



Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Lord and Peasant in the

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Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Lord and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World, by Barrington Moore, Jr.

From the jacket flap: "Tracing the responses of landed aristocrats and peasants to the growth of industrial and commercial power in China, England, France, India, Japan, and the United States (and suggesting how Germany and Russia fit into the pattern), Barrington Moore transcends the usual ethnocentrism of Western scholarship in a way which makes significant global generalizations possible.

"Exposing as superficial the common assumption that industrialization was the main cause of 20th century totalitarianism, Dr. Moore's careful, documented reassessment of modern political evolution offers scholars and students such important insights as: ... specific factors which have caused or prevented peasant revolutions; ... clarification of the intimate connection between revolutionary violence and the later success of gradual democratic reform; ... a forewarning that modernization without a successful revolution has generally led to fascism; ... a realization that the main revolutionary impulses have come not from social classes on the road to political power, but from those about to be driven off the historical stage; ... a new, comparative dimension for understanding the English and American civil wars within a revolutionary context.

"In examining the factors which have led the major power centers of the world into one or the other of the three dominant political patterns of the 20th century (parliamentary democracy, fascism, communism), Moore provides a particularly engrossing treatment of India--where the issue is still in doubt. Indeed, in every chapter Moore's evidence and reasoning shake us out of passively accepting many political interpretations so fashionable today. There are times when Moore finds it essential to expose the conservative and distorting bias that often lies" etc.

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