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CHAPTER II

Conceptualising Class and Nationality in India

"Countries want independence, nations want liberation, people want revolution"
- Mao Tse-Tung

In this chapter we attempt a synthetic approach of linking issues related to Class, Nationality and other social categories, as we consider these categories as crucial to the process of surplus accumulation/expropriation. At the outset, we will have a critical review of the Marxist theorisations on Class as can be relevant to a Third World country like India. Thereupon, we shall seek to define Nationality in a two-fold way, in terms of language, culture and consciousness on the one hand and more importantly to us, in terms of its political economy on the other and seek to examine its applicability to the case of a 'multinational' country like India. Thereafter, we focus on accumulation on a worldscale en route Dependency and World System theories and the constitutive effects of this process upon Class and National formations in 'peripheral' countries like ours. Following this, we examine the semantics of 'Development' and argue that it could well be a 'discourse of accumulation'. Subsequently, we examine the centrality of the State in mediating social contradictions and the allocation of resources and take an overview of the debates on the Class/social character of the State in India. We, then, examine the 'Social Structures of Accumulation' approach, which we believe, can synthesise the concerns of accumulation and social identity, and possibly locate the principal determinant in a complex totality of relations. And before concluding, we also seek to locate the Class-Nationality interface in our country.

Conceptualising the relationship between Class and Nationality in India, it may be argued that under the overriding impact of Global capitalism, today, most societies the world over, are primarily Class divided societies, albeit Class divisions, surplus extraction and uneven development taking on 'National' dimensions. After Samir Amin, it may be argued that the law of value has 'National' besides 'Class' and such other social dimensions. David McNally says, it would be a grievous error if we drop the nation-state

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2 Global capitalism herein is referred to as 'Imperialism' in the Leninist sense with its defining features as primarily, monopoly and export of capital.
3 Samir Amin 1997: Capitalism in the Age of Globalisation, Madhyam Books, Delhi.
out of view when we speak about the internationalisation of capital. Mao Tse-tung’s captivating slogan, “Countries want independence, nations want liberation, people want revolution” may be recalled in this context. The countries seek independence from the clutches of ‘imperialism’, nations seek liberation from the yoke of oppression by any dominant nationality and the State, and it is ‘people’ in all its multidimensionality and not merely some abstract classes who demand revolution. If oppression and exploitation are multi-faceted, so must be a political movement for liberation.

I. CONCEPTUALISING THE PROCESS OF CLASS FORMATION IN INDIA

David Camfield has a densely written, intelligent and above all, honest overview of the important strands of Marxist theorisations on Class. We would primarily bank on a recapitulation and critique of this paper from a Third World critical Marxist perspective for a theoretical overview of the Class question. We would view that although the experience of full-fledged capitalism came first in the presently advanced capitalist countries, Class cannot merely be considered as a Eurocentric construct since even capitalism itself is not a Eurocentric phenomenon.

There are three specific theoretical caveats that Camfield sets forth right at the beginning of his paper:

The first one concerns the spatial dimensions of social life. Camfield says, “In capitalist societies, class relations are anchored in the places where paid work is done but are also very much present in the community and household spheres of social life.” ‘Should not the unwaged family labour of women in the kitchen, nursery, etc. be considered in analysing class situations and class relations?’ asks Brenner. Other feminist writers have also questioned an abstract notion of Class. Thus Rosemary Hennessy questioned the gender-neutral concept of Class.

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7 Nevertheless, we would also draw upon other theoretical resources within the Marxist tradition.
The second caveat concerns the "multidimensionality of social being". Thus he says, "Class structures the totality of social relations, which cannot be reduced to class even as all social relations are mediated by each other." One should not, reasonably, have theoretical blinders about it. ... Workers' identities have facets other than class. "One should not expect to find any generic worker or essential worker, or for that matter, working class consciousness...", says Karen Sacks.

The third caveat concerns the distinction between formal class organisations and the less formal ones that constitute the cultural bases of social life. Under the class struggle analysis after Miliband, it is useful to adopt the distinction that James Wickham made between working class movement and working class. For him, there are formal "institutions" of workers like unions and parties and less formal "quasi-institutions" like shop stewards committees and tenants' associations to friendship networks. Formal organisations and the cultural basis - the "connective tissues of cultural life" need to be considered separately.

Camfield intelligently summarises Marxist theorisations on Class beginning with Marx through Gramsci and E.P. Thompson, leading up to Ellen Meiksins Wood and the school of autonomist Marxism.

Marx

Marx never elaborated on his theory of Class. Nevertheless, the 'red thread' that runs through his ideas on Class is that the working class has to undergo a process of self-development to transform itself through its own struggles and ready itself to take power. This "process of maturation" is "an educational and transforming process". Class, in conventional Marxist terms, was defined structurally in terms of the relationship towards the means of production. The question of ownership over the means of production determines the objective basis for the existence of social classes. His famous two-fold distinction between class "in itself" and class "for itself" in his works up to 1852 is very

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crucial. In the 1847 text, *Poverty of Philosophy*, he says, “Economic conditions had first transformed the mass of people of the country into workers. The combination of capital has created for this mass a common situation, common interests. This mass is thus already a class [in itself] as against capital, but not yet for itself. In the struggle…this mass becomes united, and constitutes itself as a class for itself”. Further, Marx had also traced how workers unite for the sake of maintenance of wages and subsequently in the face of united capital, the association takes on a political character and the struggle of class against class becomes a political struggle. He thus speaks of the process whereby “class in itself” (class en siche) turns into “class for itself” (class fur siche) wherein class-consciousness comes into play. Thus the question of economic status or class situation or class location on the one hand, and class-consciousness on the other seem to be the two essential criteria or defining characteristics of Class in Marxian analysis.

Marx’s analysis of the French peasantry in 1852 goes in a similar vein. Thus Marx says:

> 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 the other classes, and put them in hostile opposition to the latter, they form a class. In so far as there is merely a local interconnection among these small-holding peasants, and the identity of their interests begets no community, no national bond and no political organisation among them, they do not form a class. They are consequently incapable of enforcing their class interest in their own name [emphases added].

They had common economic conditions that in turn, marked out a distinctly similar mode of life, interests and culture for them and yet they had the weakness of association beyond their locales which undermined their “classness”. “They cannot represent themselves, they must be represented” in national politics, says he. It is notable that Marx’s classification of the organisational forms of class-conscious intervention is quite open-ended: “Community”, “national bond”, “political organisation” are, for him, the bases for similarly exploited people to become a force capable of class-conscious intervention. In this sense, Marx was not averse to viewing the phenomenon of class struggle in a much broader sense.

Marx was also guilty of sometimes treating society in a naturalistic manner. Even in *Gundrisse* and *Capital*, where according to Daniel Bensaid, there is “a radical
"deontologization" whereby "being is resolved into existence, class essence into class relations", the outcome of class formation of the proletariat is thought to be ultimately assured.23 There was an "optimistic evolutionism" in Marx,24 an inexorable expectation about the development of a revolutionary class. Camfield is quite right in rejecting along with Daniel Bensaid, Marx's rather linear conception of the process of class formation. Marx tended to underestimate the tenacious persistence of non-revolutionary ideas among workers.

Yet, it is to his credit that Marx did recognise racism and nationalism as significant phenomena that impeded class formation. Marx was not wholly unaware of the problems involved in the working class constituting itself as a 'Class for itself'. Marx and Engels in German Ideology spoke of how the working class is divided by the ideology of its rulers.25 "[T]he advance of capitalist production develops a working class which by education, tradition and habit looks upon the requirements of that mode of production as self-evident natural laws".26 He had taken note of the nationalism of the English workers pitted against Irish immigrants. Likewise, he says, "Labor with white skin cannot emancipate itself where labor with black skin is branded".27 "[O]vercoming competition, division and subordination is central to the working class's maturation through struggle."28

Further, Camfield rightly points out concerning Marx, "His conception of social being was not as multidimensional as social reality itself."29 There is substantial amount of truth in this charge.30 In response to Camfield and in defense of Marx, however, we might argue that Marx could have been viewing capitalist society as developing in the direction of increasingly democratising social relations. Marx could have turned a blind eye to the question of non-class social categories like gender in recognition of the growing tendency towards democratisation of society under classical, free-competition capitalism, which had 'freed' the serfs, made way for women to participate in "socially productive work"31.

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24 Camfield 2004-05, p. 430.
29 Ibid, p. 430.
30 Wally Seccombe and D.W. Livingstone (2000: "Down to Earth People": Beyond Class Reductionism and Postmodernism, Garamond, Aurora, Canada) have an interesting attempt at developing a multi-faceted historical materialist social being, according to Camfield 2004-05, p. 430.
31 Frederick Engels 1891: The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State, Progress publishers, Moscow, 1977 print, first published 1884, p. 158.
away from the drudgeries of the household and was fast moving towards the establishment of universal suffrage. This orientation of thinking should also be evident from the arguments of Marx and Engels in the first few pages of the *Communist Manifesto* on how capitalism had made giant leap-forwards in the sphere of advancing production and democratising social relations even as it introduced the cash-nexus in the relationship between 'man and man', i.e. between human beings. Apparently, this orientation of classical free competition capitalism is quite unlike that of contemporary capitalism in its oligopolistic stage, which is, apparently, devoid of the democratising potentialities of yore but articulates with non-capitalist modes of production, thus acting as the prime force of social regressiveness.

**Gramsci**

Gramsci was imprisoned by the Italian fascist State in 1926 and his writings from prison are our main source of his ideas. He had emphasised on the historical and relational nature of the process of class formation. His concern was to grasp the specificities of working-class formation. National peculiarities in social relations, for him, were to be understood in their originality and uniqueness... “Yet the perspective is international....” He rejected predetermined notions or fatalistic conceptions about how classes are formed. Thus he assigned great importance to the role of intellectuals and political organisations. Writing in Mussolini’s prison in 1930s, he had greater appreciation of the pressures building up against the formation of revolutionary working classes.

He takes into account not only the “objective formation” of classes by “developments and transformations occurring in the sphere of economic production. He advocates an examination of the social origins, traditions and ideology of classes that emerge out of “social groups” and about processes of “decomposition, renovation or neo-formation” of the exploited class. He did not think class formation to be a smooth or linear process. His approach has been not only to make a synchronic (structural-positional) analysis of classes but also a diachronic (relational) one. He suggests that class formation is a relational process, as related to the subaltern class’s necessarily unequal relations with a dominant class over time. Thus the denial of franchise or enjoyment of full citizenship by the working class is an important element of experience, with significant effects on workers’ consciousness and organisation.

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34 Camfield 2004-05, p. 433.
Gramsci gives ample recognition to the agency of political collectives and their leaderships in the process of class formation. Thus according to him, parties play a very important role in working class formation. The relationship between party and class is dialectical. Political organisation, for him, entails "organisers and leaders", "its intellectuals". Intellectuals give the class homogeneity and awareness of its own function not only in the economic but also in the social and political fields. Otherwise, popular consciousness is a complex admixture of ideologies of the hegemonic class and ideas arising from practical experience including critical insights. Intellectuals are capable of organising a new hegemony. Parties are also vital to the development of a class's intellectuals, its organisers. Parties translate different conceptions of the world into practice.

While not incorporating the study of gender and other social relations into his theory of classes, Gramsci’s study of classes in its complexity leaves it open to development in this direction. The very notion of 'subalternity' became a fertile conceptual ground for linking Class and non-Class modes of oppression, although later theorisations tended to overemphasise the autonomy of non-Class contradictions from Class contradictions. The trajectory of Subaltern Studies is a patent example.

**E.P. Thompson and Ellen Meiksins Wood**

E.P. Thompson was primarily a historian, albeit a politically engaged one. [As a staunch opponent of structural Marxism a la Louis Althusser and an ardent theoretical defender of human agency,] he was hostile to a theory developed outside of an ongoing dialog with the historical processes. His ideas were not always clear and therefore Wood's careful elucidation of a theory of Class out of his work has been of great use.

In the preface to his great work, *The Making of the English Working Class*, he writes that Class is a "historical phenomenon", not a "structure". It is something that "happens" in "human relationships". Thompson writes, "[C]lass [as a relationship] happens when some men [sic], as a result of common experiences (inherited or shared), feel and articulate the identity of their interests as between themselves, and as against other men whose interests

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37 Camfield 2004-05, p. 432.
38 Ibid, p. 433.
41 Camfield 2004-05, p. 433-34.
are different from (and usually opposed to) theirs". Camfield feels that instead of 'Class', if 'Class formation' is used, the meaning would have been clearer, avoiding misreadings. However, Class formation seems to be the end-result of the processes of self-identification, class consciousness and class struggle, for Thompson as would be evident from our citations from his writings, later in these pages. He opposes vulgar Marxist notions of Class wherein class consciousness is seen as a simple reflection of a relation to the means of production, the consciousness the class ought to have, as decided by a "party, sect or theorist".

In his essay, "The peculiarities of the English", he says, "Class is not this or that part of the machine, but *the way the machine works* once it is set in motion...." "Class is a social and cultural formation (often finding institutional expression) which cannot be defined abstractly, or in isolation, but only in terms of relationships with other classes; and ultimately the definition can only be made in the medium of *time*. A 'happening', a 'process', a 'relationship', a 'formation' are ideas central to Thompson's concept of class." He also mentions similar "experiences" and "disposition to behave as a class".

Did not Thompson give a short shrift to the "objective" dimension of Class? According to Ste. Croix, instead of Marx's two-sided analysis in The Eighteenth Brumaire — "economic conditions of existence" on the one hand and "community", national bond" and political organisation" on the other, Thompson acknowledges only the second aspect. Thompson's more structuralist critics pointed out that he dissolved class "in itself" into class "for itself", making class analysis irrelevant when class-conscious collective action is not happening.

On his part, Thompson in his article, "Eighteenth-Century English Society: Class Struggle Without Class?" argues that the concept not only enables us to organise and analyse evidence; it is also, in a new sense, *present in the evidence itself*, in self-conscious class organisations and cultures. It can be a "heuristic or analytic category" in pre-industrial societies, where identities of rank and status matter. Taken in themselves,

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these statements seem to reduce ‘Class in itself’ i.e., Class in its latent potency to turn into ‘Class for itself’ merely as an analytical category, in effect, denying its reality. However, he says, no other concept is available to understand “a manifest and universal historical process”.49 Because people behaved in class ways, there is the pervasive reality of class struggle. He says,

[P]eople find themselves in a society structured in determined ways (crucially, but not exclusively, in productive relations), they experience exploitation (or the need to maintain power over those whom they exploit), they identify points of antagonistic interest, they commence to struggle around these issues and in the process of struggling they discover themselves as classes, they come to know this discovery as class consciousness. Class and class-consciousness are always the last, not the first, stage in the real historical process.50

So then, he does not leave out Marx’s “economic conditions of existence” from his class theory. He does admit that “static structural analysis” of Class could be “valuable and essential” in offering a “determining logic”.51

“Productive relations” or class relations in the synchronic sense of class situations exist in all societies in which exploitation takes place. Exploitation leads to class struggle, out of which class formations “arise at the intersection of determination and self-activity...in an open-ended process of relationship of struggle with other classes – over time”.52

Ellen Meiksins Wood goes beyond interpreting Thompson in Democracy Against Capitalism. Wood says, “[T]here are really only two ways of thinking theoretically about class: either as a structural location or as a social relation”, and the latter is the “specifically Marxist” route to theorizing class. The process whereby “class situations give rise to class formations” is a complex historical process, according to her.53

As Camfield puts it, “Class is not a location but an exploitative relationship between producers and appropriators of surplus labor.” Further he says, “Class may be considered synchronically as a class situation.” Nevertheless, “class ought to be considered diachronically, as a historical process.”54 The class struggle analysis after Ralph Miliband is considered a useful approach herein as against the static structural analyses of class situations.

50 Ibid, p. 149.
51 Ibid, p. 147n.
Wood further suggests that it is necessary to follow Thompson in utilising the concept of experience. "It is in the medium of this lived experience that social consciousness is shaped and with it the disposition to behave as a class."\(^{55}\)

What is probably of greatest value in Thompson has been that class formation is seen as a structured process and a relationship. Relations of production is only the point of departure, class formation itself being an open-ended process. This is a question that demands empirical — historical and sociological analysis rather than a solution at the theoretical level, according to Wood. This is where the most important questions about 'Class lie, according to her.\(^{56}\) We might add that this is where the specificities of the historical experience of classes and the role of human collective agency comes in. This would bring along an important injunction to study the specific social determinants of experience and the cultural expressions thereof in each case. Thompson does not theoretically assert 'the multidimensionality of social being' and yet recognises that class relations are not the only kind of social relations. Gramsci's crucial emphasis on the agency of political parties is largely missing in Thompson. And yet he certainly does not neglect agency in his historical work. *The Making of the English Working Class* examines plebeian radical societies and other political institutions at length. He tells his readers right at the outset, it "is a study in an active process, which owes as much to agency as to conditioning. The working class did not rise like the sun at an appointed time. It was present at its own making."\(^{57}\) We would hold that this would however, appear contrary to the statement that "Class and class consciousness are always the last, not the first, stage in the real historical process",\(^{58}\) unless we bring in the Marxian notion of "class in itself". Such inconsistencies, could, probably have arisen from the polemic style of writing that Thompson had adopted. Nonetheless, it is beyond doubt that Thompson’s approach on *Class* placed much greater emphasis on the aspect of class struggle vis-à-vis class situations.

**Autonomist Marxism**

Autonomist Marxism originated in Italy in 1960s. For English readers, Wright (2002)\(^{59}\) is recommended as indispensable. Cleaver,\(^{60}\) Zerowork, the short-lived autonomist journal

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\(^{55}\) Wood 1995, p. 96.

\(^{56}\) Camfield 2004-05, p. 437.


\(^{58}\) Thompson 1978a, p. 149.


in mid-1970s, Yan Moulier (1986), autonomists aligned with the Italian Communist Party, such as M. Cacciari, et al are important proponents of this approach. The chief contribution of this school has been a theory of working classes as historical formations with a trio of concepts: class composition, decomposition and recomposition.

Class composition involves the structure of class power existing within the division of labour associated with a particular organisation of constant and variable capital. Decomposition refers to the process whereby any division of labour within capitalist production is not only technical but also a specific mode for capital’s attempts to control labour, according to these autonomists. Capital attempts to break the growing unity among workers by establishing a new class composition favourable to itself by reorganising production with new technology and a new division of labour, with a view to tame labour insurgency. Recomposition refers to activities that unite workers as a class against capital.

We would, however, suggest that it might be erroneous to suggest that capitalists reorganise division of labour with new technology primarily with the motive of decomposing the working class. The prime motivation could often be to improve an employer’s competitive position vis-à-vis other capitalists. And this has mainly to do with the dynamism of capitalist development, which in turn, has an effect of displacing labour and much more broadly, decomposing the working class.

Autonomists aligned with the Italian Communist Party like M. Cacciari may not have been widely off the mark when they contended that the concept of class composition was reductionist inasmuch as institutions and class consciousness are treated as reflections of a class composition. It would be an ahistorical error to read a class formation off a structure of production. Otherwise, the notion of class composition, in itself, certainly does not displace the centrality of class struggle.

Moulier (1986) argued that class composition, decomposition and recomposition do not take place only at the point of production but across the capitalist society. This is in harmony with the expanded scope of Class in autonomist Marxism.
Camfield's assessment of autonomist Marxism is notable: The concept of class composition helps us to pay attention to how different sectors of a working class relate to each other as well as with capital. The concepts of decomposition and recomposition are helpful in analysing waves of workers struggles and employers' offensives, provided they are used without assuming specific motives to, say, the capitalists engaged in reorganising the workplace.67

We would argue that class analysis is rendered ever more complex in a Third World country which is not characterised by pure capitalist relations but capitalism of oligopolies articulating with non-capitalist relations. And therefore, the concept of class composition as related to capitalist division of labour may not be as interesting in the Third World.

Towards a Theory of Working Classes as Historical Formations

In contrast to notions of Class as location or level of wealth, struggle is key to Marx's conception of class relations. Conflict, herein, is materially and historically grounded in a way that is unlike the metaphysical Nietzschean idea of universal will to power, most often through Foucault.68

For Marx, working classes are not static class situations but formations in time. However, the rather linear conceptions of class formation in Marx that working class inevitably matures towards a revolutionary Class for itself (his "optimistic evolutionism") needs to be abandoned (not his belief in the possibility of workers' self-emancipation), as Camfield rightly feels.69

The autonomist notions of class decomposition and recomposition helps us understand Class in and beyond paid workplaces. Class composition, for them, is not merely a technical matter. The concept of class composition is an invitation to fill the abstractions such as "the capitalist labor process" and "relations of production".70

Gramsci and Thompson consider Class as a process. Thompson is the more eloquent on this count. He demands an examination of the lived history of really-existing workers. Gramsci's suggestions about research into national contexts and the social origins of new working classes reflect a similar orientation.71

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67 Camfield 2004-05, pp. 441-42.
69 Camfield 2004-05, p. 442.
70 Ibid, pp. 442-43.
71 Ibid, p. 443.
Camfield has harped on the "multidimensionality of social being"\textsuperscript{72} and rightly says that in general, Marx, Gramsci, Thompson and the autonomist Marxists do not adequately appreciate that Class is "always mediated by other social relations" and that "class formation is not solely about class".\textsuperscript{73} Marx himself pointed to a "rich totality of many determinations and relations" in society.\textsuperscript{74} Camfield identifies "gender, race, nation, sexuality and space" as being interrelated to Class. This is not to collapse non-Class social relations into Class or vice versa. "It is necessary to analytically distinguish each of these social relations ... because each has its own character. ... In concrete social reality, class and other social relations interpenetrate."\textsuperscript{75}

Gramsci emphasises on the key role of class conscious unions, parties and other working class organisations as key players in class formation. Organisations and their intellectuals propagate particular conceptions of the world and motivate certain actions leading to the organisation of a new hegemony.\textsuperscript{76} Gramsci’s guidelines are complemented by autonomist Marxism’s concept of class composition as they problematise the relationship between workers and their organisations.

A substantive and better-grounded understanding of how working classes are made and remade as historical collectivities is not only an intellectual challenge but if working class self-activity is central to the future possibilities of capitalist societies, such reconceptualisation would have definite political implications, concludes Camfield.\textsuperscript{77}

\textbf{A Critique of the Review by Camfield}

Reviewing the Marxist theorisations on Class, particularly, en route Camfield’s paper, we would like to highlight some of the main ideas and attempt an application to the Indian context: After E.M. Wood, Camfield characterises the two-fold way of understanding Class - either as a structural location or as a social relation and rather favoured latter without abandoning the former.

Camfield rightly has no abstract, de-contextualised understanding about Class. On the contrary, he views Class in all its multidimensionality, as interrelated and interpenetrated by other social relations. Camfield has rightly identified "gender, race, nation, sexuality and space" as being interrelated to Class.\textsuperscript{78} We might add, nationality (i.e., nations

\textsuperscript{72} Ibid, pp. 426, 437, 443. \\
\textsuperscript{73} Ibid, p. 443. \\
\textsuperscript{74} Cited in ibid, p. 425. \\
\textsuperscript{75} Camfield 2004-05, pp. 426, 443. \\
\textsuperscript{76} Ibid, p. 444. \\
\textsuperscript{77} Ibid. \\
\textsuperscript{78} Camfield 2004-05, p. 426.
without own States), caste, tribe and community in the Indian context. Caste is a very important social peculiarity in the context of India. Caste overlaps with Class in that the majority among the lower classes still belong to the lower caste groups. We would, however, caution to add that even for the multidimensionality of the social being, it is possible to identify the primacy of one or the other kind of social contradiction at any given stage of historical development.

It has been very useful that Camfield has read the Gramscian notion of subalternity as being open to the ideas of multidimensionality of class formations. Similarly, Camfield notes how Gramsci has emphasised the role of class agency – of parties and intellectuals. Gramsci was much more conscious than Marx of the impediments to class consciousness at the cultural level and the social/cultural origins of new classes and their national character. Thompson’s emphasis on ‘lived experience’ and the acknowledgement of the pervasive reality of class struggle because people behaved in class ways, have also been useful. The arguments in autonomist Marxism are less interesting but we feel, Camfield is right that the concepts of class composition, decomposition and recomposition could be of some value.

Now, we would like to attempt a critique of Camfield’s paper in some respects from a critical Marxist perspective from the Third World. Mao’s approach to class analysis may be posited against the rather strict criterion of class consciousness laid down by Thompson, “Class and class-consciousness are always the last, not the first, stage in the real historical process”. 79 Mao says, “To distinguish real friends from real enemies, we must make a general analysis of the economic status of the various classes in Chinese society and of their respective attitudes towards the revolution”. 80 ‘Attitude towards the revolution’ was a sufficient criterion for a class analysis. To be fair towards Thompson, his own words may be cited in his defense: “The working class did not rise like the sun at an appointed time. It was present at its own making”. 81 Nevertheless, it is rather apparent that he tended to place greater emphasis on the aspect of class consciousness, rather than on the aspect of economic or structural location a la the structuralists.

In the context of the Third World, the question of class formation becomes much more complex, with ‘multiple determinations and relations’. It is crucial to speak of Space as a category of accumulation, particularly in the contemporary context of oligopolistic capitalism on the worldscale. So it becomes important to look at the pioneering

79 Thompson 1978a, p. 149.
contribution of Paul Baran to Marxism. Dependency theories and World System theories. We have also found the 'Social Structures of Accumulation' approach in Barbara Harriss-White to be a conceptual impulse with fertile theoretical grounds enabling us to capture the various facets of both accumulation and identity including that of Space, making it possible to link it to an over-arching class analysis.

We could, however, caution to add that despite the 'multidimensionality of the social being' and the multiplicity of 'determinations and relations', after the phraseology of Marx himself, it is possible to identify the primacy of one kind of social structure at any given stage of historical development.

In the context of a Third World country like India, where myriad unresolved social contradictions permeate the social reality because of the distortionary influence of colonialism/monopoly capitalism, a 'pure' Class analysis would leave out of purview the multidimensionality of the social formation in question. Third World societies like ours could not pass through the supposedly 'natural' stages of economic development in the schema of 'modernisation theory' as proposed by W.W. Rostow because they had to reckon with the dominant influence of global monopoly capitalism. D.D. Kosambi had made an important theoretical observation in proposing that India had a 'co-existent mode of production', meaning that unlike in Europe, without displacing one mode of production, another mode of production came to prevail alongside the former, making our social reality a lot more complex. In the context of a society with 'graded inequalities', our effort should be to identify the principal factor, the connecting thread that runs throughout the totality of a social formation, shaping and constituting the various aspects of the totality. Thus in a country like ours today, 'bonded labour' in itself does not constitute the mode of production but only an aspect of a co-existent mode of production.

Moreover, in the context of countries like India, working class in the formal sector of the economy in both its private and State segments, is a rather privileged category with organised bargaining power vis-à-vis their counterparts in the unorganised sector. Political praxis, therefore, needs to focus on the working class and other deprived classes in the teeming unorganised sector of the country who are apparently, the real subalterns.

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Unorganised labour constitutes about 93 per cent of the total labour force in India.\(^8^6\) Apparently, the workers in the formal sector may be considered a better-off category vis-à-vis the unorganised workers in the informal sector. However, whether the former can be designated as a labour aristocracy in comparison to unorganised sector workers is a matter that needs investigation specifically in the context of Structural Adjustment in general, and 'labour flexibility', in particular,\(^8^7\) as even the rights of workers in the formal sector are increasingly getting undermined.\(^8^8\) Peasantry in much of the non-industrialised parts of the world constitute the main component of the working population. So then, trying to build a theory of 'working class formation' in the Third World would not be as useful as it is in the industrialised countries.

"[Q]ualitatively different contradictions can only be resolved by qualitatively different methods."\(^8^9\) In this sense, caste is a very important social specificity in the context of India. Caste overlaps with Class in that the majority among the lower classes still belong to the lower caste groups. And yet caste cannot, justifiably, constitute the prime basis of mobilisation for fundamental social transformation in Indian society because popular mobilisations within castes take place under the leadership of the elites within the castes and often serve to promote the class interests of these elite minorities.

As was acknowledged by Paul Sweezy, Samir Amin, et al Third World, or more precisely, the "countrysides of the periphery"\(^9^0\) is the very 'eye of the storm' of radical social transformation on the worldscale in the era of global monopoly capitalism. We would consider the notion of the 'Third World' as used by Mao Zedong quite useful. Mao had classified the two superpowers of his time as the first world, the lesser imperialist countries as the Second world and the other countries which have mostly been the erstwhile colonised countries, as the Third World. This was useful, in his understanding, for striking tactical alliances between the Third and the Second Worlds against the aggressions of the First. The usefulness of this concept cannot be denied even as there is only one superpower in the world today. In this sense, the notion of the Third World was more ingenious than the notion of the periphery. But the notions of the centre and periphery are also quite useful in the parlance of viewing the world capitalist system in its totality and exploitative inter-relations. The notions of both 'Third World' and periphery

\(^{86}\) Harriss-White 2003, p. 17.

\(^{87}\) 'Labour flexibility' is a term used euphemistically to refer to the greater labour insecurity or the erosion of the rights of labour under SAP.

\(^{88}\) For details, see the section, 'Implications of the proposed labour reforms' in Chapter IV.


acknowledge the spatial dimensions of accumulation on the world scale. It may be further added that in liberal characterisations of the First World as the advanced capitalist, the Second World as the erstwhile socialist and the Third World as the rest of the world, the substantive meaning of the aforesaid categories go missing.

In many of the underdeveloped countries, capitalism articulated with non-capitalist modes of production and so retarded the development of productive forces in these countries. Opinions diverged with some arguing that non-capitalist modes of production had resisted capitalist penetration and others arguing that the former were kept alive by capitalism, if not created by it. Even in the advanced capitalist countries, there is seen to be the prevalence of non-Class modes of surplus expropriation such as race and gender. And apparently, imperialism, as a "parasitic" variety of capitalism only accentuates this trend. In any case, it is worth asserting that the Class reality of the Third World is much more complex than in the advanced capitalist countries and so it has given rise to debates on the Class character of the State and the character of the mode of production, particularly in the agriculture sector of these primarily agrarian countries.

Speaking of the dominant class coalition, Pranab Bardhan conceptualised it to be made up of the dominant proprietary classes, namely, State/Intelligentsia, the industrial bourgeoisie and rich farmers. For Bardhan, a section of the middle class, namely the professional class, is part of the dominant coalition in India, especially those placed in key positions of the State apparatus. The Communist Party of India held the dominant class coalition to be composed of the national bourgeoisie and the landlords. Communist Party of India (Marxist) formed in 1965 after the split, held it to be made up of a collaborationist big bourgeoisie and the landlords. Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist), popularly called the 'Naxalites' and also as 'Maoists' at present, viewed the dominant class coalition to consist of: feudalism, imperialism and comprador-bureaucrat capital.

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92 V.I. Lenin 1917 [1986]: Imperialism the Highest Stage of Capitalism, Progress Publishers, Moscow, p. 117.
93 This concerned what particular coalition of classes had the dominant influence upon the State, granting that it was not purely a bourgeois State.
95 This is because this movement originated in the Naxalbari village of North Bengal.
A Note on the Mode of Production Debate in India

In the course of the mode of production debate in India, Jan Breman, Jairus Banaji, Barbara Harriss-White, et al have held that despite the pervasive informality of social relations, the mode of production that characterises Indian economy has been basically capitalist in nature. In other words, it is held that India has a predominantly capitalist mode of production with semblances of pre-capitalist relations/non-capitalist tendencies persisting to a large extent.

The social reality in the becoming is no doubt, very important for our analysis. Nevertheless, we would consider that the view held by R.S. Rao, Pradhan H. Prasad, Amit Bhaduri, et al had the distinctive advantage of recognising the reality that has been prevailing in the sprawling countryside that more appropriately represented the Indian social reality. Their line of thinking was closer to the Naxalite/Marxist-Leninist practitioners who opted to change the Indian social reality. It was rightly pointed out by Gail Omvedt that the polemics on the mode of production in India had begun with the Naxalbari uprising. It might be admitted that despite their apparent mistake of trying to approximate the Indian social reality to the pre-revolution Chinese one, the broad characterisation of Indian economy as “semi-feudal, semi-colonial” has been more nuanced in taking into account the persistence of large scale pre-capitalist social relations in the realm of India’s dependent capitalism increasingly being incursed upon by an aggressive expansion of the global capital. The empirical reality of the country-side in many parts of India does not, as yet, seem to suggest the emergence of full-fledged agrarian capitalism, with its varying degrees of penetration across regions and sub-regions.

The debate in the left circles in India on the patriotic/collaborationist/comprador character of the Indian big capital could also throw some light on the actual character of capitalist development in India.\textsuperscript{100} Suniti Kumar Ghosh, again, closely associated with the Naxalite stream, asserted that the Indian big bourgeoisie was comprador in character. Ghosh consistently argued that the Indian big capital, supposedly, the leading class in the dominant class combine in India, arose with trade and commerce under colonialism and then diversified into finance and production and had its interests historically intertwined with the interests of colonialism/imperialism i.e., the global metropolitan capital and it continued to be so.\textsuperscript{101}

Utsa Patnaik sought to make an important observation that even when certain relations of production persisted, eg., the semi-feudal one, the predominant mode of production turned out to be something else, eg. the capitalist.\textsuperscript{102}

Summing up the mode of production debate in India, some of the major observations by Alice Thorner were as follows: She conceded to the dominant viewpoint in the debate that capitalism dominates the rural agrarian scene and yet was not sure if Indian agriculture would follow the laws of motion of capitalist development.\textsuperscript{103} The debate had amply shown that widespread tenancy and/or share-cropping does not necessarily indicate the presence of feudal relations, nor does the concentration of landholding. Similarly, wage labour in itself cannot be taken to constitute signs of capitalist relations. Yet the shift from exploitation of tenants to large-scale or intensive farming by hired labour is significant. The concepts of preservation/destruction of earlier modes of production by capitalism, and articulation of different modes within a single social formation continued to figure in the discussion, indicating their general acceptability. We would, however, hold a differing opinion that the fluidity of the situation in this regard could be owing to the process of a decadent capitalism articulating with pre-capitalist social relations. She also noted a failure or even unwillingness in India to deal with cultural aspects.\textsuperscript{104} Similarly, the

\textsuperscript{100} The Indian big capital has, more often than not, been considered the leading class in the coalition of classes that control the State in India. Hence the importance of this debate. The dominant class coalition is also held to comprise of rural magnates, bureaucratic and political elite and global monopoly capital. See, Suniti Kumar Ghosh 2000: \textit{The Indian Big Bourgeoisie}, New Horizon, Calcutta; R.S. Rao 1995; Pranab Bardhan 1998: \textit{The Political Economy of Development in India}, OUP, New Delhi and Ashok Mitra 1977: \textit{Terms of Trade and Class Relations}, Cass, London.

\textsuperscript{101} Suniti Kumar Ghosh 2000: \textit{The Indian Big Bourgeoisie}, New Horizon, Calcutta.

\textsuperscript{102} Utsa Patnaik (ed.) 1990: \textit{Agrarian Relations and Accumulation: The mode of production debate in India}, Oxford University Press, Bombay.


\textsuperscript{104} Ibid, pp. 2063-64.
tendency to advocate single-class movements indicated the scholars’ “armchair” or impractical orientation according to her.

II. Class and Nationality: Re-instatating Some Missing Links

In the context of the Third World, it is crucial to speak of Space as a category of accumulation or in other words, “spatial structures of accumulation”, particularly in the contemporary context of oligopolistic capitalism on the worldscale.

Moyo and Yeros have an analysis of the relationship between the agrarian/class question and the national question that is informed by the dichotomous relationship between the centre and the peripheries on the global scale. Thus they say, it is “in the countrysides and shantytowns of the periphery, where imperialism is experienced most brutally” and this in turn, calls for reflection on the relationship between the agrarian and national questions. The numerous human catastrophes have largely been rural affairs that have demanded answers. It is curious that despite the alleged ‘disappearance’ of the peasantry after a quarter-century of structural adjustment in parts of the Third World, i.e., following the crisis of the 1970s, ‘new rural movements’ have emerged – the most progressive and militant movements in the world today being based in the “countrysides of the periphery”. Moyo and Yeros make a crucial point when they say that even as “trade unionism has suffered disorganization and co-optation” during the phase of “neoliberal restructuring”, the rural movements, having their social base among semi-proletarianised peasantry, landless proletarians and urban unemployed, often employing the land occupation tactic, have upheld “genuine labour internationalism”, constituting the very “nucleus of anti-imperialist politics” today. “It is perhaps ironic that rural movements have become the ‘natural’ leaders of progressive change, not by virtue of being exploited by capital, but by being expelled from it.”

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105 We would like to use the term ‘Third World’ in the sense Mao had used it, that is, as a ‘subordinate other’ of the First World, which then consisted of the two super-powers, and the Second World as consisting of the other imperialist powers in Europe, Asia (Japan) and North America (Canada). During the Cold War, Mao had envisaged a possible alliance with the Second World to fight the ‘imperialistic’ designs of the First World. We do not mean to use it in the confusing sense many others had used it, viz., the First World as the US-led bloc of countries, the Second World as the ‘socialist’ bloc countries led by Soviet Union (probably with the exclusion of China) and the Third World as the ‘non-aligned’ bloc of countries.

106 Harriss-White 2003, p. 208.


108 Ibid, pp. 3, 4-5.


110 Ibid, pp. 5, 9, 10.


that “underdevelopment has persisted and expanded under neoliberalism, through the contradictory forces of proletarianization, urbanization, and re-peasantization, yielding a ‘semi-proletariat’ which in turn constitutes the core social base of rural movements.”113 It is not surprising therefore that these “rural movements today constitute the core nucleus of opposition to neoliberalism”.114 Moyo and Yeros assert, “[T]he agrarian question, despite its globalization, remains intimately tied up with the national question.”115 The specific route of this linkage has been that “capitalism has subordinated agriculture to its logic worldwide, but without creating, by necessity, home markets capable of sustaining industrialization, or fulfilling the sovereignty of decolonized states.”116 “In this sense, the agrarian question remains unresolved” and also “intimately related to the national question.”117

As for Nationality, a theoretical approach could be proposed to the study of subject nationalities, in the course of an empirical study on Keralam, that is, taking into account not only the aspect of language/culture, consciousness/subjectivity but also more importantly, the process whereby a nationality is constituted in material terms i.e. in terms of its political economy. An additional factor would be territoriality. So a nationality would be a ‘territorial community’. The constitution of a Nationality in terms of political economy (a Nationality ‘in itself’) could have an immense bearing upon its constitution in terms of consciousness (a Nationality ‘for itself’) as is borne out by many a Nationality movement in regions of relative underdevelopment. Studies by Tom Nairn seems to point in this direction. Tom Nairn regarded nationalism as a product of and response to, ‘uneven development of capitalism’.118 Our approach would be at variance with the proliferating studies on Nationality since 1960s that have placed exclusive emphasis on the first aspect. Alternatively we would draw insights from the studies by Tom Nairn, Samir Amin, Lenin, et al. The term, ‘nationality’ herein is being used in the Indian parlance, in reference to nations without own states that constitute a multinational country that India is.

The Aspect of Political Economy in National Formation

From 1960s, culture, ethnicity, identity became ‘a major problematic’ – a focal point in the studies on nationalism (as with Gellner, Anderson, Smith, Connor, et al.).119 Such

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119 Aloysius, G. 1997: Nationalism without Nation in India, Oxford University Press, Delhi, p.17.
work has, for now, somewhat dominated over the earlier painstaking studies of nations and nationalism, giving primary emphasis to the aspects of political economy besides considering the role of language/culture and consciousness/subjectivity. As against a rather unilateral approach considering nationalism as primarily a cultural category, unmindful of the aspect of political economy, a synthetic approach, could lead to better understanding and deeper insights.

Capitalism and the nation-state were viewed as twins conjoined at birth. In the era of ‘imperialism’ (in the Leninist sense), Class is seen to have a symbiotic relationship with nationality, shaped, in turn, as they are, by the dominant pattern of development process. The era is characterized by monopolies on the international scale; by the merger of banking capital with industrial capital, leading to the formation of financial oligarchies, “finance capital”; by the export of capital, etc. ‘Imperialism’ is “parasitic or decaying capitalism” as Lenin called it, devoid of the revolutionary potentialities of capitalism in its incipient stage, whether to democratise society or to achieve a self reliant, independent development of the indigenous productive forces. On the contrary, ‘imperialism’ was instrumental in the preservation of pre-capitalist/non-capitalist social forces, particularly ‘semi-feudalism’. Around 1970s, the modes of production theory argued that a number of modes of production coexist in society, and that they articulate with each other (regarding exchange of labour, goods, capital, etc.). Further, it was thought that the relationship between capitalist and non-capitalist modes of production was favourable to the capitalist mode of production. Apartheid was cited as a classic example. Although Lenin himself


does not clearly draw such implications out of his analysis of 'imperialism', his analysis leaves it open to development in this direction. In a similar vein, Samir Amin\(^{125}\) argued that the law of value operates not only with Classes but also with Nationalities. Capitalism is organised nationally and ordered hierarchically, in our present world, with the United States at the top and the lesser imperialist powers 'at the tap' and the Third World at the bottom.\(^{126}\)

With 'imperialism', appropriation of surplus value assumes global dimensions. Uneven development is an inevitable characteristic of the capitalist mode of production and even more so with 'imperialism', "the latest stage of capitalism". Oppressed/peripheral countries (multinational states), nations (nation-states) and nationalities (nations without own states) become sites of struggles vis-à-vis 'imperialism'. Globalisation and Structural Adjustment Policies being pushed through by international financial institutions (\textit{a la} IMF, World Bank, ADB) and multilateral institutions (\textit{a la} WTO) create economic conditions that further accentuates the process. So then, it is a scenario that reminds us of Mao's famous slogan that we have mentioned in the very first paragraph in this chapter.

In Chapter IV, we examine in detail the arguments of Prabhat Patnaik regarding how there is a distinction between the home-base of capitalism and the outlying region where capital feels less secure and so demands higher rates of return. There is a hierarchy of currencies in the world economy at the bottom of which are the Third World currencies which do not constitute safe media for holding wealth and therefore it necessitates deflationary economic policies in these countries with a view to retain investor confidence.\(^{127}\)

Additionally, pricing behaviour in product markets has to be a component of any explanation of terms of trade movements that, after all, refer to prices. Wealth-holding behaviour plays a role in terms of trade movements, undoubtedly mediated by pricing behaviour in product markets via its effect on exchange-rates, especially in a world characterized by the dominance of 'freely mobile' international finance capital.\(^{128}\) "A world of globalised finance would result in the deterioration of real exchange-rates purely because of the wealth-holding decisions of international rentiers, and through pricing rules turn the terms of trade against agriculture".\(^{129}\)

\(^{125}\) Samir Amin 1997.

\(^{126}\) Implications drawn from Ellen Meiksins Wood 1999.

\(^{127}\) Prabhat Patnaik 2002, pp. 97, 100. See detailed analysis in the section, 'A reflection on the economic collapses of our day' in Chapter IV.

\(^{128}\) Ibid, p. 105.

Historically, nations and nation-states arose, for the first time, in Western Europe in the context of the emergence of capitalism, in the process of people’s struggles against ‘feudalism’. A nation, as a linguistically homogenous territory was somewhat synonymous with a unified market. However, both in the colonial and neo-colonial phases of ‘imperialism’, national formations in the peripheral countries of the world faced retarding effects and followed on a different trajectory. This was a result of a retrograde alliance of ‘imperialism’ with the pre-capitalist social forces (particularly, ‘feudalism’ [or ‘semi-feudalism’]), subsequently mediated by the native capitalist classes whose interests were intertwined with the interests of ‘imperialism’. Therefore, these emerging nationalities had to reckon with the twin forces of ‘feudalism’ and ‘imperialism’. Nationality struggles, in such cases, become a mode of Class struggle itself – in their ‘objective’ configuration – contributing to the democratisation of society. However, given the variegated nature of nationalisms, it is incumbent on us to ask ‘what is the specific content of each nationalism?’ The typology of progressive and reactionary nationalisms may be a useful one in this context. The Marxist political economy perspective enables us to understand nationality question in terms of the struggles of people, particularly against ‘feudalism’ [or ‘semi-feudalism’] and ‘imperialism’ i.e. in the case of progressive nationalism. By ‘progressive’, we mean, embodying democratic values. No implications, however, are drawn of linearity in the process of progress as regress is also quite possible, as the history of the 20th century has shown.

The development of classes within a nationality may be conceptualised as integrally linked to the development of the nationality under the overriding impact of dominant forces within a multinational country and at the global level. In this view, liberation from class oppression and liberation from national oppression are like two sides of the same coin. And therein lies the importance of understanding the Class-Nationality interface.

On the one hand, nationality struggles may involve a struggle for democracy – towards fulfilling the task of democratisation of society under the leadership of the emerging capitalist class – a task that remains unfulfilled in the era of ‘imperialism’. On the other hand, it may also be a mode of class struggle itself inasmuch as it is pitted against ‘feudalism’ [or ‘semi-feudalism’] and ‘imperialism’.

Nationalities are points of departure in our journey towards internationalism. “[T]he point of departure is ‘national’ – and it is from this point of departure that one must begin. Yet

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the perspective is international and cannot be otherwise”.\textsuperscript{132} As against the policy of “catch 'em and hold 'em”, the policy of forcible integration, a voluntary union of nationalities, on the basis of their democratic rights, is the ultimate guarantee for a lasting unity. Right to self-determination, including secession is the most democratic right as far as the nationalities question is concerned.\textsuperscript{133} The principle of self-determination is certainly in crisis under globalisation. But it cannot been superseded so long as its raison d'\textsuperscript{etre}, imperialism [and national oppression] exist.\textsuperscript{134}

**The Cultural Aspect of National Formation**

The aspect of language, culture and consciousness have played a very important role in national formations and has been assigned the pride of place in recent analyses. Ernest Gellner defined nationalism as ‘primarily a principle which holds that the political and national unit should be congruent.’\textsuperscript{135} Gellner, according to Hobsbawm, stresses ‘the element of artifact, invention and social engineering which enters into the making of nations’.\textsuperscript{136} ‘Nationalism, takes pre-existing cultures and turns them into nations, sometimes invents them, and often obliterates pre-existing cultures: that is a reality.’\textsuperscript{137}

The process of invention of a nation, for Gellner, involves imposition of a common high culture on the variegated complex of local folk cultures.\textsuperscript{138}

Anthony D. Smith summed up the fundamental lessons he learned from Gellner: Firstly, nationalism is so variegated a phenomenon that it requires classification for any progress in understanding. Secondly, that nations and nationalism involves an underlying sociological reality. Thirdly, that nationalism is product of specifically modern conditions – particularly, of the phenomenon of industrialism.\textsuperscript{139} According to Smith, nationalism is an “ideological movement for the attainment and maintenance of autonomy, unity and identity of a human population, some of whose members conceive it to constitute an actual or potential ‘nation’.” Further, he defines a ‘nation’, as a “named human population sharing an historic territory, common myths and memories, a mass, public culture, a single economy and common rights and duties for all members.”\textsuperscript{140} For Anthony D.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{133} Lenin 1977 (1914).
\item \textsuperscript{134} Sam Moyo and Paris Yeros (ed.) 2005, p. 13.
\item \textsuperscript{137} E. Gellner 1996, pp.48-49.
\item \textsuperscript{138} Partha Chatterjee 1986, p.21.
\item \textsuperscript{140} Anthony D. Smith 1996, p.359.
\end{itemize}
Smith, nationalism’s ‘core doctrine’ ‘fuses three ideals’: self determination, expression of national character, and each nation contributing its special genius to the common fund of humanity.\textsuperscript{141}

For Benedict Anderson, nation was an ‘imagined political community’, imagined, first of all, by its elites. Anderson in his book, \textit{Imagined Communities},\textsuperscript{142} emphasized on ‘the ideological creation of the nation’ as central.\textsuperscript{143} He spoke of ‘the vanguard role of the [colonized] intelligentsia derived from its bilingual literacy’.\textsuperscript{144} He also emphasized on the ‘formation of a print-language’ – ‘the dynamics of print-capitalism’ and the shared experience of the ‘journeys’ undertaken by the colonized intelligentsia’.\textsuperscript{145} If, for Gellner, nation was just ‘invented’, for Anderson it was, at least ‘thought out’ or ‘imagined’, obviously by the elite.

E.J. Hobsbawm, for the most part, agrees with the analysis of Gellner. Hobsbawm too spoke of “invented traditions” after the fashion of Gellner.\textsuperscript{146} “If I have a major criticism of Gellner’s work, it is that his preferred perspective of modernization from above, makes it difficult to pay adequate attention to the view from below”,\textsuperscript{147} says he. He too believed, along with Gellner, that the non-congruence of the ethnic/national factor with the actual process of state formation has given rise to the current wave of ethnic agitations. However, he did not believe in the potentiality of such ethnic agitations in providing any alternative principle towards the political restructuring of the contemporary world.\textsuperscript{148} He had no belief that the classic ‘Wilsonian-Leninist’ slogan of self-determination of the nationalities could offer any solution for the twenty-first century scenario. “The phenomenon”, he believes, “is past its peak”,\textsuperscript{149} apparently against the belief of Gellner and Anderson. He says, “It is not impossible that nationalism will decline with the decline of the nation-state.”\textsuperscript{150} He envisages “subordinate and often rather minor roles” to nations and nationalism in a scenario of “the new supranational restructuring of the globe”. They would rather be “retreating before, resisting, adapting to, being absorbed or dislocated” by such restructuring, he contends. This is a predictable outcome of an analysis that, for the most part, skirts the concerns of political economy, in attempting to understand the

\begin{footnotesize}
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\textsuperscript{141} Partha Chatterjee 1986, p.8.
\textsuperscript{142} Benedict Anderson 1983: \textit{Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism}, London.
\textsuperscript{143} Partha Chatterjee1986, p.21.
\textsuperscript{144} Partha Chatterjee1986, p.21.
\textsuperscript{145} Partha Chatterjee 1986, p.21.
\textsuperscript{146} Anthony D. Smith 1996, p.359.
\textsuperscript{148} Hobsbawm 1992, p.181.
\textsuperscript{149} Hobsbawm 1992, pp.181, 192.
\textsuperscript{150} Hobsbawm 1992, pp.181, 192.
\end{footnotesize}
nationality phenomenon. He seems to have considered nationalism almost like a veritable amalgam of absurdity. He does not seem to have believed at least some varieties of nationalism to be capable of embodying the enlightenment values of 'reason, liberty and progress' as he does not take pains to analyse the specific content of any such nationalism in detail.

For Hobsbawm, the nation is largely, a set of 'invented traditions'. For Anderson, the nation is an 'imagined political community'. But neither of them would regard nationalism as entirely a construction – a figment of imagination.151 They do recognise the material aspects that make for the construction of the nation. Thus Gellner said, the perception of uneven development in traditional society with industrialisation, creates the possibility for nationalism.152 And Anderson spoke of 'capitalism, a technology of communications (print), and the fatality of human linguistic diversity' that 'made the new communities imaginable'.153

**Towards a Definition of the Nation**

The definition by Anthony D. Smith above is useful indeed. And there are several definitions of the nation worth our consideration. Thus Tom Nairn regarded nationalism as a product of and response to, the 'uneven development of capitalism'.154 'Stalin's definition', says Hobsbawm, is probably the best known among the attempts to establish objective criteria for nationhood.'155 It says, "A nation is a historically constituted, stable community of people, formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life and psychological make-up manifested in a community of common culture...none of the above characteristics taken separately is sufficient to define a nation. More than that, it is sufficient for a single one of these characteristics to be lacking and the nation ceases to be a nation."156 These are, apparently, rather strict criteria of defining a nation. T.K. Oommen in his book, *Citizenship, Nationality and Ethnicity* says, 'territory and language (communications) are the two important preconditions for a nation's existence'. 'Neither race nor religion can provide authentic content to the process of nation formation...as they have both undergone de-territorialisation', he says.157 Further, he thinks race and religion to be 'exclusionary in orientation'. "In contrast", he thinks, "linguistic and tribal

155 Hobsbawm 1992, p.5.
communities can provide the bases for nation formation provided, they have a minimum size.\textsuperscript{158}

It would be worthwhile to pinpoint two distinct aspects of the process of the making of a nation: One, the process of the nation being materially constituted — in the main, the aspect of its political economy. The other is the aspect of language/culture, consciousness/subjectivity — in the main, the ideological creation of the nation out of a pre-existing baggage of ‘shared world of meanings’. Historical evidence and empirical phenomena should point in the direction of the former aspect being the principal one, particularly in the current phase of aggressive global finance capitalism. Even as political economy has a principal role in the making of a nation, we would argue that in the further development or underdevelopment of a nation also material (not simply and narrowly economic) factors, particularly the aspect of political economy, are involved. One additional component may be mentioned as well: the aspect of territoriality. There could as well be aspiring nations who could make claims to a particular territory. But territoriality, no doubt, is an essential component of what constitutes a nation. So a nation is essentially a ‘territorial community’.

Nationalism is a rather amorphous category and requires classification if any significant progress is to be made towards understanding it. The typology of nationalism may involve the broad categorisation of progressive nationalism and reactionary nationalism, in the Marxist parlance. The Marxist approach has the distinctive advantage that it takes into account the dimensions of material interest and not merely the cultural expressions of nationalism. Nevertheless, it may be admitted that this classification could only be an indication in this direction and is rather insufficient to capture the varied forms of nationalisms. Further, distinction may be made between nationalism in the advanced capitalist countries and nationalism in the peripheral countries of the world and between the nationalism in a dominant nationality/nation and an oppressed one. It is imperative on us to ask, ‘what is the content of any particular nationalism?’ It may be rather misleading to speak about nationalism in general.

The concept of self-determination also cannot be understood merely as formal institutional structures.\textsuperscript{159} These are “no guarantee of identity unless these are


\textsuperscript{159} Cobban, Selassie, Brownline, Yel Tamir, and Moore are some of the prominent scholars in studies on the concept self-determination. See Moore 1998: National Self-Determination and Secession, Oxford University Press. The Charter of the United Nations Article I (2) provided for self-determination as self-government. UN covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and Article I of the UN Covenant on Civil and Political Rights also provided for the right to self-determination.
accompanied by socio-economic transformation and cultural rights.\textsuperscript{160} This would involve “political, economic and cultural self-determination”.\textsuperscript{161} Cultural self-determination would mean “de-colonising the mind” and reclaiming the “authenticity and autonomy” of the “values, cultures and languages of the people of Asia and Africa”, thus “moving the centre” not only from Europe but more importantly, from our ruling minority to the “creative base among the people”.\textsuperscript{162}

**India as a Multi-National Country**

“The union of Indian States continues to be a stupendous multi-national entity”, writes T.K. Oommen. “There are only 12 languages in India with 10 million or more speakers, and all of them are accorded recognition as ‘national’ languages” [included in the eighth schedule of the constitution], he says elsewhere. ‘The size factor is a tricky one, and yet if one fixes the size of a nation say, at 1 million there are more than 33 such communities in India. Yet, all of them would not qualify to the status of nations as all of them do not possess a homeland.’\textsuperscript{163}

It may be noted that the term ‘nationality’ is being used herein in order to refer to what in the classical western parlance is used as the ‘nation’ i.e. a population inhabiting a more or less homogenous linguistic territory that was somewhat synonymous with a unified market. Nations possessing their own states have been called ‘nation-states’, in the west. Herein the term, 'nationality', in the Indian parlance, means to refer to the many nations without own states that together constitute a multinational country such as India. Nationalities in India are not always co-terminus with the existing states (provinces) even today. The aspect of political economy in the process whereby nationalities are historically constituted and the aspect of language, culture, consciousness may be said to be the determining factors in the making of a nationality even in India.

That political economy plays a most important part towards the making of a nationality can be seen from the emergence of nationalities like Assam despite its ethnic and linguistic plurality. The massive drain of oil, tea and timber gave rise to a militant nationality movement in the eighties, demanding secession from India. Jharkhand and Uttarakhand also seem to have been constituted into nationalities in popular consciousness in the process of the struggle against the state and the dominant classes in India.


\textsuperscript{161} Manoranjan Mohanty 1996, p.iv.

\textsuperscript{162} Ngugi wa Thiongo 1996, pp.281-7.
demanding the status of separate states (provinces). In Jharkhand, it was again the drain of resources – minerals – that seems to have given rise to the movement. Neither Jharkhand nor Uttarakhand were homogenous culturally, linguistically or ethnically. In Jharkhand, there were tribals and non-tribals. In Uttarakhand, there were two Pahari (hill) languages, Garhwali and Kumaoni. Yet they could come together to constitute a nationality in the process of their struggle. This, again, points to the importance of understanding the nationality question from a political economy angle, in India as well. Even in the case of ‘reactionary nationalism’ – as is understood in the Marxist parlance – material interests of the respective ruling classes are involved. Thus some studies have shown how the material interests of Indian dominant classes are most sharply represented in militant Hindutva nationalism in India. So, once again, it may be asserted that nationality movements cannot be construed as merely cultural protests.

Speaking in general of the aspect of political economy of national formations and the Class-Nationality interface in particular, it would be immensely useful to draw on theories that have attempted to focus on Accumulation and analyse ‘spatial patterns of accumulation’ – Dependency theory, World System theory and the ‘Social Structures of Accumulation’ approach that sought to integrate the social and spatial dimensions of Accumulation.

**Focus on Accumulation: Dependency theory**

According to the modernisation theorists, to activate economic growth, one must concentrate capital spatially and economically, which at first results in geographical and social inequality. This polarisation however, is to be reversed in the last instance by a ‘trickle-down’ mechanism from the most dynamic sectors and regions to the periphery. In many developing countries, this critical turning point is far from being reached. Rather there is increasing regional and social polarisation. It is worth mentioning the ‘bluff concepts’ in the modernisation theory, such as, ‘trickle-down’.164 The ‘trickle-down’ process had failed absolutely. Two hundred years ago, the income ratio between world’s rich and poor countries was 1.5:1, in 1960, it was 20:1, in 1980 it went up to 46:1 and in 1989, the ratio was 60:1.165

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164 Schuurman 1993, p. 37, fn. 9 & 12.
It was pointed out that with the per capita growth of early 1990s to the tune of 1.3 – 1.6 per cent, it would take another 150 years for Third World countries to achieve half [the level of the then] per capita income of Western countries.\textsuperscript{166}

A.G. Frank argued that Rostow's theory was ahistorical. It denies history to underdeveloped countries. The \textit{dependistas} (dependency theorists) argued that the world system comprises of regional economies, integrated by the division of labour between these regions. Capitalist development has multiple histories. The following elements could be identified in the arguments of the \textit{dependistas}:

1) That surplus is expropriated from the satellites

2) That there is a polarisation of capitalism between metropolis & satellites

3) That the satellites continued in the fundamental structure of capitalism.\textsuperscript{167}

Underdevelopment is not just the lack of development. Development of the core is the reason for the underdevelopment of the periphery. Underdevelopment is not an original condition. It is a created condition. ‘Development of underdevelopment’ was both a process and a project.

David Slater is not averse to viewing notions of the periphery as ‘the subordinated other’.\textsuperscript{168} Rightly did he commend the dependency perspective for having called into question two central tenets of the modernisation theory: First, the [Eurocentric] notion that the Third World had no meaningful history prior to its discovery and inscription into the Western project was effectively exploded.\textsuperscript{169} Second, the contention that the relations between the First and the Third Worlds were beneficial for the Third was inverted and it was argued that the periphery suffered from these interrelations.\textsuperscript{170} For instance, the empirical investigations of Payer,\textsuperscript{171} for instance, pointed to the actuality of this line of thinking. He had examined the politics of debt, emphasising the fact that since 1982 the Third World has been a net exporter of hard currency to the developed countries.\textsuperscript{172}

\textsuperscript{166} Schuurman 1993, p. 9.
\textsuperscript{167} Schuurman 1993.
\textsuperscript{168} Ibid, p. 34.
\textsuperscript{169} Eurocentrism is rather, a state of mind, a political-philosophical view and not \textit{per se} an attitude determined by geographic location (Schuurman 1993, p. 37, f.n. 9). We would add that the ‘new world’ of Americas and Oceana are cultural extensions of Europe on this count.
\textsuperscript{172} Slater 1993, p. 95.
With the disenchantment to the predominant modernisation theory of mainstream Economics, the dependency theory came up during the end of 1960s. Dependency theory was an offspring of its time, influenced by several political and economic events.¹⁷³

1) The failure of the import substitution strategy was recognized by the Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA), under the direction of Raul Prebisch which confirmed a deterioration in the terms of trade for traditional Latin American primary product exports as compared to the import of industrial goods.

2) The Cuban revolution in 1959 presented Latin America with the possibility of socialist revolution.

3) The military coup d’etat in Brazil in 1964 led to a policy of opening the floodgates for foreign capital and many future dependistas were exiled abroad and began critically examining the Brazilian economic path.

4) The US invasion of the Dominican Republic in 1965 quashed a popular uprising supported by some enlightened army officers, indicating that ‘imperialism’ was prepared to aggressively assert its interests in Latin America.¹⁷⁴

The theoretical influences of Dependency theory were: (a) Marx and Lenin on class analysis and the relation between ‘imperialism’ and capitalism, (b) Rosa Luxemburg on the penetration of the capitalist mode of production in non-capitalist societies and its consequences on the dismantling of the ‘natural economy’, (c) Raul Prebisch and Gunnar Myrdal with their analyses in terms of ‘core’ and ‘periphery’, (d) the French structural Marxists of the 1970s who advocated the modes of production concept, (e) Paul Baran, known as the first radical political economist, who as early as the 1950s wrote about the negative consequences of monopoly capitalism for the periphery, stressing on the transfer of economic surplus from the periphery, hindering its development.¹⁷⁵ Paul Baran in 1957 argued that underdevelopment in Less Developed Countries (LDCs) is qualitatively different from early stages of capitalism in advanced capitalist countries. All societies need not pass through similar stages. Underdevelopment of this sort is intricately linked with development of capitalism.¹⁷⁶

According to Schuurman, despite the diversity in articulations of the Dependistas, there were, nevertheless, some common grounds:¹⁷⁷

¹⁷³ Schuurman 1993, p. 3.
¹⁷⁴ Ibid, pp. 3-4.
¹⁷⁵ Ibid, p. 36.
¹⁷⁷ Schuurman 1993, p. 5.
Underdevelopment is a historical process, not necessarily a condition intrinsic to the Third World.

The dominant and dependent countries together form a capitalist system – point later elaborated further by World System theory.

The periphery being plundered of its surplus, leading to the development of the core is an inherent consequence of the functioning of the world system.

There were also common grounds of agreement among the Dependistas about the pejorative role of multinational corporations.

Andre Gunder Frank\textsuperscript{178} who wrote in English, rather than Spanish, was outspoken and polemical and wrote not only about Latin America but also about the historical development of the capitalist world system. Frank's claim that Latin America was capitalist right from the beginning of the colonial period, came under fire from the Argentinian economist Ernesto Laclau.\textsuperscript{179} Laclau argued that capitalism was a mode of production rather than a mode of exchange. He focused on the sort of labour relations which created a product in the first place, rather than on what happened to the surplus. If rather than the manner of production, matters such as production for a market and appropriation of the surplus were of prime importance in defining capitalism, then capitalism should have existed since the ancient Greeks, reasoned Laclau arguing that such a definition would have turned capitalism into a meaningless concept. The proponents of the modes of production were often called 'productionists' and those of the mode of exchange were called 'circulationists'. Circulationists held that underdevelopment is caused by and maintained by surplus transfer (such as unequal transfer) from the periphery to the centre. Productionists on the other hand argued that the question is rather one of how the surplus is produced in the periphery and the class formation that results. The basic idea of the modes of production theory is that a number of modes of production coexist in society, and that they articulate with each other (regarding exchange of labour, goods, capital, etc.). Further, it was thought that the relationship between capitalist and non-capitalist modes of production was favourable to the capitalist mode of production. Apartheid was used as a classic example. The concept seemed to lose its meaning with the identification of many local modes of production.\textsuperscript{180}


\textsuperscript{180} Schuurman 1993, pp. 6, 7, 37, f.n. 3.
Marxists pointed out that Marx had pointed out that the concept was to be used at the national level, and that at any one point of time, there was only one [dominant] mode of production.\textsuperscript{181}

Cardoso\textsuperscript{182} in 1970 spoke of 'dependent development' arguing that the Third World was industrialising (also Warren’s position) but that it remained structurally incomplete. Developing countries are then having to follow the lead of the world economy dominated by Transnational corporations, which supply the missing inputs and also influence the decision making process. David Becker and Richard Sklar (1987) criticise them on grounds such as neglecting the capability of Newly Industrialised Countries (NICs) for technical innovation, for proposing an unrealistic alternative in the form of total autonomy and a State that would represent the will of the people. Despite such criticisms, Schuurman feels that the \textit{dependencia} school of Cardoso, \textit{et al} had the strength of analysing a variety of class alliances and class oppositions.\textsuperscript{183}

Walter Rodney’s study\textsuperscript{184} was another effort in the direction of understanding underdevelopment in the context of Africa.

\textbf{Critique of the Dependencia School}

The \textit{dependencia} school was criticised as both mechanistic and externalistic, as it privileged the external over the internal, as the explanatory variable. It was criticized as being against Marxism as it tended to argue that surplus is created in circulation, not in production. Thus the criticism by Robert Brenner was that the \textit{dependistas} located surplus in circulation, not in production.\textsuperscript{185}

Nevertheless, it cannot be gainsaid that the external got internalised through division of labour or commodity chains. It is a single world system, a totality. It is the dialectics that is more important.

David Booth\textsuperscript{186} who provided a philosophical critique of the \textit{Dependencia} school has been an important reference for the debate on the impasse. Booth’s critique is based on three grounds: teleology, economism and epistemology. According to Booth, both the circulationists and productionists in the Marxist camp had defined capitalism in

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{181} Ibid, p. 7.
\item \textsuperscript{182} Cardoso, F. & E. Faletto 1979: Dependency and Development in Latin America, University of California Press, first pub. 1970.
\item \textsuperscript{183} Schuurman 1993, pp. 19-20.
\item \textsuperscript{184} Walter Rodney 1972: \textit{How Europe Underdeveloped Africa}, Howard University Press.
\end{itemize}
teleological terms, i.e. in terms of inescapable and fixed outcomes.\textsuperscript{187} We would, however, like to point out that \textit{telos} in Marx did not seem to be an inescapable or fixed outcome but rather a desirable ethical goal or a normative goal or value-goal to be strived towards and in this sense, the teleology of radical political economists may be considered only desirable. The structural Marxist, Bill Warren\textsuperscript{188} who positioned himself against the \textit{dependencia} theorists is also placed by him in the teleological camp. According to Schuurman, even the Modernisation theorists exhibited the teleological trait.\textsuperscript{189}

The second charge was economism which accused the Marxists of reducing the political, social and cultural factors in developing countries in terms of the functional needs of metropolitan capital, ignoring their specificities. In defense of the \textit{dependistas}, it may not however, be forgotten that accumulation of economic surplus is, arguably, the principal feature of global capitalism.

The third accusation was on epistemological grounds that the concepts such as unequal trade and exploitation were rarely based on empirical data and were almost never calculable and were moreover, wrapped in pseudo-scientific jargon. On the other hand, Booth does not mention the ‘bluff concepts’ of the modernisation theory, such as, ‘trickle-down’.\textsuperscript{190} In defense of the \textit{dependistas}, we would argue that invariable insistence on empirical validation of phenomena tantamounts to a philosophically unsustainable empiricist inclination. It is only through theoretical understanding can ‘the internal relations of things’ be grasped.

Booth (1985) attracted much attention but the basis of his critique was not new. Bernstein\textsuperscript{191} had already begun to move away from the \textit{dependistas} and the modes of production school. He reproached the \textit{dependistas} of wanting to eat the cake and have it too. The core was portrayed as autonomous and the periphery as dependent. According to Bernstein, this logic was not consistent because the core could not be autonomous if it had based itself on exploitative interdependence vis-à-vis the periphery. Further, Bernstein scorned the modes of production school for providing a ‘shopping list’ of production modes, which was empty rhetoric. On the contrary, in India, for instance, the mode of production debate was engaged in for the purpose of securing understanding about the ground reality by radical scholars who wanted social transformation. Bernstein claimed that a theory of underdevelopment was not possible and attempts to construct

\begin{footnotes}
190 Ibid, pp. 13, 38, f.n. 12.
\end{footnotes}
such a theory as ideologically coloured. In this way, Bernstein [anticipated] both Booth (1985) and the postmodernist criticisms. However, neither Bernstein nor Booth provided a concrete way out of the impasse in radical development theories. 192

Booth’s criticism of radical political economists had concluded that the problems and the solutions lay at a metaphysical level. However, since mid-1980s, the trend has been against metatheories, accusing development theories as having its starting point in the untenable modernity discourse. 193

The postmodern notion of ‘deconstruction’ entails dismantling of structures to find actors within these structures. Structures are held to be merely reified notions (eg. the world system), which have merely an apparent value. Deconstruction eventually leads to the individual actor as the only valid unit of analysis. 194 The Actor-oriented approach of Norman Long had also attempted to deconstruct structures into actors.

We would hold structures, indeed, are abstractions of aspects of inter-connected reality, the dynamic of which is manifested in real life. They can be deconstructed only at significant loss to perceiving reality. Thus even if ‘imperialism’ as a social structure is rejected out of hand as invalid, the reality of American occupation and the resistance against it are real in the experience of the people of contemporary Iraq and least of all, reduced to the level of individual actors.

Focus on Accumulation: World System Theory

The World System theory sought to understand the world capitalist system in its totality. Schuurman195 says, “[The World System] approach was developed in the mid 1970s, when the East Asian countries were experiencing swift growth that could no longer be described as dependent development, particularly as they had begun to challenge the economic superiority of the USA in a number of areas.” [?]. Today, well after the East Asian financial crisis in 1997, we know that this belief was ill-founded. East Asia has been the single case where “the internal and external constraints to peripheral accumulation were lifted under the aegis of the United States, for geostrategic reasons, in a Cold War context”. 196

192 Schuurman 1993, pp. 13-14.
193 Ibid, p. 22.
The failure of the Cultural Revolution in China and economic stagnation in the Eastern Bloc countries led to an opening in the direction of international capital. Previously unthinkable alliances as between Washington and Peking were formed. Wallerstein who was the most outspoken figure in this terrain based his ideas on those of A.G. Frank and other dependistas. They shared in common the concepts of unequal trade, the exploitation of the periphery by the core and the existence of a world market. There were also semi-peripheries (like Brazil) which acted as buffer between the core and the periphery. It is differentiated from the periphery by their more significant industrial production. It functions as a go-between importing high-tech from the core and exporting semi-manufactures to it. It imports raw materials from the periphery and exports to it industrial end-products.\textsuperscript{197} The semi-peripheries had succeeded in endogenising their capital goods sector.\textsuperscript{198}

The World System was seen in this period as a handy tool to differentiate between the internal and external factors as explanations of underdevelopment. For the World System approach there were no more external factors, as it offered a simple solution to this question – that of moving from the country level to the more abstract global level. There is no longer a core capitalism and a peripheral one but one capitalist world system. Another World System author is Samir Amin who began publishing since 1976. He did not agree with Wallerstein about the presence of capitalist mode of production in Latin America since the 19\textsuperscript{th} century, but he agreed about the existence of unequal trade that led to a disarticulated economic system and about the existence of semi-peripheries. (A disarticulated economic system is described by Amin using a refinement, probably of Kalecki, of the distinction of Marx between Departments I and II of the economy. For Marx, Departments I was the economic sector producing capital goods and Departments II, consumer goods. The relation between these two is expressed in economic symbols as a reproduction scheme determining the reproduction of the capitalist system. Ia – capital goods, Ib – raw materials, Ila – mass consumer goods, IIb – luxury consumer goods. In the core, economic development is the result of the relation between Ia (capital goods) and Ila (mass consumer goods). In the periphery, it is between Ib (export of raw materials) and IIb (luxury consumer goods), which cannot result in independent development. This disarticulation of the economy is maintained by the changing coalitions within elite circles, according to Amin.\textsuperscript{199}

\textsuperscript{197} Schuurman 1993, pp. 8-9.
\textsuperscript{199} Schuurman 1993, pp. 8-9, 37, 39, f.n. 16.

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In general, the criticism of World System approach was same as that of dependency theories: the neglect of class analysis, the neglect of diversity of the Third World, the assumption of non-workable political options such as self-reliance and socialism at a world scale. As with the previous approaches, the World System approach was pushed to the background by mid-1980s. 200

It may, however, be happily noted that theorisations of the doctrine of 'uneven development' is not confined to or typical of radical political economists 201 alone. Less radical scholars 202 have set forth their own versions of explanations of this phenomenon. Speaking of international trade-industrialisation linkage, Krugman says, "[A] small "head start" for one region will cumulate over time, with exports of manufactures from the leading region crowding out the industrial sector of the lagging region. This process…captures the essence of the argument that trade with developed nations prevents industrialization in less developed countries." 203 He further says, "As long as both countries produce agricultural goods, wage rates will be equalized by trade; while because of the external economies in manufacturing production, whichever country has the larger capital stock will have a higher profit rate and will therefore grow faster. The result is an ever-increasing divergence between regions, which ends only when a boundary of some kind has been reached." 204 The lagging region’s nascent industrial sector gets ruined by manufacturing exports from the leading region, as it happened in the case of the Indian textile industry in the eighteenth century. As Paul Baran says, the process "extinguished the igniting spark without which there could be no industrial expansion in the new underdeveloped countries." 205 What Krugman sought to do was "to apply the tools of orthodox economics to some of the ideas of the economic system's radical critics" 206 Krugman’s model validates "a two-stage pattern of development that bears a striking resemblance to a Hobson-Lenin view of imperialism" and further "extends the analysis to a three-region world" 207 consisting of Centre, Semi-Periphery and Periphery.

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205 Cited in Ibid, p. 100.
207 Ibid, p. 94.
After Jurgen Habermas' *Knowledge and Human Interest* and more specifically, Marxist notions of class interest, we would argue that the acceptance or rejection of a particular theory has to do with specific interests as related to particular social locations of the proponents in question, without of course, denying the exceptional possibility of transcending them. The non-acceptance of the *dependistas* in the mainstream may have more to do with the character of the changed political and economic scenario under the neo-liberal epoch, rather than any epistemological grounds, as is claimed by Booth and Schuurman. Thus Norman Long and Magdalena Villarreal acknowledge the centrality of power differentials and struggles over social meaning, which are interwoven with actors' accumulated social experiences, commitments and culturally-acquired dispositions as shaping the nature of knowledge processes inherent in development intervention.  

The only way out that Leslie Sklair saw to get out of the impasse in development studies was a combination of metatheory, theory and empirical research in one project. Schuurman did not agree with Leslie Sklair's proposal to promote an untestable theory to the rank of metatheory. In fact, this is what was done by the World System theorists to solve the difficult problem of empirical difference between internal and external factors that are instrumental in underdevelopment.

Schuurman rightly says, “Whichever theoretical corner, we may choose to sit in, it cannot be denied that development on a world scale is of importance to the inequalities within the Third World and between the First and Third Worlds.” The increasing triadisation of the world economy involving Europe, the US and Japan is of great concern as well. Inequality is thus a relevant concept, not only on a micro-level (the household) or meso-level (social categories), but also on a supranational level. Analysing the global polarisation that has taken place since beginnings of capitalist development with the eighteenth century industrial revolution in Europe, Bairoch of the World System school pointed out that the ratio of disparity in national incomes between the richest countries in the capitalist-core and the poorest countries at the underdeveloped periphery in 1750 was only 1.8:1. More than a century later, this ratio went up to 5:1, after half a century in 1913, it showed a marked rise to 10:1, after less than four decades in 1950 it jumped to a height of 18:1 [although this period was characterised by two major World Wars], and by

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210 Ibid, p. 31.
1977, i.e., in less than two decades, it already reached an astounding height of 29:1.  

"One of the problems to be faced is that, while the micro- and the meso-levels are primarily defined using socio-cultural variables, the spatial dimension is present only implicitly, analyses of diversity and inequality on a national or supranational level have an explicit spatial dimension which, in turn, does not tell us very much about the actors involved."  

**The Commodity Chains Approach**

The Commodity Chains Approach was a growth out of the world-economy analyses that sought to plug in their apparent loopholes. Criticisms have been advanced of the World System and Dependency theories on reasonable grounds, first that they have ignored production and privileged trade, thus misreading the source of value and second that they neglected factors internal to the national territories, class relations in particular. Keeping Gereffi, Korzeniewicz, Hopkins and Wallerstein as their guiding lights, Rammohan and Sundaresan proposed to overcome these lacunae by focusing on socially embedded analysis of commodity chains. A commodity chain is a ‘network of labour and material processes that precede a finished commodity’. The specific location of a social group/country/zone in a commodity chain influences its relative share of value. Nodes in the commodity chain constitute each of the production operations in them. Nodes are characterised by linkages of raw material, labour/relations of production, technology, product markets.

Rammohan and Sundaresan argue that the commodity chains analysis affords an integrated examination of both production and circulation of commodities. They do not seek to replace concepts such as mode of production, as they admit but how the articulation of modes of production with each other is ‘rendered redundant’ in a commodity chains analysis and how exactly they distance themselves from the “Enlightenment modernist conception of development” is left unclear. We would view that commodity chains analysis is an approach that gives centrality of space to...
commodities rather than the producers of commodities. The difference in emphasis could be productive of a different kind of knowledge. However, we would prefer to go with an approach that focuses on collectivities of people organised around the production and exchange of commodities, which may help us obtain knowledge that could be more directly beneficial to these sections.

Having spoken of the theorisations of Nationality – both its cultural and political economy variants, we would strongly advocate a blending of the two kinds of theorisations to arrive at a better understanding of the phenomenon of national formations. It would be useful to invoke the logic of ‘Class in itself’ and ‘Class for itself’ logic in Marx to the phenomenon of national formations as well. ‘Nationality in itself’ may be referred to as the objective economic and territorial formations and ‘Nationality for itself’, to refer to the aspect of national consciousness.

III. The Meanings of Development

Robert A. Nisbet defined development as “change proceeding lineally, cumulatively and purposively over long periods of time.”215

Dudley Seers argued that any discussion of the meaning of development could not realistically avoid the question of value judgements.216 He gave a normative definition of development that it ought to be seen in the context of providing the necessary conditions for the universally acceptable aim of ‘the realisation of the potential of human personality’.217 In this sense, he expressed a healthy scepticism of the development in the First World, with evils such as urban sprawl, advertising pressures, air pollution and chronic tension.218 Seers puts on the agenda in a measured way a series of issues relating to the ethics of development.219

Amartya Sen defined development as follows: “Development consists of the removal of various types of unfreedoms that leave people with little choice and little opportunity of exercising their reasoned agency. The removal of substantial unfreedoms...is constitutive

219 David Slater 1993, p. 106.
of development." He includes civil and political freedoms, economic facilities, social opportunities including entitlement to health and education services, transparency guarantees and social safety nets among the freedoms desired. A distinction is drawn by Amartya Sen between development of material production and 'human development', which refers to the development of human capabilities. Expansion of incomes is only one of the important means to, but not the end of development in this view. Income growth is not a sufficient condition for such transformation. Elementary capabilities to lead healthier and longer lives, being literate, freedom derived from social and political participation, etc. are also counted in among development indicators. Development in this view is certainly only a means and not an end in itself and human beings are not considered as merely the beneficiaries of development but also its active agents. What Seers speaks about also looks more akin to the notion of 'human development'.

That the notion of human development has gained, at least, conceptual acceptance even by the International Financial Institutions is clear from the fact that since 1978, the World Bank began to implement a programme based on meeting the basic needs of the people, namely, primary education, primary health, nutrition, etc. Based on the experience derived from this programme, in 1981, renowned Development thinkers such as Paul Streeten, Shahid Javed Burkhi, Mehboob ul Haq, Norman Hicks, Francis Stewart, et al brought forward a new approach in the book, First Things First. This book has been the basic ideological source of the Human Development Reports (HDRs) being published by the UNDP since 1990. (Late) Mehboob ul Haq, the chief architect of the HDR is one of the authors of this book. Literacy, average life-span and per capita income were taken as the basic indicators of the Human Development Index (HDI). Since 1995, Gender Development Index (GDI) also began to be calculated separately. The philosophical moorings of the 'basic needs paradigm' can be traced back to the book, A Theory of Justice by John Rawls, who is often designated in political theory as an 'egalitarian liberal'.

Lummis deconstructs the notion of development, which is so central to the Enlightenment discourse. He says, it involves a number of metaphors with evolutionary,

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221 Ibid, pp. 38-40.
universal and reductionist implications. It implies that developed countries is the positive image of which the developing countries are the negative image, with latent potential to become the former. That which becomes visible is already embedded in the ‘genes’. The result of development process is fixed; it is only the speed that differs. The policymakers pretend to know the building blocks of the structure, the genes as well as the final outcome.

For Lummis, the ideology of development, which we would designate better as ‘developmentalism’ does not indicate any positive transformation: “Villagers are driven out and dams are built; forests are cut down and replaced by plantations; whole cultures are smashed and people recruited into quite different cultures; people’s local means of subsistence are taken away and they are placed under the power of the world market”.

In contrast, the World Bank argues that ‘when markets work well, greater equity often comes naturally’. This is passed off as productive transformation with equity. On the other hand, we would argue that equity does not ensue automatically from the operations of the market forces but to say the least, it requires conscious intervention by the State and other agencies.

Schuurman rightly opines that the construction of a non-reductionist and non-teleological development theory is the challenge of the 1990s. Well after one whole decade of writing this, the signs of development of such a theory is yet to be seen.

In the light of the above discussion we would define Development in general as the non-linear process whereby human beings transcend the determinations of nature. It may further be described as transcendence of animal-like existence at the subsistence level. It is a transcendence in the secular, material realm. It is secular because it has to do with seculum – this world. It has to do with the material realm as opposed to transcendence in the spiritual or cultural realm. The outcome is not pre-determined as it is the human

\[\text{Schuurman 1993, pp. 26-27.}\]
\[\text{David Slater 1993, p. 106.}\]
\[\text{Ibid; World Bank 1991, p. 138.}\]
\[\text{Slater 1993, p. 106.}\]
\[\text{Schuurman 1993, p. 32.}\]
\[\text{Rabindranath Tagore in his Letters from Russia had said, “[T]he humanness of human beings is not in just subsisting ... civilization consists of transcending mere subsistence.” (Cited in Rahman, Md. Anisur 2002: “Humanizing the Poverty Discourse” in Proceedings of International Workshop on Research for Poverty Alleviation, Kerala Research Programme on Local Level Development, Centre for Development Studies, Thiruvananthapuram, 16-18 September, p. 4). He went on subsequently to reflect his elitist mindset, saying, “All the best fruits of civilization have blossomed in leisure. Hence it is necessary to preserve leisure in one part of human civilization” (Cited in Rahman 2002, p. 4, f.n. 7).}\]
agency that determines in which direction development has to take place. And the process may not necessarily be linear, as has been pointed out by the discussions on the development of development/underdevelopment.

IV. CONTEXTUALISING STATE AND CLASS IN INDIA

The Class-Nationality interface is not a simple one to one relationship but is mediated by the super-imposing presence of the State. So then, let us attempt an understanding of the Class nature of the State in the Indian context.

In the words of Sudipta Kaviraj, 'all societies have "structures" and states have to obey their logic, and adapt to its compulsions'. An instrumental view of the State in a narrowly functional sense could be insufficient and needs to be transcended. In the usual economic literature on planning, the failure to secure the larger goals of planning are not considered as having anything to do with the nature of the State and instead, an array of technical weaknesses are presented. Sukhmoy Chakravarty's analysis, for instance, adopts this approach. More insidiously, the State is, in effect, considered neutral and even transcendental. Where there is a conflict between, say, reducing poverty and securing more equal distribution of income on the one hand and accumulation and growth on the other, the State may opt for the latter, at the cost of the former. But then, this is seen as a conscious and rational decision, in favour of the 'general interest'.

Byres proposes to abandon the narrowly instrumental notion of a neutral, technocratic, 'developmentalist' State, so common in the writings on development planning. We would hold that the narrowly instrumental view of the State is not limited to the writings on development planning but is also quite commonly implied in conventional Marxist writings.

Root-and-branch neo-classical economists take a line of argument that has now become a sort of orthodoxy. They oppose the 'failure' of State intervention via planning. Their ideal State is a minimal one. The State that interferes in economic activity other than on a minimal basis simply creates and protects vested interests, spreads inefficiency and distortion, prevents the proper functioning of markets, generates rent-seeking rather than

236 Byres (ed.) 1997, p. 47.
productive activity, denies the transforming role of outward-looking export-led growth, and so on.\textsuperscript{238}

\textbf{Defining the State}

Jessop points out that difficulties loom large in seeking to define the State.\textsuperscript{239} "That apparently simple exercise is fraught with difficulty' according to Byres.\textsuperscript{240}

The definition of the State by Abrams: "A palpable nexus of practice and institutional structure centred on government".\textsuperscript{241} This admittedly pragmatic definition of the State is rather minimalist and therefore not so useful in revealing the actual character of the State whether in terms of its class/social base or in the Trotskyian/Weberian terms of arrogating to itself the legitimate monopoly over violence [and regulation].

Better is the definition provided by John Haldon, Marxist historian, as follows: 'The State represents a set of institutions and personnel...exerting authority over a territorially distinct area.\textsuperscript{242} 'Institutions and personnel' bears reference to the 'the whole institutional ensemble' of the State.\textsuperscript{243}

\textbf{The Need for the Notion of Relative Autonomy}

Miliband, rather favours the idea that the State acts on behalf of 'the dominant or "ruling" class'.\textsuperscript{244} He reminds us that ruling class is made up of separate elements, with presumably, differing interests.\textsuperscript{245}

In the instrumentalist view of the State, the State acts at the behest of the 'dominant or "ruling" class' and Miliband rejects it as the vulgar deformation of the thought of Marx and Engels.\textsuperscript{246} According to Byres, there was no single dominant class in India in 1947 or in the mid-1990s. Rather, there is "an array of dominant classes, and within those,
important class fractions".\textsuperscript{247} He says that in the context of India, there is a State intent upon capitalist transformation, and yet capitalist classes in both town and country are not yet clearly dominant in the social formation.\textsuperscript{248} The State may be forced to accommodate such non-capitalist classes, in ways inimical to capitalist transformation, ways that prevent access to crucial sources of accumulation. A further sense in which the 'at the behest of reading' could not be sustained is that the 'State acts as a factor of cohesion in the social formation'.\textsuperscript{249} In Poulantzas's words, the State 'prevents the social formation from bursting apart'.\textsuperscript{250}

Byres gives the example of the poverty alleviation programme of the Indian State in which the State may have to act in the teeth of considerable opposition. We would, however, question if it could not, instead, be read as an effort at legitimising the existing system and patterns of accumulation, particularly in the context of populist electoral politics necessitated by parliamentary democracy? We would hold that in mediating class conflict over a social terrain of relative asymmetry of power relations, the State, more often than not, arbitrates in favour of the more powerful. Therefore, it should be remembered that its class nature is primary, principal and fundamental and its relative autonomy is useful to bring in a subtlety of analysis and point to possibilities of exceptional States like the Bonapartist one that favoured a class(es) that were not yet dominant in society. The aspect of relative autonomy should not be overemphasised.

The second example that he cites is that in the wake of independence, capitalist class(es) were weakly developed or were arguably in embryonic form in both town and country, and that it was because of relative autonomy that the State was able to carry forward capitalist transformation even with a civil society characterised by entrenched non-capitalist classes. In other words, the State was constrained in its 'capitalist mission' by the powerful existence of dominant classes whose interests are seriously threatened by capitalist transformation.\textsuperscript{251} We would argue that both the examples furnished by Byres for the relative autonomy of the Indian State may be disputable. The second example may be disputed because the Indian big capital was considered to be the leading class in the dominant class combine, in most shades of Marxist thinking.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{248} Ibid, p. 51.
\item \textsuperscript{249} Jessop 1982, p. 16.
\item \textsuperscript{251} Byres (ed.) 1997, p. 53.
\end{itemize}
Byres argues, "It seems most useful, then, to posit the state as representative of an array of dominant class interests", which may be especially contradictory in the prolonged transitional situation in post-1947 India. Byres rightly speaks of the representation and mediation by the State of different dominant class interests. Speaking of Planning, he believes that understanding on policy matters would be greatly enhanced if the centrality of Class was taken into account, without trivialising the processes at work or ignoring the specificities of concrete situations.²⁵²

The view of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) was represented as below: 'The state in India is an organ of the class rule of the bourgeoisie and landlords, led by the big bourgeoisie which is increasingly collaborating with foreign finance capital in pursuit of the capitalist path of development'.²³³ According to Sudipta Kaviraj, there has been, in this literature, a 'tendency to underestimate the political functions of the state, and to view the state as merely an expression of class relations rather than a terrain, sometimes an independent actor in the power process.'²⁵⁴

However unhelpful the formulations of Hanson were, implicit in his study was the idea that in a serious treatment of planning, the nature of the State matters and that narrow instrumental view of the State would not do.²⁵⁵

**The Statist View: The State as an Autonomous Site or Subject**

Scholars such as Theda Skocpol tended to view the State as having almost total structural and behavioural autonomy. This represents the Statist view that emphasised on the special interests of the State by virtue of its insertion into the international order and also by its unique responsibilities for maintaining domestic order.²⁵⁶ She argued that there has been a paradigm switch in the Western Social Sciences in the 1970s: from 'societal' approaches which treated the State as a dependent variable to those ['Statist' approaches] that treated it as an independent variable. Thus she identified Structural Functionalism and Pluralism as dominant 'societal' approaches to the State among the American academia.²⁵⁷ The Statist view has been quite effectively criticised particularly from a Marxist angle both empirically and theoretically for undermining the dynamics of class struggle.

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²⁵² Ibid, pp. 53-54.
²³³ Kurian 1975, p. 113.
²⁴⁴ Kaviraj 1988, p. 2431.
the State in its own right, naively assuming the separation of the State from social and economic spheres and then claiming that it one-sidedly influences and directs change in these spheres is quite an inconsistent position in itself.258 The underlying assumption driving a wedge between State and society rules out “any derivation of the state from the mode of production and/or from class dynamics”.259 For others, the ‘Statist’ view represented a nostalgia for the strong welfare State in the US and/or the modernising State in the less-developed countries in an epoch when forces were at work undermining it.260 Jessop had in 1982 already pointed to the general dangers in the ‘State as a factor of cohesion’ position, like that of embracing an unjustifiable ‘class reconciliation’ view or one of a neutral/Olympian State in pursuit of social justice.261 Evidently, the notion of a ‘State for itself’ or a ‘self-determining State’ is a non-Marxist view.262

Kalecki: the Indian State as an Intermediate Regime

The notion of intermediate regime was proposed by the Polish economist Michael Kalecki in 1964 for the first time and more fully in 1966 in his brief essay, ‘Intermediate Regimes’.263 The two instances clearly cited as exemplars in his argument were India and Egypt264. The idea was strongly endorsed by K.N. Raj who sought to give more concrete content to it in the context of India.265

The contrast between classical and state capitalism is significant.266 Kalecki provides the defining characteristics of an intermediate regime as follows: It is a ‘regime’, a ‘state’ or a ‘government’, ‘representing the interests of’ the two classes, urban lower middle class and the rich peasantry – indeed, two fractions of one class. It is an ‘intermediate regime’ inasmuch as the classes whose interests it represents ‘stands between’ the proletariat and the bourgeoisie.267 The second characteristic of the intermediate regime was that it followed a policy of neutrality between the two blocs – the socialist and the advanced capitalist. It received aid from both the blocs. Intermediate regimes have been ‘the proverbial clever calves that suck two cows’. Their position in international relations
defended them against the pressure imperialist powers to restore the "normal" rule of big business.268

Byres questions where the middle peasants figures in this scheme, especially since they are a large component of rural social structure.

Byres holds that the categorization of intermediate regime cannot be sustained. "...[A]ny categorization of the Indian State that portrays the Indian urban bourgeoisie as a helpless supplicant to a state dominated by the 'lower middle class', albeit with rich peasant representation, cannot be taken seriously". He further says, "...[T]he Indian urban bourgeoisie is manifestly one of the dominant classes in the Indian social formation; and that the Indian state has consistently attempted to represent its interests: via development planning, via the public sector, via a concerted attempt to keep organized labour in severe check; and in all kinds of other ways."269

Thus the railway workers, as allies of the lower middle class in Kalecki's intermediate regime had a vital confrontation with the Indian State in the rail workers' strike of May 1974. This was a crucial episode in the relationship between the Indian State and the organized labour. The unprecedentedly concerted action of the rail workers threatened the urban bourgeoisie and the strike was repressed with a rare vehemence and ferocity.270

The notion of intermediate regime underestimates the strength of both the rich peasantry and the urban bourgeoisie. It also overlooks the antagonism of interests between town and country — a contradiction that lies at the heart of the whole transition problematic. "I would suggest that the Indian state, with a degree of relative autonomy and with an eye to the cohesion of the social formation, may in essence, be seen to represent actively the interests of both the rich peasantry (and latterly capitalist farmers, in certain parts of India) and the urban bourgeoisie. These interests, however, are at bottom contradictory. Therein lies the central dilemma of Indian political economy."271 We could rather read 'semi-feudalism' or 'semi-feudal landlords' in place of 'rich peasantry' and add the essentially anti-people colonially-inherited bureaucracy as allied to the urban big bourgeoisie to be part of the dominant classes.

268 Kalecki 1972a, p. 121.
270 Ibid, pp. 67-8. For reports on this strike, Economic and Political Weekly, vol. IX, no. 18, May 1974; no. 19, 11 May; no. 20, 18 May; no. 21, 25 May; no. 22, 1 June; no. 23, 8 June, no. 24, 15 June.
271 Byres (ed.) 1997, p. 68.
The Indian State as a capitalist State: (a) pure and simple, or (b) backward

First, there are those who categorise the Indian State as being, in its essence, a capitalist State, particularly among those with a Trotskyist orientation.

One formulation, viewing the Indian State as capitalist pure and simple was that of A.R. Desai whose work\(^{272}\) was first published in 1968. He spoke of the Indian State as representing the interests of the Indian capitalist ruling class, engaged in modernisation on capitalist lines.\(^{273}\) The reality of an incomplete transition, or perhaps, a non-classical trajectory was acknowledged by Jairus Banaji.\(^{274}\)

The problematic is one of the continuing dominance of classes, which are clearly non-capitalist or proto-capitalist (especially landlords and rich peasants) and the contradictions inherent in a State that represents such a diversity of class interests, and its implications for accumulation. ‘[A]ttributing political dominance to the capitalist class in a society in which the capitalist form of production is still not entirely predominant...raises some theoretical problems.'\(^{275}\) Others sympathetic to Maoist ideas, most notably, and rigorously Bhaduri\(^{276}\) and also by Prasad insist that [the agrarian structure in] India is tenaciously dominated, overall by semi-feudal structures.\(^{277}\) He argues that the process of accumulation has been consistently checked ‘because of the low growth in Indian agriculture...mainly due to semi-feudal relations of production. He pointed to in the mid-1980s to the continuing 'stranglehold of bureaucratic and semi-feudal structures on the

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\(^{272}\) A.R. Desai 1975: *State and Capitalist Society in India: Essays in Dissent*, Bombay, pp. 139, 140, 142, 149.

\(^{273}\) Byres (ed.) 1997, p. 68.


\(^{275}\) Byres (ed.) 1997, p. 69.


Indian economy' and an associated dilution of 'the resources needed for accumulation and technology'.

**A Gramscian View of the Indian State**

Gramsci sought to explore 'the maintenance of class domination through a variable combination of coercion and consent'. His concepts, coercion and consent, hegemony and passive revolution have had significant impact upon theorising the concrete treatment of the State. His appeal has been considerable among those seeking to avoid both economic determinism and class reductionism. Hegemony was 'the successful mobilisation and reproduction of the "active consent" of dominated groups by the ruling class through their exercise of intellectual and moral leadership'. This is not to be understood in terms of mere indoctrination or false consciousness. It involves taking systematic account of popular interests and demands, making compromises on secondary issues, without sacrificing the fundamental long-run interests of the dominant group.

In this context, we would hold that the granting of reservations to the Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) and the proposal for the bill to grant reservation for women in elected assemblies, the proposed bill against domestic violence, the right to information bill, etc. may be viewed as having been necessitated by the need to secure legitimacy, particularly from deprived social identities and maintain the dominance of the 'ruling' classes. 'The limited nature of consent' leads to a weak basis for a political order, which comes to rely increasingly on force. We would say that the deepening crisis of legitimacy of the Indian State might be viewed as the reason for the increasing ascendancy of the fascist movement in India. Gramsci has used the term, passive revolution to analyse the unified Italian State, the Risorgimento: to capture the absence of a classical bourgeois revolution in Italy and the weakness of the Italian bourgeoisie. The concept helps understand how a bourgeoisie that suffers from 'relative economic weakness' handles the turbulence and contradictions of an attempted capitalist transformation.

Kalyan Sanyal identifies the central dilemma of a transitional economy wherein interest groups located within the domain of pre-capital may have considerable influence on the

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278 Prasad 1986, pp. 8, 12.
281 Ibid, p. 231.
State [and society] and may thwart the expansion of capital. He points to 'the dissociation of the domain of the pre-capital from the process of accumulation...[which] has posed a serious problem for the hegemonic role of capital'.

Partha Chatterjee argues that the notion of passive revolution has some plausibility in the context of India. Firstly, planning/capitalist transformation has failed to produce a full-scale assault on the institutional structures of the colonial State and secondly, it has failed to attempt an attack on pre-capitalist dominant classes. The apparent failure of agrarian reform is a case in point.

The Gramscians make references to 'interest groups' and 'interests' rather than to classes. Where classes are identified, they tend to appear in very general terms, as archetypes rather than concrete classes: 'the bourgeoisie', 'the subaltern classes', and 'the old dominant classes'. The veiled and allusive language Gramsci was forced to use in order to pass the scrutiny of his fascist censors has become an obligatory part of the Gramscian discourse. "[A]dequate treatment of the Indian State however demands concrete, detailed and unambiguous class analysis", says Byres.

The appeal to Gramscian categories for those who wish to avoid economic determinism and class reductionism itself may contain a danger. The exponents of this approach may have gone "too far down the road of perceived virtue", according to Byres. Neglect of economic contradictions and constraints and according to Byres, "of class agency and class-for-itself action" seem to be the theoretical costs incurred in this process. At the very least, Terry Byres rightly argues for the abandonment of the narrowly instrumental view of the State so commonplace in the conventional economic literature on planning. We would, however, hasten to reiterate that the Class character of the State is primary, principal and fundamental although the notion of its relative autonomy could be useful to bring in a subtlety of analysis and capture the possibilities of exceptionalities.

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288 Byres 1997, p. 75.
V. "SOCIAL STRUCTURES OF ACCUMULATION" APPROACH

The ‘Social Structures of Accumulation’ (SSA) approach can be considered as a very useful attempt at integrating ‘the multidimensionality of social being’ without losing out the specificities of the components in the social totality.²⁸⁹

Barbara Harriss-White (BHW)²⁹⁰ critically borrows the most important theoretical framework in the book, India Working namely, the concept of “Social Structure(s) of Accumulation” (SSA) from D. Gordon, et al²⁹¹ and D.M. Kotz et al²⁹² in the USA who undertook historical analyses of SSA in the macro-economy in the context of long waves of business cycle. SSA for BHW refers to “the matrix of social institutions through which accumulation and distribution take place”.²⁹³ A general hypothesis is proposed, faintly reminiscent of Marx²⁹⁴ that this complex of institutions emerges and gradually becomes consolidated but eventually they tend to block and undermine the accumulation process that they initially promoted. [Yet] these institutionalised structures are seen as “continually [?!] changing” and shaping the character of class conflicts and social stability.²⁹⁵ The State is seen to be a crucial SSA regulating capital and labour, allocating resources and performing ideological functions. Among the non-State SSA in India are considered Class, gender, religious plurality and caste. Moreover, in an unorthodox vein, the economic organisation of space is counted in among SSA.²⁹⁶ Writing elsewhere, she thinks that in developing economies, ethnicity, age or life cycle and even language could be among SSA.²⁹⁷ She seeks to distinguish the specificity of each of these SSA as against the fashionable approach of viewing them as components of “civil society”, lumping them together as “networks” or as “social capital”.²⁹⁸ Taking a dig at the maximising individualistic

²⁹⁰ Barbara Harriss-White 2003.
²⁹³ Barbara Harriss-White 2003, p. 13.
²⁹⁴ Karl Marx 1977, ‘Preface’ to A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy in Marx & Engels, Selected Works I, Progress, Moscow, first published 1859.
²⁹⁶ Ibid, pp. 240, 244.
²⁹⁸ Barbara Harriss-White 2003, p. 15.
rationality of neo-classical Economics, she says, "[E]conomic rationality is only one of several social rationalities at work in the economy."299 "[T]here is no privileged list of 'crucial' institutions or forces. On the other hand, some institutions are always seen to be involved...", says she.300 Alternatively, identification the principal (set of) determinant(s) at any given stage of social development could make for a rather revealing analysis.

SSA is, no doubt, the most important term in the book, India Working (2003) – a conceptual impulse with potentially fertile theoretical grounds, if critically appropriated. The concept has the distinctive advantage of capturing, on the one hand, the culture and identity of a social formation and how it serves as a distinctive structure of accumulation, on the other. The conventional Class-based political movements have failed to devote adequate autonomous attention to non-Class forms of oppression. The concept of SSA may be useful towards ameliorating this shortcoming by linking the various kinds of oppressions as they are related to the encompassing processes of accumulation and the overarching class divisions in society. The SSA approach could be considered far superior to the currently fashionable studies on culture and identity without the slightest mention of the accumulation processes and the social matrix thereof. Possibly, the concept could constitute the framework of analysis for future researches on political economy/mode of production.

VI. CONTEXTUALISING CLASS-NATIONALITY INTERFACE IN INDIA

From the foregoing discussion, it has been recognised that the Indian State after the transfer of power in 1947 has not been able to function as an unimpeded bourgeois State but has been constrained by powerful classes opposing full-fledged capitalist transformation. It has been generally recognised in the literature on the class character of the Indian State that Indian big capital has taken the leading role towards achieving capitalist modernisation. The Bombay Plan in 1944301 sponsored by eight industrialists had viewed planning as essential to the successful development of capitalism in post-colonial India.302

Capitalism, weak though, was already developing from within the decadent feudal society at the time of the advent of colonialism on the scene.303 By then, many a nationality, with

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299 Barbara Harriss-White 2003, p. 240.
301 Sir Purushotamdas Thakurdas; J.R.D. Tata; G.D. Birla; Sir Ardeshr Dalal; Sir Shri Ram; Kasturbhai Lalbhai; A.D. Shroff and John Matthai 1945: A Brief Memorandum Outlining a Plan of Economic Development for India, Bombay; Also cited in Suniti Kumar Ghosh 2000, pp. 235-49, 257.
302 Byres (ed.) 1997, pp. 41-42, f.n.11.
303 AIPRF 1996, p. 120.
full-fledged languages such as the Bengalis, the Punjabis and the Malayalees (Keralites, or Keraleeyar as per the native usage) had already developed. The colonial conquest put a break upon such ‘natural’ growth and development of the nationalities. Permanent Settlement in Bengal in 1793 is an instance par excellence of the colonial-feudal alliance.

At the time of the transfer of power, both ‘imperialism’ and Indian big capital had great stakes in a unified Indian market. A federal structure of the organisation of state power with the inclusion of Pakistan in such federation, would have greatly eroded the predominance of these classes vis-à-vis the small capitalist classes that wanted to control the markets of the respective nationalities constituting the vast multi-national country that is India. Hence the communal partition of the country and the subsequent adamance of the Indian ruling classes to concede the rights of the various nationalities.\textsuperscript{304} In deference to the popular demands, the Nagpur session of the Indian National Congress had reorganised the local Congress organisations on linguistic basis place of following the colonial administrative divisions until then.\textsuperscript{305} This must have made the mobilisation of masses in support of the cause of anti-colonialism much easier.

After the transfer of power in 1947, however, the Congress retracted from its earlier promise of reorganisation of states on the linguistic basis. Already in 1944, the Bombay Plan prepared by prominent industrialists in India had opposed the reorganisations of the formation of linguistic states on grounds that it could weaken the unity of India, lead to the growth of regional separatism and hamper planned development of the economy.\textsuperscript{306} This can legitimately be viewed as the expression of the interests of the Indian oligopolies like Tata and Birla for a unified market without significant competition from the regional capitalists. Under the Bombay Plan, development of basic industries was envisaged in the public sector under State ownership and control, which could, in effect, boost the surpluses of the Indian big capital, whose interests were intertwined with the interests of global capitalism. Further, it may be argued that it opened the way for a paradigm of dependent development with global capital increasingly dictating terms over time, particularly since the IMF loan in 1982, the Balance of Payments crisis in 1990 and the initiation of the Structural Adjustment Policies in mid-1991.

The death of Potti Sriramulu in 1952 after 58 days of hunger strike demanding the formation of Andhra state gave a new impetus to the movement for reorganisation of the country on a linguistic basis, as people’s anger in Andhra knew no bounds. As a result, the Andhra state had to be formed, excluding Telangana. The States’ Reorganisation

\textsuperscript{304} Suniti Kumar Ghosh 2000 and 1996. See also AIPRF 1996.

\textsuperscript{305} AIPRF 1996, p. 121.

\textsuperscript{306} Thakurdas, \textit{et al} 1945.
Commission had to formed in 1953 and led to the subsequent reorganisation of states in 1956. The non-capitalist relations within the states, and more specifically, feudal or semi-feudal relations were also a hindrance to the full-fledged development of the nationalities.  

Pritam Singh in 1999 rightly mentioned that there are two versions of ‘Indian nationalism’ – secular and Hindu – which are opposed to each other in their premises and perspectives in many ways, but one aspect which unites them is their insistence on the denial of multiple nationalisms in India. In a similar vein, ‘Indian nationalism’ is considered as ‘the dominant strategy of accumulation’ by him.  

We could, more aptly, consider it ‘the dominant discourse of accumulation’ in India. M.S. Golwalkar, *We or Our Nationhood Defined*, 1938 may be representative of the Hindutva school and Jawaharlal Nehru, *Discovery of India* may be representative of the secular school. A pluralistic version of religious nationalism of India may be found in Gandhi’s *Hind Swaraj*. After our critical appropriation of the Social Structures of Accumulation approach, we could consider the ‘pan-Indian big nation’ as represented in the Indian State as the dominant social/spatial structure of accumulation.

The conceptions of ‘Indian nationalism’ have suffered from being devoid of any consistent basis of an inclusive national identity. Rather than providing a unifying thread, the South Asian social system of caste has been an extremely divisive factor and could not form the basis of national identity. The notion of ‘unity in diversity’ as conceptualized by Nehru was inclusive and yet was unable to pinpoint any one or any set of underlying principle(s) defining the Indian nationhood such as language. The Hindutva school, on the other hand, provided ‘Hindutva’ or ‘Hindu-ness’ to be the basis of the nationhood of India and yet suffered from being an exclusivist credo, excluding a huge minority of over 12.6 per cent (in 1991), Muslims and a small minority of about 2.3 per cent (in 1991), Christians. Despite its inherent conceptual contradictions, it should be admitted that ‘Indian nationalism’ is a dominant socio-economic reality, primarily shaped by the Class and social character of the Indian State and the dominant classes. Indian nation is just a legal entity, according to Abraham Eraly. For U.R.- Ananthamurthy, it is an “undefinable unity”.

Any subjective preferences of the intelligentsia apart, ‘Indian nationalism’ also dominates the conceptual horizon of an average Malayalee today.

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308 Pritam Singh 1999, p. 87.
310 *Outlook* 2001, p. 111.
311 Ibid, p. 102.
VII. Conclusion

We have herein examined the conceptualisations of Class both as a structure/location\textsuperscript{312} and as a relationship and a process in a non-linear manner. We have argued that we need to have a class analysis that would be sensitive to 'the multidimensionality of social being'. The notion of 'subalternity' in Gramsci could be usefully employed so as to capture such multidimensionality in social formations of the deprived classes and social groups. Moreover, Gramsci's emphasis on the role of the 'leaders and intellectuals' in the process of the subalterns socially constituting themselves and the importance of the cultural dimension in the process of class formation are quite useful. The Gramscian notion of how the State seeks to gain legitimacy by generating the 'active consent' of its subjects is also helpful. With a renewed focus on the agency of human collectivities, we could move away from deterministic/naturalistic implications in our analysis of social formations. And by emphasising the autonomy and specificity of particular contradictions, we would be able to steer clear of the reductionist modes of social analysis. Nevertheless, we also need to look at social reality in its inter-connectedness, as a totality.

Development is defined by us as the non-linear process whereby human beings transcend the determinations of nature. It is important to draw a distinction between development \textit{per se} which is beneficial for human well-being and 'developmentalism', which is a discourse of accumulation in the interests of the dominant classes. 'Accumulation' is the key word that could integrate Class analysis with a political economy analysis of national formations. Although national formation may be primarily constitutive of the social relations/social contradictions within it, it is the Class dominance of a particular coalition of classes as represented at the level of the pan-Indian State that has the primary constitutive effect upon the particular national formations within the country. In the era of oligopolistic capitalism, in the context of the Third World, 'spatial patterns of accumulation' are of great significance particularly as it relates to national formations—Countries and Nations or Nationalities. Paul Baran (1957), Dependency theory, World System theory and the conceptualisation of the 'Third World' tried to capture the spatial dimensions of accumulation. The usage of the term, 'periphery' in this parlance is useful for understanding the world capitalist system in its totality and exploitative interrelations. Empirical estimates negated the claims of a 'trickle down' process under the modernisation theory. Massive increases in regional and social polarisation has characterised the history of capitalism on a world scale since the industrial revolution. The usage of the term 'Third World' is also useful in the parlance of building up tactical

\textsuperscript{312} Further details are provided in the early part of Chapter V.
alliances between the Third and Second Worlds against the First World, i.e. the superpowers. Modes of production controversy enabled us to understand how in the peripheries/Third World different modes of production co-existed and articulated with each other, so as to generate ever greater surpluses under the capitalism of oligopolies.

Mode of production debate focused on the aspect of class relations and surplus extraction in the process of production whereas the Dependency and World System theories focused on the relationship between centre and periphery on the world-scale and surplus expropriation in the process of exchange. Commodity chains approach adopted a commodity-centric approach within the world system theory and thus sought to overcome the criticisms of these theories as being externalist i.e., not focusing on class/social relations internal to a society and circulationist i.e., having exclusive and unilateral focus on trade. We would rather favour a producer-centric approach to even a commodity-centric approach. An analysis of the class reality of the peripheral/Third World national formations is rendered immensely complex since we need to consider how space/nationality, class, gender, caste, tribe, community, etc. are mutually inter-related in the process of surplus expropriation. In this sense, the law of value operates not only with classes, but also with these other social/spatial structures of accumulation. In the context of the Third World/peripheral regions of the world, one should not look for pure class formations. This is because myriad unresolved contradictions coexist in these societies, particularly because of the dominance of colonialism/imperialism, which have historically articulated with various pre-capitalist social relations. That is why a broad designation, 'people' as opposed to the 'dominant classes' becomes appropriate in these countries. Considering the fact of the spatial patterns of accumulation, we could confidently argue that nationality movements pitted against oppressive structures such as semi-feudalism and imperialism may be considered an aspect of class struggle itself, contributing to the democratisation of society although the issues concerning nationality are not reducible to a class angle.

Analysis of working class formations in the manner in which it is done in the advanced capitalist countries can only be misapplications in the context of countries like India. Modern industrial working class is a minuscule category and the informal/unorganised sector constitutes around 92 per cent of the economy in the Indian context. We would view that working class in the formal/organised sector of the economy is a rather privileged category in countries like ours, although there is, apparently, some erosion of their privileges under neo-liberal reforms. So it is the working class in the unorganised/informal sector, in industrial, agricultural and service sectors, that could play a crucial leading role in social transformation. This is taking into account both their
structural location in the system and their advanced level of consciousness. Social transformation in countries of the periphery/Third World can be achieved through the political struggles by a coalition of multiple subaltern classes and social groups. For a just outcome, the subaltern classes within such coalition should be able to lead or at least maintain the strong independence of its line, while being part of such coalition.

The aspect of consciousness as it relates to Class and Nationality cannot be overlooked. The insights offered by the modes of production controversy, Dependency and World System theories need to be synthetically linked to studies on Class, Nationality and other social categories wherein social consciousness is embodied. As against the unilateral and exclusive emphasis on the cultural dimension since the 1960s on the question of Nationality and a shift away from Class issues since around 1980s, we would recommend viewing social reality at the inter-junctions between accumulation and identity, structure and agency, enabling collective action for social transformation. Thus we would be able to speak of both potential/structural-locational class formations and actual class formations, i.e. in terms of consciousness. So also we need to speak of Nationality both in political economy terms or in terms of the ‘regional geographies of accumulation’ on the one hand and in terms of language, culture and consciousness on the other. The ‘Social Structures of Accumulation’ approach offers potentially fertile conceptual grounds for an analysis that could capture both the specificities of the particular social and spatial structures of accumulation on the one hand and their totality on the other, without turning reductionist either on the aspect of political economy concerning accumulation or on the aspect of consciousness/identity. In the context of graded inequalities, it is imperative to identify the principal structure(s) of accumulation or the principal contradiction in the complex totality of social relations at any given point of social development. This is very much required if we need to achieve our desired ends of social transformation.

While speaking of the class/social character of the State, we would reject both the instrumentalist understanding of the State, which holds that the State is an instrument of class rule, with little relative autonomy and also the notion of the ‘self-determining State’, which understands the State to be a terrain independent of the structural constraints posed by the social context in which it operates. State does have to obey the structural logic of the society in which it operates and yet it can and does have a certain minimal degree of relative autonomy. In the context of India, the notion of Intermediate Regime as proposed by Kalecki may have little validity given the apparent predominance of the pan-Indian

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313 The working class in the unorganised sector could play a leading role particularly because a substantial section of them in India have organic links with the rural/agricultural sector, as they are seasonal/casual workers swarming the cities as agriculture is not being able to sustain them.
dominant classes. Studies and debates on the class character of the Indian State indicate that it is not a single class that is dominant but a coalition of classes. It would be facile to speak of India as just a 'capitalist' country because we need to recognise the co-existence and articulations among different modes/relations of production both internal and external to the country. Nevertheless, the Indian big capital seems to be the leading class in the coalition of dominant classes in the country so far. However, the sphere of the Indian economy and society is increasingly being incursed upon by the global metropolitan capital in alliances with the Indian one under neo-liberal reforms. We have also argued that in the context of India, the question of nationalities needs to be understood against the backdrop of the dominance of the pan-Indian dominant classes. We have also sought to briefly analyse the category of the 'pan-Indian big nation' as represented in the Indian State as a Social Structure of Accumulation and tried to identify the 'many nationalisms' in the country as counterpoised to it as 'counter-discourses of accumulation'. Now let us, in Chapter III, turn to analysing the case of one of these nationalities, namely, Keralam both as a political-economic formation and also as a socio-cultural formation.