

الفلاح وحركات الفلاحين

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موجز

يتضمن المقال المنشور باللغة الانجليزية جزءا من العمل الذي قمت به في اطار رسالة الدكتوراة (Ph. D) وهو الجزء التاريخي الخاص بعالم الريف عامة وحركات الفلاحين عبر بلدان العالم وما عاناه هؤلاء من استغلال واضطهاد عبر العصور.

والمقال يعالج مجموعة من النقاط المتصلة بالموضوع مثل تعريف الفلاحين (Peasants) ومكانة هؤلاء في المجتمع وخصائص هذه الفئة الاجتماعية الهامة ودورها في مختلف الميادين الاجتماعية والاقتصادية والسياسية. ثم تطور حركة الفلاحين في اطار النظام الرأسمالي والاشتراكي عامة وكذلك علاقة الفلاح بنظريات المركز والمحيط الحديثين. قبل التطرق الى بعض النماذج من حروب الفلاحين وانتفاضاتهم في العالم: آسيا، وأوروبا، وأفريقيا، وأمريكا اللاتينية، وقد نوقشت فرضية قيام الفلاحين بالثورة ومدى مساهمتهم فيها، قبل التعرض الى ظاهرة الزعامة والدين في حركة الفلاحين عبر العالم وكذلك علاقة الفلاحين بالاستعمار الغربي الحديث.

THE PEASAN AND PEASNT MOVEMENTS THROUGH HISTORY *

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It is useful to start with a brief definition of peasants, the subject of this study. Who are they and how are they related to the larger society in which they are part? The several definitions and viewpoints presented are intended to help understand more fully this important portion of every developing society, its movement and development. These large popular masses have often been forgotten, underestimated, exploited, and relatively little attention has been paid them by historians. Ranga noted that historians:

«have been so much under the spell cast by the princely and priestly order and under the mistaken impression that only the upper classes, intellectuals and professionals mattered in the life of nations that the ideals and aspirations and the efforts and the struggles of the peasant masses of the different countries to gain their due place in society have rarely received sufficient attention.» (Ranga, 13).

Obviously, peasants are not among any of the above mentioned categories. They are, however, struggling to gain their place in society. Hence this definition does not exclude the urban proletariat who also struggles for equating, to gain their place in society.

* This is the historical part of my Ph. D. dissertation, **Peasants, Defendancy and Underdeveloped Areas of Algeria: The Case of Beni -Chebana**, M.S.U., Dept. of Sociology, 1985.

Ibn Khaldun may have made clear the difference between city and country people by considering the level of living. Country people are characterized by a subsistence economy as compared to city dwellers who reach higher levels of living. Ibn Khaldun wrote:

«Bare necessities, in a way, are basic, and luxuries secondary. Bedouins, thus, are the basis of, and prior to, cities and sedentary people. Man seeks just the bare necessities. Only after he has obtained the bare necessities does he get to comfort and luxuries. The toughness of desert life precedes the softness of sedentary life. Therefore, urbanization is bound to be the goal to which the Bedouin aspires. (...) Sedentary people on the other hand, have no desire for desert conditions, unless they are motivated by some urgent necessity or they cannot keep up with their fellow city dwellers.» (Ibn Khaldun, 93).

The definition, made in fourteenth century and based on economic activity and different ways of making a living, is still relevant today. Peasants are those who live by agriculture and animal husbandry which requires wide fields and pastures not needed by residents of settled areas. What seems more important here is the peasants' attitude toward urbanization as their ultimate goal. They are struggling but unable to go beyond bare subsistence level, limited in food, shelter, and warmth. The peasants' struggle is explained by their aspirations for city life as a means of getting more wealth and comfort. Hence, they tend to rest, take it easy, build large houses and lay out towns and cities for protection. In other words, peasants become urbanized.

Contemporary definitions of peasants are not much different from that described by Ibn Khaldun. Landsberger points out the thoroughly confused situation concerning the definition of peasant as follows:

«There are considerable differences not only between outstanding authors, but even crucial variations for the same author within relatively short time.» (Landsberger, 6).

These differences and variations can be seen in the definitions by Moore and Eric Wolf. Moore, while recognizing the impossibility of defining the word peasantry with absolute precision, considered the main distinguishing features of a peasantry as legal subordination, cultural distinctiveness, and *de facto* land possession. Wolf and

Moore, viewed by Landsberger to be the chief authorities on the subject of the peasantry and their movements. Wolf, in his study of Latin American Types of Peasantry, emphasized land ownership as critical to an adequate definition. Ten years later, Wolf changed his definition based on land ownership to another important criterion, namely, a peasant's loss of control over land and his own labor: «Peasants... are rural cultivators whose surpluses are transferred to a dominant group of rulers». (Landsberger, 7).

Wolf keeps changing his criterion of peasant status – from land ownership, to exploitation, and to decision making regarding the cultivation process:

I define peasants as populations that are existentially involved in cultivation and make autonomous decisions regarding the process of cultivation. The category is thus made to cover tenants and sharecroppers as well as owner-operators as long as they are in a position to make the relevant decisions on how their crops are grown. It does not, however, include fishermen or landless laborers.» (Wolf, XIV).

Wolf makes a clear difference between peasants and cultivators which fact makes his definition of peasant very close, if not identical, to that of Ibn Khaldun. He asserts that:

«The major aim of the peasant is subsistence and social status gained within a narrow range of social relationships. Peasants are thus unlike cultivators, who participate fully in the market and commit themselves to a status game set within a wide social network.» (Wolf, XIV).

The new dimension of the definition of peasant is found in Ibn Khaldun's definition of the Bedouins who:

«Restrict themselves to the bare necessities in their way of life and are unable to go beyond them, while sedentary people concern themselves with conveniences and luxuries in their conditions and customs.» (Ibn Khaldun, 93).

The term Bedouin may need some explanation. It is taken from «Badiya», meaning countryside and since the Arabic country is mainly desert, the word becomes synonymous with desert and those living in the desert who are usually constantly moving and looking for pasture ground. Animal husbandry is their main source of income.

The sedentary people, by contrast, make a living from land rather than animal husbandry. Both categories depend on land for their living and are not city dwellers. Ibn Khaldun characterizes the Bedouin as follows:

«Through his own efforts, he achieves what he proposes to achieve in this respect. He has obtained enough to be ready for the conditions and customs of luxury, he enters upon a life of ease and submits himself to the yoke of the city.» (Ibn Khaldun, 93).

Here, we are provided with a process of change from the subsistence to a higher level of living or in other words from the peasant to farmer who:

«...enters the market fully, subject his land and labor to open competition, explores alternative uses for the factors of production in the search for maximal returns, and favors the more profitable product over the one entailing smaller risk.» (Wolf, XV).

Thus, Wolf only stated the facts without looking at possible reasons for being and undergoing change. For Wolf, the peasant has no aspiration, no struggle, no consciousness of the obstacles and difficulties facing him and no city-country antagonism. What separates and creates these two types of societies and how can one change positions? To these questions, Wolf doesn't say anything. It appears that Ibn Khaldun had more depth in his definition than Wolf, despite his stating that:

«In our accounts, therefore, we must transcend the usual anthropological account of peasants and seek information also about larger society and its constituent class grouping, for the peasant acts in an area which also contains allies as well as enemies.» (Wolf, XII).

Kroeper also stressed the fact that peasants are «part-society with part-cultures» in a larger society. This is congruent, as Landsberger mentioned, with subordination and exploitation as well as with the necessary existence of a state or of cities, beyond the peasantry (Landsberger, 8). It is inconceivable to study a peasantry completely isolated from the rest of a nation's situation. This kind of study would be out of context and surely meaningless. Moreover, the national context may not be enough, in today's world, to fully understand the underdeveloped world's peasantry

because it is so closely affected by the international socio-economic division of labor and capitalist domination and exploitation. Hence, peasant decision making, mentioned by Wolf, is scarcely possible.

CAPITALISM AND SOCIALISM

The above criteria of land ownership, control of the production process, partial orientation to a market and or culture cannot, separately, explain the situation of the peasantry in developing countries. A whole set of criteria may be needed to understand this phenomenon within the framework of the capitalist mode of production dominating periphery countries. Wolf distinguished two categories of farm operations: the peasant, with narrow relationship status and subsistence activity, and the farmer, wide open to competition and profit-oriented production. The farmer is found in both center and periphery countries, while the peasant is a phenomenon of the periphery countries. Wolf, as well as Moore, mentioned some peasant characteristics but failed to deal with the crucial problem of change. It was Karl Marx and the Marxists later on who made interesting insights on the subject. Marx, applying his theory of change over time within the stratification of the peasantry, predicted that:

«Agriculture, too would become capitalistic. Consequently, property for the same kinds of technological and economic reasons operating in industry, would also become highly concentrated and would have the same result as in industry, including the generation of a propertyless, increasing class consciousness, rural proletariat.» (Landsberger, 5).

Marx, however, as is well known and despite the generalization of his theory, was not much interested in the agricultural sector and the situation of the peasantry which as he saw it would disappear. Rather, it was Lenin and Mao Tse Tung, faced with tactical questions of a revolution in rural societies, who needed a clear delineation of the rural situation. Lenin defined, as early as the 1890's three sub-groups of the peasantry: well-to-do peasantry, including

Kulak; middle peasant who is a tenant and owning a small plot of land; and the poor peasant who sells his labor – a proletarian, part of the toiling masses. Lenin did not change his division of the peasantry after the Russian revolution and sought to explore each sub-class position with regard to bourgeois revolution and the struggle for socialism against the bourgeoisie. As for Mao, he spoke of organizing five kinds of peasants into a single organization: landless, semi-landless, sharecroppers, farm laborers and handicraftsmen. (Landsberger, 16-7).

CENTER-PERIPHERY

Relationship between center and periphery countries represented by trade of merchandise, flow of capital, technology, organization, current ideologies, etc. The achieved capitalism of the center dominates periphery capitalism in formation. So, the center-periphery concept is of utmost importance with regard to our study and which will be kept in mind when analyzing the developing world's socio-economic phenomena. As Amin pointed out:

«It is sure that a fundamental error is committed any time a Third World phenomenon is studied by looking at its cause in the Third-World itself, rather than situating it within the world system dialectic.» (Amin, 50).

If this is true, the peasants of the developing countries are, consequently, not only part of their own societies, but they are also an integrated part of the capitalist system worldwide. This reasoning would allow us to understand why the rural areas of developing countries are still experiencing underdevelopment and relative backwardness, even many years after national independence. The centers of the periphery countries are subject to foreign influence that make them helpless in relation to other parts of the country.

PEASANT UPRISINGS AND WARS

Peasants throughout the world have always been aware of their depressed socio-economic, cultural, and political situation. They express their deep sense of injustice and discontent in different ways – permanent struggles, uprisings, and their literature. The sense of exploitation is, for instance, clearly expressed in this Argentinian song in Spanish (Castex, II):

«Las penas son de nosotros, las vaquinas son de ajenas.» That is: «The pains are ours, but the cows are not.»

This sense of injustice is not limited to individual cases of accidental situations. Rather, it is a general trend throughout the world and throughout human history. Peasant uprisings have been widespread and have appeared in most, if not all, countries of the world. These uprisings have had limited scope in some cases. They have failed many times, have been short-lived in many others, but they were not specific to any country or limited historical period. Among the peasant uprisings some are very famous as the following quote attests:

«Not only massive individual discontent, but organized protests have been an important ingredient of the history of the rural sector of many societies. This is true from Russia in the north to Indonesia in the south; from Latin America around the world to the Philippines; from at least the seventh century of this era until, of course, this very moment.» (Landsberger, I).

Some uprisings, in which the peasantry played a key role, constituted major breaks in the history of certain societies, and others left international effects such as those of the French and Russian revolutions, or that of Mexico from 1910 onwards and Bolivia some forty years later. Some of the most recent and noteworthy peasant wars are those of Cuba, Vietnam and Algeria. The peasant consciousness is becoming sharper and his ability to struggle is growing stronger than ever before:

«In the larger areas of the world, peasants are astir with a new spirit of hope and adventure. They are no longer indifferent to their old shackles of feudalism or the new instruments of exploitation created by the capitalism. They are in revolt against capitalism, imperialism, and feudalism...» (Ranga, I).

Today's peasant strength is mainly due to two opposite modern forces, namely capitalism and socialism. Capitalism, through world market instruments, opens the eyes of peasants to worldwide economic crises which create a need to organize in sheer self-defense. Socialism, to quote Ranga:

«... has shattered whatever inferiority complex peasants might have had about their own right to and capacity for playing their part in the governance of their countries and also their pressing need to capture political power.» (Ranga, 2).

Both Ibn Khaldun and Ranga saw peasant democratic society as being the first among the various orders, but peasants lost power and became oppressed and enslaved during the feudal era. Everywhere, they came to be degraded into slavery, serfdom, and peonage. They lost political rights and were kept down by the growing pressure of economic, social, and political oppression.

Therefore, feudalism kept peasant masses under control for a long time before recovering from political torpor and religious stupor and to begin again to cherish political ambitions. The European peasants were the first to benefit from Marxist ideology. In Ranga's words, they: «had to wait until the Russian proletariat triumphed to give wings to their political ambitions.» (Ranga, 15). Marxism, thus, played a major role in helping the masses to regain power in modern societies. But peasants did not wait for successful preconditions be put together to stage a revolt or rebellion. Organized protests started from the seventh century, as Landberger asserts, while Ranga goes even deeper with regard to peasant revolts and slave rebellion in Europe:

«Especially famous is the slave rebellion which broke out in Rome about 2000 years ago, under the leadership of Spartacus, who mobilized a huge army against the regime of the slave owners.» (Ranga, 16).

The fourteenth century witnessed a wave of revolts against feudal oppression in French and English societies. The French peasants rose in their revolts of 1358 and struck terror into the feudal lords. A better organized and integrated revolt took place in England during the same

century. Inspired by such eminent clergymen as Martin Luther and Husse rising in revolt against the church of Rome, German peasants set about killing feudal lords and their agents, burning down their palaces, and occupying their lands. They came very near complete success, but Martin Luther turned against them because he was not a thoroughgoing revolutionary. Successive generations of German peasants went into revolts in 1618-48, 1740-86, and 1790. (Ranga: 116-31).

The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries saw other peasant revolts in Western Europe. Swedish peasants found common ground with the rising bourgeoisie and together succeeded in obtaining valuable concessions from the King; the French Revolution of 1789 owed most of its success to the revolutionary peasants who suffered so greatly and for so long that their hearts were set on their various demands; and the Swiss peasants freed the country around 700 years ago. The Balkan areas of Rumania, Bukovia, Bessaravia, Czechoslovakia, Austria, Hungary, Greece and Yugoslavia also were not exceptions. The peasants in these countries have had a long tradition of revolts. The struggle for national liberation from the Turkish domination was intertwined with the movement against their oppressors. They had undergone terrible sufferings at hands of the Turks and internal enemies, the landlords. (Ranga, 131-2).

Russian peasant revolts were many, the most famous of them occurring in 1606-7, 1670-1, 1707-8, and 1773-5. The Russian peasants were emancipated from slavery only in 1907. Nehru's assessment of Russian peasant achievement is as follows:

«This confiscation of the big estates took place entirely on the initiative of the peasants and many months before Bolsheviks revolution. Lenin was in favour of the immediate transfer of the land to the peasants in an organized way. When the Bolsheviks came to power later on, they found Russian peasant proprietors.» (Ranga, 164).

Ranga counted 670 peasant uprisings in Russia between 1900 and 1904, of which 441 were against landlords and 196

against government authorities. Some two million workers went on strike in 1905, while fifty to seventy-five million peasants rose in rebellion. They destroyed some 2,000 mansions, burned down feudal properties, and distributed a large number of feudal lands among themselves. (Ranga, 140-65).

The African peasants may have suffered much more than any peasants due to the slavery system, colonialism, and local feudalism. Dubois wrote in «Black-Folk»:

«Africa has been literally bathed in blood at the behest of Europe: Not only was there the discrimination due to the African slave trade but there were eleven Zulu wars in South Africa from 1659 to 1893; there were seven wars of the English against Ashanti; there were the wars around Benin and the French wars in Dahomey and other parts of West Africa; there was the English attack on Ethiopia and in the Sudan and the rise of the Mahdi; there were repeated rebellions as the English and Germans entered East Africa, to say nothing of the fights in Egypt, Tunis, Algiers and Morocco.» (Ranga, 183).

For centuries, the Algerian peasants unsuccessfully fought feudalism, foreign intrusions, and later on, colonialism. The political power as well as socio-economic institutions, were concentrated in foreign hands. The rulers lived in Casbahs protected by their armies. Invaders faced local resistance and revolts but the limited scope of these allowed them to be defeated, as was the case of many peasant uprisings over the world. Pre-colonial Algerian peasants rose against their oppressors ever since the beginning of the 19th century; Kabylia, 1804-10, (1823). West, under Derkaqua (1805); East, Nememcha and Souf (1813-23), French invasion (1830), Abdelkader (1832-47), Mokrani (1871-2), and many others before the liberation war (1954-62), (Wolf, AA, August, 19-25, 1982).

The Indians of Latin America were duped into a false treaty. First, their chief was murdered before they were converted into a subjected race. Their lands were confiscated and their conversion into peons of the Spanish landlords took place without their knowledge. Bolivar led the revolution and liberated six states from the Spanish Crown. Presidents Juarez, Zapata, and Cardenas engineered a series of revolutions in Mexico (1850-1911). Their slogans were

«Land and Liberty» and «Freedom of the State from the Church». The most famous Indian leader of the Mexican peasants declared:

«It is better to die on your feet than to live on your knees.» (Ranga, 208).

The Peruvian peasants recently are pressing for change in successive upsurges seeking to reverse their intolerable position at the bottom of Peru's social structure. To believe Camejo, oppression is harsh and more oppressive in modern Peru. He wrote:

«While the first satellites circled the earth and jet liners landed in Lima, the Quechuas were still working the fields of rich landlords without pay, like serfs of medieval Europe. Peruvian peasants suffer a triple oppression: they are oppressed as Peruvians by U.S. imperialism; as Quechuas by Spanish-speaking whites and mestizos; and as workers or peasants by capitalists and landowners. Peasant women suffer, in addition the oppression meted out to their sex under capitalism...» (Blanco, 7-8).

These oppressed people rose in the early 1960s and did the unthinkable: they took back lands stolen from them, declared themselves human beings, and stopped working for their previous exploiters.

The peasants of the Philippines seemed to have been quiet rather than turbulent during the Spanish era. Most villagers were dedicated to passive survival. Collective violence occasionally erupted but tended to be short-lived and isolated. Only the upheaval of 1896 took on the qualities of a general rebellion. Agrarian protests took place and did not add up to a revolutionary heritage. They demonstrated hostility to domination but found freedom in the mountains. According to Sturtevant:

«Many discontented hamlet dwellers fled from the bells' to the bracing atmosphere and comparative freedom of the mountains (...) the fugitives flourished in sparsely settled uplands or on out-of-the-way islands such as Palawan. They constituted no problem to the Spaniards so long as they were left alone. Any effort to force them to accept either Christianity or Western legal codes, however, led to bitter resistance.» (Sturtevant, 115).

American intervention changed the course of development and Anglo-Saxon patterns replaced familiar Hispanic ones. The peasants, subservient to village traditions found adjustment extremely difficult. This led to

peasant attitude change after the lawlessness of 1850. Provincial officials were being disturbed and rural crimes took on class connotations, as indicated in the following quote:

«Rustlers, highway men, extortionists, and cutthroats preyed increasingly upon estate owners, lawyers, usurers, friars, and itinerant Chinese merchants, all the emerging enemies, in short, of the troubled peasantry.

«Little more than endemic peasant protest against oppression and poverty, a cry for vengeance on the rich and the oppressors, a vague dream of some curb upon them, a righting of individual wrongs.» (Sturtevant, 116-7).

Peasants, up against the Westernized elite, refused to capitulate and the irreconcilable minority shifted from overt to covert rebellion. Between 1911 and 1920 underground organizations in the countryside extended the heritage of peasant resistance to external authorities and provided covering for the new generation of those committed to violent rectification efforts. Thus, evolving tranquility was destroyed after 1923 when the movements surfaced in periods of agrarian unrest and tumult, (Sturtevant, 14).

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LES MEDERSAS LIBRES SOUS LA COLONISATION, LEUR CONTRIBUTION AU DEVELOPPEMENT DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT DE LA LANGUE ARABE ET AU RENFORCEMENT DE LA PERSONNALITE ALGERIENNE. L'EXEMPLE DE LA MEDERSA «MOUSTAKBAL CHABAB» D'HUDEIN--DEY (ALGER)

=====**K. ALIMAZIGHI**=====

Deux raisons principales expliquent la production de cet article: une raison subjective, l'auteur étant le fils de feu Alimazighi Mohammed qui, durant de nombreuses années a inlassablement et bénévolement contribué au fonctionnement de l'établissement au poste de secrétaire général; une raison objective, apporter une modeste contribution à l'histoire récente de l'Algérie en examinant un des nombreux aspects du combat du peuple algérien contre le colonialisme: la lutte sur le plan culturel contre les tentatives de dépersonnalisation.

Nous attirons l'attention du lecteur sur le fait que la documentation écrite que nous avons eu l'occasion -- et la chance -- de consulter se trouve assez réduite, elle a échappé