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Feudal System in Rajasthan

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ABSTRACT: Col. James Tod, the renowned author of the Rajasthani state's history in the early nineteenth century, was responsible for the first assimilation of the "feudal model" in the Indian setting. Tod, like the majority of European historians of his period in Europe, believed that the lord-vassal connection was the fundamental element of the feudal model.

KEYWORDS: feudal, Rajasthan, history, model, Europe

I. INTRODUCTION

Feudalism, also known as the feudal system, was a combination of legal, economic, military, cultural, and political customs that flourished in medieval Europe from the 9th to 15th centuries. Broadly defined, it was a way of structuring society around relationships derived from the holding of land in exchange for service or labour.

The classic definition, by François Louis Ganshof (1944),^[1] describes a set of reciprocal legal and military obligations of the warrior nobility and revolved around the key concepts of lords, vassals, and fiefs.^[1] A broader definition, as described by Marc Bloch (1939), includes not only the obligations of the warrior nobility but the obligations of all three estates of the realm: the nobility, the clergy, and the peasantry, all of whom were bound by a system of manorialism; this is sometimes referred to as a "feudal society".

Although it is derived from the Latin word feodum or feudum (fief),^[2] which was used during the Medieval period, the term feudalism and the system it describes were not conceived of as a formal political system by the people who lived during the Middle Ages.^[3] Since the publication of Elizabeth A. R. Brown's "The Tyranny of a Construct" (1974) and Susan Reynolds's *Fiefs and Vassals* (1994), there has been ongoing inconclusive discussion among medieval historians as to whether feudalism is a useful construct for understanding medieval society.^[10]

Two-Stage Feudalism Theory

- Indian feudal model was given significant attention in the context of socioeconomic history by D. D. Kosambi.
- In his seminal work, *An Introduction to the Study of Indian History*, first published in 1956, he proposed that the rise of the feudal model in Indian history was a two-way process, originating both from above and below. [1,2,3]
- Without the predominance of an intermediary land-owning class, the first stage was the primary phase with direct relationships between an overlord and his tributary/autonomous vassals.
- The second stage was a later, more complicated period that saw the emergence of rural landowners as powerful intermediaries between the ruling class and the peasantry.
 - According to them, the second phase, which lasted from the fourth to the seventeenth centuries, saw the establishment of the samantas as the feudatories, which resulted in administrative decentralisation and the transformation of the communal property into feudal property.
 - As a result, one of the most interesting and important ongoing discussions in Indian historiography was set in motion.
 - The social and cultural landscape underwent significant upheaval from the fourth to the seventeenth centuries.
 - Some people saw these developments as medieval influences, which would suggest that feudalism and medievalism had a similar meaning in the context of India.



Indian Feudalism Theory

- Professor R. S. Sharma made the biggest advancement in the study of the feudal model in his 1965 book *Indian Feudalism*.
- Once the Gupta dynasty fell, he pictured the decline of long-distance trade between India and many regions of the world; as a result, urbanisation suffered and the economy became more agricultural.
- Hence arose a situation where financial resources were not scarce but money was. While there were no coins available, the state began giving out land as compensation to its grantees and employees, including the Brahmanas.
- Along with land, the state gradually transferred to this new class of "intermediaries" more and more control over the cultivating peasants.
- The peasants' growing subordination to the intermediaries reduced them to the status of serfs, who were their mediaeval European counterparts. [4,5,6]
- The key component in R.S. Sharma's conception of the Indian feudal model is the growth of the intermediary class through governmental intervention in the form of grants to them.
- Later on in his works, he created other structures on top of this foundation, such as the expansion of the scribe caste, which was later cemented into the Kayastha caste since state grants had to be documented.
- The critical procedure of land allocations to intermediaries didn't end until the eleventh century when trade restarted urbanization.

II. DISCUSSION

The adjective feudal was in use by at least 1405, and the noun feudalism was in use by the end of the 18th century,^[4] paralleling the French féodalité.

According to a classic definition by François Louis Ganshof (1944),^[1] feudalism describes a set of reciprocal legal and military obligations of the warrior nobility that revolved around the key concepts of lords, vassals and fiefs,^[1] though Ganshof himself noted that his treatment was only related to the "narrow, technical, legal sense of the word."

A broader definition, as described in Marc Bloch's *Feudal Society* (1939),^[11] includes not only the obligations of the warrior nobility but the obligations of all three estates of the realm: the nobility, the clergy, and those who lived off their labour, most directly the peasantry, which was bound by a system of manorialism. This order is often referred to as a feudal society, echoing Bloch's usage.

Outside its European context,^[4] the concept of feudalism is often used by analogy, most often in discussions of feudal Japan under the shoguns, and sometimes in discussions of the Zagwe dynasty in medieval Ethiopia,^[12] which had some feudal characteristics (sometimes called "semifeudal").^{[13][14]} Some have taken the feudalism analogy further, seeing feudalism (or traces of it) in places as diverse as Spring and Autumn period China, ancient Egypt, the Parthian Empire, India until the Mughal dynasty and the Antebellum South and Jim Crow laws in the American South.^[12]

The term feudalism has also been applied—often pejoratively—to non-Western societies where institutions and attitudes similar to those in medieval Europe are perceived to prevail.^[15] Some historians and political theorists believe that the term feudalism has been deprived of specific meaning by the many ways it has been used, leading them to reject it as a useful concept for understanding society.^{[4][5]}

The applicability of the term^[7,8,9] feudalism has also been questioned in the context of some Central and Eastern European countries, such as Poland and Lithuania, with scholars observing that the medieval political and economic structure of those countries bears some, but not all, resemblances to the Western European societies commonly described as feudal.^{[16][17][18][19]}



Etymology



Herr Reinmar von Zweter, a 13th-century Minnesinger, was depicted with his noble arms in Codex Manesse.

The word feudal comes from the medieval Latin *feudālis*, the adjectival form of *feudum* 'fee, feud', first attested in a charter of Charles the Fat in 884, which is related to Old French *fé, fié*, Provençal *feo, feu, fieu*, and Italian *fió*.^[20] The ultimate origin of *feudālis* is unclear. It may come from a Germanic word, perhaps *fehu* or **fehōd*, but these words are not attested in this meaning in Germanic sources, or even in the Latin of the Frankish laws.^[20]

One theory about the origin of *fehu* was proposed by Johan Hendrik Caspar Kern in 1870,^{[21][22]} being supported by, amongst others, William Stubbs^{[23][24]} and Marc Bloch.^{[23][25][26]} Kern derived the word from a putative Frankish term **fehu-ōd*, in which **fehu* means "cattle" and *-ōd* means "goods", implying "a movable object of value".^{[25][26]} Bloch explains that by the beginning of the 10th century it was common to value land in monetary terms but to pay for it with objects of equivalent value, such as arms, clothing, horses or food. This was known as *feos*, a term that took on the general meaning of paying for something in lieu of money. This meaning was then applied to land itself, in which land was used to pay for fealty, such as to a vassal. Thus the old word *feos* meaning movable property would have changed to *feus*, meaning the exact opposite: landed property.^{[25][26]}

Archibald Ross Lewis proposes that the origin of 'fief' is not *feudum* (or *feodum*), but rather *foderum*, the earliest attested use being in *Vita Hludovici* (840) by Astronomus.^[27] In that text is a passage about Louis the Pious that says *annona militaris quas vulgo foderum vocant*, which can be translated as "Louis forbade that military provender (which they popularly call "fodder") be furnished."^[23]

Initially in medieval Latin European documents, a land grant in exchange for service was called a *beneficium* (Latin).^[23] Later, the term *feudum*, or *feodum*, began to replace *beneficium* in the documents.^[23] The first attested instance of this is from 984, although more primitive forms were seen up to one-hundred years earlier.^[23] The origin of the *feudum* and why it replaced *beneficium* has not been well established, but there are multiple theories, described below.^[23]

The term "féodal" was first used in [10,11,12] 17th-century French legal treatises (1614)^{[28][29]} and translated into English legal treatises as an adjective, such as "feodal government".

In the 18th century, Adam Smith, seeking to describe economic systems, effectively coined the forms "feudal government" and "feudal system" in his book *The Wealth of Nations* (1776).^[30] The phrase "feudal system" appeared in 1736, in *Baronia Anglica*, published nine years after the death of its author Thomas Madox, in 1727. In 1771, in his book *The History of Manchester*, John Whitaker first introduced the word "feudalism" and the notion of the feudal pyramid.^{[31][32]}

Another theory by Alauddin Samarrai suggests an Arabic origin, from *fuyū* (the plural of *fay*, which literally means "the returned", and was used especially for 'land that has been conquered from enemies that did not fight').^{[23][33]} Samarrai's theory is that early forms of 'fief' include *feo, feu, feuz, feuum* and others, the plurality of forms strongly suggesting origins from a loanword. The first use of these terms is in Languedoc, one of the least Germanic areas of Europe and bordering Al-Andalus (Muslim Spain). Further, the earliest use of *feuum* (as a replacement for *beneficium*) can be dated to 899, the same year a Muslim base at *Fraxinetum* (La Garde-Freinet) in Provence was established. It is possible, Samarrai says, that French scribes, writing in Latin, attempted to transliterate the Arabic word *fuyū* (the plural of *fay*), which was used by the Muslim invaders and occupiers at the time, resulting in a plurality of forms – *feo, feu, feuz, feuum* and others—from which eventually *feudum* derived. Samarrai, however, also advises to handle this theory with care, as Medieval and Early Modern Muslim scribes often used etymologically "fanciful roots" to support outlandish claims that something was of Arabian or Muslim origin.^[33]

History[13,14,15]

Feudalism, in its various forms, usually emerged as a result of the decentralization of an empire: such as in the Carolingian Empire in the 9th century AD, which lacked the bureaucratic infrastructure^[clarification needed] necessary to support cavalry without allocating land to these mounted troops. Mounted soldiers began to secure a system of hereditary rule over their allocated land and their power over the territory came to encompass the social, political, judicial, and economic spheres.

These acquired powers significantly diminished unitary power in these empires. However, once the infrastructure to maintain unitary power was re-established—as with the European monarchies—feudalism began to yield to this new power structure and eventually disappeared.^[34]

Classic feudalism

The classic François Louis Ganshof version of feudalism^{[4][1]} describes a set of reciprocal legal and military obligations of the warrior nobility based on the key concepts of lords, vassals, and fiefs. In broad terms a lord was a noble who held land, a vassal was a person granted possession of the land by the lord, and the land was known as a fief. In exchange for the use of the fief and protection by the lord, the vassal provided some sort of service to the lord. There were many varieties of feudal land tenure, consisting of military and non-military service. The obligations and corresponding rights between lord and vassal concerning the fief form the basis of the feudal relationship.^[1]

Vassalage[16,17,18]



Homage of Clermont-en-Beauvaisis

Before a lord could grant land (a fief) to someone, he had to make that person a vassal. This was done at a formal and symbolic ceremony called a commendation ceremony, which was composed of the two-part act of homage and oath of fealty. During homage, the lord and vassal entered into a contract in which the vassal promised to fight for the lord at his command, whilst the lord agreed to protect the vassal from external forces. Fealty comes from the Latin fidelitas and denotes the fidelity owed by a vassal to his feudal lord. "Fealty" also refers to an oath that more explicitly reinforces the commitments of the vassal made during homage. Such an oath follows homage.^[35]

Once the commendation ceremony was complete, the lord and vassal were in a feudal relationship with agreed obligations to one another. The vassal's principal obligation to the lord was to provide aid or military service. Using whatever equipment the vassal could obtain by virtue of the revenues from the fief, the vassal had to answer calls to military service by the lord. This security of military help was the primary reason the lord entered into the feudal relationship. In addition, the vassal could have other obligations to his lord, such as attendance at his court, whether manorial, baronial, both termed court baron, or at the king's court.^[36]

It could also involve the vassal providing "counsel", so that if the lord faced a major decision he would summon all his vassals and hold a council. At the level of the manor this might be a fairly mundane matter of agricultural policy, but also included sentencing by the lord for criminal offences, including capital punishment in some cases. Concerning the king's feudal court, such deliberation could include the question of declaring war. These are examples of feudalism; depending on the period of time and location in Europe, feudal customs and practices varied.



Around this time, rich, "middle-class" commoners chafed at the authority and powers held by feudal lords, overlords, and nobles, and preferred the idea of autocratic rule where a king and one royal court held almost all the power.^[42] Feudal nobles regardless of ethnicity generally thought of themselves as arbiters of a politically free system, so this often puzzled them before the fall of most feudal laws.^[42]

Most of the military aspects of feudalism effectively ended by about 1500.^[43] This was partly since the military shifted from armies consisting of the nobility to professional fighters thus reducing the nobility's claim on power, but also because the Black Death reduced the nobility's hold over the lower classes. Vestiges of the feudal system hung on in France until the French Revolution of the 1790s. Even when the original feudal relationships had disappeared, there were many institutional remnants of feudalism left in place. Historian Georges Lefebvre explains how at an early stage of the French Revolution, on just one night of August 4, 1789, France abolished the long-lasting remnants of the feudal order. It announced, "The National Assembly abolishes the feudal system entirely." Lefebvre explains:[18,19]

Without debate the Assembly enthusiastically adopted equality of taxation and redemption of all manorial rights except for those involving personal servitude—which were to be abolished without indemnification. Other proposals followed with the same success: the equality of legal punishment, admission of all to public office, abolition of venality in office, conversion of the tithes into payments subject to redemption, freedom of worship, prohibition of plural holding of benefices ... Privileges of provinces and towns were offered as a last sacrifice.^[44]

Originally the peasants were supposed to pay for the release of seigniorial dues; these dues affected more than a quarter of the farmland in France and provided most of the income of the large landowners.^[45] The majority refused to pay and in 1793 the obligation was cancelled. Thus the peasants got their land free, and also no longer paid the tithe to the church.^[46]

In the Kingdom of France, following the French Revolution, feudalism was abolished with a decree of August 11, 1789 by the Constituent Assembly, a provision that was later extended to various parts of Italian kingdom following the invasion by French troops. In the Kingdom of Naples, Joachim Murat abolished feudalism with the law of August 2, 1806, then implemented with a law of September 1, 1806 and a royal decree of December 3, 1808. In the Kingdom of Sicily the abolishing law was issued by the Sicilian Parliament on August 10, 1812. In Piedmont feudalism ceased by virtue of the edicts of March 7, and July 19, 1797 issued by Charles Emmanuel IV, although in the Kingdom of Sardinia, specifically on the island of Sardinia, feudalism was abolished only with an edict of August 5, 1848.

In the Kingdom of Lombardy–Venetia, feudalism was abolished with the law of December 5, 1861 n.º 342 were all feudal bonds abolished. The system lingered on in parts of Central and Eastern Europe as late as the 1850s. Slavery in Romania was abolished in 1856. Russia finally abolished serfdom in 1861.^{[47][48]}

More recently in Scotland, on November 28, 2004, the Abolition of Feudal Tenure etc. (Scotland) Act 2000 entered into full force putting an end to what was left of the Scottish feudal system. The last feudal regime, that of the island of Sark, was abolished in December 2008, when the first democratic elections were held for the election of a local parliament and the appointment of a government. The "revolution" is a consequence of the juridical intervention of the European Parliament, which declared the local constitutional system as contrary to human rights, and, following a series of legal battles, imposed parliamentary democracy.

Indian feudal model played a crucial historical significance for a number of reasons.

- In central India, Orissa, and eastern Bengal, land grants were a crucial tool for bringing virgin terrain under cultivation. South India experienced the same thing.
- Overall, the era of feudalism was marked by significant agrarian expansion.
- Innovative Brahmins were given important jobs in the underdeveloped, native territories so they could introduce innovative agricultural techniques.
- The priests' sponsored ceremonies and some of the tribe's beliefs contributed to their material advancement.
- The administrative framework for upholding law and order in the given regions was supplied by land grants, and all such powers were transferred to the donees.
- Religious donees fostered a sense of widespread devotion to the established order among the populace in both developed and underdeveloped places.
- Secular vassals, on the other hand, supported their rulers by managing their fiefdoms and providing soldiers during conflicts.
- Land grants caused the tribal peoples to become Brahmanized and assimilated since they were given writing systems, a calendar, works of art, literature, and a new, more elevated way of life.



- In this regard, the feudal model aided in the unification of the nation.

III. RESULTS

Heinrich Brunner

Heinrich Brunner, in his *The Equestrian Service and the Beginnings of the Feudal System* (1887), maintained that Charles Martel laid the foundation for feudalism during the 8th century.^[51] Brunner believed Martel to be a brilliant warrior who secularized church lands for the purpose of providing precarias (or leases) for his followers, in return for their military service. Martel's military ambitions were becoming more expensive as it changed into a cavalry force, thus the need to maintain his followers through the despoiling of church lands.^[52]

Responding to Brunner's thesis, Paul Fouracre theorizes that the church itself held power over the land with its own precarias.^[53] The most commonly utilized precarias was the gifting of land to the church, done for various spiritual and legal purposes.^{[54][55]} Although Charles Martel did indeed utilize precaria for his own purposes, and even drove some of the bishops out of the church and placed his own laymen in their seats, Paul Fouracre debunks Martel's role in creating political change, stating that this was simply a military move in order to have control in the region by hoarding land through tenancies and expelling the bishops who he did not agree with, but it did not specifically create feudalism.^[56]

Karl Marx

Karl Marx also uses the term in the 19th century in his analysis of society's economic and political development, describing feudalism (or more usually feudal society or the feudal mode of production) as the order coming before capitalism. For Marx, what defined feudalism was the power of the ruling class (the aristocracy) in their control of arable land, leading to a class society based upon the exploitation of the peasants who farm these lands, typically under serfdom and principally by means of labour, produce and money rents.^[57] He deemed feudalism a 'democracy of unfreedom', juxtaposing the oppression of feudal subjects with a holistic integration of political and economic life of the sort lacking under industrial capitalism.^[58]

He also took it as a paradigm for understanding the power-relationships between capitalists and wage-labourers in his own time: "in pre-capitalist systems it was obvious that most people did not control their own destiny—under feudalism, for instance, serfs had to work for their lords. Capitalism seems different because people are in theory free to work for themselves or for others as they choose. Yet most workers have as little control over their lives as feudal serfs."^[59] Some later Marxist theorists (e.g. Eric Wolf) have applied this label to include non-European societies, grouping feudalism together with imperial China and the Inca Empire, in the pre-Columbian era, as 'tributary' societies.^[60]

Later studies

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, J. Horace Round and Frederic William Maitland, both historians of medieval Britain, arrived at different conclusions about the character of Anglo-Saxon English society before the Norman Conquest in 1066. Round argued that the Normans had brought feudalism with them to England, while Maitland contended that its fundamentals were already in place in Britain before 1066. The debate continues today, but a consensus viewpoint is that England before the Conquest had commendation (which embodied some of the personal elements in feudalism) while William the Conqueror introduced a modified and stricter northern French feudalism to England incorporating (1086) oaths of loyalty to the king by all who held by feudal tenure, even the vassals of his principal vassals (holding by feudal tenure meant that vassals must provide the quota of knights required by the king or a money payment in substitution).

In the 20th century, two outstanding historians offered still more widely differing perspectives. The French historian Marc Bloch, arguably the most influential 20th-century medieval historian,^[57] approached feudalism not so much from a legal and military point of view but from a sociological one, presenting in *Feudal Society* (1939; English 1961) a feudal order not limited solely to the nobility. It is his radical notion that peasants were part of the feudal relationship that sets Bloch apart from his peers: while the vassal performed military service in exchange for the fief, the peasant performed physical labour in return for protection – both are a form of feudal relationship. According to Bloch, other elements of society can be seen in feudal terms; all the aspects of life were centred on "lordship", and so we can speak usefully of a feudal church structure, a feudal courtly (and anti-courtly) literature, and a feudal economy.^[57]



In contradistinction to Bloch, the Belgian historian François Louis Ganshof defined feudalism from a narrow legal and military perspective, arguing that feudal relationships existed only within the medieval nobility itself. Ganshof articulated this concept in *Qu'est-ce que la féodalité?* ("What is feudalism?", 1944; translated in English as *Feudalism*). His classic definition of feudalism is widely accepted today among medieval scholars,^[57] though questioned both by those who view the concept in wider terms and by those who find insufficient uniformity in noble exchanges to support such a model.

Although Georges Duby was never formally a student in the circle of scholars around Marc Bloch and Lucien Febvre, that came to be known as the *Annales* school, Duby was an exponent of the *Annaliste* tradition. In a published version of his 1952 doctoral thesis entitled *La société aux XIe et XIIe siècles dans la région mâconnaise* (*Society in the 11th and 12th centuries in the Mâconnais region*), and working from the extensive documentary sources surviving from the Burgundian monastery of Cluny, as well as the dioceses of Mâcon and Dijon, Duby excavated the complex social and economic relationships among the individuals and institutions of the Mâconnais region and charted a profound shift in the social structures of medieval society around the year 1000. He argued that in early 11th century, governing institutions—particularly comital courts established under the Carolingian monarchy—that had represented public justice and order in Burgundy during the 9th and 10th centuries receded and gave way to a new feudal order wherein independent aristocratic knights wielded power over peasant communities through strong-arm tactics and threats of violence.

In 1939, the Austrian historian Theodor Mayer [de] subordinated the feudal state as secondary to his concept of a *Personenverbandsstaat* (personal interdependency state), understanding it in contrast to the territorial state.^[61] This form of statehood, identified with the Holy Roman Empire, is described as the most complete form of medieval rule, completing conventional feudal structure of lordship and vassalage with the personal association among the nobility.^[62] But the applicability of this concept to cases outside of the Holy Roman Empire has been questioned, as by Susan Reynolds.^[63] The concept has also been questioned and superseded in German historiography because of its bias and reductionism towards legitimating the *Führerprinzip*.

Challenges to the feudal model

In 1974, the American historian Elizabeth A. R. Brown^[5] rejected the label feudalism as an anachronism that imparts a false sense of uniformity to the concept. Having noted the current use of many, often contradictory, definitions of feudalism, she argued that the word is only a construct with no basis in medieval reality, an invention of modern historians read back "tyrannically" into the historical record. Supporters of Brown have suggested that the term should be expunged from history textbooks and lectures on medieval history entirely.^[57] In *Fiefs and Vassals: The Medieval Evidence Reinterpreted* (1994),^[6] Susan Reynolds expanded upon Brown's original thesis. Although some contemporaries questioned Reynolds's methodology, other historians have supported it and her argument.^[57] Reynolds argues:

Too many models of feudalism used for comparisons, even by Marxists, are still either constructed on the 16th-century basis or incorporate what, in a Marxist view, must surely be superficial or irrelevant features from it. Even when one restricts oneself to Europe and to feudalism in its narrow sense it is extremely doubtful whether feudo-vassalic institutions formed a coherent bundle of institutions or concepts that were structurally separate from other institutions and concepts of the time.^[64]

The term feudal has also been applied to non-Western societies, in which institutions and attitudes similar to those of medieval Europe are perceived to have prevailed (see *Examples of feudalism*). Japan has been extensively studied in this regard.^[65] Karl Friday notes that in the 21st century historians of Japan rarely invoke feudalism; instead of looking at similarities, specialists attempting comparative analysis concentrate on fundamental differences.^[66] Ultimately, critics say, the many ways the term feudalism has been used have deprived it of specific meaning, leading some historians and political theorists to reject it as a useful concept for understanding society.^[57]

Historian Richard Abels notes that "Western civilization and world civilization textbooks now shy away from the term 'feudalism'.

The legitimacy of the feudal model in the context of medieval India has recently come under scrutiny.

- It has been suggested that peasant production was independent or free in mediaeval civilization.
- The tools and procedures used in production were under the control of the peasants.
- Moreover, the social and economic structure was very stable, and there was little change in agricultural production practices.



- The disagreements were more about the distribution and redistribution of the surplus than a redistribution of the means of production.
- The main tool of exploitation was the state's appropriation of agrarian surplus.
- Empirically, a number of historians have questioned the idea that trade in the area was declining and that there was a shortage of money throughout the time of Indian feudalism.
- R. S. Sharma had received criticism from D. N. Jha for blaming the development of the feudal model in India excessively on the absence of long-distance external trade.
- The historians of the Indian feudalism school have also held a few different points of view. For instance, D. N. Jha discovered a discrepancy between the location of the Kaliyuga evidence and the location of the 'crisis' that the Kaliyuga predicted: the evidence came from peninsular India, but the crisis was anticipated in the Brahmanical north.
- The validity of the evidence of a kali yuga as a sign of a crisis was questioned by B. P. Sahu as well; in his opinion, it was more of a reinterpretation of kingship and a subsequent reassertion of Brahmanical ideology than a crisis within it.[18,19]

IV. CONCLUSION

Three major lines of inquiry have been used to recreate the political organisation of medieval Indo-Europe: feudal model, segmentary state, and integrative polity. The last two have been unable to justify the concepts in terms of alternative material bases, even while their applicability appears to be restricted and localised:

R.S. Sharma's claim is more palatable in the current state of study due to their reliance on the fundamental components of the "feudal model's" mode of production and the latter's application on a nearly pan-Indian scale.[20]

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