personal control of the monopolies to public control by ever-broader sections of society. For Louis XIV the statement: "L'État c'est moi" had, indeed, a measure of truth, whether or not he himself uttered it. Institutionally, the monopoly organization still had to a considerable extent the character of a personal possession. Functionally, however, the monopoly ruler's dependence on other strata, on the entire network of differentiated social functions, was already very great, and was constantly increasing with the advance of the commercial and monetary integration of society. Only the particular situation of society, the peculiar balance of tensions between the rising bourgeois and the declining aristocratic groups, and then between the many major and minor groups throughout the land, gave the central ruler his immense powers of control and decision. The independence with which earlier kings ruled their domains, an expression of lower social interdependence, had vanished. The vast human network that Louis XIV ruled has its own momentum and its own centre

of gravity which he had to respect. It cost immense effort and self-control to preserve the balance of people and groups and, by playing on the tensions, to steer the whole.

The central functionary's ability to govern the whole human network largely in his personal interest was only seriously restricted when the balance on which he was poised tilted sharply in favour of the bourgeoisie, and a new social balance with new axes of tension was established. Only then did personal monopolies begin to become public monopolies in an institutional sense. In a long series of elimination contests, in a gradual centralization of the means of physical violence and taxation, in conjunction with a constantly increasing division of functions and the rise of professional bourgeois classes, French society had been organized step by step in the form of a state.

VIII

On the Sociogenesis of the Monopoly of Taxation

26. A certain aspect of this monopolization, and thus of the whole process of state-formation, easily escapes the retrospective observer because he usually has a clearer picture of the later stages, of the results of the process, than of developments lying further back. He can hardly conceive that this absolutist monarchy and centralized government emerged quite gradually from the medieval world as something new and extraordinary in the eyes of its contemporaries. Nevertheless, only an attempt to reconstruct this aspect gives us the possibility of understanding what really happened.

OK, but obvious

The main outlines of the transformation are clear. From a particular central point it can be described in a few words: *the territorial property of one warrior family, its control of certain lands and its claim to tithes or services of various kinds from the people living on this land, is transformed with the advancing division of functions and in the course of numerous struggles, into a centralized control of military power and of regular duties or taxes over a far larger area.* Within this area no one may now use weapons and fortifications or physical violence of any kind without the central ruler's permission. That is something very novel in a society in which originally a whole class of people could use weapons and physical violence according to their means and their inclinations. And everyone of whom the central ruler requires it is now bound to pay a certain portion of his income or his wealth to the central ruler. This is even more novel, measured by what was customary in medieval society. In the barter economy of that time, where money was relatively rare, demands by princes or kings for money payments—leaving aside certain occasions fixed by tradition—were regarded as something quite unprecedented; such measures were regarded in much the same way as pillaging or the levying of tributes.

"Constituti sunt reditus terrarum, ut ex illis viventes a spoliatione subditorum

Same with Roman Empire

abstineant":[115] the revenues of the land are intended to prevent those living on them from plundering their subjects, said St Thomas Aquinas. In this he was certainly not expressing the opinion only of ecclesiastical circles, even though church institutions were probably particularly exposed to such measures on account of their wealth. The kings themselves did not think very differently, even if, with the general shortage of money, they could not refrain from repeatedly demanding such compulsory duties. Philip Augustus, for example, aroused so much unrest and opposition through a series of taxes, particularly the contribution for the Crusades in 1188—the famous *dîme saladine*—that in 1189 he declared that no such taxes would ever again be levied. In order, his decree runs, that neither he nor his successors shall ever fall into the same error, he forbids with his royal authority and the whole authority of all the churches and barons of the realm, this damnable effrontery. If anyone, whether the king or anyone else, should attempt "by audacious temperity" to revert to it, he wants them disobeyed.[116] It may be that in the formulation of this decree his pen was guided by agitated notables. But when he was preparing for the Crusade in 1190, he himself expressly ordered that in the event of his death during the Crusade, a part of the war treasury should be distributed among those who had been impoverished by the levies. Duties demanded by the kings in this society, with its relative scarcity of money, were indeed something different from taxes in a more commercialized society. No one took them for granted as a permanent institution; market transactions and the whole level of prices were in no way adjusted to them; they came like a bolt from the blue, ruining large numbers of people. The kings or their representatives, as we can see, were sometimes aware of this. But with the limited revenues they received directly from their domanial estates, they were constantly faced with the choice of either using all the threats and force at their disposal to raise money by levies, or succumbing to rival powers. All the same, the agitation over the "Saladin tithe" and the opposition it unleashed seem to have been long remembered. It was only after seventy-nine years that a king again demanded a special tax, an *aide féodale* for his Crusade.

The general belief of kings themselves was that the rulers of a territory and their government should support themselves on the income from their domanial possessions in the narrower sense, that is, on the income from their own estates. To be sure, the kings and a number of other great feudal lords, in the course of monopolization, had already risen considerably above the mass of the feudal lords, and we can see in retrospect that new functions were evolving. But these new functions developed only slowly, by small steps and in constant conflict with the representatives of other functions, into solid institutions. For the time being, the king was a great warrior among many other greater or lesser warriors. Like them, he lived on the produce of his estates; but like them he also had a traditional right to raise taxes from the inhabitants of his region on certain extraordinary occasions. Every feudal lord demanded and received certain duties

when his daughter was married, when his son was knighted, and to pay his ransom if he were made a prisoner-of-war. These were the original *aides féodales*, and the kings demanded them like every other feudal lord. Demands for money over and above these had no basis in custom; this is why they had a similar repute to pillage and extortion.

Then, in about the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, a new form of princely revenue began to establish itself. In the twelfth century the towns were slowly growing. According to ancient feudal custom, only men of the warrior class, the nobles, were entitled to bear arms; but the burghers had now fought sword in hand for civic freedom or were about to do so; and about the time of Louis VI it became customary to enrol the town-dwellers, the "bourgeois", for war duties. Very soon, however, the town-dwellers preferred to offer the territorial lords money instead of war services so that he could hire warriors. They commercialized war service; and to the kings and the other great feudal lords this was not unwelcome. The supply of war services by indigent warriors was usually greater than the purchasing power of the rival feudal lords. So these civic payments for exemption from war service quite quickly became an established custom or an institution. The king's representatives demanded from each town community such and such a number of men or the payment of a corresponding sum for a particular campaign, and the towns agreed or negotiated a reduction. But even this custom was still seen as only a further form of the feudal *aides* in extraordinary cases; it is called the *aide de l'ost* and these aids were taken together as the "aids in the four cases".

It would take us too far afield to show how the town communities themselves gradually began to form a kind of internal taxation system for the various communal tasks. Suffice it to say that the king's demands served to develop this, just as, conversely, the urban taxation institutions that began to be consolidated about the end of the twelfth century had an importance for the organization of royal taxation that should not be under-estimated. Here, too, the bourgeoisie and the royal house—usually involuntarily—carried each other along. But this is certainly not to say that the burghers or any other social class paid willingly and without resistance. As is the case with regular taxation later, no one paid these occasional taxes unless he felt directly or indirectly forced to do so. Both cases indicate exactly the nature of the mutual dependence of groups in society at a given stage and of the prevailing power balances.

The kings did not wish and could not afford to provoke excessive opposition; the social power of the royal function was clearly not yet strong enough for this. On the other hand, for their function and self-assertion, they needed above all to finance the constant struggles with rivals, continual and gradually increasing sums of money that they could only obtain by such *aides*. Their measures changed. Under the pressure of this situation the royal representatives groped for one solution after another; they shifted the main burden first on to this urban or

other class, then on to that. But in all this twisting and turning the social power of the monarchy was constantly growing, and with this growth, each furthering the other, taxes gradually took on a new character.

In 1292 the king demanded a duty of one "denier" in the pound for all wares sold, the duty being payable by both buyer and seller. "An exaction of a kind unheard-of in the French realm", a chronicler of the time called it. In Rouen the counting-house of the royal tax-collectors was plundered. Rouen and Paris, the two most important towns in the kingdom, finally bought their exemption for a fixed sum.[117] But this tax long remained in the popular memory under the ominous name *mal-tôte*; and the opposition it aroused long remained in the minds of the royal officials. Accordingly, the king attempted in the following year to raise compulsory loans from the wealthy bourgeois. When this too met with violent resistance, he reverted in 1295 to the *aide* in its original form; the levy was demanded from all estates, not only the third. One hundredth of the value of all goods was to be paid. But the yield of this tax was clearly not enough. The following year the duty was raised to a fiftieth. And now, of course, the feudal lords also affected by the tax were extremely angry. The king therefore declared himself willing to return to the religious and secular feudal lords a part of the sum he raised from their dominions. He gave them, so to speak, a share of the booty. But this no longer reassured them. Above all, the secular feudal lords, the warriors, felt increasingly threatened in their traditional rights, their independent rule and perhaps even in their whole social existence, by this central governmental apparatus. The king's men were intruding everywhere; they appropriated rights and duties which had earlier been the exclusive prerogative of the individual feudal lord. And here, as so often, it was money duties that were the last straw. When, in 1314, shortly before the death of Philip the Fair, high taxes for a campaign in Flanders were once again levied, unrest and discontent, reinforced by the mismanagement of the war, became open resistance. "We cannot tolerate the levying of these 'aides'", says one of those affected,[118] "we cannot bear them with a quiet conscience; they would cost us our honour, our rights and our freedom." "A new kind of unjustified extortion, of unseemly money-raising, unknown in France and particularly in Paris," another man of the time records, "was used to cover expenses; it was said to be intended for the Flanders war. The servile councils and ministers of the King wanted buyers and sellers to pay six deniers for each pound of the selling price. Nobles and commoners . . . united under oath to maintain their freedom and that of the fatherland."

The unrest was indeed so great and general that towns and feudal lords formed an alliance against the king. It is one of those historical experiments from which we can read off the degree of divergence of their interests, the strength of the tension between them. Under the common threat from the fiscal demands of the royal representatives, and the high feelings it aroused on all sides, a league

between bourgeoisie and nobility was still possible. Would it last, would it be effective? It has already been pointed out that in other countries, especially in England on the basis of a different social structure, a rapprochement and concerted action between certain urban and rural classes gradually came into being which—despite all the tensions and hostility between them—finally contributed in no small way to the curtailment of royal power. The fate of such alliances in France, as can be seen here in embryonic form and far more clearly later, with the growing interdependence of the estates, was very different. The unanimity of the estates did not survive long; the impact of their combined actions was broken by their mutual mistrust. "Anger and discontent bring them together, but their interests admit no unity."[119]

> Il sont lignée deslignée
> Contrefaite et mal alignée

runs a song of the time about the allies. All the same, this violent reaction to wilfully levied taxes left a strong impression, not least on the royal officials. Such upheavals within the dominion were not without danger for the struggle with external rivals. The social position of the central ruler was not yet strong enough for him alone to determine the duties and their level; power was still distributed in such a way that he had to negotiate on each occasion with the estates whom he was taxing and gain their approval. And as yet the *aides* were no more than occasional and extraordinary payments to assist in a particular concrete purpose. This was only gradually to change in the course of the Hundred Years' War. As war became permanent, so also did the duties needed by the central ruler for its conduct.

27. "The struggle facing the monarchy in seeking to establish and develop its fiscal power can only be appreciated if we are aware of the social forces and interests it encountered as obstacles to its designs."[120] This statement does indeed point to the basic feature of the sociogenesis of the taxation monopoly. To be sure, the kings themselves could not foresee, any more than their adversaries in this struggle, the new institution to which it would give rise. They did not really have any general intention to "increase their fiscal power". To begin with they and their representatives wanted quite simply to extract as much money as possible from their dominion on one occasion after another, and the tasks and expenses necessitating this were always quite specific and immediate. No single person created taxes or the taxation monopoly; no individual, nor series of individuals throughout the century in which this institution was slowly formed, worked towards this goal by any deliberate plan. Taxation, like any other institution, is a product of social interweaving. It arises—as from a parallelogram of forces—from the conflicts of the various social groups and interests, until sooner or later the instrument which has developed in the constant social trials of strength becomes more and more consciously understood by the interested

parties and more deliberately constructed into an organization or institution. In this way, in conjunction with a gradual transformation of society and a shift of the power relationships within it, the occasional aids to the lords of estates or territories, levied for specific campaigns or ransom or dowries or the provision of sons, were transformed into regular payments. As the money and trade sector of the economy slowly increased, as a particular house of feudal lords gradually became a house of kings over an ever-larger area, the feudal *aide aux quatre cas* turned step by step into taxation.

Hundred Years' War begins in 1337 (until 1453)

From 1328 onwards, and more strongly from 1337, this transformation of the extraordinary aid into regular duties accelerated. In 1328 a direct tax for the war with Flanders was again levied in certain parts of the kingdom; in 1335 there was an indirect tax in a number of western towns, a duty on each sale, for equipping a fleet; in 1338 all royal officials had something deducted from their pay; in 1340 the tax on the sale of wares was re-introduced and made general; in 1341 there was an additional tax on the sale of salt, the *gabelle du sel*. In 1344, 1345 and 1346 these indirect taxes continued to be raised. After the Battle of Crécy, the royal officials again tried a personal direct tax, and in 1347 and 1348 they reverted once more to the indirect form, the tax on sales. All this was to some degree experimental; all these levies were regarded, as we have said, as temporary assistance from society in the conduct of the king's war; they were *les aides sur le fait de la guerre*. The king and his officials declared over and over again that the demands for money would cease with the hostilities.[121] And whenever the estates' representatives had the chance, they underlined this; they tried to ascertain that the money coming from the *aides* was actually used for military purposes. The kings themselves, however, at least from Charles V on, never adhered very strictly to this demand. They controlled the funds from the *aides* and continued, when they thought it necessary, to meet their own household costs or to reward their favourites from this money. This whole development, this inflow of money to the king's treasury as well as the establishment of a military force paid from this money, slowly but surely led to an extraordinary strengthening of the central function. Each of the estates, the nobility above all, opposed the central authority's increase in power to the best of its ability. But here, too, their divergence of interests weakened their resistance. They were far too much

Estates in the sense of 3 Estates, Church, Nobility, commoners

affected by the war, far too directly interested in a successful repulsion of the English, to be able to refuse the king funds. In addition, the strength of the antagonism between them, together with local differences, not only undermined any common front to limit the king's financial demands or to supervise the use of this income, but prevented a direct organization of the war by the estates. The threat from outside made the people of this society, which still had relatively little unity and interdependence, particularly dependent on the king as supreme co-ordinator and on his governmental machine. So they had to put up year after

year with the levying in the king's name of "extraordinary aids" for a war that did not end.

Finally, after King John was taken prisoner in the Battle of Poitiers, in order to pay the enormous ransom demanded by the English, a tax was levied for the first time not just for one year but for six. Here, as so often, a major but fortuitous event merely accelerated something that had long been prepared in the structure of society. In reality this tax was raised continuously not for six years but for twenty, and we may suppose that by this time a certain adaptation of the market to such payments was taking place. Moreover, apart from this purchase-tax for the king's ransom there were continual taxes for other purposes as well: in 1363 a direct tax to cover the immediate costs of war; in 1367 another to combat pillage by the soldiery; in 1369, on the resumption of war, new direct and indirect taxes including the specially hated house-tax, the *fouage*.

"All these are still, no doubt, feudal 'aides', but generalized, made uniform and levied not only in the king's domain but throughout the kingdom under the supervision of a special, centralized administrative machine."[122] In fact, in this phase of the Hundred Years' War when the *aides* were slowly becoming permanent, there gradually evolved specialized official functions devoted to collecting and legally enforcing these "extraordinary payments", as they were still called. First of all they were represented simply by a few *Généraux sur le fait des finances*, who supervised the army of those responsible for the aides throughout the land. Then, in 1370, there were already two supreme administrators, one of whom specialized in the financial and the other in the legal questions arising from the collection of *aides*. This was the first form of what later, throughout the whole *ancien régime*, remained one of the most important organs of fiscal administration, the *Chambre* or *Cour des Aides*. But here, in the years 1370 to 1380, this institution was still in the process of formation; it lacked a definite form; it was one more attempt in the open or silent struggle in which the different social power-centres were constantly testing each other's strength. And its presence did not, as often happens with solidly established institutions, obliterate the memory of the social conflicts from which it had resulted. Each time the monarchy, meeting resistance in different parts of the population, had to limit its taxation demands, these official functions also receded. Their level and the curve of their growth is a fairly exact indicator of the social strength of the central function and the apparatus for ruling in relation to the nobility, the clergy and the urban classes.

(1364-1380)

Under Charles V, as has been mentioned, the *aides sur le fait de la guerre* became as permanent as the war itself. They weighed upon a people that was being impoverished in this war by devastation, fire, trade difficulties and not least by continual raids by troops who wanted to be fed and fed themselves by force. All the more oppressive were the taxes demanded by the king; and the more strongly their becoming the rule instead of the exception was felt as a contravention of

tradition. As long as Charles V was alive all this found no visible expression. Distress grew unseen, and with it discontent. But it seemed that the king was to some extent aware of this growing tension in the country, of the suppressed feelings, particularly against the taxes. He probably realized the danger to which this mood must give rise if, in his place, in place of an old, experienced king, a child, his son who was still a minor, came to the throne under the guardianship of rival relations. And perhaps this fear of the future was coupled with pangs of conscience. Certainly the taxes that his government had brought in year after year seemed to the king inevitable and indispensable. But even for him, the beneficiary, these taxes clearly still had a tinge of injustice about them. At any rate, a few hours before his death, on 16 September 1380, he signed a decree repealing above all the most oppressive and unpopular tax, the house-tax which weighed equally on rich and poor. How appropriate this decree was to the situation created by the king's death very quickly became apparent. The central function weakened, the repressed tensions in the country broke out. The competing relations of the dead king, above all Louis of Anjou and Philip the Bold of Burgundy, contested predominance and not least control of the royal treasury. The towns began to revolt against the taxes. The people put the royal tax-collectors to flight. And the agitation of the lower urban strata was at first not unwelcome to the richer bourgeoisie. The desires of both ran parallel. The urban notables who in November 1380 met representatives of the other estates in Paris, demanded the abolition of the royal taxes. Probably the Duke of Anjou, the king's Chancellor, promised to fulfil the demand under this direct pressure. On 16 November 1380 a decree was issued in the king's name by which "henceforth for ever, all 'fouage' impositions, salt taxes, fourths and eighths, by which our subjects have been so much aggrieved, all aids and subsidies of any kind which have been imposed on account of the said wars . . .", were abolished.

"The whole financial system of the last ten years, all the conquests made in the years 1358/59 and 1367/68, were sacrificed. The monarchy was thrown back almost a century. It found itself at almost the same point as at the beginning of the Hundred Years' War."[123]

Like a system of forces that has not yet reached equilibrium, society swayed back and forth between the various poles in the struggle for power. It speaks for the social power already possessed by the central government and the royal function at this time, that they were able to make up the lost ground with extraordinary speed, although the king himself was a child and wholly dependent on the administrators and servants of the monarchy. What was seen later once more under Charles VII with particular clarity, emerged fairly clearly even at this time: the opportunities open to the royal function in this structure of French society and in this situation, were already so great that the monarchy could increase its social power even when the king was personally weak or insignifi-

icant. The dependence of the groups and classes in this society on a supreme co-ordinator who maintained co-operation between the various social functions and districts, grew with their interdependence, and grew even more under the pressure of military danger. And so, willingly or not, they very quickly restored the means needed to conduct the war to the men who represented their common interests, above all in conflicts with external enemies: the king and his representative. But in so doing they also gave the monarchy the means to control them. In 1382–83 the monarchy, i.e. the king together with all the relations, councils and servants who in any way belonged to the government machine, was again in a position to dictate to the towns, the chief centres of resistance, the taxes it considered necessary.

The question of taxes was at the centre of the urban risings of 1382. But in the struggle over taxes and the distribution of their burden by the central apparatus, the question of the whole distribution of power, as so often, was tested and decided. The objective of gaining a voice in the raising and distribution of taxes, that is, of supervising from a central position the working of the government machine, was pursued quite consciously by the urban notables of the time, and not only by them. At assemblies, representatives of the other estates sometimes pushed in the same direction. The horizons of the lower and middle urban classes were generally narrower; what they wanted above all was release from their oppressive burdens, nothing more. Even in this direction the goals of the various urban groups were not always the same, even if—in their relation to the central apparatus of the country—they were not necessarily mutually hostile. In the smaller circle of the towns themselves matters were very different. Here the interests of the different strata, despite all their interweaving and indeed precisely because of it, were often diametrically opposed.

The urban communities of this time were already highly complex formations. There was in them a privileged upper stratum, the bourgeoisie proper, whose monopoly position was expressed in its control of the civic offices and therefore of finances. There was a middle stratum, a kind of petty bourgeoisie, the less wealthy craftsmen and tradesmen; and finally there was a mass of journeymen and workers, the "people". And here, too, the taxes formed the nodal point where both the interdependence and the antitheses emerged particularly clearly. If clear demands were expressed at all, the middle and lower groups sought direct, progressive taxes which each paid according to his means, while the urban upper stratum preferred indirect or flat-rate taxes. As so often, the agitation of the people over taxes and the first wave of unrest were to begin with not unwelcome to the urban upper stratum. It favoured this movement as long as it reinforced its own opposition to the monarchy or even to the local feudal lords. But very quickly the insurrection turned against the wealthy town-dwellers themselves. It became in part a struggle for urban administration between the ruling bourgeois patriciate and the middle strata, who demanded their share in the civic offices as

the urban notables demanded theirs in the larger sphere of the government of the country. The urban upper strata took flight or defended themselves; and they were usually saved at this stage of the struggle by the arrival of royal troops.

It would take us too far afield to follow these struggles and the risings in different towns in detail. They ended with a further shift of power in favour of the central apparatus and the monarchy. The ringleaders of the revolt, particularly those who had refused to pay taxes, were punished by death, others with heavy fines. On the towns as a whole large payments were imposed. In Paris, the fortified royal castles or bastilles were reinforced and new ones built, manned by royal men-at-arms, *gens d'armes*. And urban liberties were restricted. From now on local town administrations were increasingly placed under royal officials until they too were essentially organs of the royal apparatus for ruling. In this way the hierarchy of the central government apparatus, whose occupants were the leading bourgeois, extended from ministerial posts and the highest judicial offices to the positions of mayor and guild-master. And the question of taxes as a whole was decided in the same way. They were now dictated by the central organization.

If we examine the reasons why this trial of strength was so quickly decided in favour of the central function, we again encounter the fact already mentioned so often: it is the antagonisms between the various groups of this society that gave the central function its strength. The bourgeois upper class had a tense relationship not only to the secular and clerical feudal lords, but also to the lower urban strata. Here, it is above all the disunity of the urban classes themselves which favoured the central ruler. No less important was the fact that as yet scarcely any close association existed between the different towns of the kingdom. There were weak tendencies towards a collaboration of several cities. But integration was not yet nearly close enough to permit concerted action. The different towns still confronted each other to some extent like foreign powers; between them too there was more or less intense competition. So the royal representatives first concluded a truce with Paris in order to have a free hand against the towns of Flanders. Thus secured, they broke the urban resistance in Flanders; then they broke it in Rouen, then in Paris. They defeated each town singly. Not only social but regional fragmentation as well—within certain limits and not excluding a certain degree of interdependence—favoured the central function. In face of the combined opposition of all parts of the population, the monarchy would necessarily be defeated. But in face of each individual class or region the central function, drawing its power from the whole country, was the stronger.

Nevertheless, sections of society continued to try to limit or break the growing power of the central function. Each time, in accordance with the same structural regularities, the disturbed balance was restored after a time in the monarch's favour, and each of these trials of strength further advanced its power. Taxes paid to the king still disappeared now and then or were briefly restricted,

but they were always very soon revived. In exactly the same way, offices concerned with the administration and collection of taxes vanished and reappeared. The history of the *Chambre des Aides*, for example, is full of such upheavals and sudden reversals. There were several successive resurrections between 1370 and 1390. Then again in 1413, 1418, 1425, 1462, 1464 and 1474 it underwent, as its historian writes, "excesses of life and death, unpredictable resurrections",[124] until finally it became a firmly established institution in the royal governmental machine. And while these fluctuations do not, of course, reflect only the great social trials of strength, they nevertheless give a certain picture of the sociogenesis of the royal function, the growth of the monopoly organization in general. They make it clear how little all these functions and formations resulted from the long-term conscious plans of individuals, and how much they arose by small, tentative steps from a multitude of intertwining and conflicting human efforts and activities.

28. The individual kings themselves were, in the deployment of their personal power, wholly dependent on the situation in which they found the royal function. This seldom showed itself so clearly as in the case of Charles VII. As an individual he was certainly not especially strong; he was not a great or powerful person. Yet, after the English had been expelled from his territory, during his reign the monarchy grew stronger and stronger. The king now stood before his people as a victorious army leader, however little he may have been inclined to this role by personal predisposition. In the war, all the financial and human resources of the country had been collected in the hands of the central authority. The centralization of the army, the monopoly control of taxation had advanced a good distance. The external foe had been driven out, but the army, or at least a good part of it, was still present. It gave the king such internal preponderance that resistance to his wishes by the estates was as good as hopeless, particularly as the exhausted population wanted one thing above all else: peace. In this situation the king declared in 1436 that the nation had approved the *aides* for an unlimited period, that he had been asked not to assemble the estates in future to decide on taxes; the costs of the journey to the estates' assemblies, he said, placed far too heavy a burden on the people.

CRITICAL PIVOT

This justification was, of course, wholly without substance. The measure itself, the suppression of the estates' assemblies, was simply an expression of the social power of the monarchy. This power had become so great that the *aides*, which during the war had in practice become more or less continuous, could now be openly declared a permanent institution. And this power was already so unquestionable that the king no longer thought it necessary to agree the amount and kind of taxes with those who paid them. As has been mentioned, the estates still repeatedly attempted to resist. The suppression of their parliament and the dictatorial powers of the kings were not consolidated without a series of trials of strength. But each of these showed yet again, and more and more clearly, how

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inexorably, in this phase of the advancing differentiation and integration of society, the power of the central function was growing. Again and again it was the military power concentrated in the hands of the central authority which secured and increased his control of taxes, and it was this concentrated control of taxes which made possible an ever-stronger monopolization of physical and military power. Step by step these two means drove each other upwards until, at a certain point, the total superiority attained by the central function in this process was revealed nakedly to the eyes of its astonished and embittered contemporaries. Here again a voice from that time is better than any description in conveying to us how all this broke upon people as something new, without their knowing how or why.

When, under Charles VII, the central government began quite openly to announce and collect taxes permanently without the estates' agreement, Juvenal des Ursines, the Archbishop of Rheims, wrote a letter to the king. It included, freely translated, the following:[125]

> When your predecessors intended to go to war, it was their custom to assemble the three estates; they invited people from the Church, the nobility and the common people to meet them in one of their good cities. Then they came and explained how things stood and what was needed to resist the enemy and they required that the people took counsel on how the war was to be conducted in order to help the king with taxes decided in this discussion. You yourself always maintained this procedure until you realized that God and Fortune—which is changeable—have so helped you that you feel such discussions to be beneath your dignity. You now impose the *aides* and other duties, and suffer them to be levied like duties from your domain, without the agreement of your three estates.
>
> Earlier . . . this kingdom could rightly be called "Royaume France", for it used to be free [*franc*] and had all liberties [*franchises et libertés*]. Today the people are no more than slaves; wilfully taxed [*taillables à voulenté*]. If we look at the population of the kingdom we find only a tenth of those who were formerly there. I would not wish to diminish your power, but rather to increase it to the best of my small ability. There is no doubt that a prince, and particularly Your Highness, may in certain cases cut off [*tailler*] something from your subjects and levy the *aides*, particularly to defend the kingdom and the public cause [*chose publique*]. But this he must agree in a reasonable manner. His task is not mine. It may be that you are sovereign in matters of justice, and that this is your authority. But as far as domanial revenues are concerned, you have your domain and each private person his [N.B. in other words the king should kindly support himself on his estates and domanial revenues, and not usurp control of the revenues of the whole country]. And today the subjects do not merely have their wool sheared, but their skin, their flesh and blood down to the bones.

In another passage the archbishop gives free rein to his indignation: "He deserves to be stripped of his rule who uses it wilfully and not one half to the advantage of his subjects. . . . Take care, therefore, that the surfeit of money

flowing to you from the *aides*, which you draw from the body, does not destroy your soul. You are also the head of this body. Would it not be great tyranny if the head of a human creature destroyed the heart, the hands, and feet [N.B. probably symbolizing clergy, warriors and common people]."

From then on, and for a long period, it was the subjects who pointed to the public character of the royal function. Expressions like "public cause", "fatherland" and even "state" were first used generally in opposition to the princes and kings. The central rulers themselves controlled the monopolized opportunities in this phase, above all the revenue from their dominions—as Juvenal des Ursines says—like private property. And it is in this sense, too, as a reply to the opposition's use of such words as fatherland or state, that we should understand the saying attributed to the king: "I am the state." Amazement at this whole development was not, however, confined to the French. The régime that was emerging in France, the strength and solidity of the central apparatus and function—which sooner or later appeared subsequently, on the basis of analogous structures, in almost every country in Europe—was in the fifteenth century something even more surprising and novel to observers outside France. We need only read reports of Venetian envoys of this time to have an impression of how a foreign observer, who undoubtedly had wide experience in such matters, encountered in France an unknown form of government.

In 1492 Venice sent two envoys to Paris, officially to congratulate Charles VIII on his marriage to Anne of Brittany, but in reality, no doubt, to find out how and where France intended to use her power in Italy, and in general, how things stood in France, what was the financial situation, what kind of people the king and government were, what products were imported and exported, what factions existed; in a word, the envoys had to discover everything worth knowing to enable Venice to take the correct political action. And these embassies, which were now gradually changing from an occasional to a permanent institution, were themselves a sign of how in this period Europe was slowly becoming interdependent over larger areas.

Accordingly, we find in their report, among other things, an exact depiction of the French finances and of financial procedure in the country. The envoy estimates the king's income at approximately 3,600,000 francs per annum—including "1,400,000 franchi da alcune imposizioni che se solevano metter *estraordinarie* le quali si sono continuate per tal modo che al presente sono fatte *ordinarie*" (1,400,000 francs from impositions which used to be *extraordinary* but have become *ordinary*). The ambassador estimates the king's expenses at 6,600,000 or 7,300,000 francs. The resultant deficit, he reports, is raised in the following way:

> Every year, in January, the directors of the financial administration of each region—that is, those of the royal domain proper, Dauphiné, Languedoc, Brittany and Burgundy—meet to calculate incomes and expenses to meet the needs of the following

year. And they *begin* by considering expenses [*prima mettono tutta la spesa*], and to cover the deficit between the expenses and the expected revenues they fix a general tax for all the provinces of the Kingdom. Of these taxes neither prelates nor nobles pay anything, but only the people. In this way the ordinary revenues and this tax bring in enough to cover the expenditure of the coming year. If, during the year, a war breaks out or there is any other unexpected cause of expenditure, so that the estimates are no longer enough, another tax is levied or stipends are cut so that under all circumstances the necessary sum is obtained.[126]

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Up to now a good deal has been said about the formation of the taxation monopoly. Here, in the Venetian envoys' account, we are given a clear picture of its form and functioning at this stage of development. We also find one of the most important structural features of absolutism and—to a certain extent—of the "state" in general: the primacy of expenditure over income. For the individual members of society, particularly in bourgeois society, it became more and more a habit and a necessity to determine expenditure strictly by income. In the economy of a social whole, by contrast, expenses are the fixed point; on them income, i.e. the sums demanded from the individual members of society through the tax monopoly, are made dependent. This is another example of how the totality arising from the interdependence of individuals possesses structural characteristics and is subject to regularities different from those of individuals, and not to be understood from the individual's point of view. The only limit set to the financial needs of a central social agency of this time was the taxable capacity of society as a whole, and the social power of individual groups in relation to the controllers of the tax monopoly. Later, when the monopoly administration had come under the control of broader bourgeois strata, the economy of society as a whole was sharply divided from that of the individual people administering the central monopoly. Society as a whole, the state, could and must continue to make taxes, income, essentially dependent on the socially necessary expenditure; but the kings, the individual central rulers, now had to behave like all other individuals; they had precisely fixed stipends and managed their expenses accordingly.

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Evolution from personal (king) to state

In the first phase of full monopoly, things were different. The royal and public economies were not yet separate. The kings set taxes in accordance with the expenses they considered necessary, whether these were for wars or castles or gifts to their favourites. The key monopolies of rule still had the character of personal monopolies. But what from our point of view is only the first stage on the way to the formation of societal or public monopolies, appeared to these Venetian observers of about 1500 as a novelty which they regarded with curiosity, as one is apt to consider the unknown manners and customs of strange peoples. Where they came from things were quite different. The power of the supreme Venetian authorities, like that of medieval princes, was restricted to a high degree by the local government of different regions and estates. Venice, too, was the centre of

a major dominion. Other municipalities had placed themselves voluntarily or otherwise under its rule. But even in the case of communes subjugated by force, the conditions on which they were incorporated into the Venetian dominion nearly always included a provision "that no new taxes may be introduced without the agreement of the majority of the council".[127]

In the dispassionate reports of the non-partisan Venetian envoys, the transformation that had taken place in France is perhaps more vividly expressed than in the indignant words of the Archbishop of Rheims.

In 1535 the report of the Venetian envoys contains the following:

> Apart from the fact that the king is militarily powerful, he obtains money through his people's obedience. I say that his Majesty usually has an income of two and a half million. I say "usually"; for, if he so wishes, he can increase the taxes on his people. Whatever burdens he places on them, they pay without restriction. But I must say in this regard that the section of the population which bears the major part of his burden is very poor, so that any increase in the burden however small, would be unbearable.

In 1546, finally, the Venetian Ambassador Marino Cavalli gave an exact and detailed report on France in which the peculiarities of the government of that country, as it appeared to an impartial contemporary with wide horizons, emerge particularly clearly:

> Many kingdoms are more fertile and richer than France, for example, Hungary and Italy, many are larger and more powerful, for example, Germany and Spain. But none is as united and obedient. I do not believe that her prestige has any other cause than these two things: unity and obedience [*unione e obbedienza*]. To be sure, freedom is the most cherished gift in the world; but not all are worthy of it. For this reason some peoples are usually born to obey, others to command. If it is the other way round we have a situation like the present one in Germany, or earlier in Spain. The French, however, perhaps feeling unsuited to it, have handed over their freedom and will entirely to the king. So it is enough for him to say: I want such-and-such, I approve such-and-such, I decide such-and-such, and all this is promptly executed as if they had all decided it. Things have gone so far that today one of them who has more wit than the others, says: Earlier their kings had called themselves "reges Francorum", today they can call themselves "reges servorum". So they not only pay the king whatever he demands, but all other capital is likewise open to his grasp.
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> Charles VII increased this obedience of the people, after he had freed the country from the yoke of the English; and after him Louis XI and Charles VIII, who conquered Naples, did likewise. Louis XII made his own contribution. But the ruling King (Francis I) can boast of having greatly outdone his predecessors: he has his subjects pay extraordinary sums, as much as he wants; he unites new possessions with the Crown Estates without giving anything in return. And if he does give anything away, this is valid only for the lifetime of the giver or of the recipient. And if one or the other lives too long, the whole gift is withdrawn as something due to the Crown. It is true that some are afterwards made permanent. And their practice is the same with regard to the

leaders and the various grades of the military. So that if someone enters your service and says he has had such-and-such reward, titles and provisions from the French, Your Serenity will know of what kind these provisions, titles and gifts are. Many never attain them, or on only one occasion in their lives, some remain two, three years without receiving any reward. Your Serenity, who give away quite definite things, but to some extent hereditary ones, should certainly not be influenced by the example of what is done elsewhere. In my judgement the custom of giving only for the duration of a lifetime . . . is excellent. It always gives the king the opportunity of rewarding those who are deserving; and there is always something left to give away. If the gifts were hereditary, we would now have an impoverished Francia and the present kings would have nothing more to give away; but in this way they are served by people of more merit than the heirs of some earlier recipient. Your Serenity might reflect, if France acts in this way, on what other princes ought to do who do not rule such a large country. If we do not carefully consider where these hereditary gifts lead—to the preservation of the family, it is said—it will happen that there are no sufficient rewards left for truly deserving people, or new burdens will have to be placed on the people. Both things are unjust and harmful enough. If gifts are made only for lifetime, then only those who deserve it are rewarded. Estates circulate and after a time revert to the fisc. . . . For eighty years new agreements have continually been made with the Crown without giving anything away, through confiscation, reversion on inheritance or purchase. In this way the Crown has absorbed everything, to the extent that there is not a single prince in the whole realm who has an income of 20,000 scudi. Moreover, those who possess incomes and land are not ordinary owners; for the king retains supreme rule by virtue of the appeals, taxes, garrisons and all the other new and extraordinary burdens. The Crown becomes more and more wealthy and unified and attains immense prestige; and that secures it from civil war. For as there are nothing but poor princes, they have neither reason nor the possibility to take action against the king, as the dukes of Brittany, Normandy, Burgundy and many other great lords of Gascony did earlier. And if anyone does anything ill-considered and tries to bring about some change, like the Bourbons, this only gives the king an even earlier opportunity to enrich himself through that man's ruin.[128]

Here, compressed into a single view, we have a summary of the decisive structural features of emergent absolutism. One feudal lord has won predominance over all his competitors, supreme rule over all land. And this control of land is increasingly commercialized or monetarized. The change is expressed on the one hand by the fact that the king possesses a monopoly in collecting and fixing taxes throughout the country, so that he controls by far the largest income. A king owning and distributing land has become more and more a king owning money and distributing income. This is precisely what has enabled him to break out of the vicious circle which trapped the rulers of countries with barter economies. He no longer pays for the services he needs, military, courtly or administrative, by giving away parts of his property as the hereditary property of his servants, as is clearly still in part the case in Venice. At most he gives land or salaries for life, and then withdraws them so that the crown possessions are not

reduced; and in an increasingly large number of cases he rewards services only with money gifts, with salaries. He centralizes the taxation of the whole country and distributes the inflowing money at his own discretion and in the interests of his rule, so that an immense and ever-growing number of people throughout the country are directly or indirectly dependent on the king's favour, on payments by the royal financial administration. It is the more or less private interests of the kings and their closest servants which veer toward exploitation of their social opportunities in this direction; but what has emerged in the conflicts of interest between the various social functions, is the form of social organization which we call the "state". The tax monopoly, together with the monopoly of physical force, are the backbone of this organization. We can understand neither the genesis nor the existence of "states" unless we are aware—even from the example of a single country—how one of these central institutions of the "state" developed step by step in accordance with relational dynamics, as a result of a very specific regularity arising from the structure of interwoven interests and actions. Even at this stage—as we see from the Venetian's report—the central organ of society has taken on a hitherto unknown stability and strength because its ruler, thanks to the monetarization of society, no longer needs to pay for services from his own possessions, which without expansion would sooner or later be exhausted, but with sums of money from the regular inflow of taxation. Finally, the peculiarity of money has exempted him from the necessity, first taken over from the procedure of rewarding with land, of repaying services with a property to be held for life and hereditary. It makes it possible to reward the service or a number of services by a single payment, by a fee or salary. The numerous and far-reaching consequences of this change must be left aside here. The astonishment of the Venetian envoy is enough to show how this custom, which today is commonplace and taken for granted, appeared as something new to people of the time. His account also once again shows particularly clearly why it was only the monetarization of society that made possible stable central organs: money payment keeps all recipients permanently dependent on the central authority. Only then could the centrifugal tendencies be finally broken.

And it is also from this wider context that we must understand what was happening to the nobility at this time. In the preceding period, when the rest of the nobility were stronger, the king exerted his power as central ruler, within certain limits, in favour of the bourgeoisie. His apparatus for ruling thus became a bastion of the bourgeoisie. Now that, as a result of monetary integration and military centralization, the warriors, the landowners, the nobility were declining further and further, the king began to pit his weight and the opportunities he had at his disposal somewhat more on the side of the nobility. He gave a part of the nobility the possibility of continuing to exist as a stratum elevated above the bourgeoisie. Slowly, after the last fruitless resistance by elements of the estates in the religious wars and then in the *Fronde*, court offices became a privilege and

thus a bastion of the nobility. In this way the kings protected the nobility's pre-eminence; they distributed their favour and the money they controlled in such a way that the balance endangered by the nobility's decline was preserved. But thereby the relatively free warrior nobility of earlier times became a nobility in lifelong dependence on, and in the service of, the central ruler. Knights became courtiers. And if we ask what social functions these courtiers really had, the answer lies here. We are accustomed to refer to the courtly nobility of the *ancien régime* as a "functionless" class. And indeed, this nobility had no function in terms of the division of labour, and thus in the understanding of the nations of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The configuration of functions in the *ancien régime* was different. It was primarily determined by the fact that the central ruler was still to a great extent the personal owner of the power monopoly, that there was not yet a clear division between the central ruler as a private individual and as a functionary of society. The courtly nobility had no direct function in the division of labour, but it had a function for the king. It was one of the indispensable foundations of his rule. It enabled the king to distance himself from the bourgeoisie just as the bourgeoisie enabled him to distance himself from the nobility. It was the counterweight to the bourgeoisie in society. That, together with a number of others, was its most important function for the king; without this tension between nobility and bourgeoisie, without this marked difference between the estates, the king would lose the major part of his power. The existence of the courtly aristocracy is indeed an expression of how far monopoly government here was still the personal property of the central ruler, and how far the country's income could still be allocated in the special interests of the central function. The possibility of a kind of planned distribution of national revenue had already created monopolization. But this possibility of planning was used here to prop up declining strata or functions.

A clear picture of the structure of absolutist society emerges from all this. The secular society of the French *ancien régime* consisted, more markedly than that of the nineteenth century, of two sectors: a larger rural agrarian sector, and an urban-bourgeois one which was smaller; but steadily if slowly gaining in economic strength. In both there was a lower stratum, in the latter the urban poor, the mass of journeymen and workers, in the former the peasants. In both there was a lower middle stratum, in the latter the small artisans and probably the lowest officials too, in the former the poorer landed gentry in provincial corners; in both an upper middle stratum, in the latter the wealthy merchants, the high civic officials and even in the provinces the highest judicial and administrative officials, and in the former the more well-off country and provincial aristocracy. In both sectors, finally, there was a leading stratum extending into the court, in the latter the high bureaucracy, the *noblesse de robe*, and the courtly nobility, the élite of the *noblesse d'épée* in the former. In the tensions within and between these sectors, complicated by the tensions and

alliances of both with a clergy structured on a similar hierarchy, the king carefully maintained equilibrium. He secured the privileges and social prestige of the nobles against the growing economic strength of bourgeois groups. And, as has been mentioned, he used part of the social product that he had to distribute, by virtue of his control of the financial monopoly, to provide for the highest nobility. When, not long before the Revolution, after all attempts at reform had failed, the demand for the abolition of noble privileges moved into the foreground among the watchwords of the opposing bourgeois groups, this implied a demand for a different management of the tax monopoly and tax revenue. The abolition of noble privileges meant on the one hand the end of the nobility's exemption from taxes and thus a redistribution of the tax burden; and on the other the elimination or reduction of many court offices, the annihilation of what was—in the eyes of this new professional bourgeoisie—a useless and functionless nobility, and thus a different distribution of tax revenue, no longer in the interests of the king but in those of society at large, or at least, to begin with, of the upper bourgeoisie. Finally, however, the removal of noble privileges meant the destruction of the position of the central ruler as the balance maintaining the two estates in their existing order of precedence. The central rulers of the subsequent period were indeed balanced on a different network of tensions. They and their function accordingly had a different character. Only one thing remained the same: even in this new structure of tensions, the power of the central authority was relatively limited as long as the tensions remain relatively low, as long as direct agreement were possible between the representatives of the opposed poles, and it grew in phases when these tensions were growing, as long as none of the competing groups had attained a decisive preponderance.

Notes

Part One

1. Oswald Spengler, *The Decline of the West* (London, 1926), p. 21: "Each Culture has its own new possibilities of self-expression which arise, ripen, decay, and never return. . . . These cultures, sublimated life-essences, grow with the same superb aimlessness as the flowers of the field. They belong, like the plants and the animals, to the living Nature of Goethe, and not to the dead Nature of Newton."

2. The whole question of the development of the concepts *Kultur* and *Zivilisation* needs a fuller examination than is possible here, where the problem can only be briefly introduced. Nevertheless, a few notes may support the ideas in the text.

It could be demonstrated that in the course of the nineteenth century, and particularly after 1870, when Germany was both strong in Europe and a rising colonial power, the antithesis between the two words diminished considerably at times, "culture" referring, as it does today in England and to some extent in France, to only a particular area or a higher form of civilization. Thus, for example, Friedrich Jodl, in his *Die Kulturgeschichtschreibung* (Halle, 1878, p. 3), defines "general cultural history" as "the history of civilization" (cf. also ibid., p. 25).

G. F. Kolb, in his *Geschichte der Menschheit und der Cultur* (1843; a later edition is entitled *Cultur-Geschichte der Menschheit*) includes in his concept of culture the idea of progress that is generally excluded from it today. He bases his conception of *Kultur* explicitly on Buckle's concept of *civilization*. But, as Jodl states (*Die Kulturgeschichtschreibung*, p. 36), his ideal "takes its essential features from modern conceptions and demands with regard to political, social, and religious freedom, and could easily be included in a party-political programme."

In other words, Kolb is a "progressive", a liberal from the pre-1848 period, a time when the concept of *Kultur* also approached the Western concept of civilization.

All the same, the 1897 edition of Meyer's *Konversationslexikon* still states: "Civilization is the stage

sometimes seems to us uncertain enough today, but this bears no comparison with the insecurity of the individual in medieval society. The greater control of sources of fear that is slowly established in the transition to our social structure is indeed one of the most elementary preconditions for the standard of conduct that we express by the concept of "civilization". The armour of civilized conduct would crumble very rapidly if, through a change in society, the degree of insecurity that existed earlier were to break in upon us again, and if danger became as incalculable as it once was. Corresponding fears would soon burst the limits set to them today.

However, one specific form of fear does grow with the increase of civilization: the half-unconscious "inner" fear of a breaching of the restrictions imposed on civilized men.

Some concluding ideas on this subject are to be found at the end of this book in Part Four, "Synopsis: Towards a Theory of Civilizing Processes".

Part Three

1. James Westfall Thompson, *Economic and Social History of Europe in the Later Middle Ages (1300–1530)* New York and London, 1931), pp. 506–7.

2. This is exemplified by the consequences resulting from the Carolingian estates or fisc. These were perhaps not as extreme as they appear from the following quotation; but undoubtedly the situation of the Carolingian fisc played a part in the formation of the national frontiers:

> The widespread character of the Carolingian fisc . . . made the fisc like a vast net in which the Empire was held. The division and dissipation of the fisc was a more important factor in the dissolution of the Frankish Empire than the local political ambition of the proprietary nobles . . .
>
> The historical fact that the heart of the fisc was situated in central Europe accounts for the partitions of central Europe in the ninth century, and made these regions a battle-ground of kings long before they became a battle-ground of . . . nations. . . .
>
> The dividing frontier between future France and future Germany was drawn in the ninth century because the greatest block of the fisc lay between them.

James Westfall Thompson, *Economic and Social History of the Middle Ages (300–1300)* (New York and London, 1928), pp. 241–2. Cf. by the same author: *The Dissolution of the Carolingian Fisc* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1935).

3. A. Luchaire, *Les premiers Capétiens* (Paris, 1901), p. 180.

4. C. Petit-Dutaillis, *Les monarchie féodale en France et en Angleterre* (Paris, 1933), p. 8 with following map. For details on the eastern frontier of the western Frankish empire and its movements, cf. Fritz Kern, *Die Anfänge der Französischen Ausdehnungspolitik* (Tübingen, 1910), p. 16.

5. Paul Kirn, *Das Abendland vom Ausgang der Antike bis zum Zerfall des karolingischen Reiches*, Propyläen-Weltgeschichte, vol. 3 (Berlin, 1932), p. 118.

6. Brunner, *Deutsche Rechtsgeschichte*, quoted by A. Dopsch, *Wirtschaftliche und soziale Grundlagen der europäischen Kulturentwicklung* (Vienna, 1924), pt. 2, pp. 100–1.

7. A. Dopsch, *Wirtschaftliche und soziale Grundlagen der europäischen Kulturentwicklung aus der Zeit von Cäsar bis auf Karl den Grossen* (Vienna, 1918–24), pt. 2, p. 115.

8. Kirn, op. cit., p. 118.

9. A. von Hofmann, *Politische Geschichte der Deutschen* (Stuttgart and Berlin, 1921–8), vol. 1, p. 405.

10. Ernst Dümmler, *Geschichte des ostfränkischen Reiches* (Berlin, 1862–88), vol. 2, p. 306.

11. Paul Kirn, *Politische Geschichte der deutschen Grenzen* (Leipzig, 1934), p. 24.

12. F. Lot, *Les derniers Carolingiens* (Paris, 1891), p. 4; also J. Calmette, *Le monde féodal* (Paris, 1934), p. 119.

13. Beaudoin, quoted by J. Calmette, *La société féodale* (Paris, 1932), p. 27.

14. Luchaire op. cit., pp. 176–7. A sketch of the distribution of rule at the time of Hugh Capet is given by M. Mignet, "Essai sur la formation territoriale et politique de la France", *Notices et Mémoires historiques* (Paris, 1845), vol. 2, pp. 154f.

15. A. Luchaire, *Histoire des Institutions Monarchiques de la France sous les premiers Capétiens (987–1180)* (Paris, 1883), vol. 2, Notes et Appendices, p. 329.

16. Karl Hampe, *Abendländisches Hochmittelalter*, Propyläen Weltegeschichte, vol. 3 (Berlin, 1932), p. 306.

17. Kirn, *Das Abendland vom Ausgang der Antike bis zum Zerfall des Karolingischen Reiches*, p. 119.

18. A. Dopsch, *Die Wirtschaftsentwicklung der Karolingerzeit vornehmlich in Deutschland* (Weimar, 1912), vol. 1, p. 162; cf. also the general account of manor and village in Knight, Barnes and Flügel, *Economic History of Europe* (London, 1930), "The Manor", pp. 165ff.

19. Marc Bloch, *Les caractères originaux de l'histoire rurale française* (Oslo, 1931), p. 23.

20. Dopsch, *Wirtschaftliche und soziale Grundlagen der europäischen Kulturentwicklung aus der Zeit von Cäsar bis auf Karl den Grossen*, pt. 2, p. 309: "The greater the real power, the economic and social base, of these officials became, the less the monarchy could contemplate transferring the office outside the incumbent's family on his death."

21. Calmette, *La société féodale*, p. 3.

22. Ibid., pp. 4–5. Cf. on this problem the contrast between European and Japanese feudalism in W. C. Macleod, *The Origin and History of Politics* (New York, 1931), pp. 160ff. Here, admittedly, the explanation of Western feudalization is sought rather in the preceding late-Roman institutions than in contemporary forces of integration: "Many writers appear to believe that Western European feudalism has its institutional origins in pre-Roman Teutonic institutions. Let us explain to the student that the fact is that . . . Germanic invaders merely seized upon those contractual institutions of the late Roman Empire which . . ." (p. 162). The very fact that analogous feudal relationships and institutions are formed in the most different parts of the world can only be fully understood through a clear insight into the compelling force of the actual relationships, into the dynamics of a specific figuration; and only analysis of them can explain why the feudalization processes and feudal institutions in different societies differ from one another in certain ways.

Another comparison between different feudal societies is to be found in O. Hintze, *Wesen und Verbreitung des Feudalismus*, Sitzungsberichte der Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, phil.-hist. Klasse (Berlin, 1929), pp. 321ff. The author, influenced by the ideas of Max Weber on the methodology of historical and social research, attempts "to describe the *ideal type* underlying the concept of feudalism". But while this study does begin to transform the older historiographical method into one more concerned with actual social structures and so gives rise to useful particular insights, its comparison of different feudal societies is one of the many examples of the difficulties arising when a historian takes over the methodological guiding ideas of Max Weber and tries—in the words of Otto Hintze—to construct "visual abstractions, types". The similarities confronting the observer of different people and societies are not ideal types that have in a sense to be mentally constructed by the observer, but a real, existing kinship between the social structures themselves; if this is lacking the historian's whole concept of types miscarries. If we are to oppose another concept to that of the "ideal type", it could be the "real type". The similarity between different feudal societies is not an artificial product of thought but, to reiterate, the result of the fact that similar forms of social bonding have a strong compelling tendency to develop in a way which in fact, and not only "in the idea", produces related patterns of relationships and institutions at different times and at different locations of global society. (The epistemological implications of this view will not be elaborated here; for some suggestions about this aspect of the problem, see N. Elias, *The Society of Individuals* [Oxford, 1991].)

A number of examples for which I am indebted to Ralph Bonwit have shown how remarkably similar the forces of social interweaving that led to feudal relations and institutions in Japan are to the structures and forces which have been established here in relation to Western feudalism. A

comparative structural analysis of this kind would prove a more useful way of explaining the peculiarities by which the feudal institutions of Japan and their historical change differ from those of the West.

Similar results have been produced by a preliminary investigation of the Homeric warrior society. To explain the production of large epic cycles—to mention only this feature—in ancient as in Western knightly society and in other societies with a similar structure, we do not need any speculative biologistic hypothesis, the notion of a "youth" of social "organisms". It is quite enough to examine the specific forms of social life that develop at medium and large feudal courts or on military campaigns and travels. Singers and minstrels with their versified reports of the fates and heroic deeds of great warriors that are passed from mouth to mouth, have in the daily life of such feudal warrior societies a specific place and function which differ from those of singers and songs in a tribe living more closely together, for example.

We also gain access to the structural changes in ancient warrior societies from a different angle by examining stylistic changes in the vases and vase paintings of early antiquity. When, for example, in vase paintings originating in particular periods, "baroque" elements appear, affected or—positively expressed—refined gestures and garments, we should think, instead of assuming a biological "ageing" of the society concerned, of processes of differentiation, the emergence of wealthier houses from the mass of warrior society and a greater or lesser transition from warriors to courtiers: or, depending on circumstances, we should look for a colonizing influence from more powerful courts. Insight into the specific tensions and processes within a feudal society which the more abundant documentation from the early European period makes possible can, in a word, in some respects sharpen and focus our observation of material from antiquity. But, of course, suppositions of this kind should in each case be supported by a rigorous examination of material pertaining to the structural history of antiquity itself.

Comparative studies of sociogenesis or structural history of this kind have scarcely begun. Indispensable for their success is an undertaking that has been made especially difficult by the oversharp distinction between academic disciplines and the lack of collaboration between them which have characterized research hitherto. Essential for an understanding of earlier feudal societies and their structure, for example, is an exact comparative study of living feudal societies before it is too late. A rich knowledge of details and structural connections necessary for an understanding of any society, which the material from the past is too fragmentary to provide, will only become available for interpretation if ethnology bases its research less exclusively on simpler societies, "tribes", and history concerns itself less with past societies and processes, and if both disciplines together turn their attention to those living societies which in their structure are close to the medieval society of the West. Both together should investigate the structure, in the strictest sense of the word, of such societies, the functional dependencies by which people in them are bound together in very specific ways, and the forces of interweaving which under certain circumstances bring about a change of these dependencies and relationships in a quite specific direction.

23. On this and the following discussion, cf. A. and E. Kulischer, *Kriegs- und Wanderzüge* (Berlin and Leipzig, 1932), pp. 50f.

24. J. B. Bury, *History of the Eastern Roman Empire* (1912), p. 373, quoted by Kulischer, op. cit., p. 62.

25. Henri Pirenne, *Les villes du moyen âge* (Brussels, 1927).

26. Paul Kirn, *Politische Geschichte der deutschen Grenzen* (Leipzig, 1934), pp. 15ff. For further details on the differences in pace and structure between German and French feudalization, cf. J. W. Thompson, "German Feudalism", *American Historical Review*, vol. 28, 1923, pp. 440ff. "What the ninth century did for France in transforming her into a feudal country was not done in Germany until the civil wars of the reign of Henry IV." Ibid., p. 444.

Here, admittedly (and subsequently in, for example, W. O. Ault, *Europe in the Middle Ages*, 1932) the decline of the western Frankish area is explained primarily in terms of the greater external threat:

"Germany being less exposed to attack from outside and possessed of a firmer texture within than France, German feudalism did not become as hard and set a system as was French feudalism. 'Old' France crumbled away in the ninth and tenth centuries; 'old' Germany, anchored to the ancient duchies, which remained intact, retained its integrity" (Thompson, op. cit., p. 443). But another decisive factor in the speed and degree of feudal disintegration in the western Frankish area was precisely the fact that after the Normans had settled invasions by foreign tribes, and therefore the external threat, was less than in the eastern Frankish area. The question whether larger areas, once unified, decay more slowly and whether conversely, once decayed, they re-integrate with greater difficulty than smaller ones, this problem of social dynamics remains to be investigated. But at any rate, hand in hand with the gradual weakening of the Carolingian house brought about at least in part by the unavoidable reduction in its wealth in the course of generations, by the loss of part of its land to pay for services or its division between different family members (this too remains to be examined in more detail), went a phase of disintegration embracing the whole Carolingian dominion. It may be that even in the ninth century this disintegration in the western Frankish area went somewhat further than in the later German region. But it was certainly more quickly arrested in the latter precisely because of the stronger external threat. Over a long period this threat gave individual tribal leaders the chance to become strong central rulers through military successes over common enemies and so to re-invigorate and extend the Carolingian central organization. And for a time the possibility of colonial expansion, the acquisition of new land on the eastern frontier of the German region, acted in the same direction to strengthen the central authority. In the western Frankish area, by contrast, from the ninth century on both factors were less: the threat of invasion by foreign tribes and the possibility of joint expansion across the frontier. Proportionately smaller was the chance of forming a strong monarchy; the "royal task" was lacking; and so feudal disintegration took place more quickly and completely. (Cf. pp. 197ff. and 213–14.)

27. E. Levasseur, *La population française* (Paris, 1889), vol. 1, pp. 154–5.
28. Bloch, op. cit., p. 5.
29. W. Cohn, *Das Zeitalter der Normannen in Sicilien* (Bonn and Leipzig, 1920).
30. H. Sée, *Französische Wirtschaftsgeschichte* (Jena, 1930), p. 7.
31. Kurt Breysig, *Kulturgeschichte der Neuzeit* (Berlin, 1901), vol. 2, pp. 937ff., partic. p. 948.

> If the actions of the three monarchies are compared . . . in seeking the reasons for their varying success, the ultimate cause will not be found in isolated events. The Norman-English monarchy benefited from a circumstance that lay neither in its power nor in that of any mortal being, but was founded in the whole structure of England's external and internal history. By virtue of the fact that in 1066 a new state was established in England from the foundations upwards, it was possible to make use of the experiences gathered by the great monarchies, most of all the closest, the French. The fragmentation of the high nobility and the hereditariness of offices were in a sense only the conclusions drawn by the Norman monarchy from the fate of its nearest example.

32. Pirenne, *Les villes du moyen âge*, p. 53. The opposite view has been taken more recently by D. M. Petrušeski, "Strittige Fragen der mittelalterlichen Verfassungs- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte", *Zeitschrift für die gesamte Staatswissenschaft*, vol. 85 (Tübingen, 1928), pp. 468ff. This work is not without interest in that, through its onesidedness in the opposite direction, it puts into proper perspective certain obscurities in the traditional historical view and certain inadequacies of existing concepts.

So, for example, the idea that the cities of antiquity had completely disappeared by the early Middle Ages is countered by one no less imprecise. Cf. the more balanced account by H. Pirenne, *Economic and Social History of Medieval Europe* (London, 1936), p. 40: "When the Islamic invasion had bottled up the ports of the Tyrrhenian Sea . . . municipal activity rapidly died out. Save in southern Italy and in Venice, where it was maintained thanks to Byzantine trade, it disappeared everywhere.

The towns continued in existence, but they lost their population of artisans and merchants and with it all that had survived of the municipal organisation of the Roman Empire."

To the static view whereby the "barter economy" and the "money economy" appear, not as expressions of the *direction* of a gradual historical process, but as two separate, successive and irreconcilable physical states of society (cf. pp. 206–7 and pp. 220ff. above), Petruševski opposed the different conception that no such thing as the "barter economy" ever existed: "We do not wish here to discuss in detail the fact that, as Max Weber has shown, the barter economy is one of those scholarly Utopias which not only do not exist and have never existed in actual reality, but which, unlike others . . . which are likewise Utopian generalizations on account of their logical character, can never have any application to actual reality" (p. 488). To this we may compare Pirenne's account (op. cit., p. 8):

> From the economic point of view the most striking and characteristic institution of this civilisation is the great estate. Its origin is, of course, much more ancient and it is easy to establish its affiliation with a very remote past . . . [p. 9]. What was new was the way in which it functioned from the moment of the disappearance of commerce and the towns. So long as the former had been capable of transporting its products and the latter of furnishing it with a market, the great estate had commanded and consequently profited by a regular sale outside . . . but now it ceased to do this, because there were no more merchants and townsmen now that everyone lived off his own land, no-one bothered to buy food from outside. . . . Thus, each estate devoted itself to the kind of economy which has been described rather inexactly as the "closed estate economy", and which was really simply an economy without markets.

Finally Petruševski opposes to the notion whereby "feudalism" and "barter economy" appear as two different spheres of existence or storeys of society, the latter as the infrastructure producing or causing the former as the superstructure, his own view that the two phenomena have nothing to do with each other: "... notions wholly at variance with historical fact, such as that of the contingency of feudalism on the barter economy or its incompatibility with a comprehensive state organisation" (p. 488).

It has been attempted to show the real state of affairs in the preceding text. The specific form of barter economy prevailing in the early Middle Ages, the relatively undifferentiated and market-less economies associated with the great courts, and the specific form of political and military organization which we call feudalism, are nothing other than two different aspects of the same forms of human relationships. They can be conceptually *distinguished* as two different aspects of the same human relationships, but even conceptually they cannot be *separated*, like two substances which can exist independently. The political and military functions of the feudal lord and his function as the owner of land and bondsmen are fully interdependent and indissolubly bound together. And likewise the changes which gradually took place in the situation of these lords and in the whole structure of this society cannot be explained *solely* in terms of an autonomous movement of economic relations and functions, or *solely* in terms of changes of political and military functions, but only in terms of the intertwining human activities comprising both these two inseparably connected areas of functions and forms of relationship.

33. Cf. the Introduction by Louis Halphen in A. Luchaire, *Les communes Françaises à l'époque des Capétiens directs* (Paris, 1911), p. viii.

34. Ibid., p. ix.

35. Ibid., p. 17.

36. Hans von Werveke, "Monnaie, lingots ou marchandises? Les instruments d'échange au XIe et XIIe siècles", *Annales d'histoire économique et sociale* (Sept. 1932), no. 17, p. 468.

37. Ibid. The corresponding process in the opposite direction, the recession of the use of money and the advance of payment in natural produce, sets in at an early stage of late antiquity: "The further the third century proceeds the faster the decline becomes. The only money remaining in circulation

is the antonianus. . . ." (F. Lot, *La fin du monde antique* (Paris, 1927), p. 63.) "Wages for the army tend more and more to be paid in produce" (p. 65) . . . "As for the ineluctable consequences of a system which allows services to be rewarded only by payment in kind, the distribution of land, they are readily perceived: they lead to what is called the feudal system or to an analogous régime" (p. 67).

38. M. Rostovtsev, *The Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire* (Oxford, 1926), pp. 66–7, p. 528 and many other places. Cf. Index: Transportation.

39. Richard Lefebvre des Noettes, *L'Attelage. Le cheval de selle à travers les âges. Contribution à l'histoire de l'esclavage* (Paris, 1931).

The investigations of Lefebvre des Noettes, on account both of their results and of their direction of enquiry, have an importance which can scarcely be overestimated. Beside the value of these results, which no doubt need confirmation on particular points, it is no great matter that the author stands the causal connection on its head, seeing the development of haulage technology as the cause of the elimination of slavery.

Indications of the necessary corrections are to be found in a critique of the book by Marc Bloch, "Problèmes d'histoire des techniques", *Annales d'histoire economique et sociale* (Sept. 1932). In particular, two aspects of Lefebvre des Noettes' work are partly accentuated and partly rectified. 1. The influence of China and Byzantium on the inventions of the Middle Ages appears to require closer examination. 2. Slavery had ceased to play an important part in the structure of the early medieval world long before the new harness appeared: "In the absence of any clear temporal succession how can one speak of a cause and effect relationship?" (p. 484). A comprehensive account of the essential results of this work by Lefebvre des Noettes in German is to be found in L. Löwenthal, "Zugtier und Sklaverei", *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung* (Frankfurt/Main, 1933), no. 2.

40. Lefebvre des Noëttes, "La 'Nuit' du moyen age et son inventaire", *Mercure de France* (1932), vol. 235, pp. 572ff.

41. Von Werveke, op. cit., p. 468.

42. A. Zimmern, *Solon and Croesus, and other Greek essays* (Oxford, 1928), pp. 113–14. Cf. also A. Zimmern, *The Greek Commonwealth* (Oxford, 1931).

For some time it has been emphasized—no doubt quite rightly—that in Rome freemen as well as slaves did manual work. Above all the research of M. Rostovtsev (cf. *The Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire*), and then specialized studies like that of R. H. Barrow, *Slavery in the Roman Empire* (London, 1928), e.g. pp. 124ff., have clarified these relationships. But the fact that freemen worked, however highly the share of their work in total production may be estimated, in no way contradicts what was illustrated earlier by the quotation from the work of A. Zimmern—the fact that the social processes and regularities within a society where manual work is done to any considerable extent by slaves differ in a very specific way from those within a society where all urban work at least is done exclusively by freemen. As a social tendency, the urge of freemen to distance themselves from work performed by slaves with the resulting formation of a class of "idle poor" in ancient society, as in modern ones with a large slave-labour sector, is always detectable. It is not difficult to understand that under the pressure of poverty a number of freemen are nevertheless forced to perform the same work as slaves. But it is no less clear that their situation, like that of manual labourers in general in such a society, is decisively influenced by the existence of slave labour. These freemen, or at least a part of them, are forced to accept conditions similar to those of slaves. Depending on the number of slaves available to such a society and on the degree of interdependence of their work with slave labour, the freemen always face a greater or lesser degree of competitive pressure from slave labour. This too is one of the structural regularities of any society of slavemasters. (Cf. also F. Lot, *La fin du monde antique*, pp. 69ff.)

43. According to A. Zimmern Greek society in its classical period was not a slave society in the typical sense of the word: "Greek society was not a slave-society; but it contained a sediment of slaves to perform its most degrading tasks, while the main body of its so-called slaves consisted of apprentices haled in from outside to assist, together and almost on equal terms with their masters,

in creating the material basis of a civilisation in which they were hereafter to share" (*Solon and Croesus*, pp. 161–2).

44. Pirenne, *Les villes du moyen âge*, pp. 1ff.

45. Ibid., pp. 10ff.

46. Ibid., p. 27. This "recourse to inland areas' and its significance for the development of Western society find confirmation in the fact that the evolution of land transport technology beyond its state in antiquity began, as far as we can see today, about a century earlier than that of nautical technology. The former began between about 1050 and 1100, the latter clearly not before 1200. Cf. Lefebvre des Noëttes, *De la marine antique à la marine moderne. La révolution du gouvernail* (Paris, 1935), pp. 105ff. Cf. also E. H. Byrne *Genoese Shipping in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries* (Cambridge, Mass., 1930), pp. 5–7.

47. A. Luchaire, *Louis VII, Philippe Auguste Louis VIII* (Paris, 1901), p. 80.

48. Calmette, *La société féodale*, p. 71. Cf. by the same author, *Le monde féodal*.

49. Law is, of course, through its fixation by an independent legal apparatus and the existence of bodies of specialists with a vested interest in the preservation of the status quo, relatively impervious to movement and change. Legal security itself, always desired by a considerable part of society, depends partly on the law's resistance to change. This immobility is indeed increased by it. The larger the areas and the number of people which are integrated and interdependent, the more necessary becomes a uniform law extending over such areas—as necessary, for example, as a uniform currency; the more strongly, therefore, the law and its apparatus, which like currency becomes itself in turn an organ of integration and a producer of interdependence, opposes any change, and the more serious are the disturbances and shifts of interest that any change brings with it. This too contributes to the fact that the mere threat of force by the "legitimate" organs of power is for long periods enough to make individuals and whole social groups comply with what has once been established as the norm of law and property on the basis of a particular stage of social power relationships. The interests identified with the preservation of existing legal and property relationships are so great, and the weight which law receives through growing integration is so clearly felt, that the constant testing of social power relations in physical struggles to which people in less interdependent societies are always inclined is replaced by a long-enduring readiness to abide by the existing law. Only when upheavals and tensions within society have become extraordinarily great, when interest in the preservation of the existing law has become uncertain in large parts of society, only then, often after intervals lasting centuries, do groups in a society begin to test in physical struggles whether the established law corresponds to the actual social power relationships.

When society had a predominantly barter economy and people were far less interdependent, and when, therefore, the most real though not visually representable network of society as a whole did not yet constantly confront the individual with its greater strength, the social power maintaining each legal claim by an individual had to be always fairly directly visible. If it became doubtful, the claim lapsed. Every property owner had to be ready to prove in physical combat that he still had enough military and social power to back his "legal claim". Corresponding to the closer intertwining of human activities at a later stage over large areas with relatively good communications, however, a law has developed that largely disregards local individual differences, a so-called general law, i.e. a law applicable and valid equally over the whole area for all the people within it.

The different kind of social interweaving and dependence existing in feudal society, with its largely barter economy, entrusted small groups and often single individuals with functions that are today exercised by "states". Thus "law", too, was incomparably more individualized and local. It was an obligation and bond entered into by this liege lord and that vassal, this group of tenants and that landlord, this civic corporation and that lord, this abbey and that duke. And a study of these "legal relationships" gives a very vivid idea of what it means when we say that in this phase social integration and interdependence were less and the relation of man to man correspondingly different.

We should take care [says Pirenne for example in *Les villes du moyen âge*, pp. 168–9] not to attribute exaggerated importance to urban charters. Neither in Flanders nor in any other region of Europe do they contain the totality of urban law. They confine themselves to fixing the main outlines, formulating some essential principles and resolving some particularly important conflicts. For most of the time they are products of special circumstances and have taken account only of questions being debated when they were drawn up. . . . If the burghers watched over them for centuries with extraordinary solicitude, it was because they were the paladium of their liberty, because they permitted them to justify revolt in cases of violation, but it was not because they enclosed the whole of their law. They were, as it were, no more than its skeleton. All around their stipulations proliferated a rich vegetation of customs, usages, privileges which were not less indispensable for being unwritten.

This is so true that a good number of charters themselves foresaw and recognized in advance the development of urban law. . . . In 1127 the Count of Flanders granted the burghers of Bruges "ut de die in diem consuetudinarias leges suas corrigerent", that is, the permission to add from day to day to their municipal customs.

Here again we see how, on that different level of integration, formations of a different order of magnitude, a town and a major feudal lord, stood in the same sort of relationship to each other as today only "states" do; and their legal agreements show the same pattern as those of the latter, following fairly directly shifts of interest and social strength.

50. Calmette, *La société féodale*, pp. 70–1.
51. A. Luchaire, *La société française au temps de Philippe Auguste* (Paris, 1909), p. 265.
52. C. H. Haskins, *The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century* (Cambridge, 1927), p. 55.
53. Ibid. p. 56.
54. Ibid.
55. Eduard Wechssler, *Das Kulturproblem des Minnesangs* (Halle, 1909), p. 173.
56. Ibid., p. 174.
57. Ibid., p. 143.
58. Ibid., p. 113.
59. Hennig Brinkmann, *Entstehungsgeschichte des Minnesangs*, (Halle, 1926), p. 86.
60. Wechssler, op. cit., pp. 140–1.
61. Luchaire, *La société française au temps de Philippe Auguste*, p. 374.
62. Ibid., p. 379.
63. Ibid., p. 380.
64. Pierre de Vaissière, *Gentilshommes campagnards de l'ancienne France* (Paris, 1903), p. 145.
65. Brinkmann, op. cit., p. 35.
66. Wechssler, op. cit., p. 71.
67. Schönback, quoted in Wechssler, op. cit., p. 74. Similarly in Marianne Weber, *Ehefrau und Mutter in der Rechtsentwicklung* (Tübingen, 1907), p. 265.
68. De Vaissière, op. cit., p. 145.
69. Wechssler, op. cit., p. 214.
70. Brinkmann, op. cit., pp. 45ff., 61, 86ff. Cf. on this and what follows C. S. Lewis, *The Allegory of Love: a Study in Medieval Tradition* (Oxford, 1936), p. 11.

The new thing itself, I do not pretend to explain. Real changes in human sentiment are very rare, but I believe that they occur and that this is one of them. I am not sure that they have 'causes', if by a cause we mean something which would wholly account for the new state of affairs, and so explain away what seemed its novelty. It is, at any rate, certain that the efforts of scholars have so far failed to find an origin for the content of Provençal love poetry.

71. In England the corresponding term is found in later periods restricted, sometimes even

explicitly, to servants. An example of this is the way in which, in an English account of what constitutes a good meal, the "curtese and honestie of servantes" is contrasted to the "kyne frendeshyp and company of them that sytte at the supper". G. G. Coulton, *Social Life in Britain* (Cambridge, 1919), p. 375.

72. F. Zarncke, *Der deutsche Cato* (Leipzig, 1852). p. 130, v. 71 and p. 132, v. 141f. For other aspects of this first main phase in the transition from warriors to courtiers (the education and codes of knightly orders in different countries) cf. E. Prestage, *"Chivalry": a series of studies to illustrate its historical significance and civilizing influence* (London, 1928); including A. T. Byles, "Medieval courtesy-books and the prose romances of chivalry" (pp. 183ff.).

73. Luchaire, *Les premiers Capétiens*, p. 285; cf. also A. Luchaire, *Louis VI le Gros* (Paris, 1890), Introduction.

74. Luchaire, *Histoire des Institutions Monarchiques de la France sous les premiers Capétiens* (987–1180), vol. 2, p. 258.

75. Cf. pp. 17ff., partic. pp. 31–2.

76. Suger, *Vie de Louis le Gros*, ed. Moliner, ch. 8, as quoted by A. Lognon, *La formation de l'unité française* (Paris, 1922), pp. 18–19.

77. A. Vuitry, *Études sur le régime financier de la France* (Paris, 1878), p. 181.

78. Luchaire, *Louis VI*.

79. "The land from Northumberland to the Channel was easier to unify than from Flanders to the Pyrenees." Petit-Dutaillis, *La monarchie féodale*, p. 37. On the question of size of territory, cf. also R. H. Lowie, *The Origin of the State* (New York, 1927), "The size of the state", pp. 17ff.

W. M. Macleod in *The Origin and History of Politics* (New York, 1931) points out how astonishing it really was that given the simplicity of their means of transport such large dominions as the Inca or Chinese empires should have proved so stable. Only a detailed structural-historical analysis of the interplay of centrifugal and centralizing tendencies and interests in these empires could, indeed, make the agglomeration of such vast areas and the nature of their cohesion comprehensible to us.

The Chinese form of centralization, compared to that developed in Europe, is certainly very peculiar. Here the warrior class was eradicated relatively early and very radically by a strong central authority. This eradication—however it happened—is connected with two main peculiarities of the Chinese social structure: the passing of control of the land into the hands of the peasants (which we encounter in the early Western period only in a very few places, for example, Sweden) and the manning of the governmental apparatus by a bureaucracy always recruited in part from the peasants themselves and at any rate wholly pacified. Mediated by this hierarchy, courtly forms of civilization penetrate deep into the, lower classes of the people: they take root, transformed in many ways, in the code of behaviour of the village. And what has so often been called the "unwarlike" character of the Chinese people is not the expression of some "natural disposition". It results from the fact that the class from which the people drew many of their models through constant contact, was for centuries no longer a warrior class, a nobility, but a peaceful and scholarly officialdom. It is primarily their situation and function which is expressed in the fact that in the traditional Chinese scale of values—unlike the Japanese—military activity and prowess hold no very high place. Different as the Chinese way to centralization was to that in the West in detail, therefore, the foundation of the cohesion of larger dominions in both cases was the elimination of freely competing warriors or landowners.

80. On the importance of the monopoly of physical force in the building of "states", cf. above all Max Weber, *Economy and Society* (New York, 1968).

81. Cf. pp. 263–4 above. It has not been necessary here to follow the present-day custom and offer a mathematical expression for the regularity of the monopoly mechanism. No doubt it would not be impossible to find one. Once it has been found it will be possible to discuss also from this aspect a question which generally speaking is hardly raised today: the question of the *cognitive* value of mathematical formulation. What, for example, is gained in terms of possibilities of knowledge and

of clarity by a mathematical formulation of the monopoly mechanism? This question can only be answered on the basis of simple experience.

What is certain, however, is that for many people the formulation of general laws is associated with a value which—at least as far as history and sociology are concerned—has nothing to do with their cognitive value. This untested evaluation often enough leads research astray. Many people regard it as the most essential task of research to explain all changes by something unchangeable. And the regard for mathematical formulation derives not least from this evaluation of the immutable. But this scale of values has its roots not in the cognitive task of research itself but in the researcher's longing for eternity. General regularities like that of the monopoly mechanism and all other general patterns of relationships, whether mathematically formulated or not, do not constitute the final goal or culmination of historical and sociological research. Understanding of such regularities is fruitful as a *means* to a different end, a means of orientating human beings with regard to themselves and their world. Their value lies solely in their function in elucidating historical change.

82. On this see "On the Sociogenesis of Feudalism", pp. 230–6 above, especially pp. 230–1. On "social power" see also the "Note on the concept of social power", p. 234, note.

83. Auguste Longnon, *Atlas historique de la France* (Paris, 1889).

84. Luchaire, *Histoire des Institutions Monarchiques* (1891), vol. 1, p. 90.

85. Petit-Dutaillis, *La monarchie féodale en France et en Angleterre*, pp. 109ff.

86. A. Cartellieri, *Philipp II August und der Zusammenbruch des angevinischen Reiches* (Leipzig, 1913), p. 5.

87. Cf. A. Longnon, *La formation de l'unité française* (Paris, 1922), p. 98.

88. Luchaire, *Louis VII. Philippe Augustus. Louis VIII*, p. 204.

89. C. Petit-Dutaillis, *Études sur la vie et le règne de Louis VIII* (Paris, 1894), p. 220.

90. A. Vuitry, *Etudes sur le régime financier de la France*, nouvelle série, vol. 1 (Paris, 1883), p. 345.

91. Ibid., p. 370.

92. A more exact compilation of these feudal houses is to be found in Longnon, *La formation de l'unité française*, pp. 224f.

93. Vuitry, op. cit., p. 414.

94. Cf. e.g. Karl Mannheim, "Competition as a Cultural Phenomenon", in *Essays on the Sociology of Knowledge*. London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1952, pp. 191–229.

95. G. Dupont-Ferrier, *La formation de l'état français et l'unité française* (Paris, 1934), p. 150.

96. L. Mirot, *Manuel de geographie historique de la France* (Paris, 1929), Map 19. This also contains maps relating to the foregoing discussion.

97. P. Imbert de la Tour, *Les origines de la réforme* (Paris, 1909), 1, p. 4.

98. Mirot, op. cit., Map 21.

99. Henri Hauser, review of G. Dupont-Ferrier, "La formation de l'état français", *Revue Historique* (1929), vol. 161, p. 381.

100. L. W. Fowles, Loomis Institute, USA, quoted in *News Review*, No. 35, p. 32.

101. Luchaire, *Les communes françaises à l'epoque des Capétiens directs*, p. 276.

102. Documentation for these and a number of other passages could not be included for reasons of space. The author hopes to append this in a separate volume.

103. P. Lehugeur, *Philippe le Long (1316–1322). Le mécanisme du gouvernement* (Paris, 1931), p. 209.

104. Dupont-Ferrier, op. cit., p. 93.

105. Brantôme, *Oeuvres complètes*, publiées par L. Lalanne, vol. 4, pp. 328ff.

106. J. H. Mariéjol, *Henri IV et Louis XIII* (Paris, 1905), p. 2.

107. Ibid., p. 390.

108. Cf. A. Stölzel, *Die Entwicklung des gelehrten Richtertums in deutschen Territorien* (Stuttgart, 1872), p. 600.

109. Richelieu, *Politisches Testament*, pt. 1, ch. 3, section 1.

110. E. Lavisse, *Louis XIV* (Paris, 1906), p. 128.

111. Saint-Simon, *Memoiren*, tr. by Lotheisen, vol. 1, p. 167.

112. Cf. Lavisse, op. cit., p. 130.

113. Saint-Simon, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 167.

114. Saint-Simon, *Mémoires* (nouv. éd. par A. de Boislisle) (Paris, 1910), vol. 22, p. 35 (1711).

115. Thomas Aquinas, *De regimine Judaeorum*, Rome edit., vol. 19, p. 622.

116. Vuitry, op. cit., pp. 392ff.

117. Ibid., nouvelle série, vol. 1, p. 145. For another form of the monetarization of feudal seigneurial rights under the pressure of the kings' growing need for money, the liberation, for payment, of bondsmen by the king and his administration, cf. Marc Bloch, *Rois et Serfs* (Paris, 1920).

118. Paul Viollet, *Histoire des institutions politiques et administratives de la France* (Paris, 1898), vol. 2, p. 242.

119. Ibid.

120. Vuitry, op. cit., nouv. sér., vol. 2, p. 48.

121. G. Dupont-Ferrier, "La Chambre ou Cour des Aides de Paris", *Revue historique*, vol. 170 (Paris, 1932), p. 195; cf. on this and what follows the same author, *Études sur les institutions financières de la France*, vol. 2 (Paris, 1932).

122. Léon Mirot, *Les insurrections urbaines au début du règne de Charles VI* (Paris, 1905), p. 7.

123. Ibid., p. 37.

124. Dupont-Ferrier, "La Chambre ou Cour des Aides de Paris", p. 202. Cf. also Petit-Dutaillis, *Charles VII Louis XI et les premières années de Charles VIII* (Lavisse, *Hist. de France*, IV, 2) (Paris, 1902).

125. Viollet, op. cit., vol. 3 (Paris, 1903), pp. 465–6. Cf. also Thomas Basin, *Histoire des règnes de Charles VII et de Louis XI*, ed. Quicherat (Paris, 1855), vol. 1, pp. 170ff. Details on financial organization are in G. Jacqueton, *Documents relatifs à l'administration financière en France de Charles VII à François Ier (1443–1523)* (Paris, 1891), partic. no. XIX in question-and-answer form, "Le vestige des finances". (A manual for future finance officials of the time?)

126. E. Albèri, *Relazioni degli Ambasciatori Veneti al Senato*, 1st series, vol. 4 (Florence, 1860), pp. 16–18 (Relazione di Francia di Zaccaria Contarini, 1492).

127. L. von Ranke, *Zur venezianischen Geschichte* (Leipzig, 1878), p. 59, and H. Kretschmayr, *Geschichte von Venedig* (Stuttgart, 1934), pp. 159ff.

128. Albèri, op. cit., 1st series, vol. 1 (Florence, 1839), pp. 232–5.

It has been frequently pointed out, no doubt with a certain justification, that the first absolutist princes in France had learned much from the princes of the Italian city states. For example, G. Hanotaux, "Le pouvoir royale sous François Ier", in *Études historiques sur le XVIe et le XVIIe siècle en France* (Paris, 1886), pp. 7ff: "The court at Rome and the Venetian Chancellery would have sufficed on their own to spread the new doctrines of diplomacy and politics. But, in reality, in the profusion of petty states which shared the peninsula, there was not one that could not have furnished examples. . . . The monarchies of Europe went to school at the courts of the princes and tyrants of Naples, Florence and Ferrara."

No doubt structurally similar processes took place here, as so often, first in smaller regions then in larger ones, and the leaders of the large regions profited up to a point from their knowledge of the organization of the smaller ones. But in this case as well, only a precise examination in terms of structural history could determine how far the centralization processes and the organization of government in the Italian city states resemble those of early absolutist France, and how far, since differences of size always bring with them qualitative differences of structure, they also diverge from them. At any rate the account given by the Venetian ambassador and its whole tone does not indicate that he regarded the specific power position of the French king and the organization of finances connected to it as something long familiar in Italy.

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