

THE WORKINGCLASS IN THIRDWORLD COUNTRIES : 
A CRITICAL REVIEW OF SOME THEORETICAL ISSUES

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BISHNU N. MOHAPATRA

**CENTRE FOR POLITICAL STUDIES
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY
NEW DELHI-110067, INDIA
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SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY
NEW DELHI

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CERTIFICATE

This dissertation entitled "The Working Class in Third World Countries : A Critical Review of Some Theoretical Issues" by Mr. B.N. Mohapatra for the Degree of Master of Philosophy has not been submitted previously for any other degree of this or any other University. We recommend that this dissertation should be placed before the examiners for their consideration for the award of the Degree of Master of Philosophy.


Supervisor


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PREFACE

"The crisis of the African Revolution is not a crisis of growth, but mainly a crisis of knowledge. In too many cases the struggle for liberation and our plans for the future are not only without a theoretical base but are also more or less cut off from the concrete situation in which we are working". 1

The above statement of Amilcar Cabral goes beyond its immediate context. It points to a generalised theoretical crisis afflicting the present day Marxism. The echoes of this crisis are to be heard even more clearly among the scholars involved in theoretical work on third world countries. Since the publication of A.G. Frank's pioneering work "Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America" and the consequent enthusiasm the new paradigm generated - the studies on third world have stagnated in a theoretical morass and it seems paradigmatic manarche has been reached. In this context, there is a crying need for painstaking re-evaluation of existing theories. The need is ever more urgent since, as Cabral pithily wrote, "Our plans for the future ... without a theoretical base". The Revolutionary practice is waiting for a theoretical revolution.

The 'working class' in the orthodox Marxist scheme was assigned the messianic role of harbinger of a worldwide revolution, and ultimately the classless society; orthodox Marxism has, as usual in case of all

dogmatism, stuck to the lifeless shell of the original propositions even when the vital substance has been drained away. The point is not whether, a particular orthodoxy stuck to the original formulations mechanically, but that all orthodoxies tend to perpetuate the conditions of their origin. This fate has been shared equally by the 'second international', or later in the 'Stalinist dogma' or, most recently, by the 'dependency school'. It is a mode of knowledge which Lucio Colletti² pointed out as 'eprioristic' and fundamentally undialectical.

The theoretical status of working class in the scheme of social change has been many times called to question not only in third world countries but also in advanced capitalist countries. But third world faces problems which are peculiar and thus the questioning has been far more vigorous. The most important of the problems is the numerical insignificance of 'working class' in the predominantly agricultural countries of third world. Even if we do not accept the traditional definition of working class as only the factory-based organised proletariat, still the question of number raises an important problem. This has led to many revolutionary theoreticians looking to other social classes to be harbingers of social revolution in third world countries (for example, Mao and Franz Fanon). Yet the problem of numerical preponderance is only a relative one. Since

the first truly proletarian revolution that of Russia was waged by a working class which was far less significant in number than many present day working class of third world countries. Thus the question directly leads us to seek answer in the social formation in which working class is placed. Its ability to generate social change is crucially dependent on its relative strength or weakness vis-a-vis other contending classes.

The peculiarities of third world social formation is thus the point of departure of our study. The most important aspect of third world social formation is the profound impress of colonialism. In a sense, the modern working class in third world countries came into being in the colonial era, in the epoch of monopoly capital. Thus our study deals with the epochal significance of formation of working class in a colonial context.

Specificities of formation have often lingered like birth marks in the structure of working class. The problems, the structure of working class raises, has been dealt next in our study. These problems ranging from heterogeneity of third world working class to the very definition of working class has been clarified. In this, the need for new analytical tools to explain working class in third world countries have been emphasised.

Finally, we have studied the nature of post-colonial state and its relation with the working class in third

world countries. The concept of 'relative-autonomy' of the post-colonial state has been used to emphasize the ideological hegemony the state exercises over the working class. The ultimate goal of working class revolution is to capture state power. It is surprising that little has come from Marxist scholars, which even raise the question of ideological and strategic domination of state, its various aspects enmeshing it inextricably in the ongoing class struggle.

Throughout our study, our effort has been not to find a blueprint or even an all-pervasive analytical model to explain and prognosticate the development of working class in third world countries. Instead, wherever possible we have generalized from different specific instances, and tried to raise those generalisations in theoretical terms. Our effort thus has been primarily towards a re-evaluation of existing theories, rather than to delineate a new paradigm. Still we felt that it was better to have asked questions where we have found no clear-cut answers, than not to have asked them at all.

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NOTES

- 1 Statements by Amilcar Cabral,
 quoted by Arrighi in G. Arrighi and
 John S. Saul, ed., Essays on the
 Political Economy of Africa (New York
 and London; Monthly Review Press,
 1973), pp.7-8.

- 2 Refer: "Bernstein and the Marxism of
 Second International" by Lucio Colletti
 in From Rousseau to Lenin : Studies in
 Ideology and Society (Delhi; Oxford
 University Press, 1978), (reprint).

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

HOW DO WE POSE PROBLEMS

A spectre of incertitude is haunting the political scientists, working on third world countries because of complexities of phenomena and the methodological inadequacies. Our purpose is to raise theoretical problems regarding the conceptualisation of working class in third world countries.¹ In a small undertaking like this, detailed analysis is rendered impossible. An attempt is made to throw light on some fundamental problems in the process of touching the contours of the topic.

Liberal economists, developmental theorists and sociologists have employed concepts like 'evolutionary growth of economy', discrete polarisation of 'tradition' and 'modernity' and 'labour commitment' (equation between workers and management and workers vis-a-vis machines) to understand the complex realities of third world countries. The backwardness of the third world countries has been attributed to the primitive cultures of third world societies. Working class population has been conceptualised as pressure group interacting with other pressure groups and with the government in a society which tends towards equilibrium.² Capitalism and liberal democracy have been posed as ideals for the third world countries. As a critique of ethnocentrism, political scientists of third world countries have attempted to evolve indigenous models of development in the third world context.³ Most of the studies of

the above tradition are historically weak, crude empiricist in its content and methodologically fragile. History of working class struggle has been interpreted by them from the angle of system-maintenance. That is why most of the studies of the above tradition are overwhelmed by the problems of legitimacy than the problems of social change.

In this work, we approach the problems essentially from a Marxian vantage point. Our main task is to raise some crucial theoretical questions about the working class of third world countries.

Marxism and the Study of Working Class:

Conceptualisation of the working class from Marxian vantage point does not project absolute coherence in terms of their analysis and perception. But this makes the Marxist tradition more rich and comprehensive. Diversities in the tradition must be identified for facilitating future research in a more adequate manner.

One of the major trends by which the political scientists and the historians have tried to conceptualise working class in third world countries is based on study of trade union movements.⁴ Study of working class is inextricably related to its struggles, but mere analysis of trade union movements is bound to be narrow and inadequate. It overlooks the actual social realities. It blurs the distinction among the leadership, working class and the

organisation. Many of the works on trade union movements lack factual richness and put the working class by abstracting it from deep structures of socio-economic and cultural matrix of the society. Depending highly on chronological narration of events, it relegates the local historical specificities into secondary importance. It leads many times to deterministic reading of working class movements and the history of working class in general.⁵ In major studies of trade union movements in the third world countries, reference to the nature of state is far from adequate. In spite of the weakness of these kind of studies, we can identify some common traits of trade union movements in third world countries. For example, the bureaucratic structure of trade unions, lack of leadership from ranks and files of the working class and the pre-dominance of piece-meal vision of the leaders those who fight for small economic gains.

The second trend which has attracted attention of research scholars is the composition of the labour markets and the structure of the labour force. New analytical categories have been employed to understand the nature of the labour markets and the process by which workers sell their labour-power.⁶ All the scholars have recognised the heterogeneity of the labour force, in fact this has broadened the arena of studies on working class. History of

working class is not only the history of organised working class but also the history of millions of the workers those who are yet to be organised. This trend has shed much light on articulation of different segments of the labour force with the dominant production process. It also points out the future of working class in the courses of changes in the modes of capitalist accumulation. In this context, the category of 'labour-aristocracy' and 'marginalised labour force' have been employed to understand different segments of third world working class.

The third trend brings a large number of studies of labour movements on local basis.⁷ The premise from which the scholars of this trend start is the uneven nature of capitalism in terms of different stages of its growth, time and space. They also warn against over-generalisation regarding the nature of the working class. Unwritten, informal sources have been explored by the scholars to understand the nature of working class movements better. Facts have been interpreted by linking them to specific context of capitalist production. Many of the scholars of this trend seem to be obsessed with facts for which theoretical arguments could not receive adequate attention. Rather, they have tried to examine the existing theories by applying those in the context of different situations which is the major contribution to future researchers.

Limitations

There are two ideological misconceptions which obstruct the studies of the working class to proliferate. First misconception that draws our attention is that, revolution in third world countries will be 'peasant-based revolution'. Numerical strength of the peasantry and stunted growth of industries have been accounted for the above hypothesis. The mistake of the hypothesis lies in not taking into account third world realities critically.⁸ The second misconception among the Marxists of third world countries is that, the industrial proletariat cannot be the agent of socialist revolution. Fanon and Debray have decried against trade unionism of industrial proletariat in the context of Latin American and African countries. 'Labour-Aristocracy thesis' has been put forth to explain the nature of skilled industrial workers vis-a-vis the unskilled workers. It is also argued that skilled industrial workers share a bit of surplus value in the realm of distribution. It is true that due to low level of industrialisation, the strength of industrial proletariat is numerically less in third world countries. Still it is not correct to define the working class by taking some arbitrary criteria. The conceptualisation of 'labour-aristocracy' is the result of adopting a restricted definition of working class by some scholars.⁹ The thesis can explain to some extent the passivity of skilled and privileged industrial workers and their assimilation in the capitalist

production process in a historical conjuncture. The political conclusions derived from the above thesis are not correct as proved by researchers in many situations. The thesis does not explain the hegemony of capitalist state over the exploited classes. The fundamental mistake lies in dogmatic application of Marxian concepts in third world countries. Working class's revolutionary potentialities have been taken a-priori. This is the mistake that the political scientists and historians commit by analysing the history of working class from above. To understand working class in its totality, a-priori assumptions must be banished. A study of working class from below must be initiated.

In our work, we have identified three important levels for discussion. First is the structure and differentiation of the working class; second level is the characterisation of third world social formations; and third level is the conceptualisation of third world state. These three levels are made distinct not because of mere analytical convenience but more because of theoretical and practical importance attached to these three levels. However unpleasant the fact may be, we do admit that there is no readymade formula to study third world working class. Study of third world working class is no doubt complex. Working class cannot be studied in isolation. Nature of the working class cannot be pre-determined. As an empirical category, working class

in third world countries is heterogeneous in its structure. It not only creates definitional problems but also problems for a revolutionary praxis-classes exist only in a determinate social formation. Working class exists only in relation to a determinate capitalism, in relation to dominant classes and in relation to the dominant structures of capitalism. By discussing the social formations, the nature of third world capitalism can be understood in relation to the dominant classes vis-a-vis the working class. How the dominant classes exercise hegemony is also an important question. Discussions of post-colonial state, thereby become theoretically imperative. It will provide knowledge how the post-colonial state keeps capitalism, reproducing its conditions of existence and the processes by which it preserves the interests of the dominant classes vis-a-vis the exploited working class.

Structure and Differentiation of the Working Class

We still believe that Marxian concepts will enable us to understand the third world societies better than the prevalent liberal concepts. No genuine Marxists can think that writings of Marx and Engels are free from mistakes. Marx has primarily bequeathed a method of historical materialism which can be creatively applied to understand various complex realities. Marx's writing on the concept of class is fragmentary, which sometimes leads to confusion among

the Marxists as well as non-Marxists.¹⁰ The concept of class has been used in various ways by various scholars. In the liberal tradition, class has been viewed as a static, structured and stratified category¹¹ and by some scholars has been defined as a cluster of roles.¹² We are using the concept of class not as a mere ensemble of different structures¹³ but also as a process (primarily economic but mediated by various other instances) in history.¹⁴

The problems regarding the differentiation of working class in third world countries are the products of semantic ambiguities regarding the definition of working class. Is there an analytical model existing to understand third world working class? Even if such a model in concrete terms does not exist, still some abstraction can be made of third world working class from various historical experiences. At this point what is more important for our purpose is to identify the specificities of working class formation and class struggle in third world countries. The process of class formation in general and the process of proletarianization in particular in third world countries are dependent upon the manner in which capitalism attacks the pre-capitalist modes of production in third world countries and the manner in which it restructures the pre-capitalist modes according to the demand of capitalism. Then, will the criterion, owner or non-ownership of means of production be sufficient

to understand the third world working class? A theory, put forward recently by many scholars, pointed out the rural links of the workers, partially dispossessed of their means of production.¹⁵ The concept of 'free wage-labour' has been used by many scholars to define third world working class. This limited criterion sometimes leads to problems regarding the characterisation of different segments of working class. The above mentioned criteria should not be used in a mechanical fashion. These concepts should be used by taking note of third world specificities. So it is important to conceptualise working class and third world capitalism in a more dynamic fashion. The structure of exploitation must be identified and explained.

The problem of caste, ethnicity and racialism should be taken stock of while analysing the working class of third world countries. Using 'class' and 'caste' as two discrete categories leads to marked perceptual distortion among the scholars. Even it is incorrect to explain the relationship of class and caste in terms of superimposition of one over the other. Complex interaction of the two must be understood. The manner in which 'caste' should be studied is not as a vertical or horizontal strata or as mere repository of cultural values, customs and habits but also how capitalism uses them by reducing working class into multiple caste groups. In the context of African working class,

Cohen has written:

Class and ethnicity must be considered together, as a bundle of intersecting and interrelated relationships the most "dynamic" of which are connected with the possession and distribution of political power. 16

It is quite pertinent to study how caste, ethnicity and tribalism have been integrated with the capitalist production process. These factors have also affected the structure of labour market in third world countries. It is also very important to note that the traditional relationships among workers and their links with villages serve as a valve through which workers used to escape psychologically from the drudgery of work and filthy living.

It is also argued by many scholars that caste and ethnicity pose obstacles on the path of formation of working class in third world countries. Even the growth of class consciousness has been affected by the above mentioned factors. Working class consciousness is not an abstract concept. It is determined by specific historical circumstances. As Thompson has written:

Class consciousness is the way in which their experiences are handled in cultural terms, embodied in tradition or value system, ideas and institutional forms. If the experience appears as determined, class consciousness does not, we cannot see a logic in the responses of similar occupational groups undergoing similar experience, but we cannot predict any law. Consciousness of class arise in the same way in different time and place, but never in just the same way. 17

Heterogeneity of the working class must be recognised by keeping eye on the structure of the labour markets, objective position of the workers in various segments of the production process. An empiricist reading of third world working class must be avoided.

Third World Social Formations

Conceptualisation of third world social formations¹⁸ is essential to observe the determinate class relationships and the dominant mode of production. Capitalist development in third world countries is different in nature in comparison to the capitalist development in West. Dependency theorists have tried to explain underdevelopment in third world countries by looking at the world capitalist system where a large number of third world countries are articulated as appendages to developed capitalist countries.¹⁹ A.G. Frank has conceptualised the third world social formations as capitalist. Many scholars have pointed out the fact that instead of one mode of production there are articulations of various modes of production in third world countries. Hamza Alavi and Jairus Banaji have argued for colonial mode of production.²⁰ Mahmood Mandani (in the context of Uganda), Mahmoud Hussein (in the context of Egypt) and Ranjit Das Gupta (case study of India) have pointed out the transitional character of mode of production.²¹

The transition from pre-capitalist mode of production to capitalist mode of production in third world countries is very complex. The transition is mediated by many internal as well as external factors. In this context, specificities of third world capitalism must be pointed out and we have tried to handle this problem in a separate chapter. Pattern of articulations of pre-capitalist modes with the capitalist mode of production should be identified.

State and Working Class in Third World Countries

There are a few literature on the nature of state in third world countries. Working class in its totality cannot be understood without taking the nature of the state into account. State should be viewed not in terms of its coercive functions but in terms of its domination over the exploited classes. How state dominates the working class and how state manages the conflict between capital and labour should be discussed. That is why we have devoted a separate chapter on post-colonial state. Form of state might be different in various third world countries but the crucial function state carries out is same in every country. How the welfare states in third world countries operate and how dominant interests have been served by the states is an important aspect for discussion.

We try to view the state, not merely as an epiphenomenon of the economic structure but as relatively

autonomous. The degree of autonomy state exercises depends upon specific historical conjuncture and specific class relationship in third world countries. By looking this way, militarism in third world countries can be understood.²² The theme to be studied regarding the post-colonial state is how state gets stabilised by injecting the kind of politics which divides society into multiple pressure groups. State also exercises its ideological domination over the exploited classes. State maintains the unity among the dominant classes but disorganises the exploited classes. The basis on which capitalist state receives legitimacy from the masses of the society must be analysed. How the state is 'over-determined'²³ in third world countries should be explained.

Our undertaking is definitely ambitious. Most of our arguments are based on theoretical plane. To quote Vilar:

Real Marxist history, by contrast, must be ambitious in order to advance. It must and no science can do otherwise move carelessly from patient and ample research to a theory capable of utmost rigour, but also from theory to 'cases' in order to avoid the risk of remaining useless knowledge. 24

Due to various constraints, we cannot claim our work as panoptic. It ensures further research. Thereby it justifies our work to begin with.

NOTES

1 We feel it necessary to make the meaning of the term 'third world' in the manner we have used in clear our work. The terms, 'post-colonial society' and 'peripheral societies' have been used as equivalent to the term third world. 'Third World' has been used as a descriptive category, not as an analytical category. Some major traits have been kept in mind while using the term 'third world'. Some common features are given below:

- (i) Experience of colonial domination,
- (ii) post-colonial phase is characterised by stunted growth of capitalism and the presence of neo-colonial interconnections, and
- (iii) presence of primordial loyalties and articulation of different modes of production in various forms.

Our study excludes the third world countries, those opted for socialist path of development after protracted class struggle. We recognise the difficulties of travelling such a great trajectory warning against over-generalisation. Rox Borough wrote:

"This does not mean that no generalisation is possible, that we can only write a series of individual histories. Theoretical generalisation is possible but the process is a complex one. Until it is much further advanced, it would be modest in our attempts at generalisation".

Ian, Rox Borough, Theories of Underdevelopment (London; The Macmillan Press, Ltd., 1979), Preface, p.x.

Refer: James, Petras, Critical Perspective on Imperialism and Social Classes in the Third World (New York; Monthly Review Press, 1978), Ch.2, p.63.

- 2 There are quite a large number of works on political development and on pressure groups since 1950s.
Refer:

G.A. Almond and G.B. Powell, Comparative Politics: A Developmental Approach (New Delhi; Oxford & IBH Publishers & Co., 1966); G.A. Almond and J.S. Coleman, The Politics of Developing Areas (Princeton; Princeton University Press, 1960); Samuel P. Huntington, Political Order in Changing Societies (Bombay; Vakils and Simons Pvt. Ltd., 1975); M. Duverger, Party Politics and Pressure Groups (London; Thomas & Nelson Ltd., 1972); Arthur Bentley, The Process of Government (Cambridge; The Belknap Press, 1967); and David Truman, The Governmental Process (New York; Alfred A. Knopf, 1951).

Even if the word 'class' has been used by some liberal scholars, but the primary emphasis has been given to status and political power. In the context of developed capitalist societies, Dahrendorf has written:

"Classes, understood as conflict groups arising out of the authority structure of imperatively co-ordinated associations are in conflict".

Ralf Dahrendorf, Class and Class Conflict in Industrial Society (California; Stanford University Press, 1967), p.206.

- 3 In this context, Rajni Kothari's work, Politics in India is worth-mentioning. Kothari has tried to grapple with the specificities of third world countries (with particular reference to India) but commits the same methodological errors as committed by the liberal scholars of the West. We do not consider it as a qualitative break.

Rajni Kothari, Politics in India (New Delhi; Orient Longman Ltd., 1970).

- 4 There are quite a large number of studies on trade union movements in third world countries. Analysis of trade union movements in great detail is outside the scope of the study. We have referred some important works in the context of India, Latin American and African countries.

India:

V.B. Karnik, Indian Trade Unions - A Survey (Bombay: Popular Prakashan, 1978), third edition; G.K. Sharma, Labour Movement in India, Its Past and Present (New Delhi: Sterling Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1971; and Sukumol Sen, Working Class of India (Calcutta: Bagchi & Company, 1977).

Latin America and Africa:

Richard Sandbrook and Robin Cohen, The Development of African Working Class, (ed.) (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 1975); Richard Sandbrook, Proletarians and African Capitalism (London: Cambridge University Press, 1975); Ivar Oxeal, Jony Barnett and David Booth, Beyond the Sociology of Development, (ed.), (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., 1975); and Robin Cohen, Peter C.W. Gutkind and Phyllis Brazier, Peasants and Proletarians, (ed.), (London: Hutchinson & Co. Ltd., 1979).

- 5 E.J. Hobsbawm has criticised the trade union analysis of working class by exposing its narrowness in the context of British labour history. It is equally applicable to the trade union analysis in third world context. See, John Foster, Class Struggle and the Industrial Revolution (London: Billing and Sons Ltd., 1974); refer to Foreward given by E.J. Hobsbawm.

- 6 In the Indian context, work of A. Mayers Charles, Labour Problems in the Industrialization of India (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1958), is of great importance. Work of Jan Bremen as a critique of the informal sector concept has attempted to criticise the mechanical division of working class into organised and unorganised labour force. He tried to look at the labour market in its totality and tried to prove the interactions of different segments of labour markets.

See Jan Bremen, "A Dualistic Labour System? A Critique

of the Informal Sector Concept", Economic and Political Weekly, vol.XI, No.48, 49 & 50, November-December 1976. Also refer: Ranjit Das Gupta, "Structure of the Labour Market in Colonial India", EPW, vol.XVI, Nos.44, 45 and 46, November 1981, pp.1781-1806; G. Arrighi, "Labour Supplies in Historical Perspective : A Study of the Proletarianization of the African Peasantry in Rhodesia" in G. Arrighi and John S. Sahl, eds., Essays on the Political Economy of Africa (New York & London; Monthly Review Press, 1973); and Quijano Anibal Obreg'on, "The Marginal Pole of the Economy and the Marginalised Labour Force" in Harold Wolpe, ed., The Articulation of Modes of Production (London; Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., 1980).

7

Refer:

Chitra Joshi, "Kanpur Textile Labour : Some Structural Features of Formative Years"; Ira Mitra, "Growth of Trade Union Consciousness among Jute Mill Workers, (1920-40)"; and Sanat Bose, "Industrial Unrest and Growth of Labour Unions in Bengal, 1920-24". All these articles are compiled in: E.P.W., vol.XVI, Nos.44, 45 & 46, November 1981.

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Those who argue of peasant-based revolution in third world, take Chinese revolution as their model. They adopt a restricted definition of working class which, we think, is inadequate. Revolution in third world cannot be decided by certain pre-determined theoretical models. It is basically a political question. The relationships among different exploited classes is the major problem of third world revolutionary praxis. A dogmatic model will be of little help. Reflecting on this problem, K.W.J. Post is of the view:

"For those concerned with the successful completion of a socialist revolution in a country characterised by underdeveloped capitalism - one, that is, which combines precapitalist and capitalist modes of production - the problem of the relations between two major subordinated classes, peasants and wage workers, must be central".

See, K.W.J. Post, "The Alliance of Peasants and Workers : Some Problems Concerning the Articulation of Classes (Algeria and China)", in Cohen, Gutkind and Brazier, Peasants and Proletarians, op.cit., pp.265-266.

9 For 'Labour Aristocracy thesis', refer: Frantz Fanon, The Wretched of the Earth (London; Penguin Books, 1976), reprint; and G. Arrighi and John S. Sahl, Essays on the Political Economy of Africa, op.cit., 1973.

10 Marx has not written an exclusive chapter on class. Last chapter of Capital, vol.III, dealing with social classes broke off after forty lines. Nothing has been given ready-made. Many things must be re-instituted and a lot many things to be deciphered from Marxian writings. In Capital, vol.III, Marx wrote:

"The owners merely of labour power, owners of capital, and land owners, whose respective sources of income are wages, profits and ground rent, in other words, wage labourers, capitalists and land owners, constitute then three big classes of modern society based on the capitalist mode of production".
See Capital, vol.III (Moscow; Progress Publishers, 1959), p.885.

Again, to quote Marx:

"In so far as millions of families live under economic conditions of existence that separate their mode of life, their interests and their culture from those of other classes, and put them in a hostile opposition to the latter, they form a class"

In so far as there is merely local interconnection among these small-holding peasants, and the identity of their interests begets no community, no national bond and no political organization then, they do not form a class."

Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte, Marx and Engels Selected Works, vol.I (Moscow) Progress Publishers, 1968), p.171. Now, we can understand the criteria, Marx has used to define a class. Three important criteria are: (i) ownership or non-ownership of the means of production; (ii) class exists in opposition to other classes in a society; and (iii) class consciousness is also an important element in identifying a class.

- 11 D. Lockwood, "The New Working Class", European Journal of Sociology, vol.5, 1960, pp.248-59. Also see J.A. Jackson, Social Stratification (Cambridge; Cambridge University Press, 1968).
- 12 Ralf Dahrendorf, Class and Class Conflict in Industrial Society (Stanford University Press, 1956).
- 13 Nicos Poulantzas, Political Power and Social Classes (London; NLB, 1973).
- 14 E.P. Thompson, The Making of the English Working Class (Penguin, 1963).
- 15 Refer to the articles in part 2 of Peasants and Proletarians (ed.), op.cit.
- 16 Robin Cohen, "Class in Africa : Analytical Problems and Perspectives", The Socialist Register, 1972, pp.231-255.
- 17 E.P. Thompson, 1963, op.cit., p.9.
- 18 The concepts like 'mode of production' and 'social formation' are not two opposite concepts. 'Mode of production' as a concept remains in the level of abstraction. But 'social formation' is referred to a determinate conjunctural reality which identifies articulation of various modes of production. In the next chapter we have discussed these concepts in a more detailed manner.
- 19 Samir Amin, Accumulation on a World Scale (New York; Monthly Review Press, 1974) and Unequal Development (New York; Monthly Review Press, 1976). Also see A.G. Frank, On Capitalist Underdevelopment (Bombay; Oxford University Press, 1975), and Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America, (1969).
- 20 Hanza Alavi, "Structure of Colonial Formations", Economic and Political Weekly, vol.XVI, 1980, pp.475-486. Also see, Jairus Banaji, "For a Theory of Colonial Mode of Production", Economic and Political Weekly, vol.VII, no.52, 23 December 1972, pp.2498-2502.

- 21 Mahmood Mamdani, Politics and Class Formation in Uganda (New York and London; Monthly Review Press, 1976). Also see Mahmoud Hussein, Class Conflict in Egypt, 1945-1970 (New York and London; Monthly Review Press, 1973); and Ranjit Dasgupta, Problems of Economic Transition: INDIAN Case Study (Calcutta; National Publishers, 1970).
- 22 Hamza Alavi, "The State in Post-Colonial Societies" in Kathleen Gough and Hari Sharma, ed., Imperialism and Revolution in South Asia (New York; Monthly Review Press, 1973). Also see Hamza Alavi, "State and Class under Peripheral Capitalism" in Hamza Alavi and Teodor Shanin, ed., Introduction to the Sociology of 'Developing Societies' (London; The Macmillan Press, 1982); and Issa G. Shivji, Class Struggle in Tanzania (London; Hienemann Educational Books Ltd., 1976).
- 23 The term is borrowed from Althusser. He has used the term 'over-determination' to understand the contradictions in different instances in relation to the totality and the effects of the contradictions upon the structure in dominance. The concept enables to understand and explain the concrete variations and mutations of complex social realities. Refer: Louis Althusser, ed., For Marx (Chapter. Contradiction and Over-Determination), (Penguin Press, 1969).
- 24 Pierre Vilar, "Marxist History in the Making : Dialogue with Althusser", New Left Review, no.80, July-August, 1973), p.101.

CHAPTER II

NATURE OF SOCIAL FORMATIONS IN THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES

The study of third world working class will be inadequate without analysing the social formations in which the working class is placed. It is incorrect to presume that realities of third world countries will be explicable by some universal mechanical categories. Typical trade union analysis of working class suffers from theoretical degeneration. It views working class without giving adequate attention to socio-economic matrix in which working class interacts with other classes. Working class should be studied from an angle of its total experiences.¹ De-totalization leads to gross empiricism and a lopsided understanding of third world working class. In fact, the study of social formations of third world countries is never exterior to the study of third world working class. Even, we do not think it is logically prior to the study of working class. The study of capitalism in third world countries is no doubt crucial. Classes do not exist in abstraction. Position of working class is determined by the logic of third world capitalism. If history can be stopped at a given point, then we will not find classes but differentiated individuals. But when we observe through the process of history, we find identifiable relationships, patterns of ideas and structures.² The relationship between working class vis-a-vis the dominant classes is determined by the specific structure of third world capitalist for which understanding of third world social formations is crucial.



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The development of a theoretical framework requires a process of abstraction and distillation, based on the comparative knowledge of a phenomenon in a wide range of settings, both now and in the past. Liberal economists and political scientists have tried to understand third world economy without paying adequate attention to the historical specificities of third world capitalism. Rustow's 'take-off' stage became an apology for neo-colonial domination of third world countries. Universal law of supply and demand for them became the key theoretical concept to understand the motion of third world economy. Social relationships received ill attention from them. Unequal division of means of production extraction of surplus-value were alien to their thinking. Liberal economists viewed the creation and disposal of surplus value in terms of productive factors abstracted from the social and political relations of production. These productive factors were treated as exogenous to the process of growth. When applied to underdeveloped countries, the mechanism of development then becomes the transfer of capital, enterprise and technology from the developed countries. The understanding of appropriate class structure and a corresponding set of production relations, within which the accumulation takes place becomes alien to the methodology used by liberal scholars. Their methodology is dependent upon observable facts and statistical reasoning.

Very often, the complex realities of third world countries are marked by liberal methodology. When Marx had criticised 'classical political economy', he had the historical analysis of the liberal economists in mind. Therefore, there is a growing need for a right perspective to understand and explain the complex realities of third world.

Mode of Production/Social Formation

The mode of production debate has generated a wide range of discussions among the Marxist scholars. Old problematics of Marxism has been reconstituted in order to grapple the specificities of third world realities. The debate sometimes resulted in semantic ambiguities and sometimes fell into gross reductionism. In spite of all this, it continues to grow not merely from theoretical angle but from the angle of operationalisation of Marxian concepts. Some Marxist scholars term the third world economy as capitalist,³ some scholars talk about articulation of various modes of production,⁴ and a few scholars talk about a transitional mode.⁵ Some Marxist scholars have conceptualised the third world economy as a specific colonial mode of production.⁶

Marx's analysis of pre-capitalist social formations was a passing reference for the study of historicity of capitalism. Many things should be deciphered from the fragmentary nature of Marx's writings. Marx's theoretical

arguments should be reformulated in the context of present historical conjuncture. For Nicos Poulantzas, a mode of production is an abstract-formal object which does not exist in the strong sense of reality. It provides an essential means for the analysis of real-concrete objects. A social formation is constituted by specific overlapping of several pure modes of production.⁷ Laclau has also taken mode of production as a pure abstract concept and used the concept of 'economic system' to denote a conjunctural articulation of different modes of production.⁸

The process of abstraction and concretisation are crucial components of Marx's epistemological structure. Theoretical abstraction has its important role in the process of understanding complex social realities. Many of Marx's writings contain important theoretical abstractions. In spite of theoretical abstractions, Marx was well aware of the historical specificities. It will be appropriate here to quote Marx:

In England, modern society is indisputably most highly and classically developed in economic structure. Nevertheless, even here the stratification of classes does not appear in its pure form ... However, this is immaterial for our analysis. 9

Marx and Engels were very much aware of the concept of 'mode of production' which they were using in the level of theoretical abstraction. To quote Engels:

Did feudalism ever correspond to its concept? Founded in the kingdom of West Frank, further developed in Normandy by the Norwegian conquerers, its formation continued by the French Norsemen in England and Southern Italy. It came nearest to its concept - in the ephemeral kingdom of Jerusalem, left behind it the most classic expression of the feudal order. Was this order a fiction because in a really classical form it achieved only in Palestine a shortlived existence, and even that, for the most part, on paper only? 10

When we use the concept of 'social formation', it does not amount to rejection of the concept of 'mode of production'. There are two interrelated points in the level of abstraction and concretization. On the theoretical plane, 'social formation' denotes a complex articulation of different modes of production and reproduction of different modes in a particular historical conjuncture.

Theories of Dependency

The appearance of 'underdevelopment' as an all pervasive phenomena, posed a serious challenge to the main body of Marxist theory. The ever widening gap of income between 'rich' and 'poor' countries, absolute pauperisation of majority of African, Asian and Latin American populace, grave sectoral imbalances; in short, the appearance of systematic barriers to economic development in the course of capitalist expansion - has led to the strong tendency which has sought to raise Marx's notion of 'economic development' and side by side to incorporate 'underdevelopment' into the Marxist framework. Revolutionary practice itself

raised various questions challenging the potentiality of classical Marxism to explain the process of underdevelopment in third world countries. A.G. Frank and Samir Amin are two major exponents of the theory of underdevelopment in third world countries.¹¹

Theories of 'dependency' came as a reaction to the failure of 'dualist thesis' to explain the political economy of Latin American countries and a response to the failure of economic programmes initiated by world organisation like, Economic Mission for Latin America. In the context of Latin American countries, prescribed 'import substitution' theory became unproductive. Political economy of third world countries experienced slow growth of productive forces, low level of technological development, massive unemployment and under-employment. It manifested in intense class contradictions. Capital accumulation became very slow due to structural constraints of the economy and the very nature of the relationship of third world countries with world monopoly capital. Frank has criticised the 'dualist thesis' in the context of Latin American countries. According to the 'dualist thesis', third world societies are constituted of two distinct sectors: one is the traditional archaic sector and the second is the modern capitalist sector. According to this thesis, both the sectors are mutually exclusive. The presence of feudalism in the traditional

sector and presence of capitalism in the modern sector are dual structures independent of each other and contain different principles of their reproduction. Stavenhagen is an important critique of 'dualist thesis',¹² To him, the dichotomous understanding of third world societies is false. According to his opinion, the traditional and the modern sector constitute a functional whole. Once we agree with the dichotomous position of the 'dualist thesis', it amounts to agreeing with two different political strategies for socialist revolution in third world societies. For us the 'dualist thesis' stands incorrect and inadequate. There are two major issues involved in this discussion:

(i) With the penetration of monopoly capital in third world countries, does it lead to complete dissolution of pre-capitalist modes of production? If the answer is in negative, then we have to handle the problems of articulation of different modes of production.

(ii) How the pre-capitalist modes of production are being articulated with the capitalist mode of production in third world countries?

For 'dependency theorists', world capitalist system serves as the fundamental unit of analysis. To quote A.G. Frank:

My thesis is that underdevelopment as we know it today, and economic development as well, are the simultaneous and related products of the development on a world-wide scale and over a history of more than four centuries at least of a single economic system: capitalism. 13

Penetration of capitalism in third world countries resulted in incorporation of third world countries as satellites of developed capitalist countries. Development in metropolis simultaneously created underdevelopment in the satellite countries. Explaining the dialectical relationship between the developed metropolis and third world countries, Frank wrote:

The thesis of the whole essay is, of course, that capitalism has produced and means not only development but underdevelopment as well, or to put it other way round, that both advanced development and 'backward underdevelopment' are equally, the product and the operational meaning of capitalism. 14

According to Frank, subjugation of third world countries by the metropolis resulted in dissolution of pre-capitalist modes of production in third world countries. Capitalism has been grafted in third world countries automatically. Frankian thesis, though to some extent useful, is an example of over-simplification. The development of capitalism in the third world countries was not handled adequately by Frank. His understanding led to a deterministic political conclusions, which is very difficult to believe. Laclau as a major critique of A.G. Frank's thesis is of the opinion:

For, despite their contradictory appearance both the positions, first cited coincide in one fundamental respect: both designate by 'capitalism' or 'feudalism' phenomena in the sphere of commodity exchange and not in the sphere of production, thus transforming the presence or absence of a link with the market into the decisive criterion for distinguishing between the two forms of society. 15

While the current writings on underdevelopment have not failed to refer to the mode of production in the periphery, it has generally been presented as some variant of capitalism e.g. 'backward' capitalism, 'deformed' capitalism, 'dependent' capitalism or 'peripheral' capitalism. The proliferation of terms itself suggests a lack of clarity about the substantive character of this mode of production. 'Dependency' does not also explain the historically uneven development of capitalism at the centre and in the periphery itself.

Class relations is pivotal for understanding any determinate social formation. 'Relations of production' which is the crux of any social formation has been relegated by Frank to a level of formal analysis. The role of market as the criterion of capitalism has been over-emphasised by Frank. Market, no doubt, brings exchange of commodities. Circulation of commodities is one important moment of capitalism in third world countries is not purely exogenous as understood by Frank. Participation in the world market cannot be the only criterion to show that there is capitalist mode of production in third world countries. Robert Brenner in his article put Frank in 'neo-Smithian' tradition. Brenner has pointed out how the 'neo-Smithian' Marxists have over-emphasised the role of market and predominance of exchange relations to point out capitalist development in third world countries. To Brenner, social relations of

production should be considered as the motive force to understand the development of capitalism in general and third world countries in particular.¹⁶ Samir Amin has also started his analysis from the analysis of world capitalist system. As Amin wrote: "Not a single concrete economic formation of our time can be understood except as a part of this world system".¹⁷

Penetration of capitalism in the peripheral countries resulted in disarticulation of third world economy and simultaneously it has been integrated into the world capitalist system as an appendage. Surplus-value, extracted from third world economy was accumulated in metropolis. To Amin, the process of unequal exchange has been reinforced even after political independence of third world countries, through the domination of world financial organisations and multinationals. Regarding the peripheral social formation, Amin wrote:

All peripheral formations have four main characteristics in common: (1) the pre-dominance of capitalism, (2) the creation of a local, mainly merchant bourgeoisie in the wake of dominant foreign capital; (3) a tendency towards a peculiar bureaucratic development, specific to the contemporary periphery, and (4) the incomplete, specific character of the phenomena of proletarianization. 18

To Amin, an induced capitalism posed serious constraints on the polarization of class forces in third world countries.

Uneven capitalist development was fitted into the world capitalist system for the profit of metropolis. Export sectors like mining, plantation economy in Africa and Asia were nurtured for the production of surplus-value for the metropolitan countries. Pre-capitalist forms of exploitation was conserved in order to keep the cost of production low and the ideological structure was maintained to create a conducive atmosphere for the extraction of surplus-value. Amin has used the concept of 'marginalization' to explain the structural necessity of tertiary sectors in third world economy.

There are quite a lot of theoretical abstractions in 'dependency theories'. Category of 'mode of production' was mechanically employed and the concept was used in a limited sense. Impact of metropolitan capital on the third world economy has been over-simplified. The problems regarding the development of capitalism in third world countries have been resolved smoothly. As a reaction to A.G. Frank's thesis, Laclau wrote:

Now this pre-capitalist character of the dominant relations of production in Latin America was not only incompatible with the production for the world market but was actually intensified by the expansion of the latter..... Thus far from expansion of the external market acting as a disintegrating force on feudalism, its effect was rather to accentuate and consolidate it. 19

Over-generalizations in 'dependency theories' have undermined the historical specificities of third world countries.

The economy of third world countries cannot be treated as an epi-phenomenon of the world capitalist system. It can have its own conjunctural autonomy. The study on internal class structure of third world countries has received inadequate attention from 'dependency theorists'. Sometimes, it amounts to reification of Marxian concepts. While warning against the reification of concepts, Engels wrote:

It happens only too often that people think they have fully understood a theory and can apply it without much ado from the moment they have mastered its main principles, and those even not always correctly. And I cannot exempt many of the more recent "Marxists" from this reproach, for the most amazing stuff has been produced in that quarter too.... 20

In the third world context, the analysis of mode of production and the analysis of articulation of different modes of production constitute two distinct and important levels of comprehension and understanding.

Articulation of Modes of Production

Because, Marx was not directly involved in studying the social formations of third world countries, it has created many confusions among Marxist scholars those who were looking for readymade answers to the complex problems of third world countries. We have earlier pointed out that historical abstraction has its important role in understanding the concrete realities.²¹ Marx has visualised the tendency of capitalism to reproduce extensively inside

and outside a determinate social formation. When Marx posed the problem in 'The Communist Manifesto', he did not reflect on the problem of articulation. As he wrote:

The bourgeoisie cannot exist without constantly revolutionising the instruments of production and thereby the relations of production, and with them the whole relation of society..... constant revolutionising of production, uninterrupted disturbance of all social conditions, everlasting uncertainty, and agitation distinguish the bourgeois epoch from all earlier ones..... The bourgeoisie draws all even the most barbarian nations into civilisations... It compels all nations on pain of extinction, to adopt the bourgeois mode of production; compels them to introduce what it calls civilisation into their midst, i.e. to become bourgeois themselves. In one word it creates a world after its own image. 22

In capital, there is progressive concretization, done by Marx. The following passage is quite illustrative:

The obstacles presented by the internal solidity and organisation of pre-capitalistic, national modes of production to the corrosive influence of commerce and strikingly illustrated in the inter-course of the English with India and China. The broad basis of the mode of production here is formed by the unity of small-scale agriculture and home industry, to which in India we should add the form of village communities and tore them apart ..., which were an ancient integrating element of the unity of industrial and agricultural production. And even so this work of dissolution proceeds very gradually. And still more in China, where it is not reinforced by direct political power. The substantial economy and saving in time afforded by the association of agriculture with manufacturer put up a stubborn resistance to the products of the big industries, whose prices include the fauxfrais of the circulation process which pervades them. 23

Class relation was pivotal to Marx's analysis of capitalism. Marx was trying to point out the effectivities of capital in different historical stages of its growth. Marx has made it clear that dissolution of pre-capitalist modes was not dependent only on the proliferation of commercial activities and on the development of markets. It also depends on the internal structures of pre-capitalist social formations. In third world countries, capitalism by preserving its law of motion incorporates other forms of exploitation. In other words for the hegemony of capitalist mode of production, the structure of articulations of different modes gets reproduced continuously. Articulation of modes of production does not mean that different modes are in equilibrium. There is always the dominance of one mode of production over other modes. In third world countries, the dominance of capitalist mode is not merely due to emergence of markets or commodity production for exchange but primarily due to the particular class configuration which is conducive for the dominance of capitalist mode. Capitalist mode of production cannot be rightly understood by not distinguishing the 'relations of production' from the 'forms of exploitation'.²⁴ When capitalism integrates other pre-capitalist modes in third world countries, it uses the pre-capitalist forms of exploitation to its advantage. It employs extra-economic methods of labour recruitment. It does not dissolve the feudal forms of exploitation but utilises those forms for the

production of more and more surplus-value. It helps to keep a 'reserve army of labour' by making the process of proletarianization partial. It follows that an analysis of the process of destruction of pre-capitalist modes of production must take into account not only the dynamics of the expanded reproduction of capital but also the internal structural elements of pre-capitalist modes. It will enable us to proceed for concrete analysis of articulation of different modes of production in third world countries.²⁵

Capitalism has different needs of pre-capitalist economies at different stages of development, which arise from specific historical circumstances, e.g. raw materials, land labour-power and at times of economic crisis. The form in which capitalism articulates with other pre-capitalist modes does not depend merely on economic conditions but also on political and cultural conditions of pre-capitalist societies. This has clearly illustrated by Barbara Bradby²⁶ in the context of Peruvian economy in which two different regions were articulated with Spanish monopoly capitalism by two different processes. Bradby has identified the ideological factor through which the tribal population has been brought into the ambit of capitalist production process in Peru. In the same vein, Harold Wolpe has examined the racial ideology in South Africa which sustained and helped in the capitalist production process.²⁷

Specificities of Third World Capitalism

We must determine the nature of third world capitalism to understand: (i) the dynamics of economic development in third world countries, (ii) identify the class configuration, and (iii) potentialities of different classes in relation to capitalism. Growth of third world capitalism is not an organic one. Growth of capitalism in third world countries is much more complex, unlike the growth of capitalism in European countries. Intervention of monopoly capital from outside is the point of departure for understanding third world capitalism. Lenin's theory of imperialism is an important source from which a lot many ideas can be deciphered for understanding the development of capitalism in third world countries from the vantage point of social change. In spite of the polemical debate among Lenin, Rosaluxemburg and Bukharin, their study of imperialism constitute a powerful tradition. This tradition should be studied from a broader perspective to extend the domain of Marxism for a creative application to specific historical realities. 28

Three significant points of the tradition should be taken into account: (i) tendency of monopoly capitalism to expand beyond its own territory for the need of external markets, raw materials and cheap labour; (ii) it leads to the penetration of capitalism in third world countries; (iii) it moulds the class structure of the third world societies by converting those countries as appendages to the developed capitalist countries.

Penetration of capitalism in third world countries resulted in violent aggression upon the pre-capitalist economy. As Marx wrote in the context of India:

It was the British intruder who broke up the Indian handloom and destroyed the spinning wheel. British steam and science uprooted, over the whole surface of Hindoostan, the union between agriculture and manufacturing industries. 29

The destruction of pre-capitalist economy was a process by which proletarianization took place and by which the pre-capitalist 'forms of exploitation' has been incorporated in the capitalist production process. So, the dissolution of pre-capitalist modes of production in third world countries was selective and partial.³⁰ Development of capitalism in third world countries was not homogeneous. It created uneven capitalist development and posed structural constraints for an independent capitalist development. The peculiar growth of capitalism was a result of the surplus value being exported from third world countries to the metropolis. Production and accumulation of surplus-value was linked with the outside social formations. The major determinants of third world capitalism were lying outside its social formation. This linking up process was facilitated by so many factors, like the role of the colonial state,³¹ economic policies launched by the metropolis and the role of ideology through which the third world population were brought into the ambit of capitalist production process. The forms in which state attacks the pre-capitalist modes are also determined by the solidity of the pre-capitalist

modes. The nature of class action also determines. In the context of third world capitalism, role of merchant capital has been stressed by scholars. It has been argued that merchant capital posed obstacles on the path of capitalist development in third world countries. This can be considered as a phase in the growth of capitalism. This can only be understood in the context of domination of metropolitan capital in third world countries.³² In the beginning of colonialism, colonial powers took the control of extractive industries. Those were the major sources of surplus-value for the metropolitan capitalist. The export sector was directly linked with the metropolitan capital.³³

The specificities of third world capitalism led Hamza Alavi to conceptualise it as a specific 'colonial mode of production'. Alavi wrote about the 'colonial mode of production' in the context of development of capitalism in Indian agriculture. The debate was initiated by Daniel Thorner and later on taken up by Utsa Patnaik, Ashok Rudra, Parash Chhotopadhaya and Jairus Banaji. Alavi's conceptualisation of 'colonial mode of production' emanated from his understanding of the concept of 'mode of production' in a restricted sense. Alavi has pointed out the specificities³⁴ in the contexts of generalised commodity production, extended reproduction of capital and organic composition of capital. The general commodity production in third world capitalism was disarticulated from the internal social formation and

was integrated into the metropolitan capitalism. Due to the link with the metropolis, the accumulation of capital takes place in metropolis rather than in third world countries. Whether the specificities of third world capitalism need a concept like 'colonial mode of production' is beyond the scope for our discussion. What is most important is to avoid an empiricist reading of Marx. We have tried to argue that instead of making the concepts mechanical, we must stress on dialectical mediations among different processes, i.e. mediation between production and circulation, between production of surplus-value and capital accumulation and between production and reproduction of capitalism.

Neo-Colonial Domination

When Lenin was reflecting upon the national liberation movements in third world countries, he was looking from a perspective of class struggle.³⁵ In many third world countries, independence became nominal because of continuation of exploitation and domination in different forms. Third World countries felt the structural presence of capital of developed capitalist countries. After the independence, economy of the third world countries is facing grave crisis. There are crises in growth, in industrialisation, in balance of payments and in the investment of capital in third world countries. Third World economy is burdened with massive unemployment problems, technological

inefficiency and, above all, a persistent stagnation. Regarding the prospects of industrialization in third world countries, the fundamental proposition held by some Marxists that capitalist development is not possible in third world countries.³⁶ It is due to underdevelopment of productive forces. The above proposition must be taken carefully for examination. The dependency theorists have tried to explain it by pointing out the subordinate position of third world countries in world capitalist system. On the contrary, these positions, Bill Warren is of the opinion that there is sufficient degree of industrialization in third world countries.³⁷ To quote Bill Warren:

That the prospects for successful capitalist economic development (implying industrialization) of a significant number of major underdeveloped countries are quite good; that substantial progress in capitalist industrialization has already been achieved; that the period since the end of second world war has been marked by a major upsurge in capitalist social relations and productive forces (especially industrialization) in the third world; that in so far as there are obstacles to this development, they originate not in current imperialist - third world relationships, but almost entirely from the internal contradictions of the third world itself. 38

Through empirical observation, Warren has granted enough autonomy to third world countries as far as industrialization is concerned. Impact of foreign capital to Warren has been lessened due to political independence of

third world countries. There is some truth in Warren's view regarding the internal contradictions inhibiting industrialization in third world countries. But the arguments of Warren cannot be taken too far to point out complete independence of third world countries from the influence of world capitalist system and the influence of multinationals. Warren has viewed the problems from an empirical angle. It lacks theory and direction. Even the problems of capitalist development have not been adequately dealt by the dependency theorists. The approach that shows complete determination of third world economy by the world capitalist system cannot be accepted. The arguments that support the view that capitalist industrialization is not possible in third world countries are similar to the arguments of 'Nardoniks' in the context of Russia. An abstract model of capitalist development cannot pose the problems correctly in the context of third world countries.³⁹ A static dichotomy between 'internal' and 'external' will not help us to comprehend the realities correctly in the third world context. Both the factors should be taken into active considerations. Third World countries cannot be isolated from world capitalist system. Simultaneously the specific class-structure of the third world countries must be understood. Compromising position of the industrial bourgeoisie in relation to the feudal landlords and metropolitan capital should be pointed out in the context of third world countries.⁴⁰ The social formation of

post-colonial period in which industrial bourgeoisie came to power was not a making of their own. So, in this context, the articulation of capitalist mode of production with pre-capitalist modes of production serve as an important guideline for our understanding class-structure in third world countries. The entry of multinational corporations in third world countries constitutes the institutional basis of domination by the developed capitalist countries. By controlling the world market, multinationals exercise influence over the crisis ridden economy of third world countries. The world financial organisations also play an important role in the interests of developed capitalist countries. So the programmes of world organisations could not help to change the relationship between the developed and developing countries.⁴¹ Economic crisis in third world countries is a product of capitalist class structure in which interests of a few get served. Policies for industrialization become the handi-work of the capitalist class. In some cases, the economic policies in third world hinder capitalist development.⁴²

The emergence of working class is affected by articulation of different modes of production in third world countries. Character of third world working class is not only determined by the articulation of different modes of production but also due to the dependent nature of capitalism in third world countries. The growth of an

urban working class has been inhibited by the penetration of monopoly capital in third world countries. A free wage labour could not emerge because of the persistence of pre-capitalist forms of exploitation in third world countries. Working class became subjugated to capitalist and pre-capitalist forms of exploitation. Rural links of third world working class is also an important feature. Working class in third world countries is semi-peasant and semi-proletarian. It has affected the organisational capacities of the working class. Sometimes, the factors like caste, ethnicity and tribalism affect the consciousness of the third world working class. The articulation of different modes of production created a heterogeneous working class. It also affects the political experience of third world working class. Study of third world social formations can enable us to place the working class in the totality of class relations.

At the end, we again reiterate the validity of Marxian concept of class and capitalism which will enable to explain the complex realities of third world. Marxian concepts should be used in a dynamic fashion and the theory must be rich enough to explain the realities of the third world.

NOTES

- 1 Totality of experiences will contain the 'conjuncture of class struggle' as well as 'conjuncture of capitalist domination'. Only by taking working class as revolutionary in a-priori fashion cannot help us to understand the concrete social realities in which working class operates.

- 2 In this context, E.P. Thompson can rightly be quoted: "Class is defined by men as they live their own history, and in the end, this is its only definition".
E.P. Thompson, The Making of the English Working Class (London; Penguin Books, 1963), p.11.

- 3 A.G. Frank has argued regarding the plantation of capitalism in third world countries, due to the penetration of monopoly capital. See A.G. Frank, On Capitalist Underdevelopment (Bombay; Oxford University Press, 1975).

- 4 On the subject of articulation of different modes of production there are quite a large number of studies in the context of Asian, African and Latin American countries. See Ivor Oxaal, Tony Barnett and David Booth, eds, Beyond the Sociology of Development (London; Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., 1975); Harold Wolpe, ed., The Articulation of Modes of Production (London; Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., 1980); Ernesto Laclan, Politics and Ideology in Marxist Theory (London; NLB, 1977); S.B.D. de Silva, The Political Economy of Underdevelopment (London; Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., 1982); and G. Arrighi and John S. Sahl, Essays on the Political Economy of Africa, ed. (New York and London; Monthly Review Press, 1973).

- 5 Mahmoud Hussein, Class Conflict in Egypt (1945-70), (New York and London; Monthly Review Press, 1973).

- 6 Hamza Alavi, "India and the Colonial Mode of Production", Economic and Political Weekly, vol.x, August 1975, pp.1235-1262. Also see, Jairus Banaji, "For a Theory of Colonial Modes of Production", EPW, vol.VII, no.52, 23 December 1972, pp.2498-2502.

- 7 Nicos Poulantzas, Political Power and Social Classes (London: NLB, 1973).
- 8 Ernesto Laclau (1977), op.cit.
- 9 Karl Marx, Capital, vol.III (Moscow; Progress Publishers, 1959), p.885.
- 10 Karl Marx and F. Engels, Selected Correspondence (Moscow; Progress Publishers, 1975) (revised edition), pp.458-459.
- 11 Refer: A.G. Frank (1975), op.cit.; A.G. Frank, Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America (New York, 1969); Samir Amin, Unequal Development (Delhi; Oxford University Press, 1979); and Accumulation on a World Scale (New York and London; Monthly Review Press, 1974).
- 12 Rodolfo, Stavenhagen, Between Underdevelopment and Revolution : A Latin American Perspective (New Delhi; Abhinav Publications, 1981).
- 13 A.G. Frank (1975), op.cit., p.43.
- 14 Ibid., p.51.
- 15 Ernesto Laclau, "Feudalism and Capitalism in Latin America", New Left Review, no.67, 1971, p.20. To quote Laclau: "The first surprising thing is that Frank totally dispenses with relations of production in his definition of capitalism and feudalism. In the light of this, his earlier characterisation of the relationship between exploiters and exploited as the fundamental contradiction of capitalism ceases to be so puzzling". See Ernesto Laclau (1977), op.cit., p.23.
- 16 To quote Brenner: "Production for profit via exchange will have the systematic effect of accumulation and the development of the

productive forces only when it expresses certain specific social relations of production, namely a system of free wage labour, where labour power is a commodity".

See Robert Brenner, "The Origin of Capitalist Development - A Critique of Neo-Smithian Marxism", New Left Review, no.104, July-August 1977, pp.25-93.

Regarding the debate of transition from feudalism to capitalism, refer: Rodney Hilton, The Transition from Feudalism to Capitalism, ed. (London: NLB, 1976).

- 17 Samir Amin (1974), op.cit., Introduction.
- 18 Samir Amin (1979), op.cit., p.333.
- 19 Ernesto Laclau (1977), p.30.
- 20 Karl Marx and F. Engels, Selected Correspondence, op.cit., p.396.
- 21 Theoretical abstractions do not mean a flight from the realm of realities into the realm of absurdities. As Marx wrote: "The premises from which we begin are not arbitrary ones, not dogmas, but real premises from which abstraction can only be made in the imagination".
- 22 Karl Marx and F. Engels, Selected Works (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1968), vol.1, p.47.
- 23 Karl Marx, Capital, vol.III, op.cit., pp.333-334. Writing on "The Modern Theory of Colonisation", Marx wrote:
- "In Western Europe, the home of political economy, the process of primitive accumulation is more or less accomplished. Here the capitalist regime has either directly conquered the whole domain of national production, or where economic conditions are less developed, it,

at least, indirectly controls those strata of society which, though belonging to the antiquated mode of production, continue to exist side by side with it in gradual decay.... It is otherwise in the colonies. There the capitalist regime everywhere comes into collision with the resistance of the producer, who as owner of his own conditions of labour, employs that labour to enrich himself instead of the capitalist. The contradiction between these two diametrically opposed economic systems has its practical manifestation here in the struggle between them".

Capital, vol.1 (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1954), p.716.

- 24 Jairus Banaji, "For a Theory of Colonial Mode of Production", EPW, vol.VII, no.52, 23 December 1972, pp.2498-2502. To quote Banaji:

"We may define relations of exploitation as the particular form in which surplus is appropriated from direct producers not the specific form, i.e. serfdom.... Relations of production, on the other hand, are the specific historically determined form which particular relations of exploitation assume due to a certain level of development of the productive forces, to the predominance of particular property forms....", p.2499.

- 25 Marx in the context of dissolution of pre-capitalist modes of production wrote:

"Commerce, therefore, has a more or less dissolving influence everywhere on the producing organisation, which it finds at hand and whose different forms are mainly carried on with a view to use value. To what extent it brings about a dissolution of the old mode of production depends on its solidity and internal structure. And whither this process of dissolution will lead; in other words, what new mode of production will replace the old, does not depend on commerce, but on the character of the old mode of production itself". Capital, vol.III, op.cit., pp.331-332.

- 26 Barbara Bradby, "The Destruction of Natural Economy" (pp.93-127) in Harold Wolpe's, The Articulation of Modes of Production, ed. (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., 1980).

- 27 Harold Wolpe, "Capitalism and Cheap Labour Power in South Africa : From Segregation to Apartheid", pp.289-320, Ibid.
- 28 Amiya K. Bagchi, "Towards a Correct Reading of Lenin's Theory of Imperialism", E.P.W., vol.XVIII, no.31, 30 July 1983, pp.PE-2-PE-12.
- 29 Refer to: Karl Marx and F. Engels, Pre-capitalist Socio-Economic Formations (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1979), pp.138-139.
- 30 A.I. Levkovsky, Capitalism in India : Basic Trends and Its Development (Bombay: PPH, 1966).
- 31 V.I. Pavlov, Historical Premises for India's Transition to Capitalism (Moscow: Nauka Publishing House, 1978). Also see, Anupam Sen, The State - Industrialisation and Class Formations in India (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, Ltd., 1982).
- 32 S.C. Jha, Studies in the Development of Capitalism in India (Calcutta: Elite Press Ltd., 1963). Also refer, Karl Marx, Capital, vol.III, op.cit., p.334.
- 33 Refer: G. Arrighi and John S. Sahl, ed. (1973), op.cit. Also see Richard Sand Brook, Proletarians and African Capitalism (Cambridge University Press, 1975).
- 34 Hamza Alavi has compared the 'feudal mode of production', 'capitalist mode of production' and 'colonial mode of production' which has been given below in a table form:

Feudal mode of production (FMP)	Capitalist mode of production (CMP)	Peripheral capitalism
(a) Unfree labour; direct producer in possession of means of production.	(a) Free labour:(1) Free of feudal obligation, (2) dispossessed. Separation of the producers from the means of production	(a) As in CMP

34 note continued...

Feudal mode of production (FMP)	Capitalist Mode of Production (CMP)	Peripheral Capitalism
(b) Extra-economic compulsion for extraction of surplus-value	(b) Economic 'coercion' of the dispossessed producers	(b) As in CMP
(c) Localised structure of power; the function of political and economic power at the point of production....	(c) Separation of economic (class) power from political (state) power; creation of bourgeois state, etc.	(c) Specific colonial structure
(d) Self-sufficient localised economy.	(d) Generalised commodity production (labour power as a commodity).	(d) Specific colonial structure
(e) Simple reproduction where surplus is largely consumed	(e) Extended Reproduction of capital and rise in organic composition of capital	(e) Specific colonial structure

Hamza Alavi, "Structure of Colonial Formations", E.P.W., vol. XVI, Annual No., 1981, pp.475-486.

35 The debate between Lenin and M.N. Roy is suggestive of the fact that the colonial question was primarily a class question. Both have tried to analyse the dynamics of class relations in third world countries.

36 Paul A. Baran, The Political Economy of Growth (Penguin Books, 1957). Refer: Ch. 5,6 and 7.

- 37 Bill Warren, "Imperialism and Capitalist Industrialization", New Left Review, no.61, 1975.
- 38 Ibid., pp.3-4.
- 39 Refer, Henry Bernstein, "Industrialization: Development and Dependence" in Hamza Alavi and Teodor Shanin, ed., Introduction to the Sociology of Developing Societies (The Macmillan Press Ltd., 1982), pp.210-217.
- 40 Prabhat Patnaik, "Imperialism and the Growth of Indian Capitalism" in Robin Blackburn, eds., Explosion in a Subcontinent (Penguin Books, 1975).
- 41 Samir Amin, "Self-Reliance and the New International Economic Order", Monthly Review, vol.30, no.3, July-August 1977.
- 42 Susanne Mueller, "Barriers to the Further Development of Capitalism in Tanzania : The Case of Tobacco", Capital and Class, no.15, Autumn 1981, pp.23-54.

CHAPTER III

**STRUCTURE AND POLITICAL EXPERIENCE OF THIRD WORLD WORKING
CLASS**

Nature and identification of third world working class constitute a serious problematic for the research scholars and political activists of third world countries.¹ Some scholars thought it premature to apply class terminology to third world wage-earners because economic differentiation is not far enough advanced, and status and prestige lines are frequently based on factors extraneous to relationship between labour and capital.² There are scholars, who tend to see the evolution of African working class as similar to that of proletariat in capitalist societies of Europe.³ Some authors maintain that principally because of the migrant character and ties to the land, the African worker is so different from his counterpart in industrialised cities that comparisons are misleading, if not impossible.⁴ There is no doubt that the specific nature of capitalism in third world countries breeds a distinctive working class within a distinctive social context. This does not lead to abandon the concept of working class. We strongly believe that Marxian notion of class has enough flexibilities to capture the moments of specificities of third world countries.⁵ It is not true that a bulk of pauperised population constitute a working class as such. They only constitute as a class in relation to capitalist, in a determinate historical stage of production.⁶

Classes exist only in the class struggle.⁷ Before analysing capitalism and class compositions in capitalism, Marx has dealt with the concepts like 'capital' and 'labour' in abstraction. Reflection on 'capital' and 'labour' in abstraction is theoretically exterior, from which Marx tried to explain the manner in which 'labour' confronts 'capital' in capitalism.

For Marx the concept of 'capital' has been developed from the concept of 'value' and precisely the exchange value in an already developed moment of circulation. Capital has been conceptualised by Marx, not as a thing but as a social relation.⁸ In the initial phase of circulation (commodities exchanged for money or money exchanged for commodities), exchange value posits itself once as a commodity and, another time as money. In 'capital', exchange value has been posited as the unity of commodity and money. Capital does not exist in vacuum but in a determinate society in which it tries to transform the social relations for its perpetuation. Before going to discuss how the working class confronts the capitalist, Marx has explained the concept of 'labour-power' in abstraction. To quote Marx:

Labour-power or capacity for is to be understood the aggregate of those mental and physical capabilities existing in a human being, which he exercises whenever he produces a use-values of any description. 9

Individual objectifies his own labour to produce commodities. Thereby, he externalizes the physical and mental potentialities, while producing commodities. In capitalism, labour-power confronts capital not as an equivalent exchange but as a commodity. Labour power posits as a value for the capitalist for the production of surplus-value. Commoditisation of labour power becomes use-value for the capitalist, for valorisation of capital and for worker it ends in consumption. Labour-power of the worker becomes external to his objective existence of being and it is manipulated by the capitalists.¹⁰ This living labour in a form of commodity is the source of surplus-value for the capitalist.

The fundamental condition of converting labour-power into a commodity is to take away all the conditions for the reproduction of labour-power of a worker. Worker's living labour in capitalism becomes non-specific, abstract and mechanical activity. The exchange between the worker and the capitalist is determined by the necessity of capitalist production, which reproduces structural relationship between the worker and the capitalist. The value of labour-power as a commodity is determined by the necessary labour time needed for its reproduction. It is the reproduction of worker's physical and mental capacities. Labour is not only the use-value which

confronts capital but, rather it is the use-value of capital itself.¹¹ Because labour-power is the source of surplus-value for the capitalist, other elements of production like instruments of production are used to raise the productivity of labour. Introduction of machines into the production process has the paradoxical effect. Instead of increasing the wages of the workers, it replaces workers; it competes with the workers and reduces the labour-time necessary for reproduction of workers. Amount of surplus-labour used to increase by raising the productivity of capital and the worker and it serves as the basis for extraction of relative surplus-value.¹² Wage labour serves as the precondition for the proliferation of capital. When wage labour confronts capital, it produces exchange value for the capitalist (capitalist as a personification of capital) and on the whole a structural relationship is produced between the wage labour and the capitalist. It is only the wage-labour which makes the capital productive at a particular stage of capitalism.¹³ While Marx was dealing with the development of capitalism, England served as a reference point for him. In an ideal form, capitalism confronts the pre-capitalist relations of production as an antithesis and dissolves the pre-capitalist forms of exploitation and relations of production. The process of dissolution,

starts with the penetration of merchant capital. When capitalism reacts upon the agriculture, it expropriates a bulk of population from their objective conditions of existence. They become wage-labourers. Similarly, people engaged in handicrafts and in petty modes of production become uprooted from their means of subsistence; capitalism engulfs the entire social being of labour and embraces the whole society with its all pervasive tentacles. From this general discussion, we will enter into the study of specific manners in which capital confronts labour in third world countries.

Proletarianization Process in Third World

The development of capitalism is not an organic development in third world countries. Third World capitalism did not emanate because of internal contradictions within the third world social formations. This is a point of departure for understanding the specificities of third world working class. The motive force of third world capitalism remained exterior due to penetration of monopoly capital from outside. Proletarianization is a process by which producer is divorced from the means of production. Thereby, he becomes the seller of labour-power as a commodity for his reproduction.

The process of proletarianization as a historical process is determined by the manner capital confronts the pre-capitalist modes of production. In an ideal case,

capitalism dissolves the older forms of production and labour and creates a bulk of wage-labourers as its precondition. It is not applicable to third world countries because capitalism introduced from outside did not dissolve the pre-capitalist modes of production totally. Rather, it restructured the pre-capitalist modes by giving capitalist content into it without destroying the form.

In Europe destruction of handicrafts and petty modes of production proceeded pari passu with the absorption of disposed artisans in large numbers in the emerging industries. On the contrary, in third world countries, due to lack of industrialization, majority of uprooted peasants and artisans became impoverished and fall back upon the agriculture as agricultural labourers. In the case of England and other European countries, the process of proletarianization was complete in the sense, it resulted in complete dispossession of the producers from their means of production. On the contrary, the disarticulation of peasants and artisans from their means of production in third world countries was not complete. To quote the observation made by Sixth Comintern Congress:

The working class in the colonies and semi-colonies has characteristic features which are important in the formation of an independent working class movement and proletarian class ideology in these countries.

The greater part of the colonial proletariat comes from the pauperised village, with which the worker retains his connection even when engaged in industry. In the majority of the colonies (with the exception of some large industrial towns such as Sanghai, Bombay and Calcutta, etc.) we find, as a general rule, only the first generation of a proletariat engaged in large-scale production.... The ruined artisan, the small property owner, carries with him into the working class the narrow craft sentiments and ideology through which nationalist reformist influence can penetrate the colonial labour movement. 14

Proletarianization is the process by which the condition of reproduction of a majority of population in third world countries were restricted. The process by which producers were converted into workers was not a straight outcome of the penetration of monopoly capital in third world countries. The process was mediated by state action through policies and through some institutional structures to expediate the process. 15 In third world countries major source of labour supply was the uprooted peasants along with artisans, petty producers and people from the lowest strata of the society like Harijans and tribals in the context of India. The Report of Royal Commission of Labour (1931) in India attributed the migration from village to cities to three causes: (i) economic pressures, (ii) the decay of village crafts, and (iii) the social disabilities of the outcastes. To quote from the Report:

The driving force in migration comes almost entirely from one end of the channel, i.e. the village end. The industrial recruit is not

prompted by the lure of city life or by any great ambition. The city as such has no attractions for him and when he leaves the village, he has no ambition beyond that of securing the necessities of life. Few industrial workers would remain in industry if they could secure sufficient food and clothing in the village; they are pushed not pulled to the city. 16

While studying proletarianization of peasantry in Africa, Giovanni Arrighi¹⁷ has dealt with the process by which wage became a necessity, not a discretion for the peasants. Arrighi has criticised the model given by W.A. Lewis for its inadequacy in explaining proletarianization. To Lewis, peasants were attracted towards capitalist sector for high wages without reducing the effective production in subsistence sector. This was how the unlimited supply of labour was enjoyed by the capitalist sector. Following the arguments of Lewis, W.J. Barber was also emphasising on high wages in the capitalist sector and 'periodic disguised unemployment' in the subsistence sector, which provided ample reasons for African peasants to become wage-labourers in capitalist sector. In the initial phase of industrialization, peasants were not responsive to the demands of the capitalist sector in Rhodesia because of the fact that reproduction of the peasants was met by selling the agricultural products in the markets. So, at that time, it was a matter of discretion on the part of the peasants to participate in capitalist sector for additional wages. As Arrighi has pointed out

that the growth of mining industries and tertiary activities without comparable development of capitalism in agriculture discouraged the participation of African peasants in labour market. In the beginning, the labour problem was solved by forced wage labour and taxation in cash, which made the peasants dependent upon wages.

By 1902, African people had been expropriated from more than three quarters of all the lands in Rhodesia and expropriated lands were given to the peasants on rents. Giving lands on rent was helping in keeping the level of wages very low. The most crucial mechanism by which African peasants were forced to participate in the labour market was by reducing the price of agricultural products. It was possible due to increase in the growth of cash crops by foreign farms and controlling the market in favour of the imperialists. As Arrighi has pointed out the immediate effect of the drastic increase in the effort-price of African participation in the produce market, brought about a sharp increase in the participation of peasants in the labour market. As a result, the relative importance of wage employment and sale of produce as sources of African cash earnings was reversed. While the sale of produce had accounted for some 70 per cent of the total cash earnings of the indigenous African population at the beginning of the present century, it accounted for less than 20 per cent of such earnings in 1932.

In the initial phase of penetration of monopoly capital, colonisers were mainly engaged in extractive industries, construction activities and in the plantation economy. By citing the case study of Peruvian mines, J. De Wind¹⁸ has shown the process by which the peasants became wage-labourers in mines. The process was possible due to the division of lands into mini-fundios in Peru. In the context of India, British land-settlement policies converted a large number of peasants into wage-labourers.¹⁹

Indebtedness is an important cause of proletarianization in third world countries. Indebtedness arose due to excessive need for cash for the payment of taxes by small peasants. Small peasant's dependence on the market, payment of exorbitant taxes in cash and need for cash at the time of failure of crops, were the motivating factors for indebtedness. This led to the intervention of money-lenders. Money-lenders became the labour contractors for the imperialists. Indebted people became the cheap source of labour for the industries and plantation. Most of the indebted people could not get out of this vicious circle and used to remain as wage-labourers throughout their lives. In Latin American context, the system of debt labour is known as enganche system. The pre-capitalist forms of recruitment of workers is a dominant feature in third world countries.²⁰

The extra-economic and extra-market means of organizing the labour force is one important feature to show how capitalism is benefited by keeping the pre-capitalist forms of exploitation untempered.²¹ The process of proletarianization in third world countries is a handiwork of the colonial states. Because the development of capitalism in third world countries is an inorganic phenomenon.

Another crucial feature of the proletarianization process in third world countries is that, it did not lead to complete separation of the workers from their rural bases. Rather there was a maintenance of the rural links. Maintenance of rural links made the source of labour relatively cheaper. Through this rural link, worker tries to escape from the drudgery of factory work. Village provides a psychological security for the workers at the time of distress. To quote from Labour Commission Report:

In sickness and in maternity, in strikes and in lock-outs, in unemployment and in old age, the village home is a refuge for many. 22

Rural links sometimes restrict the organisational capacities of the working class. Growth of a stable labour force was also obstructed by the rural links of the workers. It is not an universal phenomenon in third world countries. It only proves the heterogeneity of third world working class.

Unorganised Workers

Heterogeneity of third world working class is due to the placement of workers in different segments of production process. Those who try to dichotomise the production system into capitalist and pre-capitalist, miss the structural relationship involved between the two. Division of the production system into two discrete sectors is incorrect. Dualist conception cannot conceptualise the structural persistence of unorganised workers in third world. In third world countries, while the small-scale productions are subordinated in various ways to big capitalist production, their persistence is ensured by the interests of big capital itself, and by the structure of markets, in particular.

Due to the penetration of monopoly capital and low level of industrialization, the archaic sector of production was preserved as an adjunct to hegemonic capitalist level of production. This process resulted in minority of labour force working in selective industries and a bulk of workers as an appendage of hegemonic level of production. The objective position of the workers in 'petty commodity production'²³ must be identified in order to understand the specificities of third world working class. The category of 'petty production' is used by Gerry as "an intentionally vague term covering those units of production which exists at the margin of

the capitalist mode of production but which are nevertheless integrated into it".²⁴ He contrasts with this, the form of 'small capitalist production' constituted principally by petty producer units and the 'capitalist production' which is monopolistic and subjected to foreign control. Santos used the term 'upper circuit' as Gerry's 'capitalist production' and the term 'lower circuit' is described as the unit, outside the upper circuit.²⁵ Quijano considers that Latin American economies; there is a hegemonic monopolistic level of production and a level of competitive capitalism which is generally in decline as its markets are invaded by the hegemonic level, but it is still able to persist to a certain degree. The third level is the 'marginal pole'. To quote Quijano:

... a level of activities and mechanisms of economic organisation, which are continually losing the possibility of increasing capital accumulation and which tends to expand and become differentiated: artisanry of goods and services, petty commerce of goods and services (etc.).... This depressed level of economy contains a complex characteristic occupations, of mechanisms for their organisation, that is labour relation, which are not of the dominant formation and the defining element is precisely the lack of stable access to basic resources of production which serve the dominant levels. 26

For Quijano unlike many other writers on Latin American cities, 'marginalisation' refers to a process rather than a simple descriptive term. For him 'marginalised labour force' is more adequate to explain the unorganised workers, than the concept 'reserve army of labour' used by Marx.

The sector of petty mode of production is labour-intensive due to lack of technological development, diversified basis of works, lack of security of workers, etc. It does not have access to the dominant needs of production. Bromley and Gerry have used the category of 'casual poor' to explain the workers in this sector. Four types of casual work has been identified like: (i) short-term wage work, (ii) disguised wage work, (iii) dependent self-employment, and (iv) true self-employment. To quote a passage:

We believe that the process of 'peripheral' or 'dependent' capitalist development are particularly prone to promote the growth of very substantial casual labour force, and in many cases, to gradually destabilize that labour force producing an increasing degree of insecurity of work opportunities and instability of income for the majority of population. 27

Labour markets of these workers are not isolated from the above all determination of capitalism in third world countries. Thereby the 'dualist labour system' is untenable by any means.²⁸ If the labour force in the 'petty mode of production' is heterogeneous then what is the degree of solidarity among them? There is no doubt that certain objective constraints are responsible for their disunity. The migrant character of the workers, their attachment to traditional values and competition for employments are certain major constraints acting upon third world working class. It is not to argue that they cannot act in a

revolutionary fashion. It is also incorrect to assume that unorganised workers are inherently revolutionaries. The unity can be forged on the basis of their common experiences. There is also a need for concrete political programmes to bring about solidarity among different groups of workers.

Nature of Exploitation

The migrant character of labour force in third world countries is not only the product of uneven capitalist development but also the product of the articulation of capitalist with pre-capitalist modes of production. Labourers were primarily drawn from distant places through labour contractors. The difference between the free wage labour and slavery is very marginal in the context of third world. Extraction of 'absolute surplus-value' was the predominant form for the extraction of surplus-value. It was by lengthening the working-day with constant supervision, surplus-value was extracted. With the introduction of machines, workers became appendages to the machines. They live in the midst of pollution. Workers used to live through a slow process of death. Death overpowers them untimely.

The conditions of female workers and child labour were more tragic in the initial phase of capitalism. In third world, female labour and child labour were used as

means to reduce the cost of production because their labour was very cheap. Female workers and children in third world countries live in miserable conditions. Female workers become prostitutes in the night time and workers in the day time. Pre-capitalist forms of exploitation in third world makes the situation worse. Workers are exploited through economic as well as extra-economic means. What the third world working class needs is, a revolutionary struggle, which can integrate their objective experiences and aspirations.

Political Experience of Third World Working Class

Political experiences of third world working class cannot be pre-determined by any theory whatsoever. Political experience of third world working class is not a theological experience which dawns in the minds of the workers automatically, but it grows out from their relationship with dominant classes. Political experience comes out of certain deliberate evaluation of the relationships. The ruinous effects of colonialism were felt by third world working class. The act of expropriation was opposed by millions of peasants and tribals in India. But, it was less articulated. There were no organised expressions. Gradually, workers tried to analyse the objective situations in which they had been placed by the imperialist powers. It was not the poverty and

diseases alone that fractured the minds of the workers, but the work itself in a different environment. Many memories fade except that of the loss of any felt cohesion in the community. It manifested in sporadic confrontation between the workers and the capitalists. Working class confrontation is a gradual process. To quote Sukumol Sen:

The struggle against imperialism thus objectively became the primary task of Indian proletariat although this realization did not come to them instantaneously. They had to traverse a comparatively long path through numerous economic struggles before they got imbued with this political consciousness. 29

Sen has divided the working class movement in India in four broad phases: the first phase from 1850-1900 as the inception of the working class movement; the second phase from 1901-1914 witnessed the formative period of trade union movements, from 1915 to 1947 as the phase of developing trade union consciousness and the final phase is the present phase of organized working class movements. In the initial phase of working class movements, strikes used to be loosely organized and short-lived. Even symbolic protests used to be organized like mass refusal to work. Between the year 1882 and 1890, there were twentyfive strikes recorded in different factories of Bombay and Madras.³⁰ The unorganised protests, though suffered from narrow economic interests and restricted

political perspective, served as the beginning of formations of trade unions in third world countries.³¹

Prior to the formation of trade unions, workers were organizing themselves through different social and cultural groups. In Chile, working classes were organizing themselves through 'mutualist societies' and 'resistance societies' towards the end of 19th century. Though the objectives were very much limited, still working class learned a lot many things from these organisations. Working class learned the process of articulating their demands. It is agreed among the scholars that formation of working class consciousness took a long time in third world countries. Factors like caste, ethnicity and religion play a substantial role in the minds of the workers. Third World working class experiences manifold constraints as far as the development of class-consciousness is concerned. Working class consciousness cannot be determined mechanically. As Dipesh Chakrabarty pointed out:

Such an 'instinctive' view of class consciousness - a class consciousness that spontaneously result from the objective position of the proletariat itself can only be a historical. It exists by separating the concrete history of labour from the concrete history of capital. 32

During 1920s, trade union movement in India was gaining momentum. Leaders of trade union movements were operating from a broader perspective. Trade unions became the main instrument of working class struggle not only against economic exploitation, but also against the colonial domination. In the third world countries, prior to independence, trade unions were having this broader perspective. It is very difficult to generalise the trade union movements in third world. After independence, role of trade unions have been changed. Trade union movements entered into a different historical conjuncture.

A wide variety of literature exists today in regard to trade union movements, which is derived from Marxist-Leninist scholarship. But there has never existed a single unambiguous theory of trade unions.³³ Hyman writes that the existing interpretation on trade unionism reflects dialectically two opposite views viz. 'optimistic interpretation', which recognises a revolutionary potential in trade union activity and the 'pessimistic interpretation' which maintains that trade union activity does not in itself promote any attitude for the transformation of capitalist society. In capitalist societies, working class's protest against capitalism is carried through. A trade union has a dual character. It develops through constant struggle

and, as a dynamic existence it retifies the system. Non-Marxists treat trade union as an institution for stable industrial relations. Pointing out the limitations of trade unionism, Marx wrote:

well

Trade unions work/as centres of resistance against the encroachment of capital. They fail partially from an injudicious use of power. They fail generally from limiting themselves to a guerilla war against the effects of the existing system, instead of simultaneously trying to change it, instead of using their organized forces as a lever for the final emancipation of the working class; that is to say the ultimate abolition of the wage system. 34

Lenin has also pointed out the limitation of trade union consciousness among the working class and emphasised the need for trade union movements from the perspective of radical social change. However limited a trade union movement may be, it brings solidarity among workers. Trade union movement is definitely a class expression. Scholars like Fanon, Debray have denied the relevance of trade union movement in third world countries. To them trade union represents the interests of privileged workers in third world. To them, trade union movements in third world are only concerned with reforms but not with revolution. The privileged group of workers constitute the 'labour aristocracy',³⁵ Arrighi has pointed out that with the advent of colonialism, colonial state fostered a high paid labour force those who were skilled and urbanised in third world countries. To quote

Arrighi:

It is the discretionary consumption of this class which absorbs a significant proportion of the surplus produced in the money economy. 36

While reconsidering the 'labour aristocracy' thesis, Sehl³⁷ has tried to point out the utility of the thesis. It can explain the acquiescence of the privileged workers in third world, to some extent. While examining the thesis in the context of Nigeria, Adrian Peace wrote:

In my view, the labour aristocracy thesis, widely accepted as it is, represents a serious barrier to an accurate understanding of the present (and probably future) responses of Lagos wage earners to their class position. 38

Labour aristocracy thesis has limited truth to project. But the political conclusions derived from the thesis cannot be accepted.

A Third World Proletariat?

After discussing various aspects of third world working class, we have come back to the question posed in the beginning: how to define third world working class? Do the specificities of third world working class compel us to look for a new definition? We strongly feel that, redefinition of third world working class does not serve as a qualitative break with the classical Marxian definition of working class. Robin Cohen³⁹ has argued for a broader definition of third world working class.

A rigid definition of working class cannot grapple with the specific features of third world working class. To Cohen, third world working class is semi-proletarian and semi-peasant. Cohen was arguing from an angle of revolutionary praxis in third world. For that, Cohen has gone to the extent of including emigrant workers in metropolis in third world working class.

For Marx, identification of working class was relatively unproblematic. The working class has been identified with industrial or factory proletariat. In the Leninist tradition, the problematic of identification of working class has been posed in the realm of revolutionary struggle. The inadequacy of classical definition of working class has been felt by the scholars, working on third world working class. The 'broad' definition conventionally takes working class as being composed of all those, who sell their labour power. Thus, it embraces all wage-earners. The strategic question that flows from a 'broad' definition, focusses attention on the question of unity of the working class. It does not focus light on different segments of third world working class.

However, such a 'broad' definition is not without problems. To utilise the single criterion of wage embraces sections of people, which every political instinct makes us reject as members of working class; senior management

officials, military personnel and leading state functionaries are obvious examples. In this context, 'labour aristocracy' thesis throws some light. But it cannot be the alternative.

The narrow definition of working class has specified the productive labourers as workers. In this context, the definition has been posed in a different political perspective. Nicos Poulantzas,⁴⁰ in the context of advanced capitalist countries, has given a narrow definition of working class. To Poulantzas, every wage earner is not a worker. He has taken the criterion of 'productive labour' to define working class. 'Productive labour' produces surplus-value directly for the capitalists. This criterion has many limitations. It excludes a lot many un-organised workers of third world from working class. Through a narrow definition of working class, we cannot identify a large number of unorganised workers. Sometimes, scholars term them as Lumpen-proletariat and 'proto-proletariat'. In the context of Latin American countries, Quijano⁴¹ has used the concept of 'marginalised labour force' to identify the urban poor. The conclusion is inescapable that a narrow definition of working class will not be adequate in the context of third world working class. Certain specific features of third world working class should be given adequate attention. Rural links of third world working class ought

to be placed in a right political perspective. The process of proletarianization in third world countries should be taken seriously.

Working class cannot be defined alone by economic criteria. The political and ideological determinations of third world working class must be studied seriously. We have only tried to project different views on third world working class. It is quite premature on our part to give a concrete definition of third world working class at this stage. The identification of third world working class cannot be regarded as an theoretical exercise exclusively. It is profoundly a political question that goes to the very heart of the formation of a revolutionary strategy in third world. Unity among the workers is never straight forward. It is never automatic. Politics mediates and determines the unity by which third world working class can fight against capitalism. It will be a fight for millions. It will be a society of their own making.

NOTES

- 1 We treat third world working class as a problematic. It is definitely a point of departure. By this, over-simplifications of third world working class can be avoided. It is the precondition for a creative application of Marxian concepts in third world countries. Thus, it will make the study of third world working class more rigorous and creative.
- 2 P.C. Lloyd, The New Elites of Africa (Oxford University Press, 1966). Also see J.C. Mitchell and A.L. Epstein, "Occupational Prestige and Social Status", Africa, no.29, 1959, pp.35-36.
- 3 Jack Woddis, Africa : Lion Awakes (London; Lawrence and Wishart, 1959).
- 4 W. Ekan, Migrants and Proletarians (Oxford University Press, 1960). Also see G. Arrighi and John S. Sahl, ed., Essays on the Political Economy of Africa (New York and London; Monthly Review Press, 1973).
- 5 For understanding the social and economic phenomena, theoretical abstractions are quite necessary. Principle of linear causality stands redundant. The relationship between abstraction and concretization is dialectical. Theoretical abstractions help us to understand the invisible socio-economic processes.
- 6 To quote Marx:

"Society does not consist of individuals, but expresses the sum of interrelations, the relation within which these individuals stand. As if someone were to say: seen from the perspective of society, there are no slaves and no citizens: both are human beings. Rather, they are outside that society. To be slave, to be a citizen are social characteristics, relations between human beings A and B. Human being A, as such, is not a slave. He is a slave in and through society". Grundrisse, (Penguin, 1973), p.265.

- 7 Refer: Nicos Poulantzas, *Classes in Contemporary Capitalism* (London; NLB, 1975).
- 8 Marx has criticised Adam Smith for his treatment of capital as a thing but not as a relation. To Adam Smith, "capital is accumulated labour" to which Marx replied:
- "Capital is not a simple relation, but a process, in whose various moments it is always capital. This process therefore to be developed. Already in accumulated labour, something has sneaked in because, in its essential characteristic, it should be merely objectified labour, in which, however, a certain amount of labour is accumulated. But accumulated labour already comprises a quantity of objects in which labour is realized". Grundrisse, op.cit., p.258.
- 9 Karl Marx, *Capital, vol.1* (Moscow; Progress Publishers, 1954), ch.vi, p.164.
- 10 To quote Marx:
- "This living labour existing as an abstraction from these moments of its actual reality (also not value); this complete denudation, purely subjective existence of labour, stripped of all objectivity". Grundrisse, op.cit., pp.295-296.
- 11 When worker exchanges his labour with the capitalist, it is the alien labour which confronts the worker and the living labour is the pre-supposition for the capital. It is being appropriated and set in motion in the production process by capital. The exchange of labour is predetermined by the need for reproduction of the worker and for self-augmentation of the capital.

12 Marx has distinguished two forms of surplus-value, extracted in different stages of capitalist production process. It is the 'absolute surplus-value' and the 'relative surplus-value', and to quote Marx:

"The production of absolute surplus-value turns exclusively upon the length of the working day; the production of relative surplus-value revolutionises out and ~~the~~ technical process of labour, and the composition of society. It, therefore, presupposes a specific mode, the capitalist mode of production, a mode which along with its methods, means and conditions, arises and develops itself spontaneously on the foundation afforded by the formal subjection of labour to capital. In the course of its development, the formal subjection is replaced by the real subjection of labour to capital".

Karl Marx, Capital, vol.1, op.cit., pp.477-478.

13 When Marx has differentiated different stages of capitalism, he pointed out that, at a particular stage of capitalism, valorisation of capital needs wage-labour as a pre-condition. For example the merchant capital and introduction of money in the level of circulation do not make the capital productive as such. Without commoditisation of labour-power of the worker, money does not help in fructification of capital. Unless the society is constituted of working class and capitalist, merchant capital has a retarding effect on the productivity of capital as it happened in many ancient communities of Africa as pointed out by Marx.

14 Quoted by Sukumol Sen in Working Class of India : History of Emergence and Movement (1830-1970) (Calcutta; K.P. Bagchi and Company, 1977), pp.28-29.

- 15 The process of proletarianization is not an accidental phenomenon in third world countries. It is not purely an inevitable process. The process is carried out by various policies of the State. Colonial state was expediting the process in third world. Edward Gibbon Wakefield was an English diplomat and economist. He has put forward the view on 'systemic colonisation', which Marx has referred in Capital, vol.1. Wakefield has given his views in the context of British colonial policies in Australia. Land was made expensive artificially in Australia by which, a lot many peasants were divorced from their means of production. They became wage-labourers. Refer: Capital, vol.1, ch.XXIII, op.cit., pp.716-724.
- 16 Quoted by Margaret Reed, The Indian Peasant Uprooted (London: Longman Green and Co., 1931), p.6.
- 17 Giovanni Arrighi, "Labour Supplies in Historical Perspective : A Study of Proletarianization of the African Peasantry in Rhodesia" in G. Arrighi and J.S. Sahl, ed., (1973), op.cit., pp.180-234.
- 18 John Dewind, "From Peasants to Miners : The Background to Strikes in the Mines of Peru", pp.133-148, and Sidney W. Mintz, "The Rural Proletariat and the Problem of Rural Proletarian Consciousness", pp.149-172, in Robin Cohen, Peter C.W. Gutkind and Phyllis Brazier, eds., Peasants and Proletarians (London: Hutchinson & Co. Ltd., 1979).
- 19 British brought about radical changes in the land revenue system in comparison to the revenue system of Moghul empire. In Moghul days, land revenue was collected by taking into account the actually cultivated lands and collection was done in kind. In contrast, British land revenue collection was based on the lands entitled for cultivation and it was collected

note 19 continued...

in kind. The increased rate of revenue in cash raised the intervention of the money-lenders by which a bulk of population became indebted and became the source of cheap labour for British industries.

Refer: Aniya Kumar Bagchi, The Political Economy of Underdevelopment (Cambridge University Press, 1962), Ch.3.

- 20 C.P. Simmons, "Recruiting and Organizing an Industrial Labour Force in Colonial India : The Case of Coal Mining Industry (1880-1939)", The Indian Economic and Social History Review (IESHR), vol.XIII, no.4, December 1976, pp.455-482. Also see Ranjit Das Gupta, "Factory Labour in Eastern India : Sources of Supply, 1855-1946 : Some Preliminary Findings", IESHR, vol.XIII, no.3, September 1976, pp.277-326; and Chitra Joshi, "Kanpur Textile Labour : Some Structural Features of Formative Years", Economic and Political Weekly (EPW), vol.XVI, nos.44, 45 & 46, Special Number, 1981, pp.1823-1838; P.S. Gupta, "Notes on the Origin and Structuring of the Industrial Labour Force in India, 1880-1920" in R.S. Sharma, ed., Indian Society: Historical Probing (New Delhi: PPH, 1974).
- 21 While studying the plantation economy, pre-capitalist forms of exploitation has been highlighted by various research scholars. In the colonial days, plantation labourers were unfree and were exploited through extra-economic means. Refer: J.R. Mandle, "The Plantation Economy : An Essay in Definition", Science and Society, vol.XXXVI, no.1, Spring 1972, pp.49-62. Also see S.K. Bhowmik, "The Plantation as a Social System", Economic and Political Weekly, vol.XV, no.3, 6 September 1980, pp.1524-1527.
- 22 Quoted by Margaret Read (1931), op.cit., p.5.

- 23 The concept of 'petty mode of production' is preferred to the concept of 'Informal Sector' due to the following reasons:

With the growing popularity of term 'Informal sector' as used by analysts, their lack of precision became increasingly evident. This category has been used in an empirical sense. The term is increasingly seen to be descriptive, but not of analytical use. Whereas the concept of 'petty mode of production' is more precise. It throws light on its articulation to the hegemonic capitalist mode and the objective position of the workers involve in this level of production.

Refer: A. Foster Carter, "The Mode of Production Controversy", New Left Review, vol.107, 1978, pp.47-77. See also T.S. Papola, "Informal Sector: Concept and Policy", EDW, vol.XV, no.18, 3 May 1980, pp.817-824.

- 24 C. Gerry, "Petty Production and Capitalist Production in Dakar: The Crisis of Self-Employed", in R. Bromley, ed., "The Urban Informal Sector: Critical Perspectives", World Development, Special Issue, vol.6, nos. 9 and 10, September-October 1978, p.1159.
- 25 M. Santos, The Shared Space : The Two Circuits of the Urban Economy in Developing Countries (London: Methuen Press, Ltd., 1979).
- 26 Anibal Quijano Obregon, "The Marginal Pole of the Economy and the Marginalised Labour Force", in Harold Wolpe, The Articulation of Modes of Production (ed.) (Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., 1980), pp.264-265.
- 27 R. Bromley and Chris Gerry, "Who are the Casual Poor?" in Casual Work and Poverty in Third World Cities (ed.) (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1979), p.20.

- 28 Jan Bremen, "A Dualistic Labour System? A Critique of the Informal Sector Concept", EPW, vol.XI, no.48, and 50, November-December 1976. Also see John Hariss, "Character of an Urban Economy : Small Scale Production and Labour Markets in Coimbatore", EPW, vol.XVII, nos.23 and 24, June 1982.
- 29 Sukumol Sen (1977), op.cit., p.88.
- 30 R.K. Das, The Labour Movement in India (Berlin,1923).
- 31 Alan Angell, "The Origins of the Chilean Labour Movement", pp.29-43. Also see M.R. Clark, "Historical Background and Beginning of the Mexican Labour Movement before the Revolution of 1910", pp.77-86; A.G. Hopkins, "The Lagos Strike of 1897: An Exploration in Nigerian Labour History", pp.87-106; Charles Van Onselen, "Worker Consciousness in Black Miners : Southern Rhodesia, 1900-20", pp.107-127, in Robin Cohen, P.C.W. Gutkind and P. Brazier, eds., op.cit., (1979); Sharon Stichter, "The Formation of a Working Class in Kenya", pp.21-48 in R. Sand Brook and R. Cohen, eds., The Development of African Working Class in Africa (Toronto; Toronto University Press, 1975).
- 32 Dipesh Chakrabarty and Ranjit Das Gupte, "Some Aspects of Labour History of Bengal in the 19th Century : Two Views", Occasional Paper No.40 (unpublished), (Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta, October 1981), p.9.
- 33 R. Hyman, Marxism and the Sociology of Trade Unionism (Plato Press, 1971).
- 34 Karl Marx, "Wages, Price and Profit" in Marx and Engels, Selected Works, (Lawrence and Wishart, 1968), p.249.

- 35 G. Arrighi, "International Corporations, Labour Aristocracies and Economic Development in Tropical Africa", pp.105-151 in G. Arrighi and J.S. Saul, ed., (1973), op.cit. Also see J.S. Saul, "The Labour Aristocracy Thesis Reconsidered", pp.303-310 in R. Sand Brook and R. Cohen, eds., (1975), op.cit.
- 36 G. Arrighi, op.cit. in G. Arrighi and J.S. Saul, ed. (1973), op.cit., p.149.
- 37 To quote Saul:
- "The use of the term 'labour aristocracy' underscored important points. First it pinpointed similarity, historically between the structured position of the elites (and sub-elites) in bureaucratic employment and of the wage workers, both supplying their labour-power, to service imperial exploitation and both having objective grounds for developing a stance of conscious opposition to that pattern".
- See R. SandBrook and R. Cohen, eds. (1975), op.cit., p.306.
- 38 Adrian Peace, "The Lagos Proletariat : Labour Aristocracy or Populist Militants?", pp.281-302 in R. SandBrook and R. Cohen, eds., op.cit., p.281.
- 39 Robin Cohen, "Workers in Developing Societies" in Hamza Alavi and Teodor Shanin, Introduction to the Sociology of "Developing Societies" (ed.), (The Macmillan Press Ltd., 1982), pp.279-286.
- 40 Nicos Poulantzas, Classes in Contemporary Capitalism (NLB, 1976).
- 41 Anibal Quijano Obreg'on, op.cit.

CHAPTER IV

NATURE OF THE POST-COLONIAL STATE

Discussion of post-colonial state is very crucial for the conceptualisation of third world working class in its totality. In capitalism, the process by which the dominant classes exploit and dominate is not direct and visible. The process of exploitation is always mediated. At this point, discussion of post-colonial state is of capital importance. By this we can reflect on the process of domination and mediations. It is an important subject of discussion not only for the academicians but also for the political activists of third world. There is a scarcity of theoretical discussions on post-colonial state. As a result of which the theoretical status of post-colonial state is very weak. Recently, there is an attempt made by scholars to raise its theoretical status.¹

The post-colonial state is all pervasive. Power and functions of the state are swelling day by day. Right from economic planning to family planning, post-colonial state involves itself in various manners. In the process of perpetual alienation, people are made to think the mystified state as the real. State creates a faith among common people for its own existence. It teaches a particular song by which people sing the hymn for the state. People think post-colonial state as impersonal. This serves as an important basis for state domination² in third world.

In the "modernization" theory, state has been viewed as an independent and impartial entity, standing above the society. As an autonomous entity, state pursues developmental policies for the whole society. Implicitly, there is a disjunction between the state and society. The problematic of post-colonial state, according to this theory, has been narrowed down to the level of institutions, bureaucracy and implementation of public policies. According to this theory, state promotes economic and political development for the whole society by arbitrating the conflicting interests of different pressure groups. All the above notions regarding the post-colonial state emanate from a general understanding of society based on reciprocity of interests of different groups and state's dominant preoccupation to maintain stability in the society.³ This contrasts with the notions of exploitation and oppression, domination and subordination and antagonisms of class interests. Structures, such as those of political system and the state, thus exist to carry out necessary functions, which can but be for the good of the society. An alternative view, one that does not reify society as a whole (as functionalist theory does), but proceeds instead from the idea of the social process being constituted by interactions of free-acting individuals - the "market model". Political market like economic market brings supports and demands and converts demands as output

in the form of legislation and authoritative allocation of values. No questions are raised about the pre-conditions of a particular division of functions in a society and consequences of class divisions that determine the capacities of members of different classes in the political and economic markets, or their different relationships to the state, in the context of their mutual opposition. The picture that "modernization theory" gives us is a society constituted of heterogeneity of interests and state as a neutral entity maintains the rules of the game and maintains harmony of the system. Pointing out the limitations of structural functional method, Therborn wrote:

The fundamental flaw in the functional and system approach is: it does not consider organization as part of the ongoing historical process (of simple and expanded).... The analysis remained within a subjectivist problematic. 4

Viewing state as an impartial institution mystifies the character of post-colonial state. Institutional approach is bound to be inadequate. Extra-institutional processes are also quite important for understanding post-colonial state. Elite theory does not serve our purpose of understanding post-colonial state. Such a voluntaristic conception of modernizing elites, however, begs questions about their social roots and commitments in a class-divided society and about the logic of the system in which they operate.

II

Deep scrutinisation of liberal notions of post-colonial state is quite necessary for promoting a scientific understanding of post-colonial state.⁵ A task of demystification of liberal notions of state is theoretically and practically very essential. Needs of an alternative paradigm must be stressed. Marx and Engels have provided the alternative. To quote Engels:

State is, therefore, by no means a power forced on society from without.... Rather it is a product of society at a certain stage of development, it is the admission that this society has become entangled in an insoluble contradiction with itself, that it has split into irreconcilable antagonisms which it is powerless to dispel.... Seemingly standing above society, that would alleviate the conflict and keep it within the bounds of 'order', and this power arisen out of society but playing itself as one and alienating itself more and more from it, is the state. 6

Concept of state is an area of constant debate and discussions among Marxist scholars.⁷ The debate between Miliband and Poulantzas is very relevant and educative. It has raised a lot of pertinent questions regarding the capitalist state. Poulantzas has criticised Miliband's instrumentalist position on capitalist state. Miliband's work did not reflect much on methodological problems as pointed out by Poulantzas.⁸ Poulantzas has tried to reflect adequately on various methodological issues. Poulantzas's work has tried to dispel certain methodological misconceptions regarding the capitalist state.

The orthodox Marxian scheme of 'base' and 'superstructure' has been criticised by Poulantzas. The problematic has been reconstituted. Accordingly, the notion of 'relative autonomy' of the state has been introduced. State is not mechanically determined by the economic structures of the society. State is not an epi-phenomenon of the economic base. State exercises certain amount of autonomy vis-a-vis the dominant classes and the exploited classes. Relative autonomy of the state is ultimately determined by class struggle. Poulantzas has identified two important functions of the capitalist state. Capitalist state disorganises the exploited classes on the one hand and on the other hand the same bring about cohesion among the dominant classes. To quote Poulantzas:

State is a cohesive factor in the unity of the formation which is especially important for a capitalist formation - other important functions: economic, political and ideological. These functions are the particular modalities of the global political role of the state; they are over-determined by, and condensed in, its strictly political functions, its function in relation to the field of the political class struggle. 9

Goran Therborn¹⁰ has studied the capitalist state by placing it in the ongoing historical process and through the process of reproduction of capitalist relations of production. The effectivity of the capitalist state is

determined by the class structure. It is mediated by the specific capitalist structures. The nature of state can be understood better by placing it in the process of class struggle.¹¹ The form that state adopts is also determined by class struggle. Democratic state, representative status of the workers, adult suffrage were all granted to the exploited classes at a particular conjuncture of class struggle. State tries to limit the class struggle in order to protect the dominant interests of the dominant classes. State creates impediments on the path of working class struggle. It adopts tactics to dampen the revolutionary activities of the working class.

State tries to exercise domination through coercive and persuasive tactics. On the ideological plane state tries to create an atmosphere of consensus. State mediates in the process of communication, in the process of socialization and education. In the time of crisis, state uses coercive tactics to maintain the stability of the system. State is the institutional manifestation of contradictory class relations in a society. The existence of state is determined by the economic structure of the society. They exist in a dialectical fashion. Now a theory of post-colonial state can be derived from a general theory of state. For the understanding of post-colonial state, understanding of class relationships is very crucial.

III

In order to understand the nature of post-colonial state, a historical reading of colonialism is very essential. With the penetration of monopoly capital, peripheral societies were drawn into the ambit of world capitalist system. Structural dependency was created. Economy of peripheral societies was restructured. In this context, role of the colonial state became very important. The process of disarticulation, however, exogeneous might be, this has been activated by the colonial state. State became an instrument of proletarianization in peripheral societies. Through force and suitable policies, colonial state created a vast majority of workers in peripheral societies.

Hamza Alavi's discussion on post-colonial state is quite illuminating. Two crucial points that Alavi highlighted were the 'over-developed state' and the 'relative autonomy' of the post-colonial state. To quote Alavi:

The bourgeois revolution in the colony in so far as it involves the establishment of a bourgeois state and the attendant legal and institutional framework is characterised by the imposition of colonial rule by the metropolitan bourgeoisie. In carrying out the task that was specific to the colonial situation, its task is not merely to replicate the superstructure of the state which it has established in the metropolitan country itself; it must also create a state apparatus through which it can exercise domination

over all the indigenous social classes in the colony. It might be said that the "superstructure" in the colony is therefore "overdeveloped" in relation to the "structure" in the colony, for its basis lies in the metropolitan structure itself, from which it is later separated at the time of independence. 12

Some of Alavi's propositions are contradictory. He tried to relate the weak indigenous social classes with the 'over-developed' colonial state in an unclear fashion. Why the colonial state was to be over-developed to dominate the indigenous social classes those who were basically weak? The exceptional growth of the colonial state was due to the necessity of the time. It was due to the complex task of re-structuration of economy, which colonial state had to carry out. This process of mediation was responsible for the exceptional growth of colonial state.

The second feature, according to Alavi, is the 'relative autonomy' of the post-colonial state. Alavi's arguments were based on the historical specificities of post-colonial societies. Alavi has rightly rejected the instrumentalist notion of state. He has aptly felt the danger of reductionism. To Alavi, post-colonial state is not mechanically determined. Rather it is relatively autonomous. As Alavi has pointed out:

The central position I wish to emphasize is that in post-colonial society is not the instrument of a single class. It is relatively

autonomous and it mediates the competing interests of the three propertied classes - the metropolitan bourgeoisie, the indigenous bourgeoisie and the landed classes - while acting on behalf of all of them in order to preserve social order in which their interests are embedded, namely, the institution of private property and the capitalist mode as the dominant mode of production. 13

To Alavi, the prominent place of post-colonial state is not only rooted in the colonial legacy but also in the contemporary production process. After independence, direct control by metropolitan bourgeoisie came to an end. Still the dependence status of the post-colonial societies remained. Economic sovereignty of the post-colonial societies becomes very limited. The contemporary production process in post-colonial societies bear the structural presence of metropolitan capital. The relationship between the post-colonial societies and metropolitan capital is seldom direct. Here, the post-colonial state mediates to maintain the structural presence of metropolitan capital. Heterogeneity of the internal structures is maintained by the post-colonial state. The dependency status of the post-colonial societies is manifested in the economic policies, the import and export policies and in the attitude towards foreign technology and foreign investment. When Marx discussed the nature of Bonapartist state, he pointed out that, Bonapartist

state can truly serve the ruling class, in so far as it is relatively autonomous from the diverse fractions of this class, precisely in order to organise the hegemony of the ruling class. Such an analysis^{is}/~~not~~ applicable to the post-colonial societies because, it tries to mediate the relationship among three major classes. Because a single propertied class cannot exercise hegemony alone, thereby cannot be the only ruling class in post-colonial societies. In this context, the role of bureaucratic-military oligarchy is of crucial importance. Alavi has explained the 'relative autonomy' of the post-colonial state not merely on negative grounds but by explaining the positive grounds of state intervention in the economic and political spheres. We must delve deep in order to understand the position of the bureaucracy in post-colonial societies. We must analyse, how bureaucracy plays a crucial role in reproducing the social relationships in post-colonial societies. To Shivji,¹⁴ bureaucracy constitutes a separate class by virtue of their position in relation to the state and in relation to the international bourgeoisie. In the context of Pakistan, Alavi has pointed out the position of bureaucracy. Because, propertied classes could not subordinate the state completely in Pakistan; bureaucracy played an important role for the reproduction of class relations in Pakistan. In the context of Tanzania, John S. Saul¹⁵

has reflected upon the nature of the post-colonial state. Saul has agreed with Alavi regarding the two crucial features of post-colonial state. Saul has only added the ideological function of the post-colonial state, which was not dealt by Alavi. These three features, according to Saul, represent the centrality of post-colonial state.

Economic planning throughout the third world countries, under the hegemony of the post-colonial state is a recognised fact. Economic planning has been treated as a step for the upliftment of general masses. Plan targets are being treated in statistical terms. Statistical analysis of economic planning is very superficial. It does not take into account the class-bias of the economic planning. In the name of 'socialism', state mediates in the production process of third world countries. Benefits given to the poorer sections of the society through economic planning, manifests relative autonomy of the post-colonial state. Economic policies initiated by the state are determined by the above all maintenance of capitalism in third world countries. State planning is also a planning for capitalism.¹⁶ In third world countries, economic planning failed to change the basic structure of exploitation. It could not be able to bridge the gap between 'rich' and 'poor'. Economic planning, under the hegemony of post-colonial

state, suffers from various structural constraints. In this context, Alavi's concept 'structural imperative'¹⁷ of peripheral capitalism is very relevant. To Alavi, economic policies of the post-colonial state are not mechanically determined by the propertied classes. Some amount of interminacy is also involved in it. But ultimately, economic policies help in the reproduction process of peripheral capitalism. Concessions given to the exploited sections are equally important for the reproduction of peripheral capitalism. Uneven growth of capitalism is also a basis for its reproduction. Pre-capitalist forms of exploitation are still in operation in many third world countries. Capitalism has been introduced in the field of agriculture in many third world countries. Thus feudal landlords became capitalist farmers. Land reform policies in practice become a figment of imagination for the small peasants and landless labourers.¹⁸ As a result of the intervention in planning, post-colonial state created a strong bureaucracy as the watchdog of capitalism. In the context of Mali, Claude Meillassoux argues:

... having been the instrument of the colonial power, and having turned against it to become the mouthpiece of exploited Malian peasantry, the bureaucracy was gaining (with its access to power) some of the characteristics of a social class: control of the economic infrastructure and the use of it as a means of exploitation, control of the means of repression involving

a resort to various devices to maintain dominance. Some of its features are original; its opposite class is not yet socially well defined; it does not own the means of production on a private judicial basis, but controls them on a constitutional basis. 19

Due to the privileged nature of bureaucracy, it became a conservative force in many of the third world countries.²⁰

Politics is the means by which class interests are articulated in a society. Politics is also the arena of class struggle. Post-colonial state also helps in the reproduction process of political institutions. Conflicting class interests are mediated through post-colonial state. It maintains political cohesion in the society. State maintains the political structures which is continuously being threatened by its own dynamics. For this, restrictions are posed by the post-colonial state. State curbs the freedom of expression and brutally represses the political struggle organised by the exploited classes. Post-colonial state de-politicises the exploited classes. Thus, the stability is maintained in third world countries. Through persuasion and coercion, post-colonial state minimises the political struggle. An artificial consensus is maintained.

Domination process in the post-colonial society is very complex. This process contains the political, economic and ideological elements in it. Through ideological means,

state controls the minds of the exploited classes. Post-colonial state mystifies the minds of the people as far as the class character of the state is concerned. State portrays its neutral status before the general masses. The problematic of domination has been reconstituted by Gramsci.²¹ Gramsci has preferred the word 'hegemony' to 'ideology'. Thus, Gramscian point of view made the concept of domination more comprehensive and useful. Class hegemony is exercised through various structures. All these structures internalize the hegemonic values of a particular society. Priority of values are set by the post-colonial state. Post-colonial state tries to mould the civil society²² in a way that will ensure the hegemony of the dominant classes. Through various structures of civil society, preference of certain values is being established in the minds of the people. They become consciously victim of illusions and become conditioned to 'one dimensional' thinking. Most of the dictators, even the so-called democratic leaders of third world, are dependent upon ideological means for exercising the hegemony. Populism²³ is an important ideological instrument through which post-colonial state receives obedience from the masses. Populism portrays post-colonial state as impersonal and a welfare institution for the whole society. Failure of economic policies led many third world leaders to project their charisma²⁴ as a means to continue in power. In many Islamic countries, religious

passion has been invoked by the leaders.²⁵ Pakistan and Iran are two glaring examples of the above type. The foundation of post-colonial state lies in mystification of concrete realities. Third world remains in a realm of make-belief. There is no doubt that ideological domination still continued to be very effective in third world countries. Now we will briefly discuss the relationship between the post-colonial state and the working class.

IV

Colonial state played an important role in the formation of third world working class. Through the intervention of the colonial state, peasants and petty producers were uprooted from their objective means of living. For continuous labour supply, colonial state used to exercise force upon the workers. Colonial state was preserving the pre-capitalist forms of exploitation and the rural links of third world working class. The primary aim was to obstruct the working class from organizing themselves. Several rules and regulations were enacted to keep the labour force disorganized and weak. Formation of trade unions was opposed in the beginning by the colonial state. Due to persistent demands and struggles, right to form trade unions was granted to third world working class. It was through

coercive and divisive tactics, colonial state was exercising hegemony over the third world working class.

After political independence, the arena of class struggle became wider and wider. The main function of the post-colonial state is to keep the working class struggle within a limit. In various situations, post-colonial state brutally oppresses the working class movements.²⁶ State with the help of draconian laws, puts check on the working class struggle. The post-colonial state intervenes and impedes the transformation of working class in itself to class for itself. The organizational capacities of third world working class are restricted by the post-colonial state. Post-colonial state creates its own agents within the working class. In most of the third world countries, ruling classes have their respective trade unions. Thereby, they divide the working class. Post-colonial state mediates with the help of various institutions to reduce the possibility of class struggle. Post-colonial state tries to limit the working class struggle to non-political levels. It results in de-politicisation of third world working class. Post-colonial state tries to ingrain the ideology of reformism in the minds of third world working class. It tries to de-totalize the experiences of third world working class. Post-colonial state tries to keep the organised workers away from the unorganised working class.

Through ideological propaganda, workers are being attracted towards the populist slogans. Charisma of the leaders has been portrayed as the solution to social and economic problems. On the contrary, third world working class gradually became conscious of the process of exploitation. In the third world context, mere trade union activities will not be sufficient. Day-to-day activities of third world working class should be revolutionalised. Workers should be subordinated to the tactics of reformism. Working class struggle must go beyond the limited trade union struggles. Then, third world working class can constitute itself as a potential revolutionary force.

Third world working class is not a passive object in the hands of the dominant classes. Third world working class is an active agent in history. The relationship between the post-colonial state and the working class is of antagonistic contradiction. It is because of the class character of third world societies. How the third world working class will assert its position depends on particular historical conjuncture. Most of the post-colonial states are now in a pool of crisis. The crisis has been manifested all around. The crisis is very much organic. It is the crisis of peripheral capitalism. The crisis can be managed by the post-colonial state but not always. It cannot keep the dying peripheral capitalism

alive for a long time. Foundations are now tottering. Now it is the working class along with other exploited classes which can give the final blow to the decaying peripheral capitalism. Then, it will open a new chapter in the history of third world and a new chapter in the history of mankind.

NOTES

- 1 Hamza Alavi, "The State in Post-Colonial Societies: Pakistan and Bangladesh" in Kathleen Gough and Hari Sharma, ed., Imperialism and Revolution in South Asia (New York & London; Monthly Review Press, 1973). See also Hamza Alavi, "State and Class under Peripheral Capitalism" in Hamza Alavi and Teodor Shanin, ed., Introduction to the Sociology of "Developing Societies" (London; The Macmillan Press Ltd., 1982); John S. Saul, "The State in Post-Colonial Societies : Tanzania", The Socialist Register (1974), pp.349-372; W. Ziemann and M. Lenzendorfer, "The State in Peripheral Societies?" The Socialist Register (1977), pp.142-177; Bharat Patankar and Gail Omvedt, "The Bourgeois State in Post-Colonial Formation", The Insurgent Sociologist, vol.IX, no.4, Spring 1980, pp.23-38; and Issa G. Shivji, Class Struggle in Tanzania (London; H.E.B. Ltd., 1976).

- 2 Ideological domination is very crucial for the understanding of post-colonial state. Ideology is the invisible process of domination, carried out by the post-colonial state. Those who talk about inevitability of socialist revolution in third world, pay inadequate attention to ideological domination. Objective conditions as such cannot be the motive force for a socialist revolution. The need for proletarian ideology should be asserted. Ultimately, the struggle will not be struggle between minds but a struggle between opposite classes.

- 3 The problem of 'modernization theory' is primarily a methodological problem. The methodological error lies in the functional analysis of the society. 'Stability of the system' serves as the nodal point of 'modernization theory'. Too much preoccupation with the problem of stability blurs one's vision towards the concrete realities. Without a dialectical understanding of social change, understanding of stability is meaningless.

Refer: G.A. Almond and G.B. Powell, Comparative Politics : A Developmental Approach (New Delhi; Oxford, IBH Publishers Co., 1966). See also Samuel P. Huntington, Political Order in Changing Societies (Bombay; Vakils and Simons Pvt. Ltd., 1975).

- 4 Goran Therborn, What the Ruling Class do when it rules? (London; NLB, 1978), p.37.
- 5 'Marxian theory of state' must carry forward the task of scrutinising the liberal concepts. The problematic of state must be placed in an alternative paradigm. A new sets of questions must be posed. Alternative concepts must be developed in order to understand the class character of the state.
- 6 Quoted by Lenin in State and Revolution (Moscow; Progress Publishers, 1972), pp.177-178.
- 7 Ralph Miliband, The State in Capitalist Society (London; Quartet Books Ltd., 1976). Also see Nicos Poulantzas and Ralph Miliband, "The Problem of the Capitalist State" in Robin Blackburn, ed., Ideology in Social Science (Fontana, 1972); and Erik Olin Wright, Class, Crisis and State (London; Verso edition, 1979).
- 8 Pointing out the limitation of Miliband's work, Poulantzas wrote:
- "Instead of displacing the epistemological terrain and submitting these ideologies to the critique of Marxist science by demonstrating their inadequacy to the real (as Marx does notably in the Theories of Surplus Value), Miliband appears to omit this first step. Yet the analysis of modern epistemology shows that it is never possible simply to oppose 'concrete facts' to concepts, but that these must be attacked by other parallel concepts situated in a different problematic. For, it is only by means of these new concepts that the old notions can be confronted with 'concrete reality'."
- See Nicos Poulantzas, "The Problem of the Capitalist State" in Robin Blackburn, ed., op.cit., p.241.
- 9 Nicos Poulantzas, Political Power and Social Classes (London; NLB, 1973), p.187.

- 10 Refer: Goren Therborn (1978), op.cit.
- 11 Refer: Erik Olin Wright (1979), op.cit.
- 12 Hamza Alavi, "The State in Post-Colonial Societies: Pakistan and Bangladesh" in Kathleen Gough and Hari Sharma, ed. (1973), op.cit., p.147.
- 13 Hamza Alavi, Ibid., p.148.
- 14 Refer: Issa G. Shivji, Class Struggle in Tanzania (1976), op.cit.
- 15 John S. Saul, "The State in Post-Colonial Societies", The Socialist Register (1974).
- 16 Refer: Aniya K. Bagchi, The Political Economy of Underdevelopment (Cambridge University Press, 1982), ch.8.
- 17 To quote Alavi:
 "The "structural imperative" refers to the basis of economic circulation in a capitalist society and the conditions that govern their outcome, both at the level of individual enterprise and at the level of state".
 See, "State and Class Under Peripheral Capitalism" (1982), op.cit., p.294.
- 18 Francine R. Frankel, India's Political Economy (1947-1977) (Princeton University Press, 1978).
- 19 C. Meillassoux, "A Class Analysis of Bureaucratic Process in Mali", The Journal of Developmental Studies, January 1970, p.107.

- 20 Refer: Tariq Ali, Can Pakistan Survive? : Death of a State (Penguin Books, 1983).
- 21 Antonio Gramsci, Selections From the Prison Note Books (London; Lawrence and Wishart, 1971).
- 22 The term 'civil society' is Hegelian. Gramsci has borrowed this term from Hegel to identify the role of structures like family, religious institutions and educational institutions vis-a-vis the state. These structures reinforce the values of the state. By this, the process of domination becomes very complex and invisible.
- 23 Refer: Peter Worsley, The Third World (London; Weidenfeld and Nicolson Ltd., 1964), Ch.4. Also see John S. Saul, "On African Populism" in G.A. Arrighi and J.S. Saul, ed., Essays on the Political Economy of Africa (New York and London; Monthly Review Press, 1973).
- 24 Refer: J. Cartwright, Political Leadership in Africa (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1983).
- 25 "The basis of Pakistan is Islam and nothing else. I could have stayed on in India. But I did not, because I was a Muslim. We left everything we had in East Punjab and arrived in Pakistan, destitute but rich with hope and faith... Nevertheless we sacrificed all we had and moved to Pakistan. With such a background, how would you expect me to forget, after a mere thirty years, what the basis of the Islamic Republic was. The basis is Islam and shall be so".

(Zia-ul-Haq's interview to the Editor of Teheran Daily Kayhan). Quoted by, Tariq Ali, (1983), op.cit., p.140.

26

History of trade union movements is replete with a lot many instances of oppression by the state. For an example: In 1961, in Ghana, tax levy imposed by Nkrumah's government, led to a strike by the railway union and other workers. It was only when President threatened the massive use of force against the strikers, the workers returned to work.

Refer¹ Robin Cohen, Peter C.W. Gutkind and Phyllis Brazier, ed., Peasants and Proletarians (London; Hutchinson and Co. Ltd., 1979), Part 5.

CONCLUSION

Our work has sought to develop a perspective for understanding third world working class. The central ideas and concepts used in our work are derived from Marxian paradigm. Our work has posed an important epistemological problem: to what degree can the concept of working class, developed to explain the capitalist societies of Western Europe, be usefully applied in the context of third world countries? Or does the employment of our concepts obscure and confuse the realities of third world? Realities of third world are distinct in many ways from the realities of advanced capitalist countries. To make the Marxian concepts more effective to explain the realities of third world, orthodoxy must be banished from the realm of Marxism. On the level of Marxian epistemology, our work has sought to criticise economic determinism. We are against any a-priori notions regarding the third world working class. Working class is a mobile agent of history. Thus, it cannot be conceptualised by any pre-determined convictions. Pre-determined notions have always affected the study of third world working class. We are against the myths propagated by certain Marxist scholars that the working class, because of its low numerical strength, cannot play an important role in third world countries. Thereby the study of third world working class is not primary.

According to second myth, working class is inherently revolutionary. These myths are the product of mechanical application of Marxian concepts in third world countries. Marxian always negates orthodoxy. A true Marxist never treats the Marxian concepts as sacrosanct. This is the epistemological foundation of our work.

In order to study third world working class, we have tried to deal with the specificities of third world realities. Most of the scholars studied colonialism as a point of departure to understand third world working class better. A particular type of class structure, presupposes a particular type of social formation. So third world working class can be studied by placing it in third world social formations. Unlike the developed countries, capitalism in third world has been initiated by metropolitan countries. Inorganic nature of third world capitalism made the major difference. As a result of colonial domination, a dependent capitalism has been nurtured by the metropolitan capitalists. The capitalist mode of production has been introduced without dissolving the pre-capitalist modes completely in third world countries. Pre-capitalist modes of production were restructured to fulfil the needs of capitalism. Pre-capitalist forms of exploitation remained. Development of dependent capitalism inhibited capital accumulation in third world social formations. As a result of the penetration of capital, millions

of people were uprooted from their objective means of living. Formation of working class is never an accidental phenomenon in third world. Rather, formation of third world working class is a process. Those who have treated working class as a static-structural category could not be able to understand this historical process. The process of proletarianization is very much complex in third world. This process has been dealt briefly in our work. Colonial state has played a crucial role in the process of proletarianization. In third world, the process of proletarianization did not lead to complete separation of producers from their means of production. It also did not lead to complete spatial dislocation of petty-producers and small peasants. The rural links were maintained. Due to the specific articulation of modes of production, growth of urban based working class was inhibited. Even the organisational capacities of the working class were restricted in third world. The process of articulation not only affected the structure of third world working class but also it affected their consciousness. Third world working class became semi-proletarian and semi-peasant. After political independence, structural presence of metropolitan capital still remained in third world countries. Third world is not completely determined by the logic of metropolitan capitalism. It has its relative autonomy. Third world should not be treated as an

epi-phenomenon of world capitalism. The internal contradictions within the third world countries must be studied.

In our work, we have placed working class in a historical process. Working class as a 'class-in-itself' in third world social formations has been studied with brief references to the aspect of working class as a 'class-for-itself'. Both these aspects are interrelated. In a small undertaking like this, we could not give justice to the latter aspect. We have pointed out the heterogeneity of third world working class. Identification of third world working class posed a serious problem before us. The 'restrictive definition' of working class adopted by certain Marxists could be able to show the differences among different segments of third world working class. Restrictive definition considered the organised factory workers as the working class. A large number of unorganised workers were left out. On the ground of 'restrictive definition', 'labour aristocracy thesis' has been supported by certain Marxist scholars. On the contrary, those who have adopted 'broader' definition of third world working class, considered all the wage earners as the members of the working class. Both these viewpoints are not free from limitations. Both these viewpoints contain some truth. Labour aristocracy thesis, projected certain information regarding the privileged of high-paid workers. But the theoretical and political conclusions of the thesis

could not be accepted. Even if objective conditions of the workers vary, still they do not constitute multiple classes. We do not need multiple definitions of working class to explain various segments of third world working class. Identification of third world working class cannot be purely a theoretical exercise. It is also a profound political question. We have argued that a limited definition of working class is theoretically as well as practically untenable. A broader definition of working class should be taken up by keeping eye upon various segments of third world working class. The definitional exercise must be taken along with explanatory exercise. Working class must be understood vis-a-vis the dominant classes and structures of exploitation. In this context, we have discussed on the nature of post-colonial state. We have made it very clear that post-colonial state is never neutral. It is class-biased. The classical Marxian problematic must be reconstituted to understand the post-colonial state better. We have argued that post-colonial state is not an epi-phenomenon of third world economic structures. It is not determined alone by the capitalist class. Post-colonial state is relatively autonomous. It mediates among the three propertied classes and between the propertied classes and the metropolitan capitalists. Post-colonial state also mediates between the dominant

and dominated classes. Ultimately, post-colonial state preserves the interests of the propertied classes. Post-colonial state, through coercive and ideological means, exercises domination over third world working class. It creates an atmosphere of consensus. Post-colonial state controls the civil society by which ideological domination is exercised. Revolutionary tasks for third world working class are much more complex. It has to attack not only the economic foundation but also the political and cultural foundations of third world.

Our observations are basically tentative. We have not intended to offer any conclusion regarding third world working class. At this stage, it will be quite premature on our part to offer any conclusion. The problems are really enormous and complex. The trajectory of the problems is very long. A few things have been said. A lot many problems are still there to be handled in future.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

THE TEXTILE WORKER IN THE VILLAGE

"First tell us why you're here - have you only come to tell us Datta Samant is power hungry and that we should go back to work?"

Textile workers, now back in their village homes three months into the longest strike in their history, are at first suspicious. From the beginning they have heard from their more well-known village leaders only anti-strike propoganda - workers are well off anyway and are causing damage to the nation by demanding too much, etc, etc. But once they find out that these visitors, organisers with agricultural labourers and toiling peasants in a nearby village, are different, are supporters of their strike, have been distributing pamphlets showing this support, their mood changes. A lamp is brought, friends are called, a meeting is held in a small temple in this poor peasant section of a prosperous and merchant-dominated village in the foothills of the Sahyadris; and the process of organising the textile workers in Shiralapeth taluka of Sangli district has begun.

Workers go in groups of five to ten from village to village on bicycles, shouting slogans; meetings are held; reports are heard of progress in Bombay; they take part in April 19 bandh; with the contribution from a trade union centre in nearby Kolhapur they rent a van and spend two days touring to the very height of this mountainous taluka, and a rally is called at Bilashi on May 2. Bilashi is famous for its 'jungle satyagraha' of the independence movement, when two peasant boys were shot down by the police in 1932 clinging to the national flag. During the 1942 Satara 'prati sarkar' it was again, with the whole taluka, a centre of peoples' courts and armed struggle against the British and against the decoits and goondas harassing the people. For the 35 years of independence after that, however, it experienced only the unchallenged political dominance of the Congress party. Now, as is true of much of India, the forests that once covered the whole of the taluka and the western ghats have nearly vanished, and the huge new Chandoli dam project is on its way to radically changing the agrarian structure. But though some government work is now available on the dam, the lives of poor peasants of the area have so far changed little, and they still send their sons to Bombay to survive by toiling in the mills as they did in the days of the British.

And now, for the first time, red flags can be seen in the taluka in the organising tours of the textile workers - ironically, in the hands of workers whose most repeated slogan is "Long live Datta Samant!"

The Bilashi rally, attended by workers from 25 villages, is addressed by activists of the Lal Nishan Party and the Shramik Mukti Dal who have been active among textile workers and agricultural labourer organisations. (Datta Samant himself, who has of course been most in demand as a speaker, is unable to come, and his other major activists have only recently been arrested on trumped-up murder charges.) And as the workers themselves speak, particularly when they express their fury again and again at the tyranny in the mills of the RMMS (Rashtriya Mill Mazdoor Sangh) it becomes clear that while their economic grievances are overwhelming, their determination to fight also has a deep emotional basis in their assertion of their rights as human beings and members of a class. One worker, telling of having begged and bribed the local RMMS 'union leader' to get his badli status shifted to a permanent position, concluded with, "I may die a badli - but I'm not going to bow to anyone's feet again!" And the response of the workers is "let those RMMS goons show their heads here; we'll knock them off!"

The determination of the workers, shown at the Bilashi meeting, has been there from the beginning. No one who had spoken to the workers in this area, even in the early days of the strike, could have been under the illusion that it could be broken in three or four months. The workers had returned home thinking even then in terms of six to eight months, and with the determination that "we're not going back until we have word from Datta Samant". This strike in their minds was the big one, the battle that had been building up for years over the issues of low pay, disease-ridden working conditions, lack of work standardisation, lack of housing and other facilities to ameliorate the grim struggle for survival in Bombay, the ongoing bullying and corruption of the RMMS. "Sell your houses, sell your land, anything, but don't give up this time."

The ability of the largest section of the working class in India to maintain such a long strike is one aspect of the still-existing rural-urban connection.

Another aspect is the link between the Bombay textile capitalists, the ruling Congress party, and the power structure in the villages themselves, which has become strikingly clear to the workers themselves in the course of the strike. The RWMS is one part of this linkage, and their activists, themselves drawn from the villages, have tried to apply the same kind of pressure in the villages as in the cities. Nearly the entire kulak elite has been with them in this, including the sarpanches, chairmen, all the well-known village big men, all involved in trying to persuade and bully workers to go back. The village governmental structure has also been used, with notices sent to every police patil asking for the names of striking workers, and asking him to approach them and convince them to go back to work.

None of these pressure tactics has worked; they have simply helped to generalise the resentment of the workers at their working conditions and direct factory exploitation to the wider political structure. The resistance of the workers themselves may have begun in a quiet way, simply talking back to the village bosses ("You want me to go back to work? Try offering 5 rupees for people to work on your well tomorrow and see if anyone comes!") but it has moved on to more agitational forms of resistance in the eight month course of the strike. And this is not a small thing in an area which has traditionally been the most solid and most politically heavy-weight rural base of the Congress power structure. For the large majority of the textile workers who have returned to their villages (the Konkani workers are for the most part settled with their families in Bombay), are from Satara, Sangli and Kolhapur districts, not so much from the irrigated, sugarcane-rich river valley villages as from the hilly and dry talukas on either side. Most come from the families of the rural poor, for the low pay and bad working conditions of the textile industry make it among the least desirable forms of Bombay employment. Many are young workers, with few links to the Communist parties and Marxist traditions of the older sections of workers; they have found their leadership in the militant bourgeois unionism of Datta Samant and not in any party with pretensions to revolutionising the rural power structure. But their seething discontent and the determination of their struggle is adding one more factor to the erosion of the legitimacy of Kulak power in the region and thus to the ongoing disintegration of the bourgeois political parties.

The process of organising this discontent of the workers in the rural area itself began with Datta Samant's appearance on February 21 at the agricultural labourer conference at Satana in Nasik district. The conference was organised mainly by the Lal Nishan Party, and it was followed up by a rural tour of Samant and the two LNP leaders Yashwant Chevan and D.S. Kulkarni through villages in the hilly western and dry eastern talukas of the three southern Maharashtra districts. The tour was a resounding success. Workers and their poor peasant relatives and friends turned out in masses of up to twenty to thirty thousand for meetings in the bigger villages, and often gathered to force spontaneous unscheduled meetings on the way or to turn planned 'road visits' into full-scale rallies complete with processions through the villages. These meetings were nearly all organised by the workers and rural poor themselves, with some preparatory help of textile union activists from Dutta Samant's Maharashtra Girmi Kamgar Union and the LNP's Kapad Kamgar Sanghathana. Just as in the Satana conference, they were marked by expressions of unity between workers and rural toilers and hostility against the rich farmer elite. Few of this elite or their political representatives (with the exception of Peasant and Worker Party Leaders in a few villages) attended the workers' meetings, and where they did they often found a highly uncongenial atmosphere. At Uttur in Kolhapur district a Sarpanch grew intensely disturbed at talk by LNP organiser Santaram Petil of agricultural labourers' problems and the need for unity; he rose to protest "just talk about the workers, why are you bringing in politics", and was ignored. In the following speech Datta Samant himself took up the theme, saying that workers could not afford to stay away from politics, that they had now had experience of all the ruling parties betraying them, and that the sarpanch's party should send a resolution through the grampanchayat supporting the strike. And the man was besieged by workers afterwards pressing this demand. Interestingly, the issues of 'peasants' raised by speakers at these meetings were not those of the demands for higher crop prices, but were rather such issues as the land needs of project-affected workers, minimum wages for agricultural labourers, corruption and influence-mongering in the kulat-controlled sugar factories and the difficulties of poor peasants in having their sugar taken for processing.

This first rural tour had its main aim as that of collecting grain for the striking workers and their families who have been left in Bombay and of spreading some initial consciousness among the workers who had gone back to their villages. But after a phase of meetings, grain collection and building some organisational links,

more agitational forms began to emerge. Workers turned to participation in bandhs, road-blockages and gheraos directed against the MLAs or other government officials from their areas. The Shiralapeth textile workers' organising had its climax in early July when a meeting was planned by two local MLAs and a state minister in the taluka town to try to convince the workers to return to Bombay; they blockaded their cars twice and even after one set of activists was arrested other workers forced the planned meeting to close down with an uproar. It has apparently become almost impossible for the Congress party bosses now to confront the workers in their villages.

The main lack has been the weakness of a real left political force in building up this rural-urban toilers' alliance. Datta Samant's own union structure is not geared to this sort of thing and after the first tour his activists have not shown much interest; the local involvement of those worker-activists committed to Samant has been relatively spontaneous. The CPI and CPI(M) have also for the most part ignored the task of rural organising. Even at the beginning of the strike, they had urged workers to stay in Bombay rather than return to their villages, apparently in the belief that it is only in the dynamic heart of the city that a real mass movement can take place. When questioned about this their activists plead the lack of a rural base for the party in southern Maharashtra. It is true that the LNP has somewhat more widespread rural-based unions and rural links, but these have been less important in the task of mobilising the workers than the fact that the party decided to put some resources into first organising the rural tour with Samant and then directing many of its textile activists who had gone back to the villages to organise and sending two of its leading activists on almost continuous rural jeep tour for some months. In contrast, even those CPI and CPI(M) activists who work in or are from southern Maharashtra have generally remained in the cities and spent their time trying to use the new burst of textile militancy by capturing local textile unions from the existing conservative leadership rather than going into the villages. Quite aside from the problem of ideologies of how to build the 'worker-peasant alliance', the whole situation seems to indicate a lack of imagination and daring on the part of the two big parties, rather than a lack of activists and sympathisers with rural southern Maharashtra connections.

Source: Special Correspondent, Economic and Political Weekly (Bombay), vol. XVII, no. 38, 18 September 1982, pp. 1525-26.

APPENDIX I

TEXTILE STRIKE TURNS POLITICAL

Three hundred thousand workers marched in pouring rain in Bombay on August 1, bring Bombay's strike of 250,000 textile workers, the largest in history, to a new level of political confrontation with the Congress(I). "Without destroying the anti-working class power of Congress, the basic problems of textile workers and other sections of workers cannot be solved", declared the workers' leader, Datta Samant. Other union representatives, women's organisation representatives, and activists of the Lal Nishan Party called for workers' take-over of factories, recalled China's 'long march' and stressed the transformation of the workers' struggle into a political one.

This was the biggest in a series of 'long marches' organised in Bombay under Samant's leadership, and was a response of the working class to claims of the government and millowners that the strike has been defeated.

True, about 120,000 workers are back in the mills without winning any demands (this is the official figure, and of this number only about 95,000 are original workers, the rest are newly hired) and the majority of workers still out may never get their jobs back due to several mills going bankrupt and the others undertaking extensive modernisation and retrenchment. But the mood of the workers is one of anger, not demoralisation. The workers undertook the strike from the beginning in a spirit of no-compromise, succeeding in remaining out longer than anyone, even the left parties, had predicted (the majority of workers remained out for 18 months and kept most of the mills completely shut for over a year). Now, even though many are forced by economic hardship to return, they have continued to struggle to the extent they are able. At present they continue to show their loyalty to Samant's union - rather, their union - by attending its rallies, subscribing to membership even when police continue to harass and arrest all those collecting union subscriptions, and electing its activists to mill co-operative societies. Later they will again escalate the struggle.

The fact that the strike has been 'defeated' by conventional standards can give no comfort to the ruling classes in India's industrial centre, as they anticipate continued unrest inside the mills and watch a new political alliance of industrial workers, the rural poor, dalits and women gradually shape, as seen in the August 1 ^{take} rally.

Sangli Election

The first step of the transformation took place in June-July when workers challenged Vasantdada Patil, standing for election in his own stronghold of Sangli to confirm his position as Chief Minister. The constituency was a totally safe one; there are many textile workers from the outlying, backward areas of the district, but the constituency is in central Sangli city, excluding its working class suburbs and including 13-well irrigated villeges. But when an LNP candidate backed by Semant's Workers Front and the left parties and dalit organisations stood on behalf of the textile workers' struggle, Dada became so nervous that he camped in the constituency for nearly a month, brought dozens of ministers and MLAs to help his campaign, and exercised all sorts of strong-arm tactics on the voters.

Most of these were of the usual type - making it clear that wards/villages not voting for Dada would get no development funds, threatening the Muslim minority with 'another Malegaon', distributing thousands of saris to women voters, etc. But when the Congress goondas began stone throwing and taking out knives, the hundreds of workers who had come for the campaign threatened to retaliate and the level of violence rapidly de-escalated. On election day, July 3, the workers' representative, Santram Patil, had won 15,000 to Dada's 53,000 votes. "If we can do so much in a rich constituency like Sangli which has been in Dada's family pocket for decades, the whole Congress power is going to rock by 1985", said jubilant local activists. With Indira Gandhi having already lost the south and Kashmir, and facing unprecedented turmoil in Assam and Punjab, a blow in Maharashtra could be a final straw. And the main difference from the other states is that the opposition alliance shaping up in Maharashtra is one with a solid working class core and leadership.

The political evolution of the textile strike is not simply towards oppositional electoral politics but is also one of workers moving to lead struggles of other toiling sections. Workers of Sangli district, for instance, have begun to formulate strategies for leading struggles of rural labourers and poor-middle peasants against the kulak elite entrenched in the villeges and sugar factories of the central irrigated areas of the district. Marches and demonstrations of labourers on Employment Guarantee Scheme projects have already begun. And in Bombay itself,

on July 15, Semant's Workers' Front organised an anti-price rise march, mainly led by women, against the wholesale market, the centre of merchant power in the city. This is a major step forward, for Semant's unionism, though militant, has up to now been limited to fighting for wage demands. Now, how much Semant as an individual is moving left remains to be seen, but there is no doubt that the one-time Congress Party member is now allying with at least a section of communists and standing forth as a leader of an increasingly politicised working class.

Unique Strike

The textile strike from the beginning has had many unique features, among them notably the opposition it has faced - confronting not only the most powerful section of the Indian bourgeoisie but also a state adamantly determined to crush the workers for fear their success might inspire a wave of struggles throughout the country. The strike began in what Indira Gandhi had declared to be the 'Year of Productivity' - and by the time the year was over it had resulted in 50 million 'mandays' lost. The Economic Survey named it a major factor responsible for low GNP growth in 1982.

To crush the strike a full range of tactics was used. On the one hand, repression, the constant use of police, sporadic arrests, beatings and occasional torturing of workers, sometimes randomly dragged in from their chawls, repeated detention of all major union activists (who could be found!) below the level of Semant himself, and generally as much force as the state dared to use against a mass of a hundred thousand concentrated in central Bombay. Against workers who had gone back to their villages, the state tried to activate the entire government-party machinery, from police patils asked to report workers to the police to local politicians and bosses bringing pressure.

The workers responded to this with massive solidarity campaigns that included contribution of tons of grain from peasants, donations from workers and employees in other industries, as well as support strikes at the state level. And their own actions included huge rallies, marches and jail bhara campaigns in Bombay as well as in rural areas, and, in February-March 1983 district-level 'long marches' in which 5,000 to 12,000 workers walked 3-4 days from their villages to district headquarters in four districts.

The other aspect of the state's and millowners' strategy was a very sophisticated propaganda campaign, directed more at the middle class and other sections of the working population in an attempt to show that the strike was futile, that it wasn't really affecting the millowners because they had huge stockpiles on hand, and that anyway the mills were 'really running'. The bourgeois press helped this by reporting practically nothing on the strike except the millowners' propaganda. Mills were kept open, and huge sums were paid out for months to 'workers' (mainly scabs and clerical staff) who in fact had nothing to do because no production was going on, and cloth produced elsewhere was stamped as Bombay produce - all in order to make a show that the mills were running. And in fact many people were convinced that "after all there is no shortage of cloth we can see" because the government could make up shortages in the internal market while huge export losses, for which Bombay production was vital, were not so easily visible.

Middle Class Demoralisation

The repression had little effect on the workers. Efforts to bring pressure in the villages failed, and the Congress-UMMS activists who went to their once-secure villages to try to bring back workers were driven away - sometimes literally naked. It was sheer economic pressure which in the end drove enough workers back to start the mills running. But the propaganda blitz did have an effect in creating a puzzled and defeatist mood about the strike among the urban middle classes.

Surprisingly this included most middle class leftists, and a unique and disturbing feature of the strike was the failure of the established left (the CPI, CPI(M) and Socialists) to give it more than nominal support. These parties did not mobilise their unions to support it significantly even in Maharashtra state, and there was almost no all-India support action. The left parties adopted a defeatist attitude to the strike from the beginning, and after the big October Diwali vacation decided that the strike had 'fizzled out' and privately advised their own members in textiles to go back to work.

These parties have hated Datta Samant, for workers have been leaving their unions and flocking to him, as a result of his greater militancy and rejection of legalism. With a sectarian attitude that only unions and struggles under their own control can be really revolutionary, they

have seen the textile strike as "Datta Samant's strike", and predicted that the workers after their defeat would realise the futility of such 'mindless militancy' and return to more traditional 'red flag' leadership. But the opposite has happened: the base of these parties among the Bombay working class has been almost nullified, and in a startling and symbolic end of a historical era, workers disturbed the speech of S.A. Dange who has had a solid base among them ever since his leadership as a young Communist in the first historic 1928 textile strike - when he appeared with a Congress(I) leader to "appeal to" the textile workers.

However, the section of the left that supported the strike with their full resources has grown in the process. The largest of these is the Lal Nishan Party, which now has the biggest rural and urban base of any communist party in the state and publishes a daily paper in Marathi, Shramik Vichar. LNP threw all its union and party resources into the strike and organised most of the rural agitations. Included also are a number of smaller new communist organisations, notably the Shramik Mukti Dal, a 'post-traditional' communist group which organised the rural agitation in Sangli district, and the Navjawan Bharat Sabha, a Naxalite-linked group of young workers in central Bombay.

Struggle Ahead

The effects of the strike are as major and long-term as its size. One of these will be its economic effect on the industry, for the weaker mills have not been able to survive and the bigger ones have been undertaking extensive modernisation - reducing the number of workers they will have to confront in the future! The modernisation process had begun earlier, but the strike has hurried up the process of change in this one-time backward industry.

From the point of view of the working class, however, the political aspect of the strike, changes in the organisation and class-consciousness of the working class are much more important than these economic changes. Here, while the workers have not yet won their economic demands, they have decisively broken the hold of Congress unionism in this part of India. Upto now, while eastern India, especially Calcutta, has been the centre of the most militant working class activities under Communist-led unions, workers in Maharashtra and Gujarat in western India

(now the biggest industrial centre) have been under Congress domination. A lynchpin of this hegemony has been the Congress clamp down on the textile workers, aided by repressive labour legislation and Congress political hegemony.

Now, militant labour struggle of the past few years, mostly under Samant's leadership, have broken this pattern of incorporation. Their main feature has been a disdain and disregard for all bourgeois legalism, and the new turn of these struggles to the recognition of the necessity of politically destroying Congress power as a major step forward.

The fact that in their break from the bourgeoisie the workers have turned, not to the traditional left, but to Samant, an independent 'bourgeois reformist' unionist, also shows the stagnation of parliamentary leftism in India. It has become no longer capable of leading the most militant struggles, and communist alternatives are only beginning to emerge. A churning is going on in the working class, and a major aspect of the new workers' movements developing in India is their 'independent' orientation - a rejection of the past pattern of relationship of political parties to mass organisations, in which parties thought trade unions, etc. could have a revolutionary direction and a 'correct line' only if they were totally under party control. Even in the case of the left parties, this had led to splitting mass organisations along party lines - with every political party having a separate trade union 'centre', separate women's wing, etc. - and to subordinating these organisations and their struggles to the political alliances of the parties.

Now the workers' movement is going in the direction of snatching the unions from the grip of these parties and the parties are finding it hard to bear. Thus the CPI and CPI(M) interpreted the textile workers going from them to Datta Samant as 'forsaking the red flag' due to workers' 'immaturity' and selfish 'economism'. But in fact the outcome of the textile strike was that Samant, who had previously used the Congress Party's flag for his unions, has adopted a new flag now appearing all over Bombay (and in many district towns) - a fist rising out of a factory smokestack, black or white with a one-third red border. Symbolically it shows the direction of the entire Bombay movement.

More than this, it can be said that the most advanced achievement of the struggle is the new relation of workers with agricultural labourers and small peasants in the countryside. Upto now in India areas of militant working class struggle have been alienated from militant rural struggle and vice versa. Now this is changing. The change is shown in the Jharkhand-Chattisgarh movements with their examples of mine workers joining and supporting adivasi peasant struggles. And it has been an important aspect of the Bombay textile workers' relation with their villages during their strike struggle. A new era is beginning in the Indian working class movement.

Source: Gail Omvedt, "Textile Strike Turns Political", Economic and Political Weekly (Bombay), vol.XVIII, no.35, 27 August 1983, pp.1509-11.

APPENDIX II

POEMS

The Life We Live

By

Arun Kamble

If you were to live the life we live

(Then out of you would poems arise).

We : kicked and spat at for our piece of bread

You: fetch fulfillment and name of the lord.

We : down-gutter degraders of our heritage

You: its sole repository, descendants of the sage.

We : never has a paise to scratch our arse

You: the golden cup of offerings in your bank.

Your bodies flame in sandalwood

Ours you shoved under half-turned sand.

Wouldn't the world change, and fast

If you were forced to live at last

This life that's all we've always had?

(Translated by Gauri Deshpande)

Published in: Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars,
vol.10, no.3, July-September 1978,
p.6.

It's Reddening on the Horizon

By

J.V. Powar

These twisted fists won't loosen now
 The coming revolution won't wait for you.
 We have endured enough; no more endurance now
 won't do letting down your blood's call to arms
 It won't do:

the seeds of revolution have been sown since long
 no use awaiting the explosion now!
 the fire-pit is ablaze; it is for tomorrow
 even if you take to your heels now
 no use; life's certainty no more.
 How will they snuff the fire within?
 How will they stop minds gone ablaze?

No more reasoning now!
 unreason helps a lot
 Once the horizon is red

What is wrong with keeping the door open?

(Translated by F.S. Nerurkar), published in Ibid., p.7.

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