Ideology is a more vital and integral component of political parties as they are the prime conveyors of competing sets of political beliefs. But the extent to which political parties associate themselves with ideologies differ. Some parties, especially centrist parties view ideologies as tactical means to the end of electoral victory. Here party leaders are concerned with adopting policy stands that are designed to win elections then with winning elections in order to implement a particular set of policies. The elevation of ideology into an end-in-itself is viewed here as irrational and dysfunctional. Proponents of this view tend to favour such material incentives as patronage and career advancement over ideological motivations. They believe that a commitment to ideological principles endangers the successful operation of the pragmatic, bargaining, brokerage style of the party. However some other parties, especially both rightist and leftist parties, assign a preeminent role in societal goal definition and government policy making. From this viewpoint, a political party is supposed to stand for something, and it seeks power in order to implement basic policy views.

It is expected to be something more than merely an electoral machine. It follows then that party leaders and activists tend to be motivated by ideological or policy incentives rather than by material gains.\(^2\)

When leftist political parties and movements assign a pre-eminent role to ideologies, then the function of ideologies are three in number: (1) The function of revolutionary ideology is to legitimize the movement, to sanction its means and ends in terms of basic values accepted by its followers. Ideological justification for revolution is important when sustained violence is a principal technique employed by the movement. (2) It threatens the legitimacy of the existing regime in so far as it can claim continuity with the fundamental values and goals of the society. Even leftist revolutionary ideologies frequently cite traditions of the past and that revolution is only the necessary means of realizing the society's basic cultural identity and historical purpose. Invariably the choice of traditions is selective but it enables the revolutionary movement to link its actions to a part of the past and lessens the threat to its clientele of a radical break in the future. (3) It

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facilitates the development of cross-cutting alliances between the active minorities of the society's major classes. The ideology that appeals to national identity is the most powerful symbolic means of mobilizing revolutionary support, because nationalism alone has the greatest potential for cutting across all the society's classes. Thus legitimacy, continuity and reinforcement become the three major functions of an ideology.  

However the successful functioning of the ideology, and hence the movement or the party itself, depends on three main dimensions of it. The first dimension, that of saliency or sensitivity and intensity, indicates the extent to which ideological perspectives are applied as a frame of reference to the interpretation of political phenomena. The second dimension, that of constraint, points out the consistency and interdependence among the political beliefs that incorporate into an ideology. The third dimension, that of content, refers to the substance and direction of the political ideas, to what the ideology is about. A notable fact is that, the salience, constraint and content of a new ideology primarily depends on the extent to which the existing social

order had decayed. This indicates that the nature of functioning, salience, constraint and content of an ideology is entirely dependent on the condition of the society. Taking cue from this, Section I of this chapter tries to mention briefly the political economy of Tamil Nadu. While Section II outlines the ideological dispositions of CPI, CPI(M) and CPI(ML), Section III offers a brief analysis and conclusions.

Section I: Political Economy of Tamil Nadu:

No section of Marxist thought in India to-day would regard the state in India, in spite of universal adult franchise and a parliamentary democratic constitution, as a people's state where power belongs in any real sense to the people. Marxists generally regard the present-day Indian state as the class state of the exploiting vested interests, the handful of upper classes.

During the contemporary period, after the close of the Second World War, the imperialist metropolitan powers have conceded the formal political independence of the colonial countries and have moved on to the modern and subtler form

of neo-colonialism. Thus they continue to exploit. Secondly
the native capitalist class of these countries remain
relatively weak in regard to their independent financial
and technological resources. The acquisition of sovereign
political power by them, offers them a chance to utilize
the state machinery to enrich themselves. Thirdly, after
the transfer of power to the bourgeoisie, the feudal landlords
and princes remarkably adjusted themselves to the reformist
process of the Indian state. The result is that Imperialists,
native bourgeoisie and the feudal landlords, all continue to
exploit the Indian people. 5

All the Marxists agree that the imperialists, bourgeoisie
and the landlords are the exploiting classes. But they are not
united on the question as to which of these classes, or which

5. Pandian, D. Pannatu Koiladananam, (International capital),
(Madras : CPI, 1976).
Chaturvedi, T.N. Foreign investment/collaboration in
India. Indian journal of public administration,
Bhamhri, C.P. Indian bourgeoisie and the Indian
political system, Ibid, pp.576-593.
Singarajan, S. Agrarian movements in India with
special reference to Tamil Nadu 1857-1947,
Tamil Nadu Archives, Madras.
specific combination of the three, represent the real rulers and exploiters of India. The same question boils down to the political economy of Tamil Nadu also.

Economic activity results from the utilization of resources. The utilization of resources is determined by those who own and control them, the decision-makers in the system. When we take two objective conditions into consideration, viz., ownership of resources and the control of the decision maker over his economic environment, a spectrum of decision makers can be drawn up. In this spectrum the peasant farmer occupies the one end and the state occupies the opposite end. In terms of the twin aspects of ownership and control, the special feature of the state as a decision maker is that its ownership of resources is limited, but the control it can exercise over the system is vast. In Tamil Nadu, the important features of the economic system are: (i) increasing population (ii) increasing literacy (iii) preponderance of the agricultural sector (iv) slow growth rate of employment in organized sector (v) increase in urban population and (vi) the continued dominance of the primary sector in the income of the state.6 In this complex situation, the state was the

prime mover of economic change. The planned economic
development, as envisaged by the state, wanted to raise the
standard of living of the masses and to eradicate poverty and
gross inequalities.

It is interesting to note that in the planned development
the government did not take the initiative to fix targets for
land utilization pattern, cropping pattern, production, etc.
Nor was it interested to move into action all by itself.
During the First and the Second five year plans that cover the
fifties, the emphasis of the state was on providing the
necessary infrastructure for future economic development. All
along the state had invited landowners and tenants to participate
in the schemes initiated by the government to their utmost
benefit. The same was the case in the industrial sector also.
Steps taken to add to the infrastructural facilities such as
power and roads, the setting up of industrial estates and
arrangements to provide liberal credit facilities helped in
the further expansion of the economy. But in that expansion,
the government did not own very much. It had merely allowed
the private entrepreneurs to benefit from the situation.7

7. Government of Tamil Nadu, Perspective Plan for Tamil Nadu
With the background thus prepared, the state launched a number of positive measures in the sixties. It had tried to alter the ownership pattern by passing 'The Madras Land Reforms (Fixation of ceiling on land) Act of 1961'. It had also tried to protect the interests of the tenants by passing several legislations. As for the agricultural labourers the state passed a law fixing minimum rates of wages for seven classes of workers employed in agriculture. The state now tried to introduce a change in the cropping pattern through the Intensive agricultural area programme in Thanjavur in 1960-61 and the High yielding varieties programme of 1966-67. It also adopted a series of ancillary measures to provide infrastructural facilities continuously. It shifted from major to minor irrigation from third plan onwards. In 1963 the Agricultural Refinance Corporation was established to provide medium term and long term loans. In 1968 the Tamil Nadu Agro-Industries Corporation was set up to supply machinery for mechanized farming.

In the Industrial sector also there was appreciable change in the government's attitude. Its policy now was aimed primarily to remove the State's dependence on the textile industry and to build up a diversified and sophisticated industrial complex. The state continued to provide the infrastructure facilities also. The government's involvement in the industrialization of the state had been both in terms of direct participation and a series of measures undertaken to encourage the participation of the private sector.

In the seventies the agricultural policy of the state did not change. The passing of the 'The Madras Land Reforms (Fixation of Ceiling on land) Amendment Act of 1970' restructured the ownership pattern. The state continued to provide infrastructural facilities of credit, minor irrigation, cheap power, and farm equipments. Thus the state continued to control the economic environment and it did not own in the agricultural sector. But in the industrial field it now become an active competitor by owning several public sector undertakings. It also increasingly stepped in to control the industrial environment through its credit, licensing and other policies.

However, it has been difficult to assess the economic changes brought out by the policies of the state. Arguments are raised on both counts, that the state has been progressing, as well as no real change has been brought out by these policies. While the successive governments have tried to portray their policies in a favourable light, authoritative and expert judgments pronounce that the state had not progressed much.

Kurien and Josef James contend:

1. "There has been an increase in output, both in agriculture and in industry. The increase in output in agriculture has been essentially in paddy, at the expense of millets."

2. The increase in output has been achieved without any major direct interference with the basic structure of the economy. Some changes in the structure of the economy were postulated (land reforms) but not seriously implemented.


3. The changes in both agriculture and industry have been characterized by thick concentration and thin spread spatially. Much of the economy of Tamil Nadu is still dominated by the natural patterns of the past.

4. In terms of the broadest categories, primary, secondary and tertiary, there was no visible change in the pattern of economic activity. The noticeable change is an increase of the work force in the primary sector, although the period is often described as one of the rapid industrialization.

5. The state has played a leading role in the economic activities. Its policy both in agriculture and industry was to subsidize private activity to bring about an increase in output. In agriculture it was an effort to increase the production of paddy, and in industry to bring about diversification and sophistication.

6. The direct beneficiaries of these schemes in agriculture were the bigger farmers and in industry the large scale industries and the modern small scale industries.

7. The impact of these operations has been seen in the rural areas in the substantial increase in agricultural labourers and in the urban areas in a concentration of a bigger urban population in a few urban agglomerations swelling the sector of unorganized economic activity.¹²

Kurien and James conclude in a cryptic manner.

"Certainly this pattern of change is not unfamiliar. It is a variant of the 'enclave' development of the colonial period. During the colonial days, it resulted from a deliberate colonial policy. That it has become more intense after two decades of planning whose professed objective has been to bring about a major transformation in the structure and working of the economy, and to usher in a socialist pattern of society is the paradox of economic change and economic policies in Tamil Nadu".\(^{13}\)

The unmistakable point that becomes clear out of the analysis of the economists, Kurien and James, is that the state policy has rendered the decision-makers, both land owners and industrialists, not only to increase their properties but also allowed them to control the economic environment in a much more co-ordinated and effective manner. If so, the injustice wrought to the non-decision makers of the economic system viz., to agricultural labourers and industrial labourers, has been much more pronounced. At the same time, the state policy has not changed all the feudal lords into agricultural capitalists and entrepreneurs into industrialists. Thus the economic decision makers vary from small peasants to feudal lordlords and agricultural capitalists, and from small entrepreneurs to big industrialists. The economic scene has become complicated.

\(^{13}\) Ibid.
However the state policy of allowing the capitalist private sector to be the decision maker of the economic environment continued in all the three decades and more of independence, irrespective of political change.

The Indian National Congress, which was in power for the two decades (1947 to 1967) in Tamil Nadu, had a peculiar economic policy, which was a compromise of different economic ideologies housed in the national movement. Actually there had been three main streams of economic thinking inside the congress. First, the Servodaya ideal which was based on the Gandhian interpretation of village self-sufficiency. Second, the free enterprise ideal emphasizing industrialization. And third, the socialist ideal of industrialization with state initiative and social ownership of means of production. 14

The congress programme for the achievement of national objectives is a non-doctrinaire approach which cannot be classified under any one of the known isms. Such an approach enables the congress to have a very flexible set of ideas with which to formulate its programmes and adapt the means to the needs as it goes along. This is partly inherited from its

past when the party had to be a kind of mass movement presenting a single front against the foreign regime. The party had to accommodate people with different shades of opinion within the larger framework, because numbers meant strength at that time for the immediate objective of Swaraj. But a political party with a programme to implement cannot be an omnibus party with an ever broadening base. With the dropping of the socialists and the sarvodaya enthusiasts out of the party, the congress did lose some of the omnibus nature of its membership. But its ideology, if it can said to have one, reflects an ad hoc outlook on economic issues. In fact the Congress has found out that a combination of free enterprise theory with occasional doses of socialist principles had been a convenient strategy to keep itself in power. 15

The Dravida Munnetra Kazagam (DMK), which came to power in 1967, remained in office till 1976. During this period the complexity of the economic situation had increased and the DMK muddled without any clear ideology. It saw a condition that required treatment at several points at the same time and therefore the DMK did not allow itself to have a clear and comprehensive view of the whole picture. The party felt that the wise way was to allow the policies of the congress to

15. Ibid., p.64.
continue, while believing in its capacity to manipulate the cultural symbols to keep itself in power. The All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) which obtained power in 1977 by manipulating the symbol of 'Annaism', is an extension of the Dravidian ideology. The continuation of cultural overtones of this party forbids it to have an economic thinking of its own, and hence, in essence, AIADMK also follows the Congress tradition. 15

The policy of free enterprises with periodical socialist overdozes of the 'congress tradition' has helped agricultural capitalism and industrial capitalism beyond doubt. But there are no empirical proof as to which of the castes of Tamil Nadu have been the main beneficiaries. Because the socio-political idiom of power in Tamil Nadu has been studded with Brahmin-Non-Brahmin conflict, it becomes necessary to find out the results of the congress tradition. This becomes singularly important because DMK and AIADMK have obtained power not by

16. Hence the reasons for political change in Tamil Nadu must be looked into the socio-political issues that affect the people. See Ramachandra, J. Government and politics of Tamil Nadu, working paper presented by the Chairman to the 40th All India Political Science Conference, Mysore, December 1980.

Arunan, Dravida Iyakkam - Oru Marxia Aayvu, (Dravidian Movement - A Marxian Analysis), (Madurai : A. Abdul Wahab, '981).
posing an economic ideology opposed to the congress tradition but by sidetracking the issue with cultural symbols and personality clashes. Such an enquiry will also reveal the nature and extent of exploitation attempted by the landowners and the bourgeoisie.

Section II: Ideological dispositions of the Tamil Nadu Communist Parties.

The argument in the previous section about the political economy of Tamil Nadu came to the conclusion that: (i) the state was the prime mover of economic change (ii) The state has pursued a policy which would aid capitalism enormously (iii) The state did not allow a say from the non-decision-makers in the economic system (iv) All the political parties, which obtained power continued to have a tradition of absence of specific economic ideologies. (v) The nature and extent of exploitation in terms of caste has not been enquired into by any of the political parties and (vi) It is possible to obtain power, without recourse to any economic argument, but by addressing to the immediate socio-political questions. In such a situation, it is but natural that one expects that the communists should have addressed themselves to the twofold tasks: (i) they should have worked out an economic argument opposed to the congress tradition and (ii) the economic
argument should have been based on concrete realities of Tamil Nadu as an answer to the ills of the society. In both these tasks the communists have failed.

The ideology of the CPI: For purposes of convenient analysis the ideological development of the CPI, can be categorised in four phases: (a) from the adoption of the statement of policy and programme in 1951 to the Fourth congress of the CPI in 1956; (b) since 1956 to the split of the CPI in 1964; (c) since 1964 to the eleventh congress in 1978; and (d) since 1978 to the present.

First phase (1951-1956): At the second congress of the CPI in 1948, it was concluded that the entire bourgeoisie had to be regarded as an enemy, since it had gone over to Imperialism. The political thesis adopted at the congress contended that India was ripe for a socialist revolution and that working class in alliance with the peasantry could provide leadership to this revolution to the exclusion of the bourgeoisie. 17

However after protracted debate in the party and a series of twists and turns, the thesis of 1948 was rejected and a statement of policy and programme were accepted in 1951. These documents proclaimed that India was not ripe for an immediate socialist transformation. It was now contended that the entire bourgeoisie as a class should not be regarded as the enemy of the people. The implication of this formulation is that the CPI was making a differentiation between that section of the Indian bourgeoisie which, collaborating with British imperialism, was effectively controlling the government too, and the sections of the Indian national bourgeoisie whose urge for independent economic development of India even along capitalist lines was being jeopardised by the policy of collaborationist section. Hence the CPI's formulation was that to the extent the national bourgeoisie would be permitted to develop its economic potential to that extent the grip of the collaborationist section, together with imperialism, would slacken on Indian economy. Since the Nehru's government, according to the CPI's assessment, was an appendage to the collaborationist section, it had to be replaced by a people's democracy, where the national bourgeoisie would have a place where it would be assured of realization of its economic aims. The policy and programme of the CPI till 1956 were set in this
Second phase (1956-1964): At the Fourth Congress of the party, held in Palghat in 1956, the CPI reformulated several of its earlier positions. It contended that the government was not an absolute lackey of imperialism and feudalism. Rather it had a dual role, corresponding to the dual character of the national bourgeoisie. The recognition of this dual role of the national bourgeoisie led to a clarification of the characterization of the government. It was no longer contended that a division existed among the bourgeoisie, the big bourgeoisie siding with the imperialists and the national bourgeoisie striving for capitalist development. Now a new formulation was made that it was the bourgeoisie as a whole class which had conflict with imperialism and feudalism, as well as it was the bourgeoisie as a whole class which compromised, in its drive for independent capitalist development at the cost of the people. Because of this understanding the CPI began to lend qualified support to Nehru government which were directed against imperialism and feudalism. On the other hand, the CPI also attacked sharply the compromising policies of the government. This policy of the CPI evoked bitter controversies within the

right and left factions of the party, for the right faction supported the Nehru government and the left faction opposed it. 19

Third Phase (1964-1978): Soon after the split, the CPI had published another programme. In that programme the CPI had envisaged that India was not ripe for immediate socialist revolution and hence the Indian people must make two revolutions to establish socialist order. The first is the bourgeois revolution which overthrows the feudal order and political absolutism which goes with it, and establishes a capitalist order and bourgeois democracy. In the second revolution the proletariat overthrows bourgeois capitalism and establishes a socialist order.

For making the first revolution the actual socio-political condition must be characterized. The CPI characterized the Indian situation thus: "The state in India is the organ of the class rule of the national bourgeoisie as a whole, in which the big bourgeoisie holds powerful influences". 20 Against such a politico-economic order, the best strategy for the first


revolution, would be to pursue a policy of anti-imperialist and antifeudal revolution. The CPI calls this revolution National Democratic Revolution which would culminate in the establishment of a national democratic government at the centre. For carrying out the national democratic revolution, the CPI would welcome all democratic forces inside the national democratic front. The CPI considers that the working class would be the initiator and prime builder of this front. The front would be an alliance of the workers, peasants (including the rich peasant but not the landlord), the urban and rural intelligentsia and the national bourgeoisie (excluding the monopolists). If the national democratic front obtains power it would launch on the non-capitalist path of development. This path is not socialism because it does not ensure social ownership of the means of production, exchange and distribution and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Neither is it capitalist because it checks the growth of monopoly capital and lays the foundation for socialism.

The programme of pursuing the non-capitalist path of development to socialism through the national democratic front would involve, first, the elimination of foreign capital; second, the extension of the state sector in key and heavy industries with the nationalization of banks, general insurance,
foreign trade, oil, mines and plantations; third, the breaking of Indian monopoly combines; fourth, the destruction of the power of landlords by the abolition of landlordism, imposition of ceilings on landholdings and distribution of surplus lands to agricultural labourers and poor peasants; and fifth, the provision of facilities for the development of non-monopolist private sector enterprises. With the implementation of these measures the task of the national democratic revolution would be completed and the country would then be set firmly on the road towards socialism.  

Fourth phase (1978 to the present): In this phase the CPI carefully observed that people got rid of congress government and voted for Janata only to bring about a change in the type of the government and the Janata vote did not in any way mean that the people had rejected any of the hitherto accepted domestic or foreign policies, such as, secularism, democracy, socialism and non-alignment. CPI had further categorically stated that the kind of government that came to power was not really the kind of alternative for which the masses have been


struggling. Positively, the CPI concludes: "The mood of anger of the people would have to give way for raising the level of political consciousness and of mass activity to a higher plane. For this all democratic and left oriented forces must act in unity for taking the socialist movement of the working people forward."

The ideology of the CPI(M):

According to the CPI(M), in the present era there exist four fundamental social contradictions, namely, the contradiction between the camps of world socialism and capitalism, the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie in capitalist countries, the contradiction between the imperialist states and the colonial and neocolonial countries, and the contradiction among different imperialist states. Of these four contradictions, Khruschev had emphasized primarily the contradiction between the camps of world socialism and world capitalism. For the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, he had envisaged a peaceful transition to socialism. However, the CPI(M) considers that Khruschev had made four principal mistakes, namely, first, the assertion that the contradiction between the socialist and imperialist camps is the main contradiction of the era;

22. Sarkar, J. Establish the left democratic alternative, (Madras : CPI, 1979), p.44.
second, the belief that the contradiction between proletariat and bourgeoisie may be resolved peacefully; third, the assumption that international agreements among monopolists may mitigate inter-imperialist contradictions; and, finally, that the contradiction between the socialist and imperialist camps may be resolved through peaceful economic competition. The CPI(M) denounced Khruschev's doctrine as un-Marxian and opportunist.  

23

In the light of this international understanding the CPI(M) had considered that Indian situation had not become ripe for socialist revolution. The party wants to complete the bourgeois democratic revolution first, which it calls People's Democratic Revolution.

The people's democratic revolution is an answer to the existing condition in India. The CPI(M) notes that the present Indian state is the organ of the class rule of the bourgeoisie and landlords, led by the big bourgeoisie who are increasingly collaborating with foreign finance capital in pursuit of the capitalist path of development. Therefore,

the predominant characteristic of the People's democratic revolution has been anticolonialism and anti-feudalism.\textsuperscript{24}

The people's democratic front would be led by the working class. The allies of this people's democratic front would be the peasants, the lower middle classes and probably a section of the national bourgeoisie. But the bourgeoisie would in all probability be a vacillating ally. The enemies are the big bourgeoisie, feudal landlords, foreign monopoly capitalists and right reactionary forces.

The ideology of CPI(ML):

The CPI(ML) took its cue from Mao Tse-tung's New democracy and other writings. The party felt that no colony such as India, with 80% of its population in the rural areas, and a relatively backward industrial base, could ever hope to achieve true economic independence without a People's war led by the proletariat and its vanguard. The party feels that imperialism continues in modified forms as does feudalism. The party is convinced that feudal and semifeudal relations dominate the agricultural scene and the feudalists serve the interests of imperialism by checking the development of an

\textsuperscript{24} CPI(M), Programme and statement of policy, (New Delhi: CPI(M), 1984), p.23.
independent capitalist class. 25

India is therefore, to the CPI(ML), a semicolonial
semifeudal state, ruled by the comprador-bureaucrat bourgeoisie
and the feudal landlord, where the principal contradiction is
between feudalism and the masses of the peasantry. 26 In
uprooting this, the secondary contradiction (that between
imperialism and social imperialism on the one hand and between
imperialism and the people on the other) would be automatically
resolved.

The CPI(ML), since it holds the main contradiction to
be one between feudalism and the peasant masses, advocates
armed struggle in the rural area. It holds that the establishment
of peasant committees in the villages to run the administration
following the overthrow of landlord rule, would intensify class
struggle. The peasant committees would be transformed into
guerrilla squads and a number of villages would combine and
form a liberated area. When the guerrilla units are forced
to confront the state forces (the army and the armed police),
they will join together to form the People's Liberation Army.

25. Bhaduri, A. Socialistic pattern, Frontier, Vol.I,

of constitutional and parliamentary studies,
October-December 1971.
The party also gave the call to annihilate the class enemy everywhere. In the cities, the workers and revolutionary intelligentsia would carry out militant mass action and sabotage. Revolutionary workers would spread out in the rural areas and intensify and lead the anti-feudal revolution. It would eventually be the countryside that would liberate cities.

The revolution that would be accomplished would be a New Democratic Revolution similar to the 1949 Chinese revolution. Peasants would be given land to satisfy their hunger for land and small traders and businessmen would not be hit at first. The political as well as the cultural revolutions would progress simultaneously. As a result collectivisation would be carried out much faster than in China. 27

Section III: Conclusion

Poverty, literacy and communism have intimate relationship. Communism grows in the soil where poverty is rampant.

and literacy exists to a sizable extent. In Tamil Nadu population is very much (Seventh in India), population density is very much (fourth in India), urban population is excessive (Second in India), scheduled caste population is fairly high (Fifth in India) and consequently agricultural labourers also form a sizable proportion (Fourth in India). The result is that as much as 62.98% of rural and 52.22% of urban population live below poverty line. However Tamil Nadu maintains high literacy rate (39.46% in 1971 and 45.78% in 1981). In such circumstances, the normal expectation would be for the uninhibited growth of communism.

28. Zagoria established a relationship between poverty, landlessness and communism. Riley demonstrated that communism can be seen at greater levels of literacy. Krishnamurthy and Lakshmana Rao say that rural labour pressure is responsible for communism. As for Franda, literacy and communism go together. See

Zagoria, J.S. The ecology of peasant communism in India, American political science review, 65 (March 1971), pp. 144-160.


Tamil Nadu is also caste-ridden. Its peculiar idiom of Brahmin and Non-Brahmin cleavage in the society has not only enabled the justice party to obtain power in 1920 but also left a legacy and tradition for other parties to manipulate on this sentiment. Thus it could be possible for the communist parties to embark on this social inequality also.

However communism has not taken any roots in Tamil Nadu. The reason for such a situation must be squarely ideological. The Tamil communists have all along functioned with an ideology, which was drafted for the general and outward political condition of India, perhaps with the aid of different egoistic world communist powers. The ideologies of various communist parties in India are only sketchy because there has been no conscious attempt on the part of any of the communists to describe, analyse and interpret the existing economic situation in India. If it is the case for India, then practically no attempt exists in the case of Tamil Nadu.


31. Even a few translations available in Tamil, describe only the ideologies of the communist parties and not their relevance to Tamil Nadu. It is because they are tracts of the party and not original expositions of creative applications of Marxian analysis to the realities obtaining in Tamil Nadu.
The gravity of the situation increases when the Marxists analyse capitalism in a vague general kind of way, using a language which is specifically their own and is not capable of easy interpretation. In fact, when the Marxists are in dispute among themselves, the language of their controversy appears to be so abstract and metaphysical that one finds himself almost arguing with abstractions. Clearly the message becomes uncommunicable and so far remains uncommunicated. 32

Add to this, the confusion that arises out of polemical tracts unleashed by all the communist parties. The CPI had accused both the CPI(M) and the CPI(ML) as left sectarians and infantile disorders. The CPI(ML) had condemned both the CPI and the CPI(M) as tailists and revisionists. For its part the CPI(M) had criticized the CPI as right reactionaries and the CPI(ML) as left adventurers. The result is that the genuine left movement remains divided, and till today no hope has flickered about their unity. 33

Communism faces a double methodological problem when it makes a comparative analysis of societies. Each society has a set of irreducibly specific characteristics. No other society can be exactly on the same level on all specific points. On the other hand, there are also regularities and recurrences in social change. Over emphasis on any side of this contradiction leads to methodological imbalance. If the analysis argues only about the specific structure, it loses the theoretical rigour, and if the argument is manifestly theoretical, it becomes divorced from reality and the concrete situation. Therefore Marxist analysis has to move forward breaking down conceptual abstractions and revealing the internal dialectic of the object of analysis. But the Tamil communists have, so far, embarked only upon generalities, underestimating the specificities in Tamil Nadu. So much so, they have not produced any ideology relevant to Tamil Nadu, even partially. The result is that the ideologies of the communists do not build any cross-cutting alliances among the major classes and castes of the Tamil society, do not pose any threat to the centrist and regionalist parties and to an extent, not even make the leftists credible in the people's eye.