

While these two writers seem to have uncovered a major flaw in Bhaduri's semi-feudalism thesis, their treatment of the sharecropper's market dependence is far from satisfactory. Bardhan and Rudra simply dispose of the issue by pointing to the evidence showing that only a minority of the tenants in their survey (less than 5%) sell their produce to the landlord. But, as we hope to show in the analysis below, there is much more to market dependence than the landlord's control of the peasant surplus. It is impossible, as Keith Griffin has pointed out (Griffin, 1979) to see market relations of sharecropping in isolation from the general agrarian system under analysis. Thus, when a landlord leases his land on a sharecropping basis, with credit advances, etc., "wages, rental and interest rates, and even the price paid to the tenant for his marketed surplus, cannot be understood unless the entire relationship between the transactions is taken into account." (ibid.:xiv-xv).

#### Sharetenancy and agricultural development

A more serious but related problem of sharecropping arrangements is their perceived role in blocking agricultural growth -- in particular, their function in discouraging landlords from introducing new technology in agriculture. This is how Bhaduri expresses the problem:

...technological improvements, which raise the productivity level of the kishan, become undesirable to the landowner to the extent that they increase the kishan's available balance of paddy in relation to his consumption level so as to reduce his requirements for consumption loans. For it weakens the system of semi-feudalism, where economic and political power of the landowner is largely based on his being able to keep the kishan constantly indebted to him (Bhaduri:135).

Furthermore, the landlord: