

**Conceptualizing Post-Colonial Societies : A
Re-Examination of the Concept 'Third World'**

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DECLARATION

Certified that the dissertation entitled 'Conceptualizing Post-Colonial Societies: A Re-Examination of the Concept 'Third World', submitted by Bijay Kumar Barnwal in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy, has not been previously submitted for any other degree of this University or any other University and is his own work.

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INTRODUCTION

The main purpose of thesis is to see how far there is a 'Third World' and whether the 'Concept' Third World has any use in political analysis. Hence a review has been attempted of its usage both in Comparative Politics and International Relations.

The emergence of a vast group of countries outside the dyad--the two blocs of Superpowers in the post-war era of Cold War was definitely a "striking phenomena"¹. The significance of this phenomena was not fully understood by the analysts particularly in the Western countries. Under the prevailing conditions of Cold War, states and peoples into the World came to be classified into First, Second and Third world by the Western analysts. Though in the beginning Soviet Union refused to recognise these newly decolonized countries as different from the Western power bloc, under the Zhdanov thesis* until 1952, the progressive aspects of the foreign policy differences of these new decolonized countries led the latter to implicitly accept this part of the world as separate from the Western bloc. Thus,

1. K. Buchanan, "The Third World - Its Emergence and Contours", New Left Review, No. 18, 1963. p.5.

* According to Zhdanov thesis, there are only two blocs of countries in the world: the Capitalist and the Socialist. It gives no place for a Third World apart from the two Superpower blocs.

both the Superpowers in their own way, re-inforced the nebulous concept of an amorphous 'Third World' comprising the newly emergent post-colonial societies. Later the concept was extended to include the countries of South America, which are distinctly different from the rest of Afro-Asian countries. This system of classification of states and peoples into First, Second and Third World is based on short sighted considerations and suffer from the dangers of over simplification. The classification of states should be such that it is able to explain the political behaviour of the nations, their economic development, the dynamics of their changing scenario and so on. However, since the goals sought by the promoters of such classification was neither of these, it falls short on all these fronts. While it should give us a perspective which helps understand the world better, this classification in fact raises more questions than it explicates. Now in order to reflect more on the present classification of the World and the concept of 'Third World', let us put forward a few questions. What does it mean to divide the world into three parts? What are the biases involved in assigning nations to the third place? Are there any preferable terms for describing the various segments of humanity?

Semanticists (Hayakawa, 1972) speak of two levels of meaning in language : denotative meanings which refer to the public, dictionary definitions of words, and

connotative meanings which include all the mental associations, feelings and private assumptions triggered in a listener's mind. For example, the word 'Zionism' may denote a specific ideology of Jewish nationalism, but the term possesses vastly different connotations to Israeli Jews and Palestinian Arabs. Thus, given the potential power of words in international relations, it would be worthwhile to consider the semantic implications of the term "Third World"². Now we would discuss, what are the areas of concern in each of the chapters.

In the First chapter, an attempt would be made to look into the origin of the term 'Third World', the context in which it originated and was later incorporated in the literature on the so-called 'Third World'. Also it would be seen as to how the concept itself has been viewed by various scholars. A modest attempt would be made to go into the usefulness of the term as a tool of analysis and action in the contemporary politics, both national and international. What impression does the concept 'Third World' leave on our mind and what does ultimately it convey us about these states and peoples. Here it would be appropriate to observe that the use of the concept in the post war

2. Allen H. Merriam, "What does 'Third World' Mean?", in Jim Norwine and Alfonso Gonzalezl (ed.), The Third World: States of Mind and Being,

era for so many different purposes and in so many different senses has led to a situation wherein the concept now lacks any inherent meaning. Shiva Naipaul writes, "... the idea of a Third World is the one least confined by reality and the most promiscuous in the political temptations to which it gives rise..... there is no relationship more problematic or contemptuous than that posed by those hundreds of millions of human beings lumped together by the term 'Third World' I searched for the 'Third World' and found that there is no such place"³. The idea of a Third World despite its congenial simplicity, is too shadowy to be of any use. The Third World is an artificial construction of the West, an ideological empire on which the sun is always setting. It does not exist as such, and has no collective and consistent identity except in the newspapers and amid the pomp and splendour of international conferences. (Ibid.). It is said that in order to understand the sectarian killings in Northern Ireland, one should become acquainted with Irish history and sentiments to which its convolutions have given rise. This sounds reasonable but when the same advice is rendered in the context of Sri Lanka it is said, 'But that's the Third World. What is true for Ireland should also be true for Sri Lanka and everywhere else.

3. Shiva Naipaul, "A Thousand Million Invisible Men", The Spectator (London), 18 May 1985; pp.9.

Why these double standards? The need is to re-examine the various mythologies built by the western analysts about the world unfamiliar to them. It is in this perspective that the First chapter has been written and understood.

A related phrase among the supposedly most acceptable alternatives is 'developing nations'. However, this term seem to suggest that Third World nations will merely follow First world patterns and develop along the "same free market economy". Also it suggests that it is only these countries which are developing but the fact is that even advanced industrial countries both capitalist and socialist are developing towards still further goals⁴. Methodologically, there is no such thing as a 'typical developing' country. The literature of the 1950s and 1960s assumed a homogeneity in the Third World. This led to generalisations based on those assumed characteristics and ultimately succeeded in distorting the whole image of the so-called Third World countries. All that is ugly in the world was thought to afflict the nations of Third World. The prime example of theory building on such basis is Modernization theory's obsession for the tradition-modernity dichotomy. Theory building based on polar

4. see, Manoranjan Mohanty, "Political Comprehension of the Post-Colonial World", Foreign Affairs Reports, Vol. 36(5), May 1987.

opposites whether built on Weberian ideal types or revolutionary praxis or based on generalizations from Andre Gunder Frank's metropolis-satellite polarisation has meant that no account has been taken until recently of regional, spatial or temporal disparities. In such a polar analysis, reality tends to become subordinate to theory. The reality is that macro-sociological concepts hide much of the socio-economic reality of the Third World, just as the aggregation of statistics and data hide the failure of development theory to actually improve the lot of people in the Third World. Theory building would have to pay serious attention to the problems of generalising about the conditions and prospects of states as diverse as Brazil, Argentina, Taiwan or Nigeria on the one hand, and states such as Bangladesh or the Sahelian states of West Africa such as Mali, Upper Volta or Chad on the other⁵.

The First chapter, reflects a wide agreement among the scholars that the so-called 'Third World' is a heterogeneous⁶ group of nations, a negative community whose sources of unity lies not within themselves but on the presence of a common enemy. There are marked differences in their cultural heritages, historical

5. R.A. Higgot, Political Development Theory: A Contemporary Debate, Croom Helm, London, 1983, pp. 3-4.

6. see, Caroline Thomas & P. Saravanamuttu (ed.), The State and Instability in the South; Macmillan, 1989, p. 176.

experiences and in their patterns of economics, inspite of their common history of colonial subjugation and common underdevelopment. The developments in the post-colonial era has further accentuated the differences in their patterns of economic development, the class configurations and patterns of dominance. The Second chapter examines the use of the term 'Third World' in Comparative Politics. Two major themes in Comparative Politics: State and Industrialization in the Third World, have been selected in this review to avoid a mere general discussion. We would go into detail, how different initial forces, mechanisms and results have led to different paths of development. Since the process of industrialisation also depends on the nature of earlier colonial structure, character of technologies adopted, the relations of ownership within the sector of the external economy, the nature of social classes, and the nature and strength of state power, out of these factors develop the structural characteristics of individual states affecting the contemporary evolutions⁷. Thus, socio-economic development is a multilinear and complex process, a result of the interweaving of old and new. There is no 'linear causality' as assumed by 'Development theories'. In this chapter, an attempt would be made to show that the

7. see, Kadar Bela, Problems of Economic Growth in Latin America, Hurst and Co., London, 1977, pp. 47-59.

initial forces in Asia, Africa and Latin American countries were different from that of in Western Europe. Hence there would be different ways of transition to capitalism in these areas. The paths of development of individual countries, therefore, should not be generalised. Also different initial forces and latter developments in the so called 'developing countries' are more important than similarities between them. The commonality of disadvantages that integrate these countries should not be allowed to disguise the great diversity that exists between and within the Third World countries⁸. While in the early part of the second chapter, we look into the process of industrialisation in ASAFLA* countries, in the later half, we see how the specific nature of structural alignments created by the colonial-relationship and re-alignments which have developed in the post-colonial situations have rendered the relationship between the state and the social classes very complex. The multi-class relationship of the state in post-colonial situation calls for specific explanation. We need to situate the state within the socio-historical context, the paradigms of state intervention and the shifts in state strategy in

8. Jim Norwine & Alfonso Gonzalez, Ibid., n. 2.

* Asia, Africa and Latin America

different periods⁹. The crude statements of "dependency" is misleading. The state is not simply an instrument of any of the classes nor simply the reproducer of the social order that upholds the ruling class as a whole. The possibility of struggle among classes or even within the bureaucratic class over the direction of development would be explored.

In the Third Chapter, the last one, we would look into how the concept of 'Third World' itself is a result of the security concerns of the western countries-both economic and in terms of mere survival as a nation-state. Later, the term was taken by the so-called 'Third World' countries in a different context, say, in terms of a viable political grouping. However, it would be seen how Third World identity is essentially a fabrication of political elites¹⁰. Third World power is a fragile construct as it depends upon a collective cohesion that is difficult to maintain. The passing of the era of anti-colonial struggle (except in S.Africa), seems to have deprived the coalition of one of its

9. see, Hamza Alavi, "The State in Post-Cononial Societies", New Left Review, No. 74, July-August, 1972; pp. 59-81.

10. O. Harries, "The Ideology of the Third World" in Australia and the Third World: Reports of the Committee of Australia's Relations with the Third World, AGPS, Canberra, Appendix U, Cited in Hans-Henrik Holm, "The End of the Third World", Review of International Affairs, Vol. XLI, March 1990.

sources of solidarity and in its wake has led to a resurgence of old hostilities and competitive nationalism. While in the long run, their interests may be similar, in the short and medium run, their national interests seem to be conflicting many a times. So today Third World as a political grouping seems to be no more a viable proposition. It seems to be an amalgam of independent states of ASAFLA, the Caribbean, the Pacific island, the Mediterranean, and West Asia (the Middle East). At one glance the diplomatic, institutional and ideological achievements of the Third World states in the post-war era looks impressive. But in fact, they are essentially weak states and suffer from many of the disabilities. Their achievement is more declamatory than substantial. This is reflected, say in their campaigns for restructuring the international trade regime or for the establishment of New International Economic Order.

To conclude, the study seeks to establish that the Third World is a huge and heterogeneous grouping of states. The tendency to regard these states in a similar fashion and to apply Western terminology and categorisation to them has distorted our understanding of them. The need is to reformulate 'Concepts' which takes into account the specific situations of these countries. This would help in theorizing about these states and peoples that confirm to the empirical realities.

CHAPTER - I

EMERGENCE OF THE CONCEPT 'THIRD WORLD' : A REVIEW

Our objective in this chapter is to evaluate the existing concepts and propositions about the Third World. In particular two main concerns are : whether there is something called Third World as an entity separate and distinct from the two power blocs; and secondly, to what extent the 'concept' and the term Third World is of use in academic disciplines as an analytically valid category. The argument is based on the premise that the value of any concept lies in its ability to illuminate and explain empirical data when used in a theoretical argument.

I

Origin, Definition and Usage

The rise of a world outside the dyad, the two blocs of Super Powers after the second world war has been considered as the most striking political development of the time. These newly emergent countries has been termed by the French geographers and social scientists as the *Tiers-Monde*-the Third World. The terms is applied to refer those countries stretching from the Andean republics of South America, across Africa and the Middle East, to Indonesia and the Islands of the tropical Pacific. The bloc is constitutive of more than

a hundred political units which differ widely in territorial extent, in population and/or in political status. While some like Cambodia or Cuba are socialist countries - though their variety of socialism may be very different from their Western counterparts, others like Saudi Arabia have feudal theocracies. While some countries have stable democratic political structure as in India, others like Pakistan and Bangladesh, military may be dictating terms to the government. This World includes people of all races, of people having had human civilisations, when there was no comparable civilization anywhere else in the world, and also of islands of primitiveness. This world has people practising different faiths - Islam, Christianity, Buddhism etc. Thus what we call the 'Third World' reflects a great human diversity. Therefore, Shiva Naipaul rightly says that, "there is no relationship more problematic or contemptuous than that posed by those hundreds of millions of human beings lumped together by the term Third World".¹

However, before we go into the problems inherent in the concept, it is necessary to discuss how the emergence of this part of the world was perceived by various writings on the so-called 'Third World'.

1. S. Naipaul, "A Thousand Million Invisible Men", The Spectator (London), 18 May 1985, pp. 9-11.

World -system theorists believe that the emergence of the 'Third World' dates back to the development of capitalism in Europe and the beginnings of Europe's overseas expansion. At that time, it was only a Third World in itself. However, a Third World for itself, i.e., conscious of its own colonial history and the consequent underdevelopment, emerged only after the World War Second.²

At around the same time, Keith Buchanan argued that their emergence should be treated as a 'striking phenomenon' and that though this 'Third World' is relatively new, its emergence means that we have got to make an 'agonising re-appraisal' of our world view.³ It's emergence is the assertion by the three quarters of humanity who were "natives" of their human dignity. Vietnam, Cuba, Cyprus, Kenya, Algeria, Angola and South Africa - all are stages in the progressive assertion by the "damned of the earth...."⁴. K. Buchanan argues that whatever the diversity of colour or creed, it has an overriding unity which come "from a similarity in

2. P. Worsely, Three Worlds Culture and World Development Weidenfeld & Nicholson, London, 1984; p.306.

3. K. Buchanan, "The Third World - Its Emergence and Contours", New Left Review, No.18, 1963, p.5.

4. Ibid., p.6.

economic and social conditions, and from a similarity in desire for progress and recuperation".⁵ These countries are bound together by a common legacy of exploitation, of humiliation, and are hence a vast "fellowship of the dispossessed", a "commonwealth of poverty". In spite of the fact that Western influence manifested itself in a number of ways such as colonial conquest, economic and cultural penetration, certain themes run through the class structure and social geography of these countries.⁶

The notion that the newly liberated countries were different from both, the First and the Second Worlds came into awareness in the context of global Cold War and Korean conflict. The term 'Third World' itself seems to have originated among liberal and radical French writers during the 1950s when they looked for a 'Third Way' or 'Third Force' in the politics of their own country more congenial than either a conservative nationalism or a rigidly dogmatic communism. In fact, the term emerged in a political setting wherein the non-communist left had played a historic role in the resistance against the powerful Communist Party in France and which now continue to espouse a militant

5. Che' Guevara, "The Guerillo War Fare", trans, J.P. Morray, New York, 1961, in K. Buchanan, n: 3, p.119.

6. K. Buchanan, n:3, p.7.

socialism despite being overshadowed by the latter. One major focus for the non-communist Left was the newspaper edited by Claude Bourdet, *L'Observateur*, for which neither social democracy nor the Soviet Union were synonymous with socialism. They saw resemblance between their own search for a 'third way' between capitalism and Stalinist Communism and the new wave of militant anti-Colonial movements which were by no means pro-communist.⁷ The analogy was peculiarly French. "*Tiers-Monde*" was the analogue of the '*tiers etat*' of pre-revolutionary France : the estate of the bourgeois, the petty bourgeois, the artisans, the peasants and workers who lacked the privileges of the first two estates, the clergy and the nobility.

On a wider scale too, a 'third force' seemed even more urgently needed in a world dominated and threatened by the Cold War between the two powerful antagonistic blocs of nations of the 'East' and the 'West'. The hopes were all the more increased by diplomatic moves of the governments of Egypt, India, and Yugoslavia and by the Bandung Conference in Indonesia in 1955 of twenty-nine African and Asian countries, most of them having recently gained independence from colonial bondage. At that time, the 'Third World' came

7. P. Worsley, n.2, p.307.

to signify those countries which, however, diverse they might be in other ways, had three things in common : they were poor they were ex-colonies and in the Cold war between 'West' and 'East' they were non-aligned. Perhaps they were thought to be that Commonwealth of nations who might, if united possess the same potential to transform the existing order as the Third Estate showed in the French Revolution.

[The First public use of the term 'Third World' came in an article of *L'Observateur* on 14 August 1952 by Alfred Sauvy, the demographer, entitled *Trois-Mondes, Une Planete.*] The Third World, he declared, *ignore, exploite, m'eprise, comme le tiers e'tat, Veut liu aussi etre quelque chose.*⁸ A. Angelopolous in his, 'The Third World and the Rich Countries' (1972, p.9), also attributes the earliest use of the term 'Third World' to Alfred Sauvy. According to him, the term 'Third World' was coined by Alfred Sauvy at the height of the Cold War and applied to the developing countries that remained outside the two power blocs but belonged to the non-Communist world. Angelopolous uses the term in a specific sense to describe the group of developing countries in the early 1970s. However, the concept of the 'Third World' as initially used in 1950s carried

8. Ibid., p.307.

specific political and power connotations, roughly as an expression of 'Third Force' rather than the 'Third World', indicating 'non-alignment' rather than "underdevelopment".

In the second edition of his book *The Third World* (1967), Peter Worsley points out that Claude Bourdet had used the term at least as early as April 1949. (Citing John T. Marcus, *Neutralism and Nationalism in France*, New York : Bookman Associates, 1958, p.33). Hence according to him, the statement that M. Alfred Sauvy 'coined' the term in 1952 is incorrect.⁹ Contrary to the above assertion by Peter Worsley in his article, John Marcus in, "Neutralism and Nationalism in France", does not say that Claude Bourdet originated the phrase, nor does Worsley himself say so in the second edition of his 'The Third World' as he asserts in his *Third World Quarterly* article¹⁰. Love gives the source of the term in an article '*Trois-Mondes, une planete* in *L'Observateur* (Paris) 14 August 1952, and draws attention to the book published by Sauvy's colleagues at the *Institut National des Etudes Demographiques* in 1956 - *Le*

9. P. Worsley, "How Many Worlds?" , *Third World Quarterly*, April 1979.

10. Joseph L Love, 'Third World' A Response to Prof. Worsley, *Third World Quarterly*, April 1980, p.315. see also L. Wolf, Phillips, Why 'Third World'? : origin, definition and usage", *Third World Quarterly*, October 1987; p.1311.

Tiers Monde : Sous - developpement et developpement--
which credits Sauvy with introducing the term 'Third
World'.¹¹

In the first of three volumes titled *Unite' et
diversite' du tiers monde* (Paris, 1980), Yves Lacoste,
gives an account of his correspondence with Alfred Sauvy
concerning the origin of the term in chapter I, '*Une
unite' fondee sur quoi?*' and in the section '*Le jeu de
mots de Alfred Sauvy*' says quite firmly :

*'Tiers monde, ce fut d'abord en 1952 une formule
imaginee par Alfred Sauvy'* and discusses as did love,
the August 1952 article in *L'Observateur*.¹²

As already mentioned, the original analogy used by
Sauvy in the 1950s was to the *Tiers Etat*. He wrote
'.... this Third World is unknown, exploited, despised
like the Third Estate; it, too wants to be something.'¹³
Here he was referring to the Abbe Sieyes phrases of
1789: what is the Third Estate? Everything. What has it
been till now in the Political Order? Nothing. What
does it want to be? Something. Thus, in addition to
the idea of non-alignment, Sauvy used it to signify
neglect, exploitation and revolutionary potential.¹⁴

11. L. Wolf Phillips, *Ibid.*, pp.1311-12.

12. L. Wolf Phillips, n.11, p.1312.

13. *L'Observateur*, No.118, 14 August 1952, p.5.

14. Joseph L Love, *Ibid.*, n.10, p.316.

In the study and conduct of international (economic and political) relations, the expression 'Third World' has come into the common political discourse. It is used as a concept and a category, and within a decade of its birth, by the early 1960s, it was an acceptable and widely used term. It has been frequently used as a synonym for such phrases as "underdeveloped world", "developing countries", "less developed countries", "former colonies", "Afro-Asian and Latin American countries", the South (of the North-South division) and so on.

As initially used, the concept carried specific political and power connotations in the context of the Cold War and power bloc politics. It was used to refer the Non-aligned Group of Asian and African countries which seemed to represent the third component in the operation and dynamics of a bipolar global balance. Latin America was not included in it since its dominant groups were European in origin and have remained largely untouched by the outside forces except that of the United States with which it has had special strategic and security relations under the Rio Treaty and the OAS charter. The direct involvement of Latin America in the Afro-Asian countries have been minimal.¹⁵

15. J.D.B. Miller, The Politics of the Third World, Oxford University Press, 1965.

In his, *The New Language of Politics* (1972), William Safire uses the term "Third Force" more frequently following the French *tiers monde* than the term 'Third World'. In fact the term 'Third World' finds entry under the term 'Third Force' (p.67). According to Safire, *tiers monde* was originally popularised in France during 1947-49 to describe the parties that took their stance between the Gaullist *Rassemblement du Peuple Francais* and the regime of the fourth Republic (1946-58). Charles de Gaulle, when President of the Fifth Republic (1958) used the phrase '*tiers monde*' to describe the role of a France independent of the US foreign policy alliances. William Safire also refers to a 1960s usage by Max Frankel in the New York times, who writing about the United State's involvement in Vietnam commented, "..... there is simply no meaningful Third Force around which to build". The United States answer has been to encourage the transformation of the present military governments into a regime that might eventually come to resemble a "Third Force". In the sense of non-alignment, Safire defines *tiers monde*, 'Third Force ... a weight added at the fulcrum of the balance of power, a group of nations or an ideology, between the Communist and the Western camps". This aspect of *tiers monde* was re-emphasized when the leaders of newly liberated countries such as Kwame Nkrumah called in 1950s for the

establishment of a bloc of uncommitted nations as a "non-nuclear Third Force" between the East-West confrontation of the 'Cold War' period.¹⁶

Political Sociologists like Peter Worsley excluded the Communist countries from the 'Third World' even though China and Cuba were present at Afro-Asian solidarity Conferences. According to him, Third World countries were overwhelmingly a sub-set of capitalist countries, but with a "distinctly different set of political cultures" from those of the industrialised capitalist world.¹⁷

Irving Louis Horowitz¹⁸ also defined the Third World around the same period in terms of non-alignment, ex-colonial status, and as one importing technology from the First World and its ideology from the Second World. Thus historically, the term was earlier used to express colonial heritage, the past of these societies than what they were going to become. President

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16. L. Wolf, Phillips, n.10, p.1313.

17.(i) P. Worsley, "How Many Worlds?", Third World Quarterly, April 1979, pp.100-108.

(ii) -----, The Third World, Weidenfeld and Nicholson, London, 1964.

18. Irving Louis Horowitz, 'Three Worlds of Development', The Theory and Practice of International Stratification, Oxford University Press, New York, 1972.

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Nyerere for instance had admitted (Guardian, 8 January 1979) that if one had asked him what he intended to do after independence, he would have only given the vaguest idea of a programme. In spite of differences in ideology, social, structure, culture and so on, these countries had a common heritage, the colonialism, which at that time was their major pre-occupation. In the Cold War period when there was a rigid stalinist control of the communist bloc on the one hand and of US McCarthyism, nuclear monopoly on the other, fear of getting entangled into the conflicts between the Superpowers was quite real.¹⁹

By the middle of the sixties, the Cold War had become a routine and the tensions generated by it were slackening in intensity. The economic and development issues were becoming prominent thus reducing the monopoly of security and strategic issues in world politics. That marked the beginning of the Third World concept being viewed in its economic context and thrust. The term 'Third World' as earlier interpreted of Sauvy's original usage becomes more strongly associated with 'neglect, exploitation and revolutionary potential' than 'non-alignment'.²⁰

19. P. Worsley, *Ibid.*, n.17 (i)

20. L. Wolf-Phillips, *Ibid.*, n.10, p.1313.

The phrase 'underdeveloped' countries began to be used as a synonym for the 'Third World'; the phrase being probably first coined 'officially' in the 1951 UN document - Measures for the Economic Development of Underdeveloped Countries (E/1986 ST/E CA/10 of 3 May 1951). However this was regarded as a derogatory term by their governments and hence such euphemisms as "developing" or "less developed" was substituted instead. This move lead Gunnar Myrdal to refer in his, Asian Drama (1968) to 'diplomacy by terminology',²¹. The term 'Fourth World' was later introduced to denote the least developed and chronically poor countries. This reflects change in emphasise of the term 'Third World' in contemporary usage from the political to the economic. This later categorisation was encouraged by the World Bank economists who distinguished between 'low income developing countries' and 'middle income developing countries' in the early World Bank, World Development Reports'.²²

In its economic connotations the 'Third World' referred to the countries which were neither industrialised or free market economies (the First World) nor the socialist and the centrally planned

21. L. Wolf-Phillips, "Why Third World?", Third World Quarterly, January 1979; p.106.

22. L. Wolf-Phillips, Ibid., n.10, pp.1313-1314.

economies (the Second World) but which were still struggling to evolve a viable system and approach to economic development. Such group of countries were poor and underdeveloped and belonged to Asia, Africa and Latin America. A significant fall out of such a shift was the weakening of reservations regarding the inclusion of Latin America in this category. The specificities of economic structure and potentialities were considered of secondary importance in the context of international economic comparisons. Thus for instance, L.G. Reynolds, an economist described the characteristics of the Third World :

"..... the dominance of subsistence production and self employment; low per capita incomes and unequal distribution of incomes, imperfect markets, low productivity, dependence on export earnings and foreign capital flows, and small public sectors and minimal modern industrial sectors. .. There are wide variations on such variables but a median behaviour of these countries should be focussed upon rather than on the particular characteristics of one or a few countries".²³

II

CONCEPTUAL IMPLICATIONS

The concept of 'The Third World' has in recent years been increasingly called into question. By the beginning of the 1970s the debate between those who advocated differentiated approach

23. L. G. Reynolds, The Three Worlds of Economics, Yale University Press, 1971; pp.97-98.

to the study of the Third World on the one hand and an overall (generalistic) approach on the other had become pronounced. While the generalistic approach relied on the criteria of overall poverty and underdevelopment, the differentiated approach emphasised different groupings within the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America on the basis of the GNP, per capita income, levels of industrialisation and so on. Caplow²⁴ was one of the earliest supporters of the differentiated approach, who divided the countries of the world into three groups: the developed countries; the developing countries that are partially industrialised and that import capital and technology; and the underdeveloped countries in which technology has not yet taken roots. Later this differentiated approach to the Third World was strengthened by the consequences of Oil Crisis which consequently turned the few, very rich and the powerful. The development of a new group, the newly industrialised countries (NICs) such as South Korea, Singapore, Hong Kong and Taiwan has further re-inforced this thinking. Thus, for instance, Harris writes, that the 'Third World' as

24. T. Caplow, "Are Rich Countries Getting Richer and the Poor Countries Poorer?", Foreign Policy(3), 1971, p.91.

a concept describing a group of countries of comparable economic situation in the international system in no longer a valid label.²⁵

Together with economic reasons for challenging the concept of 'Third World', the concept raises certain fundamental issues. A great deal of explanation would be needed if Latin America, Asia and Africa are to be considered not even just as 'independent' entities, but as virtually a hemispheric entity separate from Europe and North America. The mere existence of what seems to be a separate and an autonomous economic, political and social units on the periphery of Euro-American world, does not constitute an independent southern hemisphere. If there is a 'Third World' of persons and communities living, roughly south of the Shenyang Guadalajara line,* what is it that holds these persons and communities together or bring them into a single focus? Have they not been integrated, partially or totally with

25. see, Harris Nigel, The End of the Third World The Newly Industrialising Countries and the Decline of an Ideology, Harmonds worth : Penguin, 1986. pp.7-10

* The 'line' cuts through China, Afghanistan etc. and cannot be taken literally. The line may be drawn Westwards from Shenyang, through Kabul, Aleppo and Algiers, to Guadalajara. The 'boundary' extends in fact along the northern limits of Korea, China, Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Syria and onwards to the north-western corner of Mexico.

cultural factors at work south of the Shenyang -
the peoples of the hemisphere north of the line?
What are we to make of the great cultural diversity
within it? What are the historical, political and
cultural factors at work south of the Shenyang-
Guadalagara line which bring the peoples in Chile
and Korea, Iran, and South Africa, Cyprus and China,
into a single focus in the minds eye?²⁶

Due to above considerations there are reasons
for doubts and hesitations over talking seriously
about a world divided into three major parts, of
which the Third World is one. Our assumption that
colonialism has ended is not sufficient reason for
the 'Third World' to make a force in the
contemporary history. Can it be assumed that the
people of the southern hemisphere are taking their
own initiatives? Do they have common values and
interests and objectives and are they antagonistic
to those of the northern hemisphere? Has there
been a decisive break in 'continuity of colonial
structures or has there been a significant re-
inforcement of those traditions.²⁷

In 1950s and through much of the 1960s no one
raised the question doubting the existence of the

26. C.R. Hensman, From Gandhi to Guevara, Allen Lane, London, 1969, pp. 18-22.

27. Ibid., p.20.

'Third World'. Apart from Latin America, the underdeveloped countries shared almost a common past, common attitudes toward the former colonial powers, and a similar set of problems. They generally talked in the language of nationalism, anti-colonialism, anti-imperialism, non-alignment, socialism and so on. Thus, for instance, Keith Buchanan, had no problem in describing them as a "fellowship of the dispossessed", a "commonwealth of poverty".²⁸ Whatever the diversity of colour or creed, it had an overriding unity and this tendency to unity coming in the words of che' Guevara, "from a similarity in economic and social conditions and from a similarity in desire for progress and recuperation."²⁹

All the more, the new states did not seem to be in competition with each other. Except for verbal commitment to a few slogans, no one had to sacrifice anything. The illusion of power, the seemingly equivalence with the 'First' and the 'Second' worlds was an added attraction.³⁰

28. Keith Buchanan, *Ibid.*, n.3, p.6.

29. Che' Guevara, *Ibid.* n.5, p.119.

30. R.L. Rothstein, *The Weak in the World of Strong*, Columbia University Press, 1977; pp. 47-48.

However, as these countries began on the road to economic development, sharp differences started surfacing between various groups within the Third World vis-a-vis their policies towards the external world. Regional groups which benefited from preferential arrangements with the industrial countries were reluctant to share those benefits with their poor neighbours. At the same time, poor neighbours were afraid of becoming closed markets for their more advanced neighbours. Their national interests at least in the short run seemed to conflict with their neighbours. Those countries which had relatively vibrant export industry seemed to be in conflict with each other and did not wish to see more competition emerging from their own group. These aspects frequently eroded the possibility of meaningful co-operation. Thus critics over the past decade have challenged the notion that the 'Third World' usefully describes a coherent bloc of underdeveloped countries. On a broader scale, the number of underdeveloped countries are so many and differences between them so much that any single label for them is quite misleading except in reference to certain shared attitudes or to a general range of characteristics. Whatever be the indicator for comparison - the level of development, per capita income, political

structures, cultural and historical patterns or ideology the range of variation is enormous, much wider than among the developed countries. Anti-colonialism is now a spent force. Non-alignment in the phase of declining Cold War, and with the increasing need to seek help from all the industrial countries has lost significance.

The danger of treating the Third World as a conceptual category becomes apparent when generalisations are based on aggregate statistics wherein the countries such as India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nigeria, Indonesia and Brazil dominate such statistics to the extent that whatever is happening to them often appear to be happening to the rest of the underdeveloped countries. Sometimes variance among the large Least Developed Countries (LDCs) are so much that any consistent influence on statistical profiles is likely to be cancelled out. Sometimes a few intractable problems of some large LDCs create unwarranted despair about the problems of other LDCs. Because of possession of a potentially large domestic market and natural resources, some countries can exercise choices and have problems which the small underdeveloped countries do not have.³¹ Thus there

31. Ibid., p.55.

is usually a large assymetry in the bargaining positions of a few large LDCs and the other LDCs vis-a-vis the developed countries. Once committed to a particular set of trading relations, especially with the developed countries a small LDC stands to loose relatively much more by a interruption of relations since there may not be an alternative or domestic market for the previously exported goods and there may be little possibility of diversification in the range of exports. Thus a small LDC risks much more in any exchange relationship.³²

Political scepticism about the existence of a Third World has existed both on the left and the right. for instance, Regis Debray has written that:

"Third World is a lumber room of a 'term' a shapeless bag in which we jumble together to hasten on their disappearance, nations, classes, races, civilisations and continents as if we were afraid to name them individually and distinguish one from another : it is the modern version of the Greek barbaros, whereby all those who did not speak the language of Pericles were lumped together in a single word.....

..... The term 'Third World'.... indicates a certain backwardness in economic and social development but the real meaning of the 'Third World' is that it presents the concept of a world apart, equidistant from the capitalist first world and the socialist second world, whose sole inner determining principle is that of underdevelopment.... It conceals-and this

32. Ibid., p.62.

is its main usefulness--the paradoxical unity of the capitalist mode of production all over the world... in which the lower level of underdevelopment is maintained and continued by the 'development' of the upper.... / The 'Third World' is infact an annexe of the First World, an enclave in the international system of market relations.... It is an astute piece of stage management.. to distinguish as merely a statistical gap something that is the necessary result of an international and national system of exploitation.... everyone in the poor countries is poor, everyone in the rich countries is rich, even the poor... What 'Third World' means in the last analysis is to reject or evade the capitalism/socialism dilemma..... Anyone who uses the latter term will inevitably tend, whether consciously or not, to isolate any actual 'national liberation' movement from the international socialist movement.... True, there is a certain solidarity among the 'three continents' : but it comes more from outside than from within: they share the same economic exploiter, the same political opponent--imperialism--but it is a hollow unity a kind of negative community.....".³³.

Debray seeks to criticise the proposition that these countries possess economies and social systems different in kind from either the First or Second Worlds. For him, there are either capitalist Third World countries or socialist ones. All the capitalist Third World countries are exploited dependencies of the First World; an integral part of world capitalism.

From the point of view of development theory, Daniel Lerner has asserted in a similar tone that.. .if, what the West is... the modernizing Middle East seeks to

33. Regis Debray, A Critique of Arms, Harmondsworth, Penguin, Vol.1, 1974; pp.35-38, pp.322-323.

become there is in post - 1945 Asia, Africa and Latin America, no Third World but rather underdeveloped populations which are in the process of development, with aims, objectives, values and so on which are already visible in developed form.³⁴ Thus, the term 'Third World' is not a polite fiction-a face-saving label for non-white peoples who are sensitive about the exploitation and discrimination in the present world order. The governments whose power and interests had been decisive in the non-European world at the beginning of twentieth century endorsed plans for the periods following both the First World War and the Second. But there is no evidence in such arrangements which suggest that they envisaged or legitimized the creation of an international community and economy-the Third World subject neither to the Atlantic powers nor to the Soviet Union. The evidence is on the contrary.³⁵

Infact the western analysts have used the concept 'Third World' from western security perspectives in the wake of European cold war and its global ramifications. They have compressed the wide ranging variety of states in the world into a simple taxonomy which regards the 'Third World' as the residual conglomerate of state

34. Daniel Lerner, *The Passing of Traditional Society*, Grencoe, Illinois : Free Press.

35. C.R. Hensman, *Ibid.*, n.26, pp.80-81.

systems apart from the First and the Second Worlds. The western alliance system have attempted to bring these newly decolonized countries in their own alliance system. The Soviet Union in order to cut the potential losses has sought to keep them non-aligned. Thus the two Superpowers for their own security considerations reinforced the nebulous concept of an amorphous 'Third World' consisting of countries outside the two power blocs.³⁶ This contradict the notion that there is a Third world to be studied, distinct from the products of Western tutelage and authority.

Those Western analysts who see the rivalry of the 'Superpowers' as normal see the so-called 'Third World' as an area of political, moral and intellectual vacuum, a field of contest between forces loyal to the United States-to freedom of private enterprise and individualism and those loyal to the Soviet Union- to Communism. Hence some countries are described in the 'South' as 'uncommitted' or 'non-aligned' and such phrases are used like 'the battle for men's minds'.³⁷ In these cases it is not assumed that there are modern human communities which freely and on their own

36. Aswini K. Ray Third World perspectives on security and nuclear non-Proliferation : an Indian view, in John Simpson (ed), Nuclear Non-Proliferation : An Agenda for the 1990's; Cambridge University Press, 1987.

37. C.R. Hensman, Ibid; n.26, p.33

initiative can appraise the responses of two foreign groupings of states and ideologies.

The variations within the southern hemisphere are enormous. There are virtual continents like Brazil, India and China and the tiny islands and city states like Singapore, Taiwan. There are countries with very high literacy rates and free education like Cuba and Ceylon and those with almost universal illiteracy like Haiti. There are traditional monarchies, and government by workers and poor peasants organisations. To take anything and everything said or written by nationalists as a demonstration of the existence of the 'Third World' would be worthless. There is Asian, African and Latin American material which clearly demonstrate the continued integration and subordination of these continents to the Europeanised First and the Second Worlds.

Terms like 'non-aligned' and 'neutral' when attached as a label to the Asian and African countries are often misleading. In the struggle between the impoverished subject peoples of the 'Third World' and those who exploit them the principle of non-commitment can be misleading.³⁸

38. C.R. Hensmen, *Ibid.*, n.26. p.70.

From a different angle, the Non-alignment which is thought to be an essential attribute of Third Worldhood presents many dilemmas. The question which arise is, how many different varieties of alignment can one accomodate within the ideal of non-alignment without robbing it of meaning altogether? While some are non-aligned towards Washington and have American advisers, some others offer hospitality to communist soldiery. Some are socialist democracies while some are free-enterprise dictatorships. the possibilities are enormous. Thus, the present three world classification is not enough. This prompted Shiva Naipaul to assert that :

"The Third World is a form of bloodless universality that robs individuals and societies of their particularity.... Blandly, to subsume say, Etthiopia, India and Brazil under the one banner of Third Worldhood is absurd and as denigrating as the old assertion that all Chinese look alike. People only look alike when you can't be bothered to look at them closely.... The promiscuous idea of a 'Third World' does not stand upto close examination. Lacking particularity, it delineates nothing that really exists. It is a flabby Western concept lacking the flesh and blood of the actual.... a Third World does not exist as such ... it has no collective and consistent identity except in the newspapers and amid the pomp and splendour of international conferences..... The idea of a Third World, despite its congenial simplicity, is too shadowy to be of any use.... Islamic resurgence is one thing; the excesses of Idi Amin are another; a Marxist coupd'etat in Grenada is yet another. It's not some vague

Third World happening to be fitted into the off the peg categories manufactured by the Third World ideological rag-trade."³⁹

Shiva Naipaul rightly asserts that one of the greatest honours we can bestow on other people is to recognise not only that they exist but they do so in specific ways and have specific realities... We must cast off the rag-trade mythologies with which we clothe our perceptions of mental and spiritual worlds unfamiliar to us... The Third World is an artificial construction of the west - an ideological empire on which the sun is always setting... the idea of a Third World is the one least confined by reality and the most promiscuous in the political temptations to which it gives rise. In the Caribbean, the Third World status had little to do with economic deprivations pure and simple. The idea was swiftly harnessed to racial assertion and militancy. In the Caribbean, being Third World meant being black. To be black was to be oppressed.⁴⁰

To some, taxonomies like these are merely academic exercises. However, in reality they do signify the distinctive political praxis which are sought to be justified and expressed. Ideas, as W.I. Thomas,

39. S. Naipaul, Ibid., n.1, pp.9-11.

40. Ibid., n.1.

observed are 'real in their consequences' and the names we give things--the taxonomies we construct and then impose on the world--have consequences not just for the way we think but also for the way we act in it.⁴¹ The real life implications of the Chinese conception of the three worlds, for instance, differs from the economic models. The economic models treat level of development of productive forces as the key causal factor relegating political institutions, social arrangements and cultural differences to irrelevance. It was a reductionist economic conception of development and of its causes and impediments.⁴² Thus for instance, the real life implications of the Chinese conception of the three worlds radically differs from the economic model. In the Chinese model, far more important matter than the distinction between capitalist and communist countries is the differences in levels of development of the productive forces, whether in a capitalist or a communist society, which enables the rich countries to exploit the poor. The two Superpowers compete with each other for world hegemony but 'collude' to prevent any challenge to the world balance of power which is in their favour. To them, second world is the set of countries, both communist and the capitalist with -----

41. P. Worsley. Ibid., n.2, p.311.

42. Ibid., p.311.

relatively advanced levels of economic development. The 'Third World' consists of the least economically developed countries in which China herself includes. Though at one level, it appears to be an economic model, the political implications are clear that since the principal contradiction is between the Superpowers and the rest, the precondition for development on a global scale is the ending of their joint domination of the world.⁴³

It is clear that classification schemes have certain purpose. What we need are analytic categories that attempt to illuminate the process of choice within the 'Third World' countries, not ones that help an external observer to organise a universe of discourse. The coherence of 'Third World' countries, which are varied in their cultural heritages, with very different historical experiences and marked differences in the patterns of their economies, in spite of their common history of colonial subjugation and common underdevelopment, is inherently quite problematic. It is a negative unity, necessarily dependent on the presence of a common enemy. The concept of the 'Third World' necessarily implies the existence of two prior worlds. It is also stipulative in that it assumes there

43. Ibid., p.311-312.

to be three and only three worlds. It seems that no attempt was made to see closely this part of the world. The concern of the European scholars being largely confined to their part of the world thought it sufficient to put this large number of nations into a residual category called the 'Third World'. Hence Shiva Naipaul rightly says that, there is no relationship more problematic or contentious than that posed by those hundreds of millions of human beings lumped together by the term 'Third World'. He questions the tendency of Americans omitting Latin America from their list and Australians pointing out their finger at South East Asia as being the 'Third World'.⁴⁴

Plainly, the world has become too complicated to be accommodated in a simple division into three, when a number of countries have advanced rapidly along the road to industrialisation: in Asia,--Taiwan, South Korea, Singapore and Hong Kong; in Latin America - Mexico and Brazil and also the oil states the world over planning to emulate them. Hence such a Third World spokesman as President Nyerere has frankly admitted that Brazil and Burundi have different problems' and.... that Third World should be seen more as a "federation of several unions or groups of unions...."⁴⁵ The growing

44. S. Naipaul, Ibid., n.1, pp.9-11.

45. P.Worsley, Ibid., n.17 (i), p.103.

differentiation within the Third World is widely recognised. Thus by 1973, New Left Review could refer to the Caribbean countries as 'the Third World of the Third World'. Fourth World came to be recognised to signify this economic differentiation.⁴⁶

With the passage of time, and as the euphoria of political independence subsided, the reality of economic dependence was felt. This led to shifts in the Third World's own conceptions of itself. Thus Julius Nyerere, the Tanzanian President, remarked that while at the time of independence they had assumed that political liberation would take care of the economic problems. Two decades later, he had learned differently. He says: our mistake was not in our demand for freedom, it was in the assumption that freedom--real freedom--would necessarily and with little trouble follow liberation from alien rule...⁴⁷

The categories "underdeveloped" and "developed" "communist" and "capitalist" often explain a great deal of international groupings and how their interests operate in common. But since they are timeless, synchronic models, they can't inherently capture relationships other than those built into the model such

46. Ibid., p.104.

47. P.Worsley, Ibid., n.2, p.318.

as political ties between countries in different categories such as India and Soviet Union or USA and China. Also country being the basic unit, relationships between the major groups within the country classes, ethnic groups, religious communities etc. are left out of the picture.⁴⁸

Such schemas also can't capture change whether economic or shifts of political allegiance at world level. Thus at present, some scholars have been tempted to say that suddenly the 'Third World' has become the 'Second World' after the recent changes in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.

The countries of the Third World are often given a flat uniformity by statements that they are all caught up in a revolution, or that they are all poor, or that they all take the same line towards the Western and the Communist worlds. These mistaken views obscure the very great variety of states in Africa and Asia. Though they are mostly new in the sense that they have been established since the Second World War, but they also include states of considerable experience, such as Afghanistan, Iran, Thailand, Egypt and Ethiopia.⁴⁹

48. Ibid., p.320.

49. JDB Miller, Ibid., n.15, p.1.

Many Third World leaders want the Third World to be a unit for certain purposes but it is hardly ever. The dominant element in their diplomacy in each case is, however, the burgeoning sense of their individual national interest which comes with their experience of international politics. The anti-colonialism though provides a source for emotional unity, but it has its divisive quality in the different perspectives which the various new states derive from their colonial experiences.

There are disputes on political grounds whether to put South Africa and Israel into the First World, to which both are firmly attached politically or into the Third, because of the persistence of the colonial syndrome of racial exploitation and oppressions. These disputes in the present classification system are generally resolved by fiat. JDB Miller⁵⁰ regards Latin America as something of a Fourth World, with characteristics of its own which entitle it to be studied in its own right and not forced to conform to whatever generalisations can be made about the Third. Latin American independence preceded by more than a century the movement which has led to the vast post war increase in independent states in Asia and Africa. The

50. Ibid., Introduction, p.xi-xii.

intervening period gave Latin America a form of experience which marked it off from other parts of the world. Its predominant culture was Latin, not indigenous. Its dominant groups were European in origin. Its relations with the United States, even since the enunciation of the Monroe Doctrine, have been unique in world affairs and remain unparalleled in the experience of Asia and Africa.

Some degree of political agreement and common fronts which Afro-Asian countries have presented, or at least seemed to present, at the United Nations and at Bandung, in the OAU and the Arab League have created the impression of a distinctive political force. However, such unity has been neither shown in practice nor is likely to reveal itself in future. It seems that Afro-Asian unity is something which orators such as President Sukarno invokes to solve their own problems. Arab unity and African unity are the same; only a pious wish which can't be relied in actions. Thus, for instance, while oil exporters benefit from high prices, the oil importers suffer, notably India and Brazil. Such conflicts of interest hardly make for unity among the so-called 'Third World' as a whole.

The Third World is often declared to be transitional : in a condition of movement from traditional to modern society by Western commentators, and in a condition of movement from capitalist to

socialist society by communist authorities. This assumption is not borne out of the facts and in fact there is a relative stability of socio-economic forms in the Third World.⁵¹

India and Brazil have more than 75 p.c. of their productive industries in the capitalist sector, while Algeria and Egypt are more than 75 p.c. nationalised. Yet all the four nations belong to the emergent Third World bloc. In other words, to be considered part of the Third World is not necessary to limit the character of the national economic system. The political posture in relation to the main power blocs is thus central to defining conditions of 'membership' in the Third World.⁵²

Like Debray on the Left, there has been similar attempts to demolish the existence of Third World on the Right as well. Thus, for example, the then US Secretary of States, Alexander Haig, declared in January 1981 that the third world is a 'myth'. Many rulers of the Third World countries have infact used the language of non-alignment, and of themselves as spokesman of the wretched of the earth in a demagogic way, internally to

51. I.L. Horowitz., Ibid., n.183, p.20.

52. Ibid., p.21.

present an image of common interests as between themselves and the people they exploit, and externally, to project a pretence of non-alignment that disguises the reality of very aligned, normally pro-First World policies. Their rhetoric is of "national unity" and "independence" and of "solidarity" with other poor countries but in reality they sell everyday their countries into an ever-deeper dependence on the multinationals.⁵³

A study of UN voting patterns over the years show that while in early years the non-aligned did 'reach an impressive degree of coherence and were clearly identifiable as a distinct group, by the end of the 1960s they were no longer so and behaved differently in the East-West relationships. As a voting bloc, it was a complete collapse.⁵⁴ There emerged on the scene as a group of strong anti-Communist Asian countries, ASEAN (Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and the Phillipines), which while voted the same way only on a third of all issues in the late 1960s did so nine times out of ten a decade later.⁵⁵ Thus, the Third World as an united political group was split, by the defacto

53. P. Worsley, Ibid., n.2, p.324.

54. Peter Willets, the Non-Aligned Movement : The origins of a Third World Alliance, Frances Pinter Ltd., 1978.

55. P.Worsley, Ibid., n.2, p.324.

attachment of most of its member--the capitalist Third World to the First World, and of a minority to the Second world. Internally, since then, says Ben Bella,⁵⁶ one of the founders of Non-aligned movement the consumerist society and development in terms of GNP had displaced cultural priorities and self management.

Debray is right that Third World is only a "negative" community, culturally having shared only the colonial experience, and even that has left different systems of education, of public administration, even modes of thought in countries subjected to the very different cultural hegemony of England or France.⁵⁷

To conclude, the historical roots of the concept 'Third World suggest that the taxonomy within which the Third World emerged as a generic category did not originate indigenously. Any taxonomy possesses latent values and results in an uneven distribution of benefits. In this case it results in a reinforcement of the global hierarchy inherited from the colonial era, the goal sought by their instigators. The sequential location of the Third World as the third and last element in the post-war global hierarchy reflects the

56. Interview in the Gurdian Third World Review, London, 15 January 1981, cited in P. Worsley, *Ibid.*, n.2, p.325.

57. P. Worsley, *Ibid.*, n.2, p.326.

relative hierarchy of the superpowers concerns.⁵⁸ The Third World is much less homogeneous than the other two. It is widely scattered between the three continents with an internal hierarchy determined by the global importance of specific countries to the strategic interests of the superpowers. The Third World as an actor in international relations has its roots in the western Cold War taxonomy. It is inadequate not only to conceptualise it but also is not a suitable category for any durable structure of global security. The Third World that has emerged today from the Cold War is more distorted and divided from within than previously during the colonial era.

58. Jacqueline A. Braveboy - Wagner, Interpreting the Third World Politics, Economics and Social Issues; Praeger Publishers, New York, 1986. p.1.

CHAPTER - II

THE 'THIRD WORLD' IN COMPARATIVE POLITICS

While in the longterm world historical perspective it may be correct to view Third World prospects in dichotomous terms (socialism versus neo-colonialism), over the short and medium run it grossly over simplifies events and developments, under estimates the political and social capacities of non-socialist force, and seriously distorts the actual class structure in formation in the Third World.¹

The countries of the so-called "Third World" show inevitably a great diversity for their socio-economic problems, their cultural heritages and the types of pressure they have been exposed to vary greatly and hence no magic political formula exists which will solve all of their problems.² Therefore, it can't even be accepted that the 'Third World' or the periphery actually designates an unitary reality. The crisis in the centre has further sharpened differences among these countries and has led to explosive fragmentation of the old periphery. Further the Third World should not be

1. James Petras, Critical Perspectives on Imperialism and Social Classes in Third World, Monthly Review Press, 1978, p.84.

2. Keith Buchanan, "Bingo or UNO", New Left Review No. 21, October 1963, p.22.

defined in terms of periphery as a mere function of the centre. We must consider the "peripheral" countries for themselves, as social formations with their own social relations and policies corresponding to their own dominant classes.³ Local capitalism had not become a insignificant force by the early seventies in a number of newly industrialising countries. The middle classes immediately below the richest 5 percent have grown considerably in the last fifteen years.⁴ Hence it is no longer relevant to conceive the Third World as a single bloc opposed to the industrial countries East and West.

Since the living soul of Marxism is a concrete analysis of a concrete situation (Lenin), the priority task is to study the Third World countries as they are, before dreaming of what they should be. Anti-imperialism has only served as a demagogic cover for the development plans of a modernist local bourgeoisie whether liberal or statist in orientation. Therefore, it is right to stress that domestic causes are paramount, that the local elites bear the main responsibility for their country's plight and that dependence only perpetuates itself on the ground of an internal situation. Capitalism and industrialization

3. Alain Lipietz-I, "Towards Global Fordism?", New Left Review, No. 132, March-April 1982, p.40.

4. Ibid., n:3, p.44.

are rapidly developing in these countries and hence Third World can no longer be grasped as a single homogeneous entity - a "corpus of homogeneous figures" susceptible to uniform criticism of "dependent development" or a *fortiori* "the development of underdevelopment". Even slightest attention is not paid to the character of industrialisation, the specificity of the socio-economic structures in question, the nature of the dependent State and the nature of classes controlling the State power.⁵

Should a common colonial history be the defining feature? It is overlooked that every country in America is the product of colonization. Even Lenin saw that the specificity of internal socio-economic structures as the basis of a "democratic and anti-imperialist" stage of the revolution. It is necessary to define the socio-economic relations expressed in the process of industrialisation. This method lumps together the countries openly fighting the sores of underdevelopment and those which bear its full effects: "New industrial countries" and "less developed countries" (LDCs), OPEC member states and countries with no raw materials. If everything is jumbled in this way, it is not surprising

5. Alain Lipietz-II, "Marx or Rostow", New Left Review, No. 132, March-April 1982, pp.48-49.

that the laws of statistics yield a rather monotone picture. The need is to appreciate the heterogeneity of the Third World.⁶

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF INDUSTRIALISATION IN THE "THIRD WORLD"

The theory of modes of productions reveal that there is no single universal process of transition to an industrial society. Different initial forces, mechanisms and results may signify different paths of development.⁷ The process of industrialisation also depends on the nature of earlier colonial structure, character of technologies adopted, relations of ownership within the sector of the external economy, nature of social classes and the strength of state power. Out of all these factors develop the structural characteristics of individual states which have persisted affecting contemporary evolution.⁸ The socio-economic development is everywhere, including in developing countries, a succession of modes of production and hence a multilinear process, growing out of the originally given modes of production. The process of succession of modes of production is a

6. Ibid., p.53.

7. see, Miomir Jaksic, "Marx's Theory of Modes of Production. Problems of Colonialism and Underdevelopment" in D. Banerjee (ed.), Marxian Theory and the Third World, Sage Pub. N.Delhi, 1985, pp.73-87.

complex process owing to the fact that the interweaving of old and new is always present. Accordingly, there is no "linear causality".⁹ Marx writes that the revolutionising of a social mode of production occurs in a colourful variety of transitional forms.¹⁰ In his letter to Vera Zasulich, Marx comments that we would commit a great error if we regard them (ie. primitive communities) as all being on the same level. As in the case of geological formations, historical formations constitute a whole series of primary, secondary and tertiary types.¹¹ Thus in accordance with space-time conditions, the socio-economic development is multilinear. The paths of development of individual countries should not be generalised.

Since the initial forces were different in Western Europe, Latin America and in Asia, there would be different ways of transition to capitalism in these areas. While in Western Europe, the general mechanism of succession was the transition from feudalism to capitalism (an internal path), in Asia the transition

9. Louis Althusser and Etienne Ballibar, Reading Capital, (Zagreb 1975), in Miomir Jaksic, Ibid., n.7, p.77.

10. Karl Marx, Capital, Vol.1, Belgrade, 1971, in Miomir Jaksic, Ibid., n.7, p.77).

11. MECW, Vol. 30., in Miomir Jaksic, Ibid., n.7, p.83.

was from Asiatic mode of production to capitalism (an external path). In Britain, the classical industrialization experience was the result of technological innovations in the productive process and the creation of a home market. The application of capital to technological innovations was the work of the new rising manufacturing bourgeois classes. Moreover, industrialisation was largely a market phenomenon although the state did provide the environment for capitalist growth.

In the purely colonial areas of Asia and Africa, industrialization was attempted to be superimposed upon pre-capitalist structure by capitalist penetration and was hence a foreign venture, although in some areas such as India, a small bourgeoisie arose during the colonial period. While in the West, industrialisation occurred in such a way as to create a number of favourable prospects for constitutionalism, in the case of Africa, opposite is the case. The process of industrialisation here is not an abbreviated version of the historical pattern experienced by Western society. It is an altogether different one and the differences largely account for many of the political difficulties being experienced by African nations today.¹²

12. Michael Lofchie, "Political Constraints on African Development", and "Preface to Part I", in Michael F. Lofchie (ed.), State of the Nations: Constraints on development in independent Africa, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1971, pp.3-18.

Two significant difficulties being encountered by African nations in the way of capitalist industrialisation are the lack of an autonomous entrepreneurial class outside the state and the non-availability of the advantages of technological gradualism. In Africa, where autonomous economic elites are largely non-existent the generation of economic growth is a state function and hence more burden on the state. Also industrialisation begins under conditions of high automation and the social problems created by this fact are immense. In the case of Western society, the political burden on state institutions was lightened considerably by the fact that the basic dynamism for economic transformation was supplied by an autonomous entrepreneurial class outside the state. State only played a facilitative role. Secondly, the technological gradualism in the West helped to absorb culturally disparate peoples into a common socio-economic environment and in helping to reduce the cleavage between industrialised and non-industrialised sectors of society. It made possible for technological innovations to be evenly diffused between the city and the countryside. There was a great deal of time for society to absorb technological innovations. Thus the timing of technological change introduced enormous differences in the experience of industrialisation between Western nations and African states and had profoundly important

socio-political consequences and advantages for the west. The fact is that in all these fundamental political matters Africans do not possess realistic political choices. The African governments can't realistically choose to import a technology or to undergo the entire process of gradual technological evolution that occurred in the West.¹³ •

Until the present, the African countries have witnessed relatively little industrialisation, except for Nigeria where a strong industrial base could be built because of the presence of petroleum, a strategic raw material. The fragmentation of the continent by colonialism still has its effect in the many separate states, most of them too small to support major industries. There has been no basic change in the relation of these countries to the world market. As primary producers with an export-oriented bias, their dependence on the extra-territorial companies and advanced countries is as great as in colonial days. The countries of Africa are acutely deficient in human capital, ie. entrepreneurs, managers, technicians and skilled workers. Domestic market is very small. Hence exports are necessary almost from the very beginning of

13. Ibid., p.17-18.

industrialisation to assure economies of scale and hence reasonable efficiency. This makes the first steps in industrialisation particularly difficult. Their share of manufacturing is less than 20 p.c. of value added in commodity production.¹⁴

Now we would see how industrialisation in Latin America has been different from both the industrialised nations of Europe and the colonial areas of Africa and Asia, in terms of both , initial impetus and the process. In Latin America (in contrast to Western Europe and the purely colonial areas of Asia and Africa), both internal and external factors have played a role in the process of industrialisation. Here, industrialisation which began earlier than in Africa and Asia was from the beginning an indigenous process though with external links. ¹⁵

The "national bourgeoisie" especially in the large countries of Latin America was formed predominantly by indigenous groups. They arose partly from the earlier commercial sectors, partly from the former agrarian patriciate and partly from immigration and were led by the process of import replacement to produce and market domestically industrial goods that were formerly

14. Helen Hughes, "Industrialization and Development: A stock taking", in Pradip K. Ghosh (ed.), 1984, "Industrialization and Development. A Third World Perspective, Greenwood Press, 1984, pp.5-49.

15. H. Jaguaribe, Political Development and A Latin American Case Study, New York, Praeger, 1973.

imported. While the initial impetus was supplied by export specialisation, it was the necessities of "Import substitution industrialisation" (ISI) that provided the impetus for large-scale industrialisation.

Latin America is significantly distinct from Asian and African countries since from a certain angle it is at least as Western as Canada. Latin America's predominantly Western character should be more conducive to modernization, and economic and social development. Some of these countries had large cities and modern institutions such as universities well before the United States. The region possesses exceptional advantages in its rich variety of natural resources, minerals, arable land, ample space in relation to the population, varied and frequently mild climates and vast navigable river systems constituting a volume of fresh water unequalled anywhere else and enormous hydroelectric potential. They are important relative advantages that clearly set Latin America apart from the Asian and African countries.¹⁶

For most of Latin America, the process of industrialisation began sixty years ago, i.e., in 1930s. Since then, they have made a tremendous progress in the

16. Carlos Rangel, "Third World Ideology and Western Reality, Manufacturing Political Myth, Transaction Inc., New Brunswick, New Jersey, 1986.

development of a diversified industrial base. The Latin America taken as a whole, is far along in the drive to technological maturity. Industrialisation has expanded the regions economy and made possible the incorporation of the technological progress of the centres, making Latin American economic growth more self-sustaining. They have developed potentiality to increasingly apply sophisticated technologies to its agriculture and services as well as industry. Industrialisation has played its part in significant economic and social transformation. Over the past thirty years, Latin American industry has expanded at an average rate of 6.7 p.c. per year, whereas world industry did so at a rate of only 5.9 p.c. annually. The Latin American regions manufacturing weight among the Western market economies climbed from 4.7 p.c. to 8.4 p.c.¹⁷ Today's private entrepreneurs in Latin America are capable of producing diversified industrial' products competitively for world markets. Such flexible private entrepreneurship is certain to be critically important in the Fourth Industrial Revolution : the set of new technologies which emerged roughly since later half of 1970s - the micro electronics, genetic engineering, the laser,

17. Hector Soza, "The Industrialization Debate in Latin America ", in Pradip K. Ghosh (e.d.), Industrialization and Development. A Third World Perspective, Green Wood Press, 1984, pp.308-29.

robots, new communication methods and new industrial materials. Because of extraordinary range and diversity of the new technologies, it is likely that these regions would be able to master the development and use of some of the frontier technologies.¹⁸

At the Punta del Este conference in August 1961 it was roughly calculated that 80 p.c. of the investment for Latin American development in the 1960s would have to come from Latin America. The proportion turned out to be 90 p.c. or more. In any concerted effort at Latin American development, the United States will be a partner but inevitably a "junior partner".¹⁹ The share of manufacture is between 40 to 60 p.c. of value added in commodity production in Latin American countries in general. This is in sharp contrast to African countries where (except for Nigeria) this share is less than 20 p.c.²⁰ Thus it may be concluded, that there has been a certain autonomous dynamism in Latin American development and is reflected in the effects on the regions economy.

18. see, W.W. Rostow, "Rich countries and poor countries, reflections on the Past, Lessons For the Future. West View Press, 1987, Praeger Publishers, USA, pp.125-132).

19. Ibid., p.120.

20. Helen Hughes, "Industrialisation and Development : A stocktaking, pp.11-12, in Pradip K Ghosh (ed)., Ibid. n.17.

The advances that Latin America has made in the field of industrialisation is reflected from the experience of Brazil. From 1968 onwards Brazil experienced a period of spectacular growth when net GDP grew at a yearly rate of 11.3 p.c. and industrial growth was 12.6 p.c.²¹ In Brazil, 3/5th of population resided in the urban areas. Urban workers comprise 38 p.c. (1970) of the population.²²

Thus, it is important to recognise that the differences between developing countries are more important in many respects than the similarities between them. The commonality of disadvantage which integrates countries of the Third World must not be allowed to disguise the great diversity that exists, both between and within the Third World states. The use of an universalistic terminology such as the "developing nations" is objected to by the Marxist writer Fred Carrier (1976) because it seems to suggest that Third World nations will merely follow First World patterns and develop along the "same capitalist path".²³ This

21. Werner Baer, "The Brazilian Boom 1968-72 : an Explanation and Interpretation", World Development, 1 August 1973 (b).

22. R.N. Chilcote and Harding, "Special issue on Brazil : Introduction", Latin American Perspectives, Vol.VI, No.4 Fall.

23. ^{See,} Allen H. Merriam, "What does 'Third World' Mean ?", in Jim Norwine and Alfonso Gonzalez, ed., The Third World : States of Mind and Being.

approach is Euro-Centric, which artificially seeks to transfer the West European model of socio-economic development to these regions of the East. The Euro-Centricism is related to the thesis of the "civilising mission of capitalism" the alleged necessity to initiate the Western capitalist path of development.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF STATE AND CLASSES IN THE 'THIRD WORLD'

The classical Marxist theory of the state regarded the state simply as instruments of a single ruling class. This was based on the study of Western societies where in we witness the creation of the nation state by indigenous bourgeoisies, in the wake of their ascendant power, to provide a framework of law and various institutions which are essential for the development of capitalist relations of production. In the colonial societies the process is significantly different. The specific nature of structural alignments created by the colonial relationship and realignments which have developed in the post-colonial situation have rendered the relationship between the state and the social classes more complex.²⁴ State in post-colonial societies is not established by an ascendant native

24. Hamza Alavi, "The State in Post Colonial Societies: Pakistan and Bangladesh", New Left Review, No.74, July-August 1972, pp.59-81.

bourgeoisie but instead by a foreign imperialist bourgeoisie. At independence, however, the direct command of the latter over the colonial state is ended. But its influence over the state is by no means brought to an end. The metropolitan bourgeoisie, now joined by other neo-colonialist bourgeoisies is present in the post-colonial society. Together they constitute a powerful element in its class structure. The relationship between neo-colonialist bourgeoisie and the post-colonial State is clearly of a different order from that which existed between the imperialist bourgeoisie and the colonial state. The class basis of the post-colonial state is therefore complex. It is not entirely subordinate to indigenous bourgeoisie, nor simply an instrument of neo-colonial bourgeoisie. Neither bourgeoisie excludes the influence of other. In fact their interests compete. Because of plurality of "dominant classes", state in post-colonial society is not the instrument of a single class.²⁵ Independence is not a mere sham. State is relatively autonomous and mediates between competing interests of three propertied classes: metropolitan bourgeoisie, indigenous bourgeoisie and the landed classes. The state even acquires considerable powers of control and regulation

25. Ibid.,

over the "dominant" classes under the conditions of centralised state administration. Hence the fundamental classes do not have any direct control over the state.

The multi-class relationship of the state in post-colonial societies calls for specific explanation.²⁶ The specificity arises from structural changes brought about by the colonial experience and alignments of classes, and by the super structures of political and administrative institutions which were established in that context, and secondly from radical realignments of class forces brought about in the post-colonial situations.²⁷ To determine the character of state, we need to situate it within the socio-historical context, the paradigms of state interventions, and the shifts in state strategy in different periods. After all, variations in intervention and the capacity to effect intervention is largely conditioned by the structure of social relations, the path of transition and the nature and direction of development process. Structures define the parameters of state action by imposing constraints on policy choices in the long term. Every government operates within a specific historical social matrix which circumscribes state action, and determines the

26. Ibid.,

27. Ibid.,

possibilities of change. The existence of retrograde structures, for example, constraints the regime from reconstituting social relations unless major structural changes are initiated.²⁸

In order to understand and explain the Third World's position in the international economic and political environment, both A.G. Frank and Wallerstein (1960s) the "Dependency theorists" put forward the "Stagnationist" thesis. They gave very little importance to the role of the dependent state and perceived the ruling groups - whether military, political or bureaucratic as mere agents of foreign domination and therefore not capable of promoting industrialization. The dependent state was seen as perpetual suppliers of raw materials as a result of their position in the international division of labour.²⁹ However, it was later realised that the crude statements of "dependency" is misleading as it obscures the fact that metropolitan capital the most powerful of

28. Zoya Hasan, "Introduction : State and Identity in Modern India", in Zoya Hasan, S.N. Jha and R. Khan (ed.), The State, Political Processes and Identity: Reflections on Modern India, Sage Publication, New Delhi, 1989, pp.9-26.

29. A.G. Frank, Development of Underdevelopment, Monthly Review, New York, 1966.

-----, Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America, Monthly Review Press, New York, 1969.

three dominant classes often has to accept disappointments or compromises. Now it has to negotiate with the state. This occurs even in societies where metropolitan capital is not confronted with competing indigenous fundamental classes.³⁰ State is not simply an instrument of any of the classes nor the reproducer of the social order that upholds the ruling class as a whole. There are instances where the state in peripheral societies has failed to pursue consistently the interests of any single one of the three dominant classes.³¹

Thus, we see that since the beginning of 1970's, the perceptions about the state and classes in the "Third World" countries began to change. The need began to be felt for specific explanations taking into account the specific nature of class formations, the re-alignments that have taken in the post-colonial period and various other national and supra-national forces active in such a process. The emergence of historical structural dependency school from the mid 1970s marked the beginning of such a change within dependency theory in the Latin American context.³² In the case of Africa,

30. Hamza Alavi, "State and Class under Peripheral Capitalism", in Hamza Alavi and T. Shanin (ed.), (Introduction to the Society of Developing Societies, Macmillan, London, 1982, pp.289-303.

31. Ibid.,

32. Cardoso and Falleto, Dependency and Development in Latin America, Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1979.

such a change is reflected in the 1970s in the works of J. Saul³³ among others. The importance began to be given to local classes and class struggles and popular movements. The dependent state began to be characterised as an arena of class struggle out of which may arise many forms of popular regimes which pursue different strategies.

It began to be realised that the expansion of capitalism in different countries has had different consequences, which are different not only due to the different periods in which these economies were incorporated into the international system, but rather also depend on the manner in which local classes allied or clashed with foreign capital, organised different forms of state and developed different strategies for growth. The possibility of sustained economic development was conceded even with the help of foreign capital. The possibilities of different forms of state in the "Third World is also reflected in the writings of James Petras.³⁴ According to him, to characterise states as simply "neo-colonial" over simplifies actual

33. J. Saul, "The State in Post-Colonial Societies : Tanzania", Socialist Register, 1974, pp.349-372).

34. James Petras, *Ibid.*, n.1, p.

developments. His analysis points to three types of regimes/state forms in Latin America depending upon the strategy selected by those who control state power and type of class alliances possible : Neo-colonial model; national bourgeoisie developmentalism, and nationalist popular strategy. Thus Petras, while not denying the external dependence, foresees a greater degree of autonomy of the state and social classes in the "Third World". He accepts the complexity of the state and social classes in these societies. The state in Latin America since 1930s is seen as "interventionist", which despite dependence makes possible the economic boom in countries such as Brazil. This process is termed as "Associated Dependent Development" by Cardoso ³⁵ The emphasis is here put on internal as well as external factors. In this process both dependency and development is seen as co-existing in sharp contrast to older forms of imperialism. Class relation embodied in the state is seen as an alliance between the interests of the internationalised sectors of the bourgeoisie and those of public and entrepreneurial bourgeoisie. This led to the rise of a stratum of public entrepreneurs - the "state bourgeoisie" who are the "office holders of

35. F.H. Cardoso, "Associated Dependent Development : Theoretical and Practical Implications in A.H. Stepan (ed), Authoritarian Brazil, Origins Policies and Future, New Haven, Yale University Press, London, 1973.

capital". Hence, dynamic dependent development is seen possible in the Third World due to this interaction of new forms of national political power and new international economic forces.³⁶ In a similar way, because of growth in state power, a triple alliance develops between the state, domestic and international capital.³⁷ The state enjoys a degree of freedom vis-a-vis these three dominant classes in general and with respect to multinationals in particular. Under these circumstances, this alliance has both strengthened state power and promoted economic development in Brazil and other Latin American countries.

When we turn to Africa, we find that independent African nations exhibit within themselves fully as wide a range of phenomena as are to be found throughout these continents : stable single and multiparty systems, as well as unstable ones, more or less assertive efforts to achieve a socialist organisation of economy and society, and a variety of forms of rule that include personalistic, elitist, and military as well as democratic control. Any attempt to generalise about so diverse an array of political phenomena is an extremely hazardous undertaking. All encompassing notions such as "decay" and "breakdown" with an implicit across the

36. Ibid.,

37. Peter Evans, "Dependent Development : The Alliance of M.N. State and Local Capital in Brazil": Princeton University Press, 1979.

board prognosis of disruption, disunity and instability seem as inappropriate as "development" and "modernization" with an equally broad suggestion of responsible government and visible social progress.

In Africa, the landed classes and the indigenous bourgeoisie are not very developed or powerful because of the nature of the pre-colonial agricultural society which consisted mainly of peasant communities (tribal societies) without large landowning classes such as those we encounter largely in Asia and Latin America. This created a situation very different from that of Latin America and Asia where these classes have historically played a key role. In the early 1970s, attention was focussed upon the growth of a "new class" in control of state apparatus independent of dominant social classes the "bureaucratic bourgeoisie"³⁸ In a situation of weak indigenous classes they attempted through a single party machine to suppress opposition and to infiltrate the national economy through the creation of a nationalised economic sector under the convenient label of "socialisms". After decolonisation, these bureaucrats were content to remain subordinate allies of imperialism.³⁹ A similar analysis of Ghana

38. Issa Shivji, Class Struggles in Tanzania, Heinemann, London, 1976).

39. C. Meillassoux, "A Class Analysis of the Bureaucratic Process in Mali", The Journal of Development Studies, January, 1970, p.106.

under Nkrumah was put forward by Fitch and Oppenheimer.⁴⁰

This analysis of state and classes in Mali and Ghana, are not universally applicable to all the African nations. For example, Green⁴¹ tried to show that in Tanzania, this class has not abused power or served its own interests. Rather, it has accepted low material rewards and kept national interests in the forefront. Cranford Pratt⁴² also looked upon most bureaucrats and politicians in Tanzania as "developers".

Roger Murray⁴³ in his analysis of Ghana under Nkrumah, points to the accession to state power of "unformed classes" - a heterogeneous group-the petty bourgeoisie. Not being a determinate economic class, it vacillated between compromise and hostility towards international capital, alternatives which would actually affect in different ways their own position in the

40. R. Fitch and M. Oppenheimer, Ghana : End of an Illusion, New York, 1966).

41. R.H. Green, "Economic Independence and Economic Cooperation", in D.P. Ghai, (ed.), Economic independence in Africa, Nairobi, 1973, p.85.

42. C.Pratt, "The Cabinet and Presidential Leadership in Tanzania : 1960-66", in M.H. Lofchie (ed.), The State of the Nations, University of California, Berkeley, 1971.

43. Roger Murray, "Second Thoughts on Ghana", New Left Review, No.42, March-April 1967.

production process. This shows the possibility of a struggle - among classes, or even within the bureaucratic class over the direction which development should take.

The use of the term "bureaucratic bourgeoisie" to describe a functional and a dominant class in Africa does not hold universally,⁴⁴ for it is unsuitable for many African countries like Nigeria or Kenya which have a fairly large entrepreneurial class and growth professional classes. It leads to poor analysis of classes in Africa. Also the variety of stages of development in Africa is the result of the varying degree of colonial penetration and factor endowments leading to an open range of options. This preclude any generalisations about class and state in Africa.

To conclude, we can say that "classness" of politics in 'Third World' countries varies in relation to states, for the degree to which (and the forms in which) class interests are organised into national politics depends very much on the prevailing political culture, forms of collective action, and possibilities for raising and resolving broadly collective (societal

44. (i) Colin Leys, "Capital Accumulation, Class Formation and Dependency - The Significance of the Kenyan Case", Socialist Register, 1978, pp.241-266.

(ii) R. Sklar, "The Nature of Dominant Class in Africa", Journal of Modern African Studies, 17 (4), 531, 552.

or class) issues. Political expression of class interests and conflicts is never automatic or economically determined. It depends on the capacities classes have for achieving consciousness, organisation and representation. Directly or indirectly the structures and activities of states profoundly condition such class capacities. State structures influence the capacities not only of subordinate but also of propertied classes. It is never enough simply to posit that dominant groups have a "class interest" in maintaining socio-political order, or in continuing a course of economic development in ways congruent with their patterns of property ownership. Exactly how even whether order may be maintained and economic accumulation continued depends in significant part on existing state structures and the dominant class political capacities that those structures help to shape.⁴⁵

45. Theda Skocpol, "Bringing the State Back in: Strategies of Analysis in Current Research", in Peter Evans et.al. (eds.), Bringing the State Back in, New York, Cup, 1985.

CHAPTER - III

THE 'THIRD WORLD' IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

International Relations as an academic discipline has almost exclusively developed in the NATO countries, particularly in the USA since the end of the Second World War. Hence its words and concepts constitute a positive metalanguage reflecting the historical experience and the value structures of the NATO countries. The normative function of such concepts consist in the rationalisation and legitimization of the role of the Western countries in international relations in this modern age. Terms such as "Developed Countries", "Less Developed Countries" etc. are supposedly used for effectively communicating the prevalence of mass poverty in these countries. However, these and other similar terms used in contemporary literature of international relations for the classification of states and nations are infact highly value laden and heavily weighted against the economically weak states of Asia, Africa and Latin America. Further, since the early Cold War days, these terms have come under so much of overuse and Western policy makers in particular have used them for so many different purposes that now they do not convey effectively any "inherent meaning". Their efforts to compress such a wide-ranging variety of states into a simple taxonomy can be traced to their concerns for

their own security arising out of the European Cold War and its global ramifications. This taxonomy views the Third World as the residual conglomerate of state systems outside the First and the Second worlds. Such taxonomy also being based on their wealth and ideology is highly arbitrary and deeply rooted in Western ethics. It serves the purpose of justifying and perpetuating the international multi-structure of dominance and dependency, inequality and exploitation, contempt and humiliation, a central reality of the contemporary international system. It is but one illustration of the many such attempts of the NATO countries to assign a permanently inferior status to the not so rich nations of the world in terms of wealth.¹

This Western system of classification of states was further reinforced by the security perspectives adopted by the Soviet Union after 1952. The Soviet Union's global view prior to 1952 was based on Zhdanov thesis that there existed only two Worlds, the Capitalists and the Socialist. This provided no scope for a Third World. The newly liberated countries like India were dubbed as "lackeys of imperialism", while their foreign policy differences with the West were viewed as manifestations of "intra-imperialist rivalry".

1. J. Bandyopadhyaya, The Poverty of Nations, Allied Publishers, 1988.

In 1952, there occurred a change in Soviet diplomacy which implicitly acknowledged the 'progressive' aspects of their foreign policy differences. Thus, it is clear that the concept of a 'Third World' became widely accepted under the security compulsions of both the Superpowers in the Cold War era. Both Superpowers in their own way reinforced the nebulous concept of an amorphous 'Third World' comprising newly independent post-colonial countries. Later the concept was extended to include the countries of south America which further added to its conceptual mystification.

Now we will look into the historical roots of the concept of the 'Third World'. To begin with the taxonomy within which the 'Third World' emerged as a generic category did not originate indigenously. Also, the sequential location of the 'Third World' as the third and the last element in the post-war global system reflects the relative hierarchy of the Superpowers concerns. Another problem with this taxonomy is that it is inadequate to describe the composition of the region described as the 'Third World' since states deemed to be within it have accepted different delimitations of this region overtime. For example, during Bandung conference of 1955, the Third World was supposed to consist of all the countries in the geographic region of Asia, including Pakistan and China, both militarily aligned to Superpowers. By the time of the Belgrade summit in

1961, the Third World had come to consist exclusively of the militarily non-aligned countries of the World, cutting across both the ideological divides and the geographical divisions of the globe. Subsequent to this, close military allies of the Superpowers as for example, Cuba and Pakistan were included within it. In addition, the so-called Group of 77 was often regarded as a synonym for the Third World. The term has thus frequently been used for different purposes and has encompassed different states. The classification has sometimes been based on economic factors, at other times geographical and at still other times foreign policy or historical or issue based. All this has added to its conceptual mystification within contemporary international relations.

The present taxonomy within which Third World finds itself has often proved to be an inadequate perspective for analysing many critical problems of contemporary international relations. Countries like China, Japan, Austria, Switzerland, Australia and New Zealand also pose problems for any generic global taxonomy. China, a Communist regime having many of the pretensions of the Superpowers, has preferred to be treated as part of the Third World. Similarly, India, a post-colonial country having democratic structure with strong industrial base and technological nuclear

capabilities is infact dissimilar to other Third World stereotypes. Japan, despite being geographically a part of the Third World is considered for most purposes to be part of the First World as borne out by its inclusion within the Trilateral Commission. On the issue of Nuclear Proliferation, the global system consists of the 'haves' and the 'have-nots' with no Third World. Similarly, during the Energy Crisis of the 1970s, a Fourth World of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) emerged to challenge the Cold War taxonomy. It thus seems that all attempts at classification of the wide ranging diversities within the global system is structured around the goals sought by their instigators. Moreover any taxonomy possesses latent values and results in an uneven distribution of benefits. In this case it reinforces global hierarchy inherited from the colonial era.

The Third World is much less homogeneous in comparison with the other two. It is scattered between the three continents, with an internal hierarchy, determined by the global importance of specific countries to the strategic interests of the Superpowers. The Western Cold War taxonomy is inadequate not only to conceptualise the Third World but also as a basis for any durable structure of global security. Since the beginning of the Cold War, all armed conflicts have been fought within the Third World. This inequitable

hierarchy of insecurity is the consequence of the structural imbalance created in the global system by the Superpowers security syndrome of the Cold War days. This is reflected in the statement of the United States Secretary of State Dulles, "those not with us are against us". The Western diplomacy of the Cold War days reinforced by Soviet diplomacy created a range of distortions and complexities from which most of the Third World countries are yet to emerge. Indeed Third World today is more distorted and divided within itself than the structure that existed during the colonial era.²

II

Though it might have been reasonably valid to regard these so called 'Third World' countries as having comparable economic situations immediately after the decolonisation process, the changes since then both within and without has robbed them off of their such status in the international system. The increased differentiation of the so-called 'Third World' countries within the international system renders the flat categories 'developed' and 'developing' useless. Increased economic differences have reinforced the

2. Aswini K. Ray, "Third World Perspectives on Security and Nuclear Non-Proliferation: an Indian view", in John Simpson (ed.), Nuclear Non-Proliferation. An Agenda for the 1990's, Cambridge University Press, 1987.

political differences among them. Therefore, these countries today are infact an uneasy amalgam of the independent states of Asia, Africa and Latin America, the Caribbean, the Pacific Islands, the Mediterranean, and West Asia (the middle east) in the operations of international organisations and in international diplomacy.

When we add together the diplomatic institutional and ideological achievements of the Third World states in the past years, apparently the record looks impressive. Perhaps one can be tempted to say that a great new force has appeared in the world political scene. However, when we analyse more closely, we find that in fact these are weak states and suffer from many of the disabilities which have traditionally afflicted such weak states in a hard world. Their achievement is more declamatory than substantial, whether one looks at it in terms of their achievements in United Nations or of influence upon the major states, or of institutional advance or of solidarity in the pursuit of common causes. While it is true that since the 1960s, the temper of General Assembly has greatly changed and that a great many resolutions have been passed, which if fully implemented, would alter the very shape of the

World, it is also true that the world has remained much the same.³

Dominance by the major powers in economic and certain other fields is not exercised through the 19th century forms, but is still dominante in the sense that the Afro-Asian countries and their Arab and Latin American associates have been unable to change the flow of trade and economic benefits in the ways suggested by them at the UNCTAD conferences and in their campaign for a New International Economic Order. Similarly, their notions on disarmament and on the use of Nuclear Weapons have made little impact on the Superpowers, which have gone their own ways in accordance with their bilateral relationships.

Even in the colonial sphere, while it can be said that the promise of independence to neighbouring colonies had much to do with the early independence of the Belgian Congo, one can't say that the solution of the myriad problem which the Congo (now Zaire) then presented was the work of the 'Third World'. Similarly, no amount of efforts from the OAU, from the Africans at the Common Wealth meetings or at the United Nations, endangered the Smith regime in Rhodesia, simply because Britain, the declining but still significant colonial power involved, refused all suggestions that it

3. J.D.B. Miller, "The Role of the Third World in International Relations", Non-Alligned World, April-June 1983.

should use force to bring down this intrinsically insignificant regime. It was only when the US became seriously concerned about the trend of events in Central Africa that things began to move.

It is not just that the 'Third World' depends on the developed states for economic aid : one can refuse economic aid, as Burma and Guinea have done and still retain independence. However, doing so does not give one the strength or the presence to persuade others to follow one's example or to join in combined efforts. The Francophone African states do not readily follow the other African states, unless they are convinced that their own interests will not be harmed. Similarly, the states of South-East Asia find effective co-operation difficult, inspite of their frequent protestations to the contrary and the Arabs can't agree on anything except declamatory statements about Israel in the one case or neo-colonialism in the other. The hard facts of economic life demand that the new states come to terms not necessarily unreasonable with the old.

The Afro-Asian militancy which sounded so formidable in the mouths of Nkrumah, Sukarno and Ben Bella has not proved to be either durable or acceptable. Each of the three was overthrown by his own countrymen, thus pointing an inherent weakness of most Third World states: their inability to ensure that any policy or

attitude will be carried through consistently in the face of domestic political turmoil. The militant ideology provided little comfort to those states which tried it. For Ghana and Indonesia, it meant difficult times and led to deteriorating economy and a ruined balance of payments. In Algeria, it led to the establishment of a brutalised and cruel regime, greatly different from the one that Fanon had dreamt of when he had forecast the result of the end of the French rule. It can be argued that whatever the ideological merits and solaces of a militant Third World ideology, it has had little or no impact on the mass of people in most African and Asian countries. In Latin America, the corresponding ideology, which is essentially anti-American has provided refuge to one military regime after another.

While the Non-Aligned, Afro-Asian, Pan-African and other African and Asian Conferences have provided valuable diplomatic training for the representatives of newly independent states and have produced sober statements about economic development which have influenced Western formulations about economic aid, they have not displayed either unanimity or sustained purpose with the possible exception of the OAU when it was able to mediate successfully between African states which had border disputes. One can argue that the effect was to hasten the decolonisation programmes of the European

powers and that, in this sense, these bodies proved their worth. No doubt in some cases (Belgium is the most obvious), this was so but with Britain and France, the major Colonial powers, the Afro-Asians were mostly pushing at open doors, since it had already been decided that holding on to Colonies was expensive and unrewarding. Moreover, the fact that the US was not ready to support retention of most colonies was a powerful reason why European powers gave them up, as soon as they could be sure that public opinion at home would stand it. Thus it becomes clear that the position of the Third World states as a group is weak. It is a fragile construct as it depends upon a collective cohesion that is difficult to maintain. They are divided on most issues and often ineffective on those on which they are not. Their resources are insufficient and are hard to muster with any assurance as the feeble campaigns for the South African "freedom" have shown. While given superficial equality in diplomatic terms and encouraged to set up co-operative arrangements among themselves and to present solutions to World problems, they are pushed aside when the major issues are being considered. Their opinions are only incidental to the main themes being developed by the major powers. The passing (except in southern Africa) of the era of anti-Colonial struggle has deprived the coalition of one of its sources of solidarity. In its wake has come a resurgence of old hostilities and

competitive nationalism. When Third World states compete with one another over local stakes such as Western Sahara or Ogaden, they are likely to look for major power support. This in turn exacerbates the residual cleavage between moderate and radical regimes in developing countries. The cohesion of the coalition requires some measure of peaceful coexistence between its left and right wings otherwise diversity overwhelms solidarity, and dispersion occurs. As far as intra-Third World co-operation is concerned, the developing countries as a whole are far from such mutual interdependence.⁴

Now when we look at the policy process in these states, we see that it is afflicted by external interests, be they former colonial relationships or more recently acquired transnational economic relationships. In such a situation, the aim of most elites seems to be to improve their standing vis-a-vis these intrusive elements and not to overthrow the existing structure within which the relationship exists. The recent demands for a New International Economic Order must be seen in this context. By blaming most of the ills of their countries on the inegalitarian structure of international economic relations that exist outside

4. Robert A. Mortimer, The Third World Coalition in International Politics, Praeger Publishers, 1980.

national boundaries, Third World elites are able to shed part of their responsibility for many of the problems that exist within national boundaries.⁵ While dependency theory is not taken seriously at the policy level, it is quite extensively incorporated at a rhetorical level into the language of Third World politics, especially in that crude kind of 'Third Worldism', which allows both left and right to join together in condemnation of the exploitation of the Periphery by the Core.⁶

'Third Worldism', supposedly a radical break in the traditions of the world, the theory of the emancipation of the poor majority by means of a third alternative, was in fact only the prelude for a new type of re-incorporation in the world economy. Temporary seclusion and isolation of the national economy permitted the manipulation of the terms of trade to give a monopoly to industry and thus accelerate 'primitive accumulation'. This was not the basis for independence, but rather the launching pad for the fledgling capitalists of the leading "Less Developed Countries" to learn to spread their base. An incidental by product of the process was that the left in the name

5. R.A. Higgot, Political Development Theory. A Contemporary Debate, Croom Helm, London, 1983, p.35.

6. Ibid., p.89.

of socialism was subverted and bent to the tasks of supporting and defending the process of national capital accumulation in the name of national liberation. It was a harsh process, and required radical terminology to conceal it. When elementary accumulation was complete, the ruling orders on their own or otherwise returned to the global market. Everywhere the politics were required to change from Sukarno to Suharto, from Nasser to Sadat etc. Some of which were not flexible to evolve, or the social order of which they were Chiefs, resisted the overthrow such as Nkrumah, Ben Bella and Sukarno made exits as dramatic as those of Allende and Goulart in the ruin of their ambitions. Others more fortunate had the good fortune to die before the need to overthrow them became supportable.⁷

With the decline of the Cold War and with the increasing need to seek help from all the industrial countries, non-alignment has lost significance. Also socialism the new force, has been undermined by the practical necessity of mixed economy, especially the need to make some concessions to both the domestic and the foreign capitalists, and the absence of sufficient administrative skill to run a centralised economy. Only

7. see, Harris Nigel, The End of the Third World Newly Industrialising Countries and the Decline of an Ideology, I.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd., London, 1986, p.170.

nationalism remains strong but by its very nature it can't be a powerful agent of mutual co-operation.⁸

Another change is perhaps more important. As these countries began to concentrate on problems of economic development and as their policies towards the external world began to be increasingly critical, sharp differences began to appear between various groups within the Third World bloc. Regional groups that benefitted from preferential arrangements with the industrial countries did not want to share their benefits. The more advanced group among these countries were reluctant to accept agreements that sought to subsidize their poorer neighbours. Those LDCs capable of exporting manufactures to the industrial countries were not only in competition with each other but also did not want to see more competition arise from within the 'Third World'. Exporters of primary products wanted to exclude new producers from the market and to maintain high prices. The point is, of course, that national interests no longer necessarily coincided at least in the short run with the 'general interests' of the Third World, and the possibility of competition and divergent interests within the larger bloc frequently eroded the possibility of meaningful co-operation. As a result

8. R.L. Rothstein, The Weak in the World of the Strong, Columbia University Press, 1977, p.48.

Third World summit meetings could do little more than enunciate "maximum common denominator" positions.⁹ Thus, for example, at meetings of the Non-Aligned Movement, efforts to find or mediate common positions on conflicts such as those in Western Sahara and in Kampuchea have proved futile as illustrated by the Non-Aligned meetings in Harare in August 1986 and in Nicosia in September 1988. Viewed from an international economic perspective, the Third World is not a very relevant concept. Today the international economic system is so pervasive that all countries are dependent on the same economic mechanisms. In the long and medium term, it is impossible for any country to retreat into isolation. Gorbachev's speech to the UN in 1988 showed that this has been accepted even by a Superpower like the Soviet Union. The possibilities of the Third World isolating itself or spearheading a political movement to change the fundamental economic rules of the game thus seem doomed to failure. The international system is structured on the basis of the size of the countries, their degree of development and their importance in vital economic areas. The international economic role of the Third World is that of adaptation, not reformation.

9. Ibid., pp.48-49.

Similarly on central political issues, there is no fundamental agreement in the Third World. Both Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and the Group of 77 stand more divided today than previously. There is no open failure or disagreement, but neither is there any common political platform or any common action. It has proved impossible to agree on the creation of a strong Secretariat for the Third World, and even the new South-South Commission has been set up outside the official organisations. Appointing Yugoslavia as NAM chairman for the period upto 1992 was, among other things, the result of the inability to agree on any of the candidates from the South. Within the Third World, there are unquestionably both strong economic differentiations and immense difficulties in achieving political unity. Today, the Third World is relevant not as a theoretical construct, but as a label that several countries have decided to adopt. The 128 countries that now participate in the work of the Group of 77 in the UN consider themselves members of the Third World. A subgroup here is the NAM, currently comprising some hundred states. It is usually here that joint positions of the Third World are prepared and negotiated.

Over the years many different programmes of economic reform have been presented by the Group of 77 and the Non-Aligned Movement. The declaration issued at the 1987 Harare Non-Aligned meeting is a case in point.

Any common strategy or agreement on an economic programme is absent in this, as in other recent statements from the Third World. Also several countries have changed their strategy in the short time since their independence and the institutions they have created nationally have achieved little control, over the process of development.¹⁰

Today, just as previously, the Third World find its unity in the perception of common external and to a lesser extent internal conditions. The level of conflict indicates that the Third World has little international collective power, now or in the future. The power of the Third World may be assessed by examining three elements: resources, degree of organisation and the status of the Third World. The more than one hundred twenty countries of the Third World have a combined GNP of about US \$ 2,700 billion compared to USA's \$3,900 billion. The largest GNP of any Third World country, that of China was less than 10 p.c. of that of the USA. The Third World as a collective actor is weaker than the USA, and in terms of military resources the differences are even greater. Current

10. R.L. Rothstein, "National Security, Domestic Resource Constraints and Elite Choices in the Third World", in Saadet Daegor & Robert West (eds), Defence, Security and Development, Pinter, 1987.

military expenditure of the Third World is around US \$ 150 billion, while the corresponding figure for the USA is \$ 240 billion.¹¹

International economic negotiation, among the major industrialised powers (Group of Seven) have not included representatives from the Third World. World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) is dominated by the West. Difficulties in mobilising resources for common action have increased in recent years with the development of regional Third World organisations in Asia, Africa and Latin America. These organisations are often given more importance than the universal organisations by the Third World countries themselves and certainly by the industrialised countries. A case in point is the growth in co-operation between the Nordic countries and the SADCC countries of Southern Africa. Intensified co-operation among these countries has meant that they have been able to negotiate separately on global issues, for example, in attempts to create a mini-New International Economic Order for the Nordic and SADCC countries. The Lome co-operation is another example of the same tendency to regionalise co-operation and negotiation.¹²

11. Hans-Henrik Holm, "The End of the Third World?", Review of International Affairs, Vol. XLI, March 1990, p.17.

12. Hans-Henrik Holm, IFDA Dossier, No. 4, 1979, in Ibid., n.11, p.17.

Effective organisation of the Third World is a pre-requisite for converting power resources into manifest power. For this the third world countries will need common goals (Holm, 1978), several of which already exist but are defined in such general terms that it is difficult to translate them into action.¹³

Some authors have argued that it is impossible for the Third World to act collectively and that the only alternative is to try to build 'like minded' groups within the Third World. This may fragment the Third World, but would create more effective political co-operation among certain of these states.¹⁴ The Third World is not generally perceived as having high status. Few states viewed the Third World as a central actor in international politics, except during the period 1973-79, when the OPEC countries were demanding negotiations on a New International Economic Order (NIEO). Keohane¹⁵ (1986), Moon¹⁶ (1987) and others have concluded that mobilisation is most likely to take place in smaller regional groups if indeed at all. Further blocks will

13. R.L. Rothstein, Global Bargaining, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1979.

14. IFDA Dossier, 1979.

15. Robert Keohane, Beyond Hegemony, Boston: Little Brown, 1986.

16. Bruce Moon, "Political Economy and Political Change in the Evolution of North-South Relations", in Gavin Boyd and Gerald Hopple (eds), Political Change and Foreign Policies, London: Pinter, 1987, pp.225-250.

develop within the Third World, thereby dissolving the perceived common conditions and interests that have held the Third World together. The Third World has accepted that its problem have to be negotiated regionally. Some see this as a tendency towards increased nationalism and attempts by regions to isolate themselves from the effects of international economic integration. The consequences may be of a regionalised international system.

In the broad based World dialogue on problems related to the relaxation of international tensions, disarmament and the resolving of regional crisis, as well as in the trends of economic and technological development there is no so-called Third World.¹⁷

These developments has led Harris Nigel to assert that the Third World is disappearing not the countries themselves but the argument. Third World as an ideology began supposedly as a critique of an unequal world, a programme for economic development and justice, a type of national reformism dedicated to the creation of new societies and a new world. It ends with its leading protagonists either dead or defeated or satisfied to

17. Bimal Ghosh, "1922: Third World in the Margin", Review of International Affairs, Vol. XLI, March 1990, p.23.

settle simply for national power rather than international equality, the rhetoric remains now toothless. The new world that has superseded it is far more complex and does not lend itself to the simple identification of the First and the Third, haves and the have-not's, the rich and the poor, the industrialised and the non-industrialised. The simple dichotomies of the past: the First, the Second and the Third World, imposed their own gross distortions. The division between the rich and the poor is represented in each microcosm of the system. Poverty at the global level was never a territorial concept. The poor of the United States were defined out of existence. The rich of India were carefully concealed from view. The case deflected attention to geography.¹⁸

18. Harris Nigel, n.7, p.200.

CHAPTER - V

CONCLUSION

The foregoing discussion makes it clear that the concept 'Third World' is very imprecise. Its meaning has been further confused by its recurrent, uncritical overuse in post-war literature on the so-called 'Third World'. Since the beginning of Cold War, policy-makers and analysts, particularly in the West, have used this term for so many different purposes and in so many different senses that it now lacks any precise meaning. The concept 'Third World' reflects an attempt by the so-called developed (Capitalist) world to divide the states and peoples in a certain sense of hierarchical concerns. While reserving for their part of the world, the term 'First World' and calling the socialist world as the 'Second World', they have termed the rest of the globe as the 'Third World'. The First World is the advanced capitalist countries which share a great commonality. Similarly, the Second World is the socialist world, based on planned economy. However, there is nothing so much in common among the so-called Third World, except for the fact that they had been the erstwhile colonies. Except for this the Third World as a concept has no significance.

The so-called 'Third World' is a residual concept, constituting of all those states and people outside the First and Second worlds. There exists wide range of diversities both within and between them on cultural, ethnic, religious, linguistic grounds. Recently even economic diversity has widened with the emergence of OPEC, NICs, LDCs etc. Moreover, in simple economic terms some of the advanced states such as Portugal seem to be poorer than some of the new industrialised countries (NICs). The so-called 'Third World' contains within itself all forms of state systems from liberal democratic countries (such as India) to extreme forms of despotism (as in Chile). The problems of various countries within the omnibus category called the 'Third World' vary enormously and hence no uniform policy prescription can be useful for each one of them. However, a persistent use of the term in the post war literature emanating from western countries on the Third World has created a myth of homogeneity in these countries leading to generalisations of such a nature as to distort the perception of the reality. Modernization theory's attempt to analyse the developments in these countries on the basis of tradition - modernity dichotomy is a prime example in this respect.

The concept seems to foster the fallacious notion that the aggregates are effectively the sum of homogeneous elements, of agents who react in a basically

similar way to changes in context such as those resulting from decisions designed to intervene in the behaviour of a macro-economic variable. Therefore, uniform policy prescriptions are pushed through for economic ills of Third World countries by the Western countries via the World bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF).

It would be methodologically absurd to make generalisations concerning the nature of the state in the Third World when our data and knowledge of its functioning in individual cases is almost inferior to that which we possess about the advanced industrial states, but about which we are far less ready to make sweeping generalisations. Above all, the question of the autonomy of the cultural and political levels vis-a-vis the economic has to be confronted in the Third World context. In this context, the statement by Peter Bauer is worth noting. He says, "There is no Third World development problem. Rather there are innumerable societies with widely differing conditions of life and expectations for the future..... The so-called 'Third World' development problem was created by those who lumped together the innumerable societies of the Third World."¹ The socio-political reality of 'Third World'

1. Peter Bauer, in R.A. Higgot, Political Development Theory : The Contemporary Debate, Croom Helm, London, 1983, pp.94.

World is much more complex than what the concept 'Third reflects. In fact it conceals more than it explicates. It tries to create a world in its own image. The term Third World takes our attention away from the role of the indigeneous bourgeoisie in these countries. It seeks to convey the message (at least it is the way the Third World elites have projected), that what this part of the world can achieve is only by uniting at the institutional level in various international organisations. The resultant is that greater efforts have been invested on united action against the First and Second worlds in UNO and its affiliated organisations and through non-aligned movement. This way of looking at things neglects the grass-root changes required for more effective social change.

Within the broader framework of according legitimacy to the concept 'Third World', a new terminology, the 'Fourth World', has been coined to signify the emergence of extremely poor countries. This reflects the hierarchy that is developing within the Third World countries on the basis of economic development. This classification further signifies the hierarchy built into this scheme of classification of states and peoples.

The countries within the omnibus category of 'Third World' are basically neo-colonies which has no independent existence like the First and Second Worlds,

and are not yet so free as to chart out their own course of action. Third World as a political grouping which seemed to pose a reasonable challenge in the 1950s and 1960s seem to have lost the steam and are now more or less appendages of either of the power blocs. Though some of the countries in the Third World do exercise a degree of relative autonomy vis-a-vis the developed world, however, they are yet to pose a formidable challenge to the latter. Today the international economic system is so pervasive that all countries are dependent on the same economic mechanisms. Even a Superpower like Soviet Union (Gorbachev's speech in United Nations, 1988) has come to accept the fundamental economic rules of the game. Today, the option for the Third World is not of retreating into isolation but of adjusting its economy to the rules of the market.

Despite great energies spent on the eve of independence, political divisions between the developing nations are too deep for any co-operative action to be possible. The result of such a situation is a serious one for these nations. They can pursue no large scale political aims. Behind their efforts within the UN, there is no genuine common political will. This is one of the key weaknesses of the Third World.² Also the

2. Jean-Yves Calvez, Politics and Society in the Third World, Orbis Books, Mary-Knoll, New York, 1973, p.39.

growing vertical integration of some countries with the World Capitalist system through the co-option of the local elites threatens the Third World unity of interests and action.

The 'Third World', a Cold War taxonomy is inadequate to analyse many of the critical problems of contemporary international relations. While in the beginning the term 'Third World' may have been used as a euphemism for the newly emergent countries, latter the term got associated with all that is ugly in the present world. It seeks to present that this part of the world is uncivilized. It results in a re-inforcement of the global hierarchy inherited from the colonial era. It also does not provide a basis for any durable structure of global security. Socio-economic distinctions are blurred and even buried. Socialism and Imperialism are pushed out of terminological view and sometimes even out of our discourse. It is indifferent to the class characters of the different Third World regimes and societies. This classification adopts power as the basis of global differentiation. The division is based on imperialism and hegemonism of the two Superpowers which account for the development of the fundamental contradictions of contemporary world.

Those who view 'Third World' as a bloc seem to stress that the interests of their designated First World is in sharp contradiction to those of the

interests of Third World. They would advocate an enbloc subjugation of these countries by the First World states. However, if we look at the contemporary problems, many of them are so interrelated (such as maintenance of ecological balance, peace, viable industrial development), that the need is for going beyond the nation-state system as a unit of solving these problems.

To conclude, the 'Third World' should not be viewed as a homogeneous entity susceptible to uniform changes and policy prescriptions. Acceptance of similar policies and uniform results is unacceptable. We must recognise the 'Third World' states and people in the context of their specific socio-cultural and political setting. Today, the reasons for rejecting the expression 'Third World' is all the more necessary to indicate profoundly important changes that have taken in the post-war period which have deprived it of any precise meaning. The world has become too complicated to be accommodated in a simple division into three. The 'Third World' has disintegrated.³

3. see, J.E. Goldthrope, The Sociology of the Third World Disparity and Development, (second ed.), Cambridge University Press, 1984.

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