

PARIAH ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN TRADITIONAL SOCIETIES: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE JEWS IN MEDIEVAL EUROPE AND THE CHRISTIAN MINORITIES IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

Joseph P. L. Jiang

江炳倫*

摘 要

傳統社會蔑視商貿活動，因此擔任此項工作者，幾皆為地位低微的所謂社會邊緣人，如少數民族，少數宗教團體、或文化背景完全不同的外來者。歷史上，這種例子俯拾皆是，本文特以歐洲中世紀各國猶太人與鄂圖曼帝國境內基督徒少數民族（尤其是希臘人）兩個著名的例子，來比較說明這些所謂下級商人（韋伯用語）的社會結構、經貿機會及所冒的風險。大抵言之，在靜態的農業社會，他們從事國際貿易和溝通城鄉有無，常可累積可觀財富。但他們毫不受法律或傳統規範保障，統治者一聲令下，就可把他們的財產全部充公，驅逐出境，甚至任意殺戮。在統治者的眼中，他們就像海棉一樣，可用來慢慢汲取民間的錢財，等它汲到飽滿之後，再用力一擠，這些財富就全部落入統治者的口袋中。

I. Trade and the Trader in preindustrial Societies

Business entrepreneurs in the industrial West are now often hailed as the pillars of the society, and a free business class as the best guarantee of democratic government. But the situation was not always so favorable. The ancestors of the present respectable businessmen, according to Henri Pirenne, were no other than a mass of wandering beings, who, having no land to cultivate, floated across the surface of society.¹ They were from the dregs of society, *deracindes*, men without roots, who took to trade with no assets but their energy, intelligence, and lack of scruples.²

Most traders in preindustrial societies were of either alien origin or lowly

*作者為本校政治研究所教授

¹ Henri Pirenne, "The stages in the Social History of Capitalism", *American Historical Review* vol. 19(April, 1914), 494-515.

² Henri Pirenne, *Economic and Social History of Medieval Europe*, tr. by I. E. Clegg (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1937), p.164.

birth, and were completely or partially denied political and legal rights. Karl Polanyi has noticed their existence in ancient Babylon and Greece. He says:

The trader types of the antiquity were the *tamkarum*, the *metic*, or resident alien, and the foreigner The *tamkarum* dominated the Mesopotamian scene from the Sumerian beginnings to the rise of Islam. The *metic* became first conspicuous in Athens and other Greek cities as a lower class merchant The foreigner is of course ubiquitous.³

And Max Weber explains how these people acquire protection:

The merchant was an alien and would not have legal opportunities as a member of the nation or tribe and therefore required special protection. One institution which serves the purpose is that of reprisal Since the merchant as a foreigner could not appear before the court, he had to provide a patron who represented him; hence arose in antiquity the phenomenon of the *proxenia*, which manifests a combination of hospitality and representation of an interest. To it corresponds the law of hostage in the middle ages; the foreigner merchant was authorized and required to place himself under the protection of a citizen, with whom he had to store his goods, and the host in turn was obliged to guard him on behalf of the community.

Elsewhere in ancient times, the traders listed in the Bible were practically all non-Israelities.⁵ In Egypt, and possibly under the Minoan rule of priest kings also, the merchant was originally a temple serf. In any case he always had to be considered as a servant of the king to all intents and purposes. The merchants and seamen mentioned in the pertinent parts of the *Zen Avesta* were foreigners and non-Aryans. They brought gold, silver and heavily ornamented clothings to the castles of the Iranian kings and nobles. Later a special class, the *huiti*, appeared to carry

³ Karl Polanyi *et al.*, *Trade and Market in the Early Empires* (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1957), p.260.

⁴ Max Weber, *General Economic History*, tr. by Frank H. Knight (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1950 ed.), p.212.

⁵ F. M. Heichelheim, *An Ancient Economic History* (Leiden: Sijthoff, 1958), vol. I, p.236.

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on trade.⁶ In Brahmanic India, trade and the crafts were regarded with great disfavor. "One who acquires property cheap, gives it for a high price, is called a usurer and blamed among those who recite *Veda*".⁷ In most Indian villages the petty traders and shopkeepers are either Parsees (originally from Persia), the Sudras or the untouchables. And as well known, both Chinese and Japanese Confucianists have relegated the merchants to the bottom of social classes. In Tokugawa Japan the merchant was prohibited from wearing silk, using parasols, hair ornaments, and house furnishings of raised lacquerware. He was not given legal protection either of his life or his property. A *samurai* could cut him down for any imagined offense and leave without further ado.⁸

In Europe up to the time of the Industrial Revolution, the prejudice against business and the businessmen was deep-rooted in the hearts of the upper classes. In the Carolingian period it was the yet heathen Frisians from East Germany who were doing trade all over Europe. And most cities and towns contained large numbers of foreign merchants:

Norwich owed much of its position to Danish influence, to the settlement of Scandinavian traders there at an early date London had German establishments in the reign of Etherred. The same would largely apply to continental towns such as Paris and Geneva, to cities on the Rhine like Cologne which quite early had a colony of alien merchants.⁹

This trend of large numbers of aliens or people of lowly birth engaged in business and commerce has continued to the present time. They can be found in almost every corner of the earth. The best known are the Jews in Europe and North Africa, the Indians in Southeast Asia and East and South Africa, the Greeks all over the world, and the Chinese in Southeast Asia and other parts of the world. In Morocco, the traders competing with the Jews are from a minority tribe, the Soussis Berbers, from the Sous valley in southern Morocco. In Algeria, the Mizabites,

⁶ *Idem*, p.224.

⁷ Vasishtha II, 40, as quoted by Lewis H. Haney, *History of Economic Thought* (New York: MacMillan, 1925), p.38.

⁸ Charles David Sheldon, *The Rise of the Merchant Class in Tokugawa Japan 1600-1868* (Locust Valley, N.Y.: J.H. Austin, 1958), p.38.

⁹ Adam Smith, *Wealth of Nations* (London: 1826 ed.), p.76.

men from an oasis in the Sahara, take over the same office.¹⁰ The Lebanese are most notable as petty traders in many countries in West Africa. In Lhasa, there is a large colony of Nepalese, who belong to the tribe of Newars and, having lost political power to the Gurkha in their own country, go to live in Tibet as traders.¹¹ In Afghanistan the ruling group is the Pushtuns, constituting fifty to sixty percent of the total population. The Tajiks are a conquered native minority. It is this group which is in crafts and trade.¹² In Argentina in South America, by the early 1900's eighty percent of the owners of commercial and industrial establishments were immigrants or naturalized citizens.¹³ Add the same role played by the Huguenots in the seventeenth century France, by the Puritans and other religious minorities in England of the same period and later, and by the so-called old believers in Tzarist Russia, one must conclude that the phenomenon just described is not a product of any particular culture. It is indeed a world type.

Max Weber used the concept of pariah capitalism to designate the activities of the Occidental Jewry from late antiquity to the present, and the Parsees of India. These people are functionally indispensable, according to him, to the luxury of the princely courts and the general economies of the nations, but for reason of ethnic or religious background, they are socially segregated and reduced to a pariah status.¹⁴ As this is a universal phenomenon, as indicated above, we may well provide for it a tentative definition, substituting pariah entrepreneurship for pariah capitalism, emphasizing the grave risks this type of activity subsumes. A pariah entrepreneur is a business undertaker (*verleger*) belonging to a deviant or marginal community, more or less identifiable by ethnic origin, religious practices or other cultural symbols, and treated with suspicion and low esteem by the dominant community. He is given access to wealth and economic welfare through his business enterprise, but lacks legal, political and social power to protect himself and his wealth. Hence he can only survive by buying protection from the political elite. His social role and function are best illustrated by a sort of antagonistic symbiosis in which he lives precariously with the elite. Because of his exclusion from the main stream of the dominant

¹⁰ Eliot D. Chapple and Carleton S. Coon, *Principles of Anthropology* (New York: Henry Holt, 1942), 379.

¹¹ Charles Bell, *The People of Tibet* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1928), pp.118ff.

¹² Donald N. Wilber, *Afghanistan* (New Haven: Human Relations Area Files, 1956), p.47.

¹³ Thomas Roberto Fillol, *Social Factors in Economic Development: The Argentine Case* (Mass: The M.I.T. Press, 1961), p.28.

¹⁴ Max Weber, *Essays in Sociology*, tr. & ed., with introduction by H.H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (London: Oxford University Press, 1946), p.66.

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society and his affiliation with an alien or lowly regarded culture, a pariah entrepreneur would be generally also a marginal man as defined by Everett Stonequist.¹⁵

With this definition in mind, we may hypothesize that a comparative study of the lives of the pariah entrepreneurs in different parts of the world, be they Jews in the Germanic states or the Chinese in colonial Southeast Asia, before the advent of modern industrialization, should reveal many interesting similarities. Furthermore, these similarities should not be looked upon as mere historical accidents. The fortunes or misfortunes of the pariah entrepreneurs anywhere in the world, their discriminations and massacres, can be accounted for by certain identifiable social, economic and political factors. We propose to illustrate these remarks by reviewing two classical cases: the Jews in medieval Europe and the Christian minorities in the Ottoman Empire.

II. The Jews in Medieval Europe

The life of the Jews in Medieval Europe is particularly interesting and relevant to our study, not so much because they suffered the worst persecutions as a distinct deviant community, as because the socio-political setting and the techniques of the oppressors offer a prototype for events which were to occur in other times and places. However, because the subject is so vast and complex, only the most significant aspects of the elite-pariah relationship can be briefly described here.

The Jews in Medieval Europe were pariah people *par excellence*. In the contemporary feudal system they were completely outside the political and legal organization, and were regarded as merely human properties, who could be transferred as gifts from the jurisdiction of one ruler to another. They were invited to settle in a city when the princes and bishops needed their services, and then were expelled at a moment's notice. They were segregated in ghettos, and then accused of clannishness; they were forced to wear a yellow badge of infamy, and then accused of furtiveness; they were encouraged to be money-lenders — a profession that jeopardized a Christian's chances of salvation — and then accused of avarice. In the path of the pious Crusaders, whole Jewish communities were

¹⁵ Everett V. Stonequist, *The marginal Man* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1937), ch. I.

¹⁶ Herbert J. Muller, *The Uses of the Past* (New York: Mentor Book, 1960 ed.), p.98.

wiped out as the hateful deicides; in the panic of recurring epidemics, the Jews were accused of poisoning the wells; and when Christian traders appeared for business competition, from the thirteenth century onwards, a hideous myth to the effect that the Jews sacrificed Christian children for the Passover feast was fabricated to drive them away.

1) Social Organization of the Jews

The Jews in Europe were slowly deprived of the privileges granted them by Julius Caesar and other Roman emperors, until only one privilege remained, that which granted them a wide measure of judicial autonomy. Jewish communities by tradition were allowed to establish local courts to try civil as well as minor criminal cases when only Jews were involved. Excommunication constituted the severest sanction in the hands of the Jewish courts. But on rare occasions, and with the consent of the king, these courts could even condemn a person to death. In 1360 a royal French privilege empowered the Jews to banish one of their number, provided that the community indemnified the king with a hundred guilders for a loss of a taxpayer. Sometimes the community had to bribe officials to help carry out such an expulsion.¹⁷

From the earliest time, in the East as well as in the West, the Jewish people tended to live together in special quarters of the cities. The requirements of religious ritual and services, and the need for social communication with coreligionists, created these special Jewish quarters, which carried no stigma of inferiority at the time. But in the later Middle Ages, the Jews were walled in special, often the dirtiest, districts of the cities by official regulations, and a Jew found outside the ghetto after nightfall was fined enormous sums, or whipped through the streets, or even put to death.

The communal solidarity of the Jews is well known and much marvelled at. There have been speculations as to how much the survival of the Jewish identity through two thousand years in Diaspora was due to fresh religious conversion, and how much to continuous descent from the original Israelites. It is, however, beyond doubt that a well disciplined and cohesive religion was the mainspring for the survival of the Jewish people as a group. A well educated religious leadership, a set of

¹⁷ Sala Wittmayer Baron, *A Social and Religious History of the Jews* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1937), Vol. II, p.93.

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rigorously observed rituals, and a fervent belief in a coming Messiah as their glorious liberator, more than anything else, cemented the unity of the Jewish people in prosperity as well as in adversity, cultivating in them an almost defiant spirit of sublimity amid recurring tragedies, and gave them a sense of reverence in the face of a cruel destiny.

When persecution from outside intensified, the Jew, debarred from public activity, came to concentrate his attention on his own circle. The family became an object of intense devotion, and home life the center of all-absorbing thought. The Sabbath and other holy days did as much for the fostering of the ties of family and kinship as of religion.

It is almost axiomatic that the Jew has a strong passion to amass wealth, and very clever ways to get it. Superficially this is quite true, for the Jew knew that he was only tolerated on account of his wealth, which meant, therefore, life and happiness for him. But the highest ambition and ideal of a medieval Jew was not really to be rich, but to be counted among the learned of his community. Despite the complex social relations with non-Jews, the primary concern of every Jewish parent was to give his child a Jewish education, which occupied a central position in the Jewish communities. Wherever a distinguished scholar attracted to his academy numerous students, the community deemed it a privilege to help maintain them.

The Jews also developed an equally efficient system of meeting general and individual emergencies through charitable institutions, which were placed under strict communal supervision. According to their religious law, the Jewish poor could always claim support from wealthier coreligionists as a right. A special tithe was expected to be set aside by every Jew for charitable purposes. It was also a special duty for the Jews to ransom their brothers from captivity. The institution of charity provided a sort of social insurance in the prevailing lack of security, because nobody could tell whether his accumulated wealth would not be destroyed overnight by a decree of the monarch or by pillage.

There are always individuals in every pariah group, who, being lured by opportunities in the elite society, or cowed by imminent persecution, conceal or renounce their identity. Medieval Jewry was no exception. In Spain, Jews of special importance, such as tax farmers, ambassadors, physicians and surgeons, sometimes secured for themselves a special privilege of non-solidarity with other Jews, and thus were free from their liabilities. Jews of wealth could buy exemption from wearing the yellow Jewish badge by paying a determinate or undeterminate sum to the authorities. There was also a continuous conversion into the dominant religion. A Dominican friar, Vincent Ferrer, claimed to have converted 35,000 Jews

alone.¹⁸ The motives of conversion varied. Some changed their religion because of personal conviction; others because of ambition; others were forced to receive baptism under the threat of the sword; and still others feigned conversion to protect their life and property, yet secretly continued to practice their own religion. These Jewish Christians were known by the Spanish name *marranos*, and some of them became the leading anti-Jewish agitators of the age.¹⁹ A few of them even attained high positions in the government and the clergy. It was not easy, however, for them to completely discard the stigma of being from the pariah group. The Inquisition was even harsher to the *marranos* than to professing Jews.

2) Opportunities and Risks

The Jews in the earlier Middle Ages were not yet limited to money-lending. They occupied an important and often dominant place in commerce, particularly in international trade. Coming from the more advanced Byzantine or Muslim countries, they also had a decisive advantage as industrial producers and artisans. The Jewish quarter of Saragossa had special streets of shoemakers, cutlers, tanners, saddlers and jewelers. In their capacity as money-lenders the Jews were praised by the authorities as beloved and faithful subjects, who “provide credit for the needy population”.²⁰ Christian lords often entrusted their cash to Jews to invest in profitable transactions. In the first two centuries after the Christian reconquest of Spain, the Jews were generally employed as tax-gatherers and fiscal agents, and even as ambassadors and advisors of the kings.²¹ It is said that the twelfth was the century of high noon in the career of Spanish Jewry. In France and the Teutonic lands they were subjected to greater vicissitudes, but before the advent of the Crusades they at least found some justice and occasional favour as a useful mercantile class. They fared not badly in Italy, especially under the eyes of the Popes. But in Poland the Jews did best of all. They not only enjoyed peace, but also many privileges of a trading class. They were used as tax-agents of the Polish lords who ruled the Saporagian Cossacks on the Dnieper. Such employment, however, was to cost the Jews dearly. In 1648 a rebellion broke out, and every Jew found in the area

¹⁸ Paul Goodman, *History of the Jews* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1933 revised ed.), p.115.

¹⁹ S. W. Wittmayer Baron, *op. cit.*, p.53.

²⁰ *Idem*, p.19.

²¹ *Idem*, p.21 & *passim*.

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was mercilessly slaughtered.

The Jews served an essential function in the Medieval agricultural economy. More importantly, they were useful to the Royal treasury. The Jews had to pay special taxes as well as other "voluntary" contributions. Property taxes, sometimes as high as 33 percent, were the most common means of speedily extracting large amounts of cash from the Jews. Their loans were registered by a number of complicated systems, and, of course, the Jews had to pay a handsome fee for the services. Fines and tallages of all kinds were imposed upon entire communities to punish transgressions of law by a single member. It has been estimated that in the twelfth century English Jewry, constituting one quarter of one percent of the population, furnished eight percent of the total income of the treasury.²²

Since the Jews were by law rightless, they had to buy the privilege of trading and protection from the rulers. In the North the term of their residence was usually a limited one, and could only be renewed by a fresh act of the ruler. When a ruler died, the privileges of the Jews automatically expired, until renewed by his successors. This meant that the Jews had to pay again a considerable fee.

The Jews were also socially discriminated against. Besides residential segregation, they were prohibited to bathe together with Christians in public streams. In order to prevent a state of affairs whereby "by error Christians should mix with Jewish or Saracen women, or Jews and Saracens with Christian women," the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215 introduced the Jewish badge into the Catholic world at large.²³ And then, as it was profitable to suddenly order all the Jews to re-seal their deeds, so the local ecclesiastical authorities frequently changed the requirements of the shape and color of the badge, and the Jews had to pay for it. Finally the Jews were expressly prohibited by the Canon laws to be employed by the government, and were shut from ownership of most of the available land.²⁴

When the extortion of money from individual Jewish merchants failed to yield the sums desired, the rulers confiscated the properties of the entire communities. Charges of one sort or another were trumped up against the Jews of a particular town or country, and the Jews were ordered out, deprived of their belongings. In a few years, after they were permitted back again, the game was repeated. Sometimes formal pools for robbing them were established between the princes, as for example between the bishop of Bamberg and the Hohenzollern Burgraves of Nuremberg to

²² *Idem*, p.18.

²³ *Idem*, p.53.

²⁴ *Idem*, p.11.

the effect that they shared in the booty when the Jews fled from the jurisdiction of one to that of the other.²⁶ The function of the Jews has been rightly compared to that of a sponge; during many years they soaked up much of the wealth of a country, only to be eventually squeezed dry by those who had the political power.

3) Impact of Political structure and International Relations

The Jews were finally expelled from England in 1290; from France in 1306, 1384 and 1394; from Hungary in 1349 and 1360; from Spain and Sicily in 1509 and 1540. Several causes led to this general uprooting of human communities. First, Christian traders now began to appear on the scene, after the Crusades brought large numbers of Christians into contact with foreign lands and foreign commodities. Economic competition intensified hostility against the Jews, and complaints began to be heard that Christians suffered from Jewish cheating; that their livelihood was endangered because the Jews deprived them of their profits.²⁷ Secondly, a vital, if still latent, nationalism was now working detrimentally for the Jewish people. As the national states became more homogeneous, the alienness of the pariah people also became more conspicuous and irritating. Thirdly, the social disruptions wrought by religious heresies in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and the inescapable Black Death in the fourteenth century, created a widespread psychological discontent in the people, which had to be discharged on some target.

On the other hand, royal initiative was rarely the sole cause of the disappearance of a Jewish community. As long as the people remained quiet, the Jews were profitable. Permanent banishment of the Jews was decreed only because the kings were helpless in the face of rising popular indignation. This leads us to investigate two important facets of the Medieval political structure, which deeply affected Jewish life.

First, Medieval royal governments could rarely carry out all of their policies. Especially in the political quiltwork of Germany, nominally ruled by the head of the Holy Roman Empire, the Jews, even though protected by special charters of the Emperor, were actually at the mercy of every local baron, within whose domain they might happen to be. This meant that the Jews had not only to pay taxes and

²⁵ Max Weber, *General Economic History*, *op. cit.*, p.270.

²⁶ Werner Sombart, *The Jews and A Modern Capitalism*, tr. by M. Epstein (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1951), p.116.

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fees to the imperial court, but had to bribe the local authorities as well. Sometimes the barons interfered so much with the commercial activities of the Jews, that the king, afraid of losing revenues from this source, had to repeatedly order the barons to let the Jews alone. Philip the Fair, whose need for money was insatiable, ordered his royal officials to see that none of the rights possessed by the different barons interfere with the person or commerce of the Jews in his kingdom. He promised, however, to allow the local lords a share in the final loot when the Jews were generally expelled.²⁷ On the other hand, Emperor Charles IV, not having the power to do what he wished, transferred in 1348 the Jews of Worms "with their persons and property and with all the uses and rights" connected with them to that city.²⁸

But even the barons and city councils were unable to do what they pleased with the Jews. The local bishops and abbots were often not only narrow-minded, but also the most powerful money-lenders of the time. It was, therefore, expected that they would be the most clamorous opponents of the Jews. Many anti-Jewish riots and expulsions could be directly or indirectly attributed to the activities of the clergy.

To be fair, the highest ecclesiastical authority was seldom bigotedly anti-Jewish. This can be proved by the fact the Jews fared comparatively well in the papal states in Italy and Avignon. The Jews, however, sandwiched between the ecclesiastical and secular authorities, were prone to be used as pawns in the contemporary political chess game. This can be illustrated by a concrete example.

Philip the Fair, on two occasions, in 1293 and 1302, forbade the Inquisitors to concern themselves with the Jews in any way, and ordered his officials to refuse any cooperation with them in matters of usury, fortune telling, "and other matters which only concern the king". In addition to this general ordinance he issued a special confirmation of it to the seneschal of the south, where the Inquisition was most active. In the first of these orders, he disclosed his motive clearly that such action might impede the payment of tallage to the king. But during a period between the issuance of these orders, an exactly opposite policy prevailed. For in 1299 he allowed the Inquisitors the widest authority, and instructed royal officials to hand over to them any Jew who induced a Christian into heresy, handled the sacred Host, blasphemed the sacraments, circumcised Christians, sheltered heretics, built new synagogues, sang too loudly in them, possessed the Talmud, or deluded

²⁷ James Parkes, *The Jew in the Medieval Community: A Study of Political and Economic Situations* (London: Soncino Press, 1938), Vol. II, p.120.

²⁸ S. W. Baron, *op. cit.*, p.140.

Christians. The cause of this change of policy lay in his relations with Pope Boniface VIII. In 1293 he was engaged in a bitter quarrel with him, culminating in the issuance of the bull *Clericos Laicos* in 1296. Then in 1297 a peace was made between them which lasted until 1301. As soon as it came to an end, Philip returned to his policy towards the Inquisitors.

This represents the extreme but not the unique case of a pariah group being used as a weapon in international power struggle. Through out the ages up to the most recent times, many similar cases, in East as well as in the West, can be cited.

III. The Christian Minorities in the Ottoman Empire

The Turkish census of 1945 gave the number of non-Muslims as 292,000 out of a total population of 18,790,000. The number of people who were classified as Greek by mother tongue was 89,000, and as Armenian 56,000.³⁰ Fifty years before each of these communities numbered two to three million in Turkey proper alone. The catastrophic decline of the Christian minorities in Turkey probably could be matched only by that of the Jews in some European countries in modern times, and both events were equally replete with human tragedies.

The Greeks and Armenians had settled in Asia Minor long before the Turks conquered this area. As the followers of Osmanli swept westward from the thirteenth century onward, the empire they created eventually came to comprise "the strangest congeries of racial and social types,"³¹ with people who spoke some form of Turkish amounting to only 30 to 40 percent of the whole population.³² In the military empire, at once feudal and bureaucratic, the Muslims knew only four professions — government, war, religion, and agriculture. Industry and trade were despised, and were left to the non-Muslim conquered subjects.³³ It is unnecessary to describe in detail the roles which the Greeks and Armenians served as financiers, money-changers, tavern-keepers, grocers, boatmen, laborers and so on in the Ottoman

²⁹ James Parkes, *op. cit.*, p.140.

³⁰ The Royal Institute of International Affairs, *The Middle East, A Political and Economic Survey* (New York & London: RIIA, 1954, 2nd ed.), p.508.

³¹ A. J. Toynbee, *Turkey: A Past and A Future* (New York: George H. Doran, 1917), p.5.

³² *Idem*, p.6.

³³ Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey* (London & New York: Oxford University Press, 1961), p.35.

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Empire, because the story is well known, and in so many respects similar to what the Jews did in Medieval Europe and the Chinese in Southeast Asia. We will directly go to investigate the most prominent features of their social structure and their status in the prevailing social structure for the sake of making a comparative study.

1) The Social Structure of the Christian Minorities

Each sect of the Christian minorities as well as the Jewish community was given a sort of semi-autonomy in the Ottoman Empire by being recognized as a *millet* or nation. The headship of the *millet* was conferred on the religious leader of each group, who superintended the administration of justice in cases affecting its members only. All matters concerning marriage, divorce, and inheritance, as well as minor offences, were dealt with by his tribunal. He also had a number of lay officials, who busied themselves with the management of schools and hospitals, and the administration of the revenues of the *millet*.³⁴

After the initial wave of conquest which inevitably involved much bloodshed and social dislocation, the general attitude towards the subject population of the Ottoman rulers showed a high degree of tolerance. There was no attempt to force a mass conversion of the subject people to the Islamic faith, if only because such a step meant considerable loss of revenues since non-Muslims were liable to a special capitation tax. On the other hand, the *millet* system enabled the Christians and Jews to maintain something of a communal life and social position. The Turks did not care how the various Christian sects prayed, taught, and talked, so long as they were not, in their own calculation, threatened by imminent revolt.

A sort of communal separation with regard to locality of settlement also prevailed in the Ottoman Empire. After the siege of Constantinople the Sultan transplanted 15,000 Greeks from the provinces to the new capital and asked them to settle in the most devastated part of the city. In other cities which were at the time strongly walled, the Greeks were compelled to settle outside the walls (in the suburbs).³⁵ Some 30,000 Armenians were also invited by the Sultan to leave Asia Minor, and take up their abode in a place called Kum Kapu across the Golden Horn

³⁴ H. Luke, *The Making of Modern Turkey* (London: MacMillan, 1936), pp.97ff.

³⁵ Karl Dieterich, *Hellenism in Asia Minor*, tr. by Carroll N. Brown (New York: Oxford University Press American Branch, 1918), pp.27-28.

in Constantinople.³⁶ When the Jews were driven out of Spain in 1415, and again in 1492, they were favorably received by the Sultan, and were given a special quarter in his enchanting capital to live in.

The non-Muslims were further kept apart from the Muslims by distinctive dress and headgear. If a Christian or a Jew wore the fez, he was required to sew on it a strip of black ribbon or cloth, not to be concealed by the tassel.³⁷ He could not freely mix with Muslim society unless he was converted to Islam. Throughout the Ottoman period there was no doubt a continuous process of individual conversion and assimilation, though the tendency to cling to their own faith of the non-Muslim people was remarkable. There were also some communities of Christians who concealed the fact that they were Christians, and passed as adherents of Islam.³⁸

2) Opportunities and Risks

The rule of Osmanli was in the beginning advantageous to Greek and Armenian commerce. The abolition of the privileges accorded to foreigners (especially the Genoese) by the Byzantine emperors, and the indifference of the Turks to mercantile pursuits, left the Christian subjects of the Porte in a favorable position. Thus when a number of noble Greek families, returning after the siege to Constantinople, found that the territorial wealth on which they had formerly depended was largely gone, through confiscation or otherwise, they devoted themselves to commerce. Soon they became so fabulously rich and luxurious that it was said no traveller went to Constantinople in the seventeenth and eighteenth century without being furnished with a letter of introduction to at least one of the great families in the Phanar — the Greek settlement in the city.³⁹

While the Greeks had the controlling hand in trade and traffic in the coast towns, the Armenians carried on a regular and important traffic along the great trade routes of Asia Minor. The Armenian colony in Constantinople was also considerable, being variously reckoned at from 200,000 to 400,000 persons in the 1890's. It was divided into two classes. The first was the trading community,

³⁶ Richard Davey, *The Sultan and His Subjects* (London: Chatton & Windus, 1907), p.382.

³⁷ Roderic H. Davison, "Turkish Attitudes Concerning Christian-Muslim Equality in the Nineteenth Century", *American Historical Review*, LIX (1953-54), 844-864.

³⁸ Karl Dieterich, *op. cit.*, p.32.

³⁹ Richard Devey, *op. cit.*, p.332.

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comprising the bankers, money-lenders and numerous small merchants. The second class was commonly known as *hammals*, or porters, who were temporary laborers from the provinces.⁴⁰

Trade, commerce, and industry constituted the normal outlets for the entrepreneurial talents of the Christian and Jewish minorities. Besides that, the door to high administrative positions was always open to those adventurous spirits who allowed themselves to be converted to Islam, because religion was nearly the only dividing line between the ruling class and the pariah subjects. But even those who did not renounce their faith might have a part in the administration which required special skill, or in the remote regions of the empire. For example, Egyptian finance was by tradition in the hands of the Copts and Jews. In Turkey proper, the foreign affairs, at least as far as details were concerned, were in the hands of the Greeks. In Roumania and Albania, unscrupulous Greeks bought the office of governor and became petty despots themselves. Rich Greek merchants also farmed taxes. For these offices they paid enormous sums to the Supreme Porte, but were left a free hand in the matter of filling their own pockets.⁴¹

Yet the position of the Christians and Jews were always precarious. The more wealth they made, the more carefully they had to conceal it. It was said that the churches and buildings of the Phanar were remarkably unpretentious, though the interior of the houses was marked with profuse luxury.⁴² The following story was common: When a Sultan heard that certain merchant had made an enormous fortune, he simply sent his emissaries to hang the man on the door and confiscated all his property.

In more than one way the Christian subjects were relegated to second class citizenship. There was a tacit assumption that full political and legal rights could only be claimed by Muslims. Thus in a legal dispute between a Christian and a Muslim, the verdict would always be biased in favor of the latter.⁴³ Christian evidence was discounted in a Muslim court of law.⁴⁴ Christians could not serve in the armed forces, but had to pay an exemption tax, which was "the backbone of the Imperial

⁴⁰ Sir Charles Eliot, *Turkey in Europe* (London: Edward Arnold, 1908), p.410.

⁴¹ *Idem*, p.281.

⁴² *Idem*, p.278.

⁴³ M. Philips Price, *A History of Turkey. From Empire to Republic* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1956), p.73.

⁴⁴ R. H. Davison, *op. cit.*

budget".⁴⁵ Other discriminatory measures included such matters as distinctive dress for the non-Muslims, or occasional denials of permits for the repair of churches. Under Sultan Bayazid, a law was passed ordering all Greeks and other *rayas* to salute even the humblest Mohammedan they might chance to meet in the street, and the latter was not bound, in any way, to return the complement.⁴⁶

As to those who served the Sultan in any official position, they could deal freely with non-Muslim subjects, but had to be careful how they punished a Muslim brigand, and might be deposed or even executed if they offended one of the Sultan's eunuchs. The offices which they had bought so dearly usually did not last long, for the Porte changed them as often as possible in order to increase the number of sales.

In short, in a state where everything depended on the caprice of the ruler and nobody's life or property was safe, the Christians and Jews were even more helpless than others. Usually they did not even have the tenuous protection of the religious law and of feudal customs. For example, one Sultan went so far as to propose the total extermination of the Greeks by genocide, and was restrained from doing so only by the serious objections of his Grand *Vazier* and other advisers. Another Sultan, Murad II, who was a drunkard, was forbidden wine by his Jewish physician. To revenge himself for so unpleasant a prohibition, he ordered some hundred Jews in whose houses wine was disclosed to be hanged. On the other hand, individual Sultans and Grand *Vaziers* might occasionally show special kindness to Christian minorities as the favored "pets", going as far as to build churches for them. In the latter part of the seventeenth century, the condition of the Christian provinces was greatly ameliorated by the reforms introduced by the Grand *Vazier* Koyprulu-Zade-Mustafa. He argued that excessive oppression of the Christians was like killing the goose that laid golden eggs.⁴⁷

From the eighteenth century onward, the monolithic structure of the Ottoman Empire was gradually loosened, and sometimes situations occurred beyond the control of the central government. For example, mass massacres of the Greeks in Anatolia and other sea ports were committed by Turkish soldiers when the Greeks in the Balkan peninsula declared independence in 1822. Sultan Mahmud opposed the pogrom, but at the time he was unable to do anything. He set to work to reassure

⁴⁵ Arnold J. Toynbee, *The Western Question in Greece and Turkey* (London: Constable & Co., 1922), p.268.

⁴⁶ Richard Davey, *op. cit.*, p.328.

⁴⁷ Sir Charles Eliot, *op. cit.*, p.346.

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his Greek subjects after order was restored, and so effectively that, before long, not less than thirty thousand Greeks emigrated from Greece proper to the empire.⁴⁸

3) Impact of International Relations

The position of the Christian minorities was deeply affected by the impact of Europe upon the Ottoman world during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The European powers used the relations between the Porte and its Christian subjects as a pretext for their intervention in the Ottoman's affairs. The Sultan was persuaded or compelled to issue a number of formal edicts, of which the most important were the Gulhane Decrees of 1839, which contained the famous Tanzimat reforms, the Hatti Himayun of 1856, and the Constitution of 1876. These decrees established the formal equality of civic rights and duties of all Ottoman subjects, guaranteed the essential liberties of the individual, replaced an absolutist by a constitutional form of government, and defined and guaranteed the position of the *millets*. But it took more than the mere passage of laws to change the attitudes which had been long in the growing. "The new laws and regulations remained largely a dead letter."⁴⁹

The actual impact on individual merchants of the activities of the European powers was much more important. The increase of trade with Europe and America led to the rise of a new international business class drawn from the minority population. Often very rich and powerful in the economic and financial spheres, they were slavishly imitative of Europe, at least on the surface, and more often than not despised the Oriental life around them. They tended to attach themselves to one or another of the foreign governments having interests in the Near East, to imitate the French or English way of life, and to serve foreign governments with a feverish and brittle devotion. At the same time, their aptitude for western languages and ways of thought was very useful to western governments and companies, which therefore tended to draw a disproportionately large number of their secondary employees from the minorities. This considerably affected their social structure and

⁴⁸ Richard Davey, *op. cit.*, p.346.

⁴⁹ M. Philips Price, *op. cit.*, p.105.

made them an eyesore to an increasingly important section of the dominant community.⁵⁰

A large number of individual Christians and Jews in the big towns were further enabled to improve their position by securing European nationality or protected status, and so enjoyed the privileges of the *capitulations*. The word capitulation etymologically comes from Latin *capitula*, which means a decree or decrees. In the Ottoman tradition the capitulations were the decess of the Sultans, granting foreign governments jurisdiction over their own nationals residing within the empire. Originally this measure did not by itself indicate political weakness; rather it was in perfect accord with the ancient practices of personal law, i. e., extending the *millet* system.⁵¹ One of the earliest capitulations was granted to the king of France in 1535 by Suleiman the Magnificent at the height of his victories in North Africa, Asia Minor, and Central Europe.

Gradually the content of the capitulations was enlarged, and its nature changed. Starting with the Treaty of Kainardji, concluded between Russia and the Ottoman Empire in 1774, more and more concessions were made to foreign powers. They were allowed to appoint in all seaports consular officers, who, together with their assistants, dependents, and servants, enjoyed certain privileges and immunity from Ottoman jurisdiction. Not only the minor officials were generally Greeks, but the Porte allowed the ambassadors to distribute a certain number of *berats*, or certificates conferring these privileges and immunities on anyone they might choose, even on persons without any official position at all. Eventually foreign protection was extended to most religious communities, monasteries, and employees and servants of private European companies. Often such immunity became an hereditary right.⁵² At first the Sultan tried to stop the abuse, but seeing his effort fruitless, thought it prudent and profitable to sell certificates of immunities himself. Thus there arose a class of privileged minority merchants who were placed beyond the Ottoman law, but drew upon themselves the envy and hatred of their Muslim neighbors.

Despised but protected, the parih entrepreneurs might appear as *concessionairs* by buying special favors from domestic or foreign elites. But as long as they stood apart, or were not accepted into, the dominant society, such special favors might

⁵⁰ Albert H. Hourani, *Minorities in the Arab World* (London: Oxford University Press for the Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1947), pp.25-26.

⁵¹ Philip M. Brown, *Foreigners in Turkey: Their Juridical Status* (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1944), pp.8-24.

⁵² *Idem*, p.95.

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prove deadly dangerous to themselves in the long run. The liquidation of the Greeks as a pariah entrepreneurial class in Turkey finally came in the early 1920's when hundreds of thousands of them were killed and more than 1,200,000 deported from the country. But this sad tale will not be elaborated here.

IV. Conclusion

The foregoing account of the lives and fortunes of the Jews in Medieval Europe and the Christian minorities in the Ottoman Empire may be, with appropriate changes in proper names and some details, employed to describe pariah people in other traditional societies, for example, the Chinese in old Siam or even in colonial Philippines and the Netherlands East Indies.⁵³ That is why we postulate earlier that the phenomenon is not merely a historical accident. Certain common features of the traditional society, such as the political system, social stratification, economic structure, religion and cultural values, can be identified and explored to see how they might affect these marginal people.⁵⁴

1) The Elites and Their Recruitment

Traditional society was usually differentiated into a small number of the ruling elite on the top and the masses at the bottom, with little sympathy and empathy between the two. The privileges of the elite were protected by sacred tradition and rituals. Their prestige, status and power depended on the grace of the supreme ruler as well as on landed property, family connections, religious eminence and so on.

⁵³ Joseph P. L. Jiang, "The Chinese in Thailand: Past and Present", *Journal of Southeast Asian History* (University of Singapore), March, 1966.

Joseph P. L. Jiang, "The Chinese and the Philippine Political Process" in Charles J. McCarthy (ed.), *Philippine-Chinese Profile*. (Manila: Pagkakaisa Sa Pag-unlad, Inc.) 1974.

Joseph P. L. Jiang, "Colonial Rule and Alien Entrepreneurship: The Chinese in Netherlands Indies". *The National Chengchi University Journal*. December 1971.

⁵⁴ Joseph P. L. Jiang, "Political Change and Pariah Entrepreneurship", *Philippine Journal of Public Administration*. October 1962.

Joseph P. L. Jiang, "Towards A Theory of Pariah Entrepreneurship", *UNESCO Conference on Leadership and Authority*. (University of Singapore, 1963.) Papers edited by Gehan Wijetewardene and published by University of Malaya Press in Singapore, 1968, pp.147-162.

Recruitment to the elite class, with rare exceptions, was based on ascriptive criteria and not on individual achievement. As a rule, only persons with royal blood could aspire to the top or near the top positions. In times of national expansion or crisis, military prowess might be stressed, but the military men were generally guarded with caution by the court.

Since the pariah people were from outside the dominant community or from a traditionally prescribed low caste, they evidently lacked most of the criteria for recruitment to the elite positions in such systems. Occasionally one or two individuals might succeed in gaining special favor from the monarch and were given high places at the court. But their positions were generally insecure, and easily toppled with the demise of their patron-king. Indeed they might be called the "pariah courtiers" unless they were given time to assimilate to the elite class, and to acquire other footings of eliteness than mere royal grace.

2) State Functions and Administrative Apparatus

The state functions of the traditional regimes were cosmopolite in assumption yet parochial in reality. Theoretically the state was a microcosmic representation of the cosmos, with the capital as the symbol of the city of heaven. The commands of the divine king were supposedly to be obeyed within the four corners of the earth, or at least, within the civilized parts of it. No aspect of worldly life was considered to be beyond the reach of the divinely royal power. The actual functions of the state, however, were much restrained by the limited efficacy of the existing administrative apparatus. The undifferentiated nature of education and the ascriptive criteria of recruitment were among the factors which limited the efficiency and efficacy of the administration. But the chief handicap was the low level of technology of the traditional society, especially in transportation and communication. Hence, despite the unlimited claims of the government, the people were left pretty much alone. Practically their only contact with the government was through the sporadic appearance of the tax collectors, and these, in many cases, were not even real officials, but merchant-tax-farmers.

Another common feature of the traditional administration was the personal basis of jurisdiction. In monarchical Thailand every freeman had to have an official patron on whom he could depend, and who received his taxes, produce, and services for the king. In the Ottoman Empire a Christian and a Muslim living side by side in the same place were subject to different laws and different officials. In Europe the

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concept of territorial jurisdiction took shape only after the conclusion of the bloody religious wars in the beginning of the seventeenth century.

Neither did the administrative laws of the traditional regimes apply equally to all those who were supposedly subject to their jurisdiction. Reciprocity in rights and duties were largely determined by status and family relationships.⁵⁵ Persons with correct connections were not expected to follow the legally proclaimed rules, which had to be interpreted in each case in the light of the status of the persons involved.

The several features of pariah entrepreneurship described above may now be seen in proper perspective. Collection of taxes often was farmed out to alien agents not only because it was considered a dirty business and disreputable but also probably it was the cheaper way to obtain revenues in view of the gross inadequacy of the existing administrative apparatus. And successful pariah people were employed as financial and diplomatic agents because they possessed the requisite skill which the elite officials lacked. They were also more ready to take upon themselves the risks involved in these two professions where failure in one mission often carried a heavy penalty.

Pariah communities in ancient regimes were mostly ruled indirectly under separate jurisdiction. This might be explained by the fact that traditional jurisprudence was chiefly founded on religious precepts and customs, and therefore could not equitably apply to the deviant communities. The famous anthropologist Coulanges said:

A foreigner and a citizen might live side by side during long years, without one's thinking of the possibility of a legal relation being established between them Where there was no common religion, there was no common law.⁵⁶

3) The Social Structure

The social structure of traditional societies has been characterized by Francis X. Sutton as follows: predominance of ascriptive, particularistic and diffuse patterns; stable local groups and limited spatial mobility; relatively simple and stable

⁵⁵ Henry Maine, *Ancient Law* (London: J. N. Dent & Sons, 1960 ed.), p.99.

⁵⁶ Fustel de Coulanges, *The Ancient City: A Study on the Religion, Laws, and Institutions of Greece and Rome*, tr. by Willard Small (Boston: See & Shepard, 1877), pp.257-258.

occupational differentiation; and a deferential stratification system of diffuse impact.⁵⁷

In a traditional society a person's actions and activities were bound by customs and the network of relationships into which he was born. Stable primary organizations whose membership was limited and based on birth, and whose purposes were complex and undifferentiated, prevailed over voluntary secondary organizations. There was a strong attachment to the native soil. Leaving one's own clan and family usually involved much personal trauma. Occupational skills were transmitted from one generation to another. Means of spatial communication were primitive. Attitude towards government officials was cold respect, and towards government policies one of general apathy.

The pariah entrepreneurs, on the other hand, being away from home and regarded as outcasts, were less bound by the norms of the dominant society. They had lost their attachment to the soil. They often had, besides primary organizations, to enter into secondary organizations to protect their interests. Travelling through wide stretches of land, they were not only responsive to new ideas and innovations, but frequently acted as disseminators of news to the villagers.⁵⁸ The limited social mobility and simple occupational differentiation of the members of the dominant society offered the pariah people many opportunities for their earthly pursuits. But it was near impossible for them to break through the ascriptive networks of the dominant society and to assimilate to it except through marriage and religious conversion.

4) The Economic Structure

The primitive nature of technology of the primitive society meant that an overwhelming proportion of the populace had to be engaged in the primary occupation of producing food stuffs. The agriculturists, if not serfs forcibly bound to the soil, must be enticed to stay on the land by ideological and other means. Relatively isolated peasant communities lived largely on subsistence economy, consuming what they themselves produced, with little need for an outside market.

⁵⁷ As quoted by Fred W. Riggs, "Agraria and Industria," in William J. Siffin, (ed.), *Toward the Comparative Study of Public Administration* (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1959), p.29.

⁵⁸ The Chinese middlemen still perform the function of news-carriers in present Thai villages. See Howard Keva Kaufman, *Bangkhuad. A Community Study in Thailand* (Locust Valley, N. Y.: J. J. Augustin, 1960), p.67.

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Strictly speaking, there was no property right in the traditional autocratic regimes. The Crown theoretically owned all lands of the realm, and the peasants were his tenants as the bureaucrats were his servants. The only limits to the amount of taxes demanded were enlightened benevolence of the king, the efficiency of his ruling machinery, and then the potential rebellion of the hungry people. Arbitrary confiscation was a general policy practised on the prominent officials who had fallen in favor as well as on wealthy businessmen and other individuals. "Any persecution could be justified politically."⁵⁹

The "mobile element", those free from the toil of producing food stuffs, was relatively quite small in the traditional scene. Besides court officials and professional soldiers, this consisted of a handful of traders and craftsmen. Since trading was generally held in disesteem, only those people, primarily foreigners, who were debarred from other opportunities of social betterment, went into trade. The state also frequently monopolized the most essential commodities such as salt, iron, liquor and so on, as well as the profitable foreign trade. The logical place for the pariah entrepreneurs was, therefore, that of the petty traders between the local bazaars and the villages.

5) Religion and Cultural Values

As ethnic consideration and nationalism are to modern political systems, so religion used to be the foundation of the earlier regimes. "The foundation of a city was always a religious act."⁶⁰ The state capitals were less the centers of administration than the symbols of the heavenly city. The will of heaven was invoked to justify and legitimate the dynastic rule. Ceremonies and rites were an essential part of administrative procedures. The king was either believed to be the incarnation of a god or the highest priest of the state religion. In the case of Medieval Europe where an international religious authority competed with princes over the control of human affairs, the power struggle was perennial and ceased only after a more secularized principle of state allegiance was found. In the Ottoman Empire when Selim the Osmanli entered Cairo as a conqueror in 1517, he caused the Abbasid to cede his office of the Caliph of Islam to him and his successors.

⁵⁹ Karl A. Wittfogel, *Oriental Despotism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959), p.76.

⁶⁰ F. de Coulanges, *op. cit.*, p.117, 248 and *passim*.

He knew military might had to be buttressed by spiritual leadership.

Since religion functioned as the most important factor of national integration, identification with the state religion became the first criterion for elite membership. Scattered groups of religious dissidents might be more or less tolerated or persecuted as the rulers saw fit, but an integrated autonomous church outside the authority of the state was invariably looked upon as a threat. And when the state wanted to eliminate such a church or to make the life of its adherents miserable, it could always find ready support among the subject people by stirring up religious intolerance and fears.

The pervasive function of religion in earlier times was reflected in the norms of social stratification. Social class divisions were strengthened by taboos and religious preaching. "The Blessed One" declared, in the sacred Hindu Bhagavad-Gita, "Caste-duty hangs from matter; each is to one duty born; the Brahmans, soldiers, middle class, and even serfs forlorn" (Canto XVII, verse 41). "Far better," he continues, "botch your job than gain perfection in your neighbor's" (Verse 47).⁶¹ Such attitudes, it would not be difficult to infer, would discourage personal ambition, manipulation, and risk-taking — traits characteristic of business enterprise. The pariah people, who adhered to different cultural values and religious symbols, who hunted for profit from place to place, and who catered to the passions of other people rather than strive after their own spiritual perfection, found no acceptable place in such a society but at its edge, and often as an indispensable evil.

⁶¹ As quoted by Fred W. Riggs, *op. cit.*, p.56.