



Typologies of pre-modern societies beyond feudalism: exploring alternative possibilities and the problem of their applicability in cases of peripheral European societies

Nerijus Babinskas

Vilnius University, Faculty of History, Lithuania, email: nerijus.babinskas@if.vu.lt

Abstract

*The most traditional approach of medievalists to articulate classification of pre-modern European societies is to consider whether particular pre-modern society is feudal or not. However I argue that this approach is quite complicated because of ambiguity and polysemy of the term. There are at least several Marxist and non-Marxist alternatives instead. Transcending the horizon of debates about feudalism proposes more creative possibilities and enlarges analytical capacities. Although discussion about the notorious Asiatic mode of production seems obsolete nevertheless there are other more promising and up-to-date concepts like the tributary mode of production, patrimonialism versus feudalism dichotomy or the so-called type/model of early Central European state (the system of *Ius Ducale*). The application of the concept of the African mode of production in the case of typology of some European pre-modern peripheral societies despite of its astonishing etymology also is plausible. Another perspective way of elaboration comparative researches of pre-modern European peripheries is combining Marxist and non-Marxist concepts (like patrimonialism and the tributary mode of production, for example). I would also like to emphasize that in some cases in order to develop adequate typological concepts the combining of evaluation of internal (evolving of*

Rezumat

*Cea mai tradițională abordare a medievaliștilor de a realiza clasificarea societăților europene premoderne este aceea de a stabili dacă o societate pre-modernă dată este sau nu feudală. Apreciez însă că această abordare este destul de complicată din cauza ambiguității și polisemiei termenului. Există cel puțin câteva alternative marxiste și non-marxiste. Transcenderea orizontului clasic al dezbaterilor despre feudalism propune posibilități mai creative și lărgiște capacitățile analitice. Deși discuția despre faimosul mod de producție asiatic pare a fi depășită, există totuși și alte concepte mai promițătoare și mai actuale, cum ar fi modul de producție tributual, dihotomia patrimonialism versus feudalism sau așa-numitul tip / model de timpuriu de stat din Europa Centrală (sistemul *Ius Ducale*). Aplicarea conceptului de mod de producție african în cazul tipologiei unor societăți periferice europene pre-moderne, în ciuda etimologiei sale uimitoare, este, de asemenea, plauzibilă. O altă modalitate de perspectivă de a realiza cercetări comparative ale periferiilor europene pre-moderne combină conceptele marxiste cu cele non-marxiste (cum ar fi patrimonialismul și modul de producție tributual, de exemplu). Aș dori, de asemenea, să subliniez faptul că, în anumite cazuri, pentru a dezvolta concepte tipologice adecvate, combinarea evaluării interne (evoluția*

socioeconomic structures) as well as estimation of external impact is inevitable. structurilor socio-economice) și estimarea impactului extern este inevitabilă.

Keywords: feudalism, Asiatic/tributary/African modes of production, patrimonialism, Ius Ducale, peripheral pre-modern societies

CC BY-SA License (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0>)

According to the Hungarian medievalist Nora Berend, *feudalism* is among those “entrapping constructs” created by historians themselves (like the Middle Ages, as a matter of fact) which may block heuristic thinking in historical research¹. Therefore, I argue that not every medieval European society which has reached the stage of medieval statehood is feudal *ipso facto*.

Since history as *idiographic* (i.e. descriptive, case study or hermeneutically oriented) discipline cannot become a *critical human science* as Jo Guldi and David Armitage have claimed in their “The History Manifesto”² (in other words, it would lose an opportunity to fill a gap between humanities and social sciences) I am convinced that historians in order to keep their scholarship relevant in the contemporary discourse should seek possibilities to transcend the limitation of searching just for details, uniqueness and individualities. Comparative-historical method is one of possible ways to do it³. Besides, it enables to integrate humanities and social sciences in historical research but at the same time it does not eliminate the analysis in depth of a particular case. In order to realize that undertaking historians need proper analytical tools and relevant theoretical framework enabling to form hypothesis.

¹ Nora Berend, "The Mirage of East Central Europe. Historical regions in a comparative perspective", in *Medieval East Central Europe in a Comparative Perspective. From frontier zones to lands in focus*, ed. G. Jaritz and K. Szende (London and New York: Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group, 2016), 9.

² Jo Guldi and David Armitage, *The History Manifesto* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 15.

³ Matthew Lange, *Comparative-Historical Methods*. (London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi, Singapore SAGE, 2013).

Medieval historians who are seeking to transcend the horizon of „knowing everything about nothing“⁴ usually get involved into traditional debates about **feudalism**. However, that discussion is quite complicated, first of all, because of ambiguity of the term itself. In the 1980s the Australian historian John O. Ward distinguished even 11 meanings of the term „feudalism“⁵. The British medievalist Susan Reynolds (referring to her compatriot colleague Chris Wickham) has presented generalized classification of the three main notions of feudalism: narrow-legal (Ganshof), „middle-range“ (Bloch/Weber) and the wide one (Marx/Engels)⁶. The Belgian medievalist François-Louis Ganshof defined feudalism as concerning only relations within a military landowning upper stratum, whose members are linked together by vassalage and hold their land as fiefs. The famous French historian’s Marc’s Bloch’s definition (according to Reynolds, Weber’s concept was very much alike Bloch’s) includes fiefs and vassalage in much the same sense as in Ganshof’s, but they are obviously much wider, apparently embracing the whole of society, though concentrating particularly on social and political relations among the upper strata. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels also looked at the whole of society but concentrated on the economic basis of social and political relations – what they called the mode of production. The essence of the feudal mode of production is the exploitative relationship between landowners and subordinated direct producers (peasants), in which the surplus of the latter, whether in direct labour or in rent (in kind or in money), is appropriated under coercive sanction to the former. Here the emphasis is quite different, with only a brief reference to the character of the ruling class, and no specification of their rights in their land or on the bonds between them⁷.

⁴ See: Peter Baldwin, „Comparing and Generalizing: Why All History Is Comparative, Yet No History Is Sociology“, in: *Comparison and History. Europe in Cross-national Perspective*, ed. D. Cohen, M. O’Connor (New York and London: Routledge, 2004), 1.

⁵ John O. Ward „Feudalism: Interpretative Category or Framework of Life in the Medieval West?“, in: *Feudalism: Comparative Studies*, ed. E. Leach, S.N. Mukherjee, J. O. Ward (Sydney: Sydney Association for Studies in Society and Culture, 1985), 40-49.

⁶ Susan Reynolds „The Use of Feudalism in Comparative History“, in: *Explorations in Comparative History*, ed. B. Z. Kedar (Jerusalem: The Hebrew University Magnes Press, 2009), 192.

⁷ Reynolds 2009, 192-194.

Moreover, in her earlier book after performing exhaustive comparative research Reynolds criticized decisively the narrow-legal concept of feudalism. She came to the conclusion that such feudalism was a fiction created in a later period and it did not correspond with historical reality altogether⁸. In two other cases, according to the British medievalist, impact of the concept of feudalism on comparative history was obvious. By the way, according to her, the most promising one was the Marxist approach. Nevertheless, Reynolds argued that in the 21st century feudalism as an interpretative category is obsolete and she proposed to abandon it⁹. Although there is no common consensus in the contemporary historiography concerning the relevance of feudalism as interpretative category the obvious ambiguity of the term encourages to look for alternatives.

The main task for the current article is precisely to look into the historiography as well as through historically oriented literature of social sciences in order to propose alternative interpretative concepts. In the context of the current article the most relevant categories are those which are applicable for peripheral pre-modern societies of Europe (i.e. those of East Central Europe, Scandinavia, the Balkans and the space of Eastern Slavs).

* * *

In the context of Marxist historiography there is a concept of the Asiatic mode of production (AMP), which has enabled to formulate the idea of multilinear development of societies¹⁰. The debates about AMP trace back as early as the interwar period and have been revived several decades later¹¹. During the second wave of discussions the British historical sociologist Perry

⁸ Susan Reynolds, *Fiefs and Vassals. The Medieval Evidence Reinterpreted* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 475.

⁹ Reynolds 2009, 215-217.

¹⁰ Cf. Perry Anderson, *Lineages of the Absolutist State* (London and New York: Verso, 1979), 484.

¹¹ Jarosław Bratkiewicz, *Teoria przedkapitalistycznej formacji społecznej w kulturach orientalnych. Interpretacja badań i polemik* (Wrocław, Warszawa, Kraków, Gdańsk, Łódź: Wydawnictwo Polskiej Akademii Nauk, 1989); Anne. M. Bailey and Josep R. Llobera, eds., *The Asiatic Mode of Production. Science and Politics* (London, Boston and Henley: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981).

Anderson singled out 10 characteristics which various authors before Marx and Engels (from Niccolo Machiavelli to Charles de Montesquieu) attributed to Oriental despotism (the latter should be treated as a precursor of AMP): 1) state property of land; 2) lack of juridical restraints; 3) religious substitution for law; 4) absence of hereditary nobility; 5) servile social equality; 6) isolated village communities; 7) agrarian predominance over industry; 8) public hydraulic works; 9) hot climatic environment; 10) historical immutability¹². Whereas Marx himself, according to Anderson, distinguished the following fundamental elements of AMP: 1) the absence of private property in land; 2) the large-scale irrigation systems in agriculture; 3) the existence of autarchic village communities combining crafts with tillage and communal ownership of the soil; 4) the stagnation of passively rentier or bureaucratic cities; 5) the domination of a despotic state machine controlling the bulk of the surplus and functioning not merely as the central apparatus of repression of the ruling class, but as its principal instrument of economic exploitation; 6) the purely external and tributary impact of the state on villages; 7) secular inertia and immutability¹³.

Although the concept of AMP was much and soundly criticized by Anderson himself and by many others that haven't discredited the idea of multilinear development in general¹⁴. Several alternative terms were proposed in order to get delimited from the controversial and notorious AMP: for example, *state* (Leonid Vasilyev¹⁵) or *politarian* (Yuryi Semenov¹⁶) mode of production. Among the earliest surrogates was the so-called tributary mode of production (TMP) or the tributary formation. The term itself was introduced by the Japanese historian Jiro Hayakawa in the

¹² Anderson 1979, 472.

¹³ Ibid., 483.

¹⁴ See, for example: Ibid., 462-549.

¹⁵ Леонид Сергеевич Васильев, *История Востока* (Москва: Высшая школа, 2001, т. 1), 40; see also: Андрей Витальевич Коротаев, Николай Николаевич Крадин, Валерий Алексеевич Лынша, «Альтернативы социальной эволюции (вводные замечания)», in: *Альтернативные пути к цивилизации*, ред. Н. Н. Крадин, А. В. Коротаев, Д. М. Бондаренко, В. А. Лынша (Москва: Логос, 2000), 47.

¹⁶ Юрий Иванович Семёнов, *Политарный («Азиатский») способ производства: сущность и место в истории человечества и России* (Москва: «Волшебный ключ», 2008), 335-345.

interwar period¹⁷ but the conception has been elaborated during the second half of the 20th century. At first (starting with Hayakawa) TMP was treated just as a more successful alternative of AMP but later several traditions of using the term have been developed:

1. some scholars (such as John Haldon¹⁸, Eric R. Wolf¹⁹) following the main promoter of the conception Samir Amin²⁰ and some others even earlier (Romanian scholars Ion Banu²¹, Constantin Daniel²²) treated TMP as a universal stage of pre-modern societies (i.e. TMP is comprised of both feudalism and AMP as variations of the same pre-capitalist mode of production);
2. the others (for example, the British medievalist Chris Wickham²³, although eventually he had changed his mind²⁴, and Jairus Banaji²⁵) opposed such a wide treatment and treated TMP as just a more successful replacement of AMP. Their attitude was based on the distinction between rent and tax (rent is attributed to feudalism and tax to TMP respectively). So in this case TMP is narrower than in previous one since it does not include rent-based feudalism;

¹⁷ See: Eric R. Wolf, *Europe and the People without History* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2010), 402.

¹⁸ John Haldon, *The State and the Tributary Mode of Production* (London and New York: Verso, 1993).

¹⁹ Wolf 2010.

²⁰ Samir Amin, 'Modes of Production and Social Formations', *Ufahamu. A Journal of African Studies*, 4 (1974), 57-85.

²¹ Ion Banu, „Asupra formațiunii sociale tributare („asiatice“)\”, in: Ion Banu, *Sensuri universale și diferențe specifice în filozofia Orientului Antic* (București), vol. 1, 15-36.

²² Constantin Daniel, „Modul de producție tributual în Sumer“, in: Constantin Daniel *Civilizația sumeriana* (București: Editura Sport-Turism, 1983), 56-66.

²³ Chris Wickham, „The Uniqueness of the East“, in: *Feudalism and Non-European Societies*, eds. T. J. Byres, H. Mukhia (London: Frank Cass, 1985), 166-196.

²⁴ Chris Wickham, *Land and Power. Studies in Italian and European Social History, 400-1200* (London: British School at Rome, 1994).

²⁵ Jairus Banaji, *Theory as History. Essays on Modes of Production and Exploitation* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2010).

3. some Romanian scholars (Henri H. Stahl²⁶, Miron Constantinescu²⁷) originated the specific conception TMP/tributary formation and applied it directly in their typology of particular European peripheries (the Moldavian and Valahian principalities). According to this conception, tributary formation is only one variation of AMP/Oriental despotism (i.e. it is narrower concept than AMP).

It is worth to add that debates about TMP have not lost their relevance in the context of Marxist historiography until the 21st century inclusively (Jairus Banaji, Laura da Graca and Andrea Zingarelli)²⁸.

Another Marxist alternative originated in the second half of the 20th century is the so-called early medieval Central European type of state devised by the Czech historian Dušan Třeštík. According to the Czech scholar, that type of state should be treated as a special variation of feudalism, despite the fact that there are some features which make it similar to AMP²⁹. On the one hand, according to Třeštík, there are essential differences between sociopolitical structure of the Carolingian Empire and early states of Central Europe: there was no private property in Central Europe; everyone was a subordinate of a ruler; centralized mode of surplus product appropriation prevailed. According to Třeštík, the point of departure of feudalization in Central Europe was not property (of means of production) but freedom and a tax raised by a ruler, however, should be interpreted as rent³⁰. The Czech historian applied this model to the early

²⁶ Henri H. Stahl, 'Analiza sociologică a orînduirii „tributale“ românești', *Viitorul social* (București), 7 (1978), № 3, 534-541; Henri H. Stahl, 'Comentarii la problema „orînduirii tributale românești“', *Viitorul social* (București), 6 (1977), № 4, p. 702-710; Henri H. Stahl, *Teorii și ipoteze privind sociologia orînduirii tributale* (București: Editura științifică și enciclopedică, 1980).

²⁷ Miron Constantinescu, 'Despre formațiunea social-economică tributală', *Probleme economice* 4 (1973), 51-68; Miron Constantinescu, 'Modul de producție tributală și orînduirea tributală', *Probleme economice* 11 (1972), 28-44; Miron Constantinescu, *Schița unei teorii marxiste a formațiunii social-economice tributale* (București: Martie, 1974).

²⁸ Banaji 2010; Laura da Graca and Andrea Zingarelli, eds., *Studies on Pre-Capitalist Modes of Production* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2015).

²⁹ Душан Тржештик, «Среднеевропейская модель государства периода раннего средневековья», in: *Этносоциальная и политическая структура раннефеодалных славянских государств и народностей*, ред. Г. Г. Литаврин (Москва: «Наука», 1987), 124-133.

³⁰ Тржештик 1987, 125-130.

Bohemian, Polish and Hungarian states. Moreover, he suggested that Great Moravia was a predecessor of this type of state³¹.

In my opinion, the arguments of Třeštík supporting the thesis of “feudality” of this early Central European regime do not seem very convincing. Therefore, it is not surprising that other historians who dealt with peculiarities of the early Central European states have come to entirely different conclusions. The Russian historian Boris Floria who described societies of the Central European states in the 9th – 11th centuries in the same way did not interpret them as feudal. On the contrary, he contrasted the sociopolitical structure in this early period with that of the later one (the 13th – 14th centuries). According to Floria, only during the latter those peripheral societies became feudal because of the decisive influence of Western Europe. Besides, the Russian scholar argued that societies of the early Central European states (in the 9th – 11th centuries) were typologically very similar to those of Scandinavia, Kievan Rus’ and Southeastern Europe. The ways of development of those regions diverged only in the second period (in the 13th – 14th centuries)³².

One can also find one more alternative interpretation of sociopolitical structure of Central Europe’s early states (at least, on the example of early Poland). The early regime of Polish state and society is usually called *prince’s law* (*Ius Ducale*). What are particular features of this regime? In Poland (as well as in Hungary) at least until the 12th century nobility possessed only small manors. On the other hand, the administrative apparatus at all levels consisted exactly of the representatives of this social stratum and it determined their status in societies and guaranteed incomes (since only a small part of their incomes were received from the manors). All lands of state (polity) belonged to a ruler (duke or king), at least formally. Peasants owed some tributes and services to state. So central way of exploitation was prevailing³³.

³¹ Тржештиќ 1987, 125, 131.

³² Борис Флоря, «Центральная Европа в Европе средневековья», in: *Центральная Европа как исторический регион*, ред. А. И. Миллер (Москва: Институт славяноведения и балканистики, 1996), 26-47.

³³ See: Krzysztof Brzechczyn, *Odrębność historyczna Europy Środkowej. Studium metodologiczne* (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Fundacji Humaniora, 1998), 194-197, Karol Modzelewski, *The*

In the context of the specific features of sociopolitical structure of the early Polish state described above the contemporary Polish historical sociologist Krzysztof Brzechczyn argued that feudalism was not an inevitable stage of pre-modern development of all European societies³⁴. According to the Polish medieval historian Karol Modzelewski, that specific early regime of Poland contains two coexisting social formations (*układy*) – Western European feudalism and AMP³⁵. Therefore, Modzelewski's interpretation is very akin to that of Floria although the Polish scholar stated that at least the early Polish regime shared the same "civilizational basis" with the area of classic feudalism – an individual household of peasant (direct producer)³⁶.

One must admit that the *Ius ducale* type of society is identical to the early medieval Central European type of state thus they are not different alternatives.

Transcending the Marxist horizon one can make use of the possibilities provided by political sociology and political anthropology. Keeping in mind the essential features of the Central European type of state presented before it's easy to notice obvious parallels with Max Weber's patrimonialism. According to the famous German sociologist, it is a type of traditional authority. In the case of patrimonialism administration and military force are personal instruments of the ruler. In principle, he can exploit his right like any economic asset. The patrimonial retainer may receive his support in any of the following ways: a) by living from the lord's table, b) by allowances (usually in kind) from the lord's magazines or treasury, c) by rights of land use in return for services ("service-land"), d) by the appropriation of property income, fees or taxes, e) by fiefs. Weber treated cases „d“ and especially „e“ as very peculiar which tended to turn into the antagonist of patrimonialism – feudalism (although Weber put it in a quite ambiguous

system of *Ius Ducale* and the Idea of Feudalism (Comments on the Earliest Class Society in Medieval Poland)', *Quaestiones Medii Aevi* (1977), I, 72-74.

³⁴ Brzechczyn 1998, 193-194.

³⁵ Karol Modzelewski, *Organizacja gospodarcza państwa piastowskiego: X-XIII wiek* (Wrocław: Ossolineum, 1975), 266.

³⁶ Modzelewski 1975, 267.

way)³⁷. The one who clarified the patrimonial-feudal dichotomy in the context of typology of Weber's political domination was the American social scientist Vatro Murvar³⁸. Emphasizing that dichotomy some scholars (like Richard Pipes and others) applied it to pre-modern and even modern Russia (interpreting it as patrimonial but in no way feudal!)³⁹. Another classic of historical sociology Shmuel Noah Eisenstadt used the term „patrimonial regimes“ not only in cases like ancient Egypt or Babylonian kingdom but also in cases of Germanic and Slavic tribes settled in Europe and with some qualifications even of many medieval Balkan and Slavic states⁴⁰. Besides, in the scholarly literature of the 21st century one can find one more interesting application of the concept „patrimonialism“ – there was an attempt to apply it in the case of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania: in one of his books the contemporary Lithuanian historical sociologist Zenonas Norkus interpreted political regime during the reign of Vytautas the Great as Weberian sultanism (i.e. the extreme case of patrimonialism)⁴¹.

On the other hand, one can find the widespread term „patrimonial state“ in Polish historiography (it is also adopted by Lithuanian one). As my previous analysis has revealed this term which is used widely by Polish as well as by Lithuanian historians has no connection with Weber's typology of traditional types of authority: it has an entirely different origin and another tradition of usage which is unfavorable for comparative historical researches⁴².

The wider application of the term „patrimonialism“ in the context of pre-modern societies of Central Europe (as well as of peripheral pre-modern

³⁷ Max Weber, *Economy and Society. An Outline of Interpretive Sociology* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1978), vol. 1, 231-236.

³⁸Vatro Murvar, 'Patrimonial-Feudal Dichotomy and Political Structure in Pre-Revolutionary Russia: One Aspect of the Dialogue Between the Ghost of Marx and Weber', *The Sociological Quarterly* 12 (1971), 500-524.

³⁹ Richard Edgar Pipes, *Russia under the Old Regime*. Second Edition (London: Penguin Books, 1995); Banaji 2010.

⁴⁰ Shmuel Noah Eisenstadt, *Traditional Patrimonialism and Modern Neopatrimonialism* (Beverly Hills, London: Sage Publications, 1973), 31.

⁴¹ Zenonas Norkus, *An Unproclaimed Empire: The Grand Duchy of Lithuania. From the Viewpoint of Comparative Historical Sociology of Empires* (London and New York: Routledge, 2018), 320.

⁴² Nerijus Babinskas, 'Patrimonializmas: lenkiškoji sąvokos vartosenos tradicija ir jos santykis su M. Weberio samprata', *Lietuvos istorijos studijos* 30 (2012), 171-188.

European societies in general) seems interesting and perspective keeping in mind, on the one hand, the insights of Třeštík about the parallels of sociopolitical development and, on the other hand, distinction between patrimonialism and feudalism (elaborated by Murvar). In this context the suggestion of Norkus about sultanism in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania during the reign of Vytautas the Great also definitely deserves attention.

There was one more very important impulse in searching for more adequate modes of typology of pre-modern peripheral European societies. That was a re-evaluation of external factor which should be associated with the world-system theory (Immanuel Wallerstein) which became popular in the 1970s⁴³ and the idea of distinction between primary and secondary statehood formulated by political anthropologists (Morton Fried) in the 1960s⁴⁴. In the context of these ideas entirely new interpretations of particular pre-modern peripheral European societies were devised. Both of them are essentially based on the concept of the African mode of production (AfMP) sketched by the French Africanist Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch in the 1960s⁴⁵. In short, AfMP could be defined as a combination of patriarchal-communal villages and long-distance trade controlled by a narrow social group⁴⁶.

The contemporary Russian historian Denis Alimov argued that the state of Great Moravia might be interpreted exactly as a manifestation of the AfMP. Keeping in his mind the entirety of available knowledge (from written sources as well as from archeological evidences) about that early Central European polity the Russian scholar emphasized the secondary character of its statehood (in respect to the Carolingian state) and drew clear parallels both to military city-states of the gulf of Guinea and Western Sudan trading empires (Ghana, Mali, Songhai)⁴⁷.

⁴³ See: Коротаев, Крадин, Лышца 2000, 37-38.

⁴⁴ See: Николай Николаевич Крадин, *Политическая антропология* (Москва: Логос, 2004), 183, Денис Евгеньевич Алимов, ««Африканский способ производства» в Великой Моравии? (Заметки на полях статьи Иво Штефана)», *Петербургские славянские и балканские исследования* (2012), № 1 (11), 191.

⁴⁵ Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch, 'Research on an African mode of production', *African Studies. A Radical Reader* (1977), 77-92 (initially published in French in 1969).

⁴⁶ Coquery-Vidrovitch 1977, 85-87.

⁴⁷ АЛИМОВ 2012, 192-193.

In the 1970s the American historical sociologist Daniel Chirot interpreted the socioeconomic structure of Valahian principality in 1250-1500 AD as a case of communal-trading political economy (CTPE) taking into consideration the peculiarities of internal structure as well as an external impact (and drawing parallels to medieval empires of Western Sudan)⁴⁸. The basic features of CTPE are the following: a) a state imposes a tribute on the rural population; b) the tribute, however, is light and the state interferes only slightly with village life; c) the principal source of revenue for the state is taxation of trade of luxury items; d) villages continue to exist in a condition akin to “primitive communalism”; e) the ruling elite is primarily tax and tribute collectors and not landowners; f) in villages society is relatively undifferentiated⁴⁹.

According to Chirot, CTPE should not be confused neither with the “hydraulic state” (described by Karl Wittfogel; particular subtype of AMP) nor with feudalism. According to Wittfogel, „hydraulic state“ controls the rural population and the rural economy quite directly. CTPE bears only the slightest resemblance to feudalism either, since in this case the state is decentralized and the nobility directly controls local villagers and the rural population⁵⁰. Roughly speaking, both concepts (CTPE and AfMP) could be treated as synonyms.

Conclusions

- 1) The assertion that feudalism was not an inevitable stage of pre-modern development of all European societies is fundamental in order to overcome inertia of conceptual thinking among medievalists and to revive debates in a creative and analytical way.
- 2) There are at least four Marxist alternatives to feudalism which could be grouped into three following clusters: AMP (plus TMP), AfMP (plus CTPE), early Central European type/model of state (the system of *Ius Ducale*).

⁴⁸ Daniel Chirot, *Social Change in a Peripheral Society: the Creation of a Balkan Colony* (New York, San Francisco, London: Academic Press, 1976), 15-35.

⁴⁹ Chirot 1976, 16-17.

⁵⁰ Chirot 1976, 17.

- 3) The only non-Marxist alternative (patrimonialism) proposed here obviously have some common characteristics with TMP and especially with early Central European type/model of state.
- 4) At least in some cases combining criteria of internal development with those of external impact is necessary to articulate adequate typologies.
- 5) Further discussion about the combining of Marxist and non-Marxist concepts in typologies of pre-modern European societies would be very productive.
- 6) The idea of distinguishing the early Central European type/model of state proposed by Třeštík remains relevant but there are important differences of its interpretation. Further discussion is necessary in order to, on the one hand, clarify the place of that type of state in general historical-sociological schemes and, on the other hand, define the limits of its spread more precisely.
- 7) Sociologically oriented historiography under consideration is able to supply various alternatives beyond feudalism to interpret peripheral pre-modern European societies in a typological way.

Bibliography:

- Amin, Samir. „Modes of Production and Social Formations’, *Ufahamu. A Journal of African Studies*, 4 (1974), 57-85.
- Anderson, Perry. *Lineages of the Absolutist State* (London and New York: Verso, 1979).
- Babinskas, Nerijus. „Patrimonializmas: lenkiškoji sąvokos vartosenos tradicija ir jos santykis su M. Weberio samprata’, *Lietuvos istorijos studijos* 30 (2012), 171-188.
- Bailey, Anne. M. and Llobera, Josep R. eds., *The Asiatic Mode of Production. Science and Politics* (London, Boston and Henley: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981).
- Baldwin, Peter. “Comparing and Generalizing: Why All History Is Comparative, Yet No History Is Sociology”, in: *Comparison and History. Europe in Cross-national Perspective*, ed. D. Cohen, M. O’Connor (New York and London: Routledge, 2004), 1-22.
- Banaji, Jairus. *Theory as History. Essays on Modes of Production and Exploitation* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2010).
- Banu, Ion. „Asupra formațiunii sociale tributare („asiatice“), in: Ion Banu, *Sensuri universale și diferențe specifice în filozofia Orientului Antic* (București), vol. 1, 15-36.
- Berend, Nora. "The Mirage of East Central Europe. Historical regions in a comparative perspective", in *Medieval East Central Europe in a Comparative Perspective. From frontier zones to lands in focus*, ed. G. Jaritz and K. Szende (London and New York: Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group, 2016), 9-23.
- Bratkiewicz, Jarosław. *Teoria przedkapitalistycznej formacji społecznej w kulturach orientalnych. Interpretacja badań i polemik* (Wrocław, Warszawa, Kraków, Gdańsk, Łódź: Wydawnictwo Polskiej Akademii Nauk, 1989).
- Brzechczyn, Krzysztof. *Odrębność historyczna Europy Środkowej. Studium metodologiczne* (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Fundacji Humaniora, 1998).
- Chirot, Daniel. *Social Change in a Peripheral Society: the Creation of a Balkan Colony* (New York, San Francisco, London: Academic Press, 1976).

- Constantinescu, Miron. ‚Despre formațiunea social-economică tribotală’, *Probleme economice* 4 (1973), 51-68;
- Constantinescu, Miron. ‚Modul de producție tribotal și orînduirea tribotală’, *Probleme economice* 11 (1972), 28-44;
- Constantinescu, Miron. *Schița unei teorii marxiste a formațiunii social-economice tribotal* (București: Martie, 1974).
- Coquery-Vidrovitch, Catherine. ‚Research on an African mode of production’, *African Studies. A Radical Reader* (1977), 77-92 (initially published in French in 1969).
- Daniel, Constantin. ‚Modul de producție tribotal în Sumer“, in: Constantin Daniel *Civilizația sumeriana* (București: Editura Sport-Turism, 1983), 56-66.
- Eisenstadt, Shmuel Noah. *Traditional Patrimonialism and Modern Neopatrimonialism* (Beverly Hills, London: Sage Publications, 1973).
- da Graca, Laura and Zingarelli, Andrea, eds., *Studies on Pre-Capitalist Modes of Production* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2015).
- Guldi, Jo and Armitage, David. *The History Manifesto* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).
- Haldon, John. *The State and the Tributary Mode of Production* (London and New York: Verso, 1993).
- Lange, Matthew. *Comparative-Historical Methods*. (London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi, Singapore SAGE, 2013).
- Modzelewski, Karol, *Organizacja gospodarcza państwa piastowskiego: X-XIII wiek* (Wrocław: Ossolineum, 1975).
- Modzelewski, Karol. ‚The system of Ius Ducale and the Idea of Feudalism (Comments on the Earliest Class Society in Medieval Poland)’, *Quaestiones Medii Aevi* (1977), I, 71-99.
- Murvar, Vatro. ‚Patrimonial-Feudal Dichotomy and Political Structure in Pre-Revolutionary Russia: One Aspect of the Dialogue Between the Ghost of Marx and Weber’, *The Sociological Quarterly* 12 (1971), 500-524.
- Zenonas Norkus, *An Unproclaimed Empire: The Grand Duchy of Lithuania. From the Viewpoint of Comparative Historical Sociology of Empires* (London and New York: Routledge, 2018).

- Pipes, Richard Edgar. *Russia under the Old Regime*. Second Edition (London: Penguin Books, 1995);
- Reynolds, Susan. „The Use of Feudalism in Comparative History“, in: *Explorations in Comparative History*, ed. B. Z. Kedar (Jerusalem: The Hebrew University Magnes Press, 2009), 191-217.
- Reynolds, Susan. *Fiefs and Vassals. The Medieval Evidence Reinterpreted* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994).
- Stahl, Henri H. ‚Analiza sociologică a orînduirii „tributale“ românești‘, *Viitorul social* (București), 7 (1978), № 3, 534-541;
- Stahl, Henri H. ‚Comentarii la problema „orînduirii tributale românești“‘, *Viitorul social* (București), 6 (1977), № 4, p. 702-710;
- Stahl, Henri H. *Teorii și ipoteze privind sociologia orînduirii tributale* (București: Editura științifică și enciclopedică, 1980).
- Ward, John O. „Feudalism: Interpretative Category or Framework of Life in the Medieval West?“, in: *Feudalism: Comparative Studies*, ed. E. Leach, S.N. Mukherjee, J. O. Ward (Sydney: Sydney Association for Studies in Society and Culture, 1985), 40-49.
- Weber, Max. *Economy and Society. An Outline of Interpretive Sociology* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1978), vol. 1-2.
- Wickham, Chris. „The Uniqueness of the East“, in: *Feudalism and Non-European Societies*, eds. T. J. Byres, H. Mukhia (London: Frank Cass, 1985), 166-196.
- Wickham, Chris. *Land and Power. Studies in Italian and European Social History, 400-1200* (London: British School at Rome, 1994).
- Wolf, Eric R. *Europe and the People without History* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2010).
- Алимов, Денис Евгеньевич. ««Африканский способ производства» в Великой Моравии? (Заметки на полях статьи Иво Штефана)», *Петербургские славянские и балканские исследования* (2012), № 1 (11), 183-196.
- Васильев, Леонид Сергеевич. *История Востока* (Москва: Высшая школа, 2001), т. 1-2;

- Коротаев, Андрей Витальевич, Крадин, Николай Николаевич, Лынша, Валерий Алексеевич. «Альтернативы социальной эволюции (вводные замечания)», in: *Альтернативные пути к цивилизации*, ред. Н. Н. Крадин, А. В. Коротаев, Д. М. Бондаренко, В. А. Лынша (Москва: Логос, 2000), 24-83.
- Крадин, Николай Николаевич. *Политическая антропология* (Москва: Логос, 2004).
- Семёнов, Юрий Иванович. *Политарный («Азиатский») способ производства: сущность и место в истории человечества и России* (Москва: «Волшебный ключ», 2008).
- Тржештик, Душан. «Среднеевропейская модель государства периода раннего средневековья», in: *Этносоциальная и политическая структура раннефеодальных славянских государств и народностей*, ред. Г. Г. Литаврин (Москва: «Наука», 1987), 124-133.
- Флоря, Борис. «Центральная Европа в Европе средневековья», in: *Центральная Европа как исторический регион*, ред. А. И. Миллер (Москва: Институт славяноведения и балканистики, 1996), 26-47.