

Nine

Thus, where there is a predominance of allocation of own labor to own fields, this entails a limited circulation of labor services in the community as a whole and a low level of neighborliness and community life. Differences in wealth are constrained by the range of the labor capacity of each cultivator–householder.

Where on the other hand there is much beer party activity and reciprocity in the host guest relationship, this maintains an egalitarian, communal peasant community through the constant circulation and redistribution of labor services and rewards.

But the actual extent of reciprocity also needs to be measured. If some consistently act more as hosts than as guests, they are transforming some millet into labor. An increased rate of nonreciprocal allocations of this kind leads to an increased social differentiation, where some simultaneously obtain both wealth and leisure; that is, it leads to change in the direction of increased social stratification.

One may therefore argue that these behavioral outputs feed back on the structure of the community itself. The ubiquitous beerparty guest, who is exchanging labor directly for beer, does not ask himself: How will this allocation affect our system of social stratification? Yet his allocations, made on the basis **of** limited considerations, do in fact create directions and constraints on possible change. It is only through attention to the frequencies of allocations, by describing the pattern

itself as a certain set of frequencies, that it becomes possible to observe and describe such quite simple events of social change.