CHAPTER VII: Conclusion

Class, Nationality and the Task of Social Transformation in Keralam

"Men [human beings] make their own history but under conditions given to them."
- Karl Marx

"Bharanavum bharaniyum naathoone
Nannaakkkaale nannaavoo"
- Kunhunni

Making activist prescriptions against social maladies or providing a blue-print for social transformation is bound to falter on the question of agency. Concluding a book on land reforms, Ronald Herring says that trying to answer the question, "What should be done?" presents, a "severe problem of standing": should be done by whom? Insightfully does he further say, "Land reforms that genuinely overturn rural society and economy are frequently the product of cataclysmic historical events, often revolutions, which are neither policy options nor common occurrences. Moreover, the question contains an exquisite tension between structural constraints and optimal policy...." So it is only the ethical feasibility or even possibilities of a direction of change that we can comment upon, given the existing structures and agents. The actualisation of the possibilities is something that has to be left to the agency of social/political movements. When Marx makes the profound assertion on the dialectic of structure and agency that, "Men [human beings] make their own history but under conditions given to them", the determinism involved therein is that we can go in any direction that we want to but we can go only from here and now. This is the determinism imposed by the sociologically given, historically handed down structures of society. Development of both objective conditions, i.e., social contradictions emanating from economic and social conditions of social sections, and subjective forces i.e., transformative ideology and organised collectivity could determine the destinies of social transformation. In this context, it is worth mentioning that 'stages analysis' is an integral part of the Marxist method of understanding and changing social reality.

However, we would believe that the utility-maximising self-centred, individualistic rationality of methodological individualism, an underlying premise that we find even in

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2 Governance and the pickle-jar at home, dear sister-in-law, Can be mended only if you mend it. (Kunhunni 2004: Kunhunni Kavithakal (Malayalam), Current Books, Kottayam, first pub. 1987, p. 114).
the writings of an ‘egalitarian liberal’ like John Rawls,\(^4\) is impotent to bring about genuine social transformation. It is the collective agency of social/political movements that can bring about this change. The individuals that comprise these collectivities need to undergo personal transformation in values and actions even while they strive to usher in structural transformation at the levels of both social structures and cultural values. In other words, personal change and structural change need to go hand in hand. In this sense, self-realisation (\(\textit{sidhi}\)) and liberation (\(\textit{mukti}\))\(^5\) are values that are integrally linked. We need to posit an alternative notion of self-realisation whereby human beings find fulfillment, not by dominating fellow beings, as it happens in a hierarchical society but by outsmarting themselves, i.e., by realising the full flowering of their ethically feasible capabilities. A hierarchical society engenders a ‘hierarchical mindset’ reflecting both the propensity to dominate those low down in the social hierarchy and the propensity to show cringing deference to those higher up in the hierarchy, the two rolled into one. On the other hand, an egalitarian society can engender an ‘egalitarian mindset’, the very opposite of a ‘hierarchical mindset’, that is both concerned towards those low down in the social hierarchy and irreverent towards those higher up. The demands of an ‘egalitarian mindset’ entails cultural change that makes it possible to move away from a fetishism of commodity that is consumerist and a fetishism of accumulation driven by the capitalist profit motive. It also demands a shift away from hierarchical values that are feudal, casteist, patriarchal or chauvinistic in any other sense. It may also be added that genuine social transformation demands that we a radical shift away from notions of people being passive objects or mere receptacles of development/welfare or participative in the implementation of schemes charted out from above, to being active subjects shaping their own destinies under given conditions.

We do accept the merit of the notion of human development even when it was unaccompanied by economic development as in the 1970s and 1980s as the universal kernel of the development experience of Keralam. Nevertheless, the feasibility of projecting a ‘model’ out of social sector development without structural transformation and economic development is a questionable proposition. Moreover, the specificities or uniqueness of the Kerala experience, such as the remittances-driven Service sector, struggle for land reform, for educational rights and against caste inequalities need to be considered while considering the replicability of this pattern of development. Further, the superlatives of the negative order in the Kerala case such as high level of disparities,

particularly of the marginalised social groups vis-à-vis the mainstream society, high unemployment, high suicide rate, high alcoholism, high mental illness rates, etc. are causes for caution.

We would argue that in order to understand the class formations in the peripheral/Third World societies of the world, we need to recognise both the spatial and social patterns of the accumulation process. That is why the broad designation, 'people' as opposed to the 'dominant classes' can usefully be employed in the parlance of political struggles. Class should not be seen as abstract categories, but substantively and as a multidimensional phenomenon in the context of a multiplicity of unresolved social contradictions in these societies, particularly since they have gone through the phase of domination by colonialism/monopoly capitalism. Towards understanding the possibilities of social transformation, we need to look at social categories in the conjunction of accumulation and identity, structure and agency, enabling collective action for social transformation. Evaluating the mode of production debate in India during 1960s and 1970s, Alice Thorner had noted an unwillingness to deal with the cultural aspects. Mainstream academic discourse today has swung to the other extreme of an unwillingness to deal with the economic aspects. Similarly, there has been a shift away from Class issues since around 1980s to issues of marginalised social identities. Conversely, we would adopt a synthetic approach in both these regards. We consider the Social Structures of Accumulation (SSA) approach as in Barbara Harriss-White having the potential for such an analysis, if critically appropriated. In the case of Kerala, we hold Class and Nationality to be the prime SSA, at this stage of social development. In keeping with this orientation, we would define nationality as a territorial community with the twin dimensions of language, culture and consciousness, on the one hand and political economy on the other. Class too is viewed in its multidimensionality, both as structural-locational and relational. Class is to be seen as a substantive category in relation to gender and caste in particular, in the Indian context.

We would classify the political movements in the contemporary phase under four categories: (i) Class struggles, (ii) Nationality movements (including anti-colonial movements), (iii) Social Liberation struggles of oppressed social sections such as of women, Dalits, Adivasis and minorities in India and of coloured people in the West, and (iv) General Democratic movements such as the anti-globalisation struggles at Seattle, environmental movements, etc. We would designate these four streams as the four great movements.

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The concept of 'creative society' as propounded by Manoranjan Mohanty may be usefully invoked in this context. It refers to a phase of social turbulence in which a large number of potential contradictions or hitherto subdued contradictions have become articulate and active. A creative society is viewed as "a theatre of intense struggle between forces of freedom and forces of domination". "The structures and processes of domination are shackles on human creativity, therefore they are sought to be removed." We would, however, tend to view that hitherto dormant contradictions coming to the fore may be a reflection of the multiplicity of unresolved/unconsummated contradictions, particularly in a society that has gone through the domination by colonialism/imperialism and it may be no guarantee that the social process takes a 'creative turn'. This is quite congenial to the view put forth by Mohanty himself because he himself admits that these movements may be viewed as "deviant forces" by forces of the established order – the State, dominant social sections and political parties and could be repressed as such. Moreover, the problem of exclusiveness, or "ours and yours" could make them vulnerable to the former. Or, they could as well be victims of a trend in the very opposite direction i.e., of "an aggregate view of social formations", as with the party-linked mass organisations, leading to "a lack of recognition of the specificity and autonomy of a range

of social contradictions".12 We would hold that apart from these, the process of multiple contradictions coming to the fore contains the danger that it could also cause a fissured social basis for anti-State,13 anti-imperialist resistance. A scenario of oppressed masses contending each other on the basis of narrow, parochial and rigid identities, of course with some bases in the material reality could provide an optimum situation for the exploitative incursions of global capital. The plausible way-out is to identify the primacy of contradictions at any given point of social development and to distinguish between non-antagonistic contradictions among the masses that can be resolved amicably and antagonistic contradictions vis-à-vis the major oppressive social structures.14 It is only if while not compromising on the specificities of these contradictions, they are networked against oppressive macro-structures like a regressive State and imperialism could genuine social transformation be brought about.

We have analysed in Chapter II the “multidimensionality of the social being”, which cannot be captured by a reductionist/exclusivist analysis of class or any other social category. Along with Manoranjan Mohanty, we would hold that the struggle for liberation and liberation itself also have to be multidimensional.15 In other words, it is a “multidimensional transformation of society” that is called for16 and to this end, a preservation of both autonomy and spontaneity of social movements and the interconnection among these movements is called for.17 He rightly says, “Relating class struggle with the wide spectrum of social struggle is a critical aspect of the democratic resurgence in the 20th century.”18 Mohanty has rightly drawn an insightful contrast between the mobilisational discourses of the freedom struggle in India and the Swaraj (self-rule) perspective of Gandhi on the one hand, and the New Democratic Revolution and Mao’s notion of Jiefang (liberation) in China, on the other. The former subsumed all the specific struggles to the imperatives of mobilising all sections of society against the colonial rule and in the process, denied their autonomy to specific struggles whereas the latter wedded the anti-feudal, anti-colonial programme to a comprehensive framework of

13 By anti-State struggles, we do not mean to take an anarchist position but a position ranged against a socially reactionary State, as in Marxism.
14 In this sense, we would consider Mao Tse-Tung 1965: ‘On Contradiction’, (Selected Works of Mao Tse-Tung, vol. I, Foreign Languages Press, Peking) as a crucial contribution.
political, economic, social, cultural, educational and international policy measures. Social transformation in countries of the periphery/Third World can be achieved through the political struggles of multi-class alliances comprising 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 autonomy of its line, while being part of such coalition. The orientation of tailing behind a nationality movement led by the emergent bourgeoisie, for instance, can spell disaster for the cause of a movement of the subalterns. In this connection, we would tend to view that it is, indeed, possible to build a broad-based political movement with a comprehensive political programme. The support to specific social struggles of social minorities need not necessarily alienate the rest of society but could fetch staunch, specific support and broad, vacillating support on grounds of justice. It could also be the case that the aggregate support-base of all these social minorities together could constitute the widest majority in society. This is quite true in the case of India where women, the oppressed castes, the Adivasis, religious minorities and the struggling nationalities together with the peasants and workers constitute the largest possible majority in the country.

We would hold that it is radical Class struggles and Nationality struggles that hold the key to genuine structural transformation. The social liberation struggles of women, Dalits, Adivasis, fisher people and minorities as pitted against dominant social groups within society are vulnerable to cooption by the State and accommodation within a ‘liberal multi-cultural consensus’, unless these movements undergo qualitative change by being networked with Class and Nationality movements for social change. Similarly, General democratic struggles such as the anti-globalisation protests in the West, such as at Seattle, Genoa, etc., environmental movements, movements of displaced people also need to undergo qualitative transformation before they could be agents of genuine structural change.

We would hold that democratisation of society and development of productive forces are the twin agenda of social transformation in the present-day Kerala society. The first task needs to focus on classes and social groups and the second, on the process of development. The classic phase of capitalism had apparently achieved these goals in the countries of Western Europe, if Marx, in the initial pages of the Communist Manifesto is to be believed. However, this agenda of social transformation was hindered in the

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peripheral/Third World national formations because of the super-imposing presence of a decadent global monopoly capitalism. We would believe that it is only through the conscious intervention of the democratic forces that these tasks can now be achieved. Working class in the unorganised/informal sector can be the leading force in terms of consciousness and the numerically main force in this transformation. Cultivators/peasantry constituted only just over 7 per cent of the total workforce in the state in 2001. The crucial role of marginalised social groups, namely, women, Dalits, Adivasis, religious minorities, fisher people and immigrant labourers towards this transformative agenda needs to be underlined. The special problems faced by these social groups are not reducible to a class angle and need specific autonomous attention.

As far as the question of nationality is concerned, the feasible notion of self-determination propounded, needs to keep in view the ideals of justice, liberty and equality. As we have seen in Chapter III, in the section on the debate on the nationality question of Keralam, the concerns of justice, equity and genuine libertarian concerns seem to warrant the advocacy of a nationalism of the subaltern classes and social groups. The contesting claims of the different subaltern identities need to be brought on common grounds on the basis of the notions of universalism, which is possible from the angle of class analysis.

Nationality contradictions are too conspicuous to be wished away. Rather, ways and means should be thought out towards resolving them amicably. Particular notions of nationalism could give rise to particular notions of self-determination. As we have observed in Chapter III, there are three kinds of demands for self-determination of nationalities in India: those demanding the formation of separate state, those by more developed nationalities demanding greater autonomy of states and those demanding independence or secession from the country. Kerala nationality being a rather developed nationality in India, already constituted into a state, as of today, the dominant stream of national consciousness within Keralam is, apparently, for greater autonomy within India as a multi-national country, as most Malayalees also identify themselves as Indians. It also voices concerns about the dependency and underdevelopment of productive sectors of the economy of the state. These constitute, in essence, an assertion of the right to development against the paradigm of dependency imposed by global and all-India structures and an assertion of greater autonomy within the Indian Union. As it is said, 'The real power lies in the Centre'. The focus here is not on horizontal disparities vis-à-

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21 Cobban, Selassie, Brownline, Yel Tamir, and Moore are some of the prominent scholars in studies on the concept self-determination. Please see Moore 1998. The Charter of the United Nations Article 1 (2) provided for self-determination as self-government. UN covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and Article 1 of the UN Covenant on Civil and Political Rights also provided for the right to self-determination.
vis other states but on vertical disparities vis-à-vis the Indian State in financial/economic, political, cultural and administrative terms.

A caution to be exercised is that nationality movements have often degenerated into chauvinistic ones, a primary reason for this being that the cultural aspect of mass mobilisation gets the upper hand over the aspect of political economy and leads to utter unreason and intolerance. Taking cue from myriad forms of chauvinistic nationalisms and fascist movements, we would argue that as ideas grip the minds of the masses, the cultural sphere could assume a dangerous autonomy of its own, as disjunct from the original class/social interests that the movement was supposed to uphold. Marx has rightly said, "...[T]heory also becomes a material force as soon as it has gripped the masses."22 In other words, 'When idea grips the millions, idea itself turns a material force.' In the case of Keralam, the question of 'cultural self determination' of the Kerala nationality may also be addressed in opposition to the question of the emergence of Hindutva fascist movement, communalising people's minds.

So then, we need to move away from abstract, de-contextualised notions of national pride and national self-determination and explore substantive notions of national self-determination. Substantive conception of self-determination may entail control over the economic, political, cultural and social resources within the given national territory. We would hold that secession and creation of a separate state, by no means, define the character of self-determination in every case. Moreover, political boundaries by themselves are no guarantees of national self-determination in the context of neo-colonial exploitation and hence the need for democratic transformation.23 We would further emphasize on a substantive notion of Class that warrants democratic transformation internal to the society in question and a patriotic outlook in nationalism is counterpoised to dehumanising structures external to the society, global capitalism, in particular. The resolution of the agrarian class question as integrally related to the national question under neo-liberal restructuring remains key to any democratic transformation in a peripheral nationality. The external and internal constraints to development in the periphery need to be overcome primarily by the agency of the democratic forces from within the nationality. Nevertheless, networked linkages to the struggling forces in the rest of the country and the rest of the world needs to be emphasised, particularly in an era when apparently the State is turning increasingly repressive and capital, increasingly expansionist.

22 Karl-Marx 1844: 'Introduction', Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right, Progress, Moscow.
Keeping in view the concerns of internationalism of the working people, a negative notion of national self-determination is warranted — that is, directed against oppressive social structures like native and global monopoly capitalism, semi-feudal structures, etc. Negative conception of nationalism or national self-determination is negative in the sense that such nationalism is articulated in terms of the struggles of working people against certain oppressive social structures like feudalism/semi-feudalism and imperialism that hamper the realisation of justice and a broad conception of liberty and is oriented towards its own ultimate self-negation. A notion of self-determination that keeps the concerns of internationalism in view may ultimately be devoid of parochialism and national chauvinism. On the other hand, a ‘positive’ conception of national self-determination may exult in the superiority of some cultural feature like language or base its claim on some sort of superiority like religious, ethnic, racial, etc., which in turn would be prejudicial to the interests of international integration on the basis of a well-grounded notion of common humanity.

We would hold that a universalist perspective of the subaltern classes and social groups on the nationality question of Keralam (devoid of national chauvinism) could be the most appropriate one, not only with a view to mediate between the conflicting claims of the various oppressed classes and social groups within Kerala society, but also in terms of integrating a movement for social transformation within Kerala society with similar movements in other parts of the country and at the global level.

We would hold that it would be reductionist to reduce all the issues related to the nationality question into a class angle, or vice versa. As against the conventional Marxist view that class struggle would automatically fulfil nationality aspirations, sufficient autonomous attention must be given to the nationality question.24 This makes sufficient strategic grounds for making common cause with the movements for self-determination, particularly for federal autonomy, of other nationalities in the rest of India.

The questions of ‘Class Justice’ and ‘Federal Autonomy’ in the case of Keralam need to addressed simultaneously. Addressing the question of federal autonomy/national self-determination without addressing the problem of oppressive and exploitative structures of accumulation within the state could only turn out to the benefit of the hitherto dominant classes within the state. Demands for ‘a share of our own market’ as with K. Venu (1992) may benefit the regional entrepreneurs within the state but it cannot mechanically translate into welfare for the working class, the peasantry and the broad masses of people consisting of marginalised sections such as women, Dalits, Adivasis, fisher people,

minorities, immigrant labour, especially those hailing from Tamil Nadu, etc. In numerical terms, the excluded and exploited constitute the overwhelming mainstream of Kerala society. With regard to the mainstream electoral parliamentary politics in the state, we have observed how caste/community identities provided the social bases for cross-class mobilization through a peculiar variety of identity politics propelled by the dominant classes in Keralam over the years.

As we have observed in Chapter VI in our analysis attempting to identify the dominant classes within the state, we find no single dominant class within the state but a range of classes dominant within the national formation. This is following our method of identifying interests that have cornered huge, undeserved and often, illegal benefits from the State. This includes both massive corruption and tax evasion. Indian big capital and Regional dominant classes have long dominated the economy of the state. The Indian big capital seems to be the dominant class among these two categories, given their dominant influence both at the Centre and the state, both in the stages of policy formulation as well as policy implementation. These two categories include upper echelons of the traders (in a state where trade has dominated over production), plantation owners and liquor contractors (abkari lobby). This is evident from the very fact that huge tax arrears are pending with them unrecovered by the state government. Given their cosy relationship with external market forces, these classes cannot constitute the propelling forces for a self-reliant development of the economy of the state. Massive landgrabs in forest areas and scams plague the people of the state. These landgrabs of thousands of acres of forestland should be considered much bigger than the many scams that have shamed India in recent times. Moreover, they have catastrophic implications for the ecology of the Western Ghats.

The dominant bureaucracy in the state consists of three sections – the bureaucracy of the State machinery with a loathsome colonial lineage, the bureaucracy in the cooperative sector and the bureaucracy on the trade union front. Bureaucracy, including the one at the trade union leadership is found to be of a most regressive character, posing impediments to social transformation. It may also be observed that often, it is the rentier bureaucracy on the trade union front which is the prime force behind the so-called 'labour problems' in the state. As for antagonists external to the state, semi-feudalism, global monopoly capitalism, the all-India big capital and the State in which these forces are represented seem to constitute the rival camp.
Class-Nationality Interface in Keralam

As against the conventional literature on Class and Nationality that view each of them in isolation, we have sought to find the interfaces between the two, as they are, in turn, shaped by the other social relations as well. Let us list out a few counts on which Class and Nationality are related to each other:

The relationship between Class and Nationality in Keralam may be seen as a symbiotic one, the latter heavily impinging upon the former. Let us cite a few examples to make it clearer: The national dimensions of surplus expropriation could have pauperising or enriching effects upon class formations at the local level. An instance can be had from exchange rate disparities across countries. Underdevelopment of the commodity-producing sectors of the economy exert telling effects upon the sustainability of the very development process, having direct impact on the classes and social groups living on the fringes of the economy and society. The lack of federal autonomy of the national formation could hamper or enable agrarian or educational reforms that are of crucial relevance to the popular classes and social groups. Or a liberal import policy of the Central government could lead to volatilities in the prices of agrarian or other indigenous products, affecting these sections. Lack of control over the financial resources of the state by the state government could lead to inflation affecting prices, result in financial drain from the state, underdeveloping productive forces and worsening employment situation. If most of these are ill-effects at this juncture in time, they could also be reversed to the advantage of the subaltern classes and social groups, if they assert themselves politically within the national formation and at the country level and that is why we call this relationship a symbiotic one.

Although the character of the 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. This underscores the analytical primacy of Class over Nationality. It is through organised political struggles against the dominant socio-economic structure at the all-India level, the essence of which is embodied in the Indian State, that genuine social transformation be brought about. To this end, the need to network with struggles for self-determination of the subaltern classes and social groups and of the nationalities, in the rest of India needs to be underscored. It is through the political assertion of the subaltern classes and social groups over the national formation that the cycle of dependency vis-à-vis external markets be broken and a development trajectory be secured to suit the needs of the common people. We would hold that an assertion of the right to development-with-equity
could constitute self-determination in the case of Keralam at this stage of social development, in the interests of the working class, the peasantry and the broad masses of people within the national formation. Thus the self-determination of Keralam, at this stage of social development, is primarily a question of ‘economic self-determination’ and an internal self-determination within the multi-national country of India.

Historically, the demand for the formation of linguistic state and responsible government – especially in the Thiruvithamkoor princely state in southern Keralam – represented a democratic aspiration of the masses. It was the subaltern classes who were mobilised under the Communist party that played a leading role in this movement, which was considered part of class struggle itself. The violent suppression of the struggle at Punnapra-Vayalar in 1946 under the then Thiruvithamkoor Dewan was the highlight of this movement.25 On the contrary, the Bombay Plan (1945) that visualised a plan for economic development of the country by the Indian big capital, stressed on a unified market, denying nationality to the linguistic units. Indeed, it was the impulses of class forces from below that ultimately led to the formation of the linguistic states.

Land struggles led by the Communists within the state had been much more developed as compared to many other parts of India. There was also a strong popular mandate for land reforms in the state as a government under E.M.S. Namboodiripad came to power through electoral politics in 1957. The patently unjust act of the Union government led by Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru dismissing this government aborted the project of land reforms and educational reforms to control vested interests right at the nascent stage. Moreover, the key parameters of agrarian reforms were laid down by the Union government, such as the absence of ceilings on plantation crops. The land reforms, turned out to be tenancy reforms, in essence. The reform of educational institutions in the state, ensuring greater State control was also stopped midstream by this high-handed action by the Union government. It would not be a misreading to say that it was the lack of federal autonomy that lay at the roots of these letdowns of popular aspirations, indicating a clear Class-Nationality linkage. Besides having its impact on the day-to-day politics of policy formulation and policy implementation, at critical junctures of Kerala history, the question of the lack of federal autonomy has kept coming to the fore.

The ‘angry oppositional national identity of the Malayalees’ in the food-scarce 1960s and 1970s found reflection in the popular protests on the streets demanding food allocations from the Union government. Members of Parliaments from the state held protests within the parliament as well, under the leadership of A.K. Gopalan. Although Union

government sought to maintain the colonial status-quo with regard to plantation crops in the state, so as to maintain its foreign exchange reserves, it did not adhere to promises of providing adequate food supplies to the state. This was what led to these popular protests demanding the most essential commodity for human survival. Once again, it was the lack of federal autonomy to choose an inward-looking development pattern and further the raw deal meted out to the broad masses of people in the state that comes up in bold relief.

In the context of a remittance-driven economy in the state since the mid-1970s, the lack of federal autonomy, once again, led to lack of control over the financial resources of the state and in turn, hampered the development of productive forces, spiralled inflation and led to a disproportionate development of the economy dominated by the service sector. On the other hand, remittances contributed to the foreign exchange reserves of the Union government. The low Credit-Deposit ratio and the operations of all-India financial institutions like LIC, GIC and nationalised banks led to outflow of investible surplus from within the state. The lack of development of productive forces, in turn, led to lack of employment opportunities for people within the state and resultantly, educated unemployment and outmigration/emigration, leading to loss of human resources from the state. The financial penury of the state government and the consequent inability to initiate an independent trajectory of development/industrialisation is the matter in question. The state government was also constrained by the structures of accumulation within the state, including, crucially, the Indian big capital as in the cases of Tata-tea and Mavoor Gwalior Rayons. It is known that prior to liberalisation, the terms of trade of plantation crops from the state was rather prejudicial to the state, as compared to the international prices. The Class-Nationality linkage here should be apparent.

The fiscal penury of the state with the Constitution itself disallowing direct borrowals from the banks (under Article 293) was cited by the state government as one of the reasons for opting for a ‘programme loan’ (Structural Adjustment loan) from the Asian Development Bank (ADB). It has, in turn, been instrumental in accentuating the process of globalisation, which we have observed in Chapter IV does not lead to the development of productive forces but accentuates rentier exchange relations. In the political and cultural sphere, we notice that the communalisation of people’s minds and a shrinkage of democratic space have proceeded apace along with the processes of globalisation. By the mid-2000s, the introduction of Value Added Tax system at the all-India level, under the initiative of the Union government, undermined fiscal autonomy of the states leaving the states to their own devices in terms of being able to raise their own revenues. The Fiscal Responsibility Bill has ‘extended the unreason of zero fiscal deficits to the states’,\(^\text{26}\) thus

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\(^\text{26}\) Prabhat Patnaik 2005.
accelerating the process of deflationary economic policies and reducing the role of the State as an economic actor to being a mere appendage of private capital.

Of late, in 2005-06, the attempts by the state government at reining in the vested interests in the field of education, particularly, technical and professional education, in keeping with the advanced level of consciousness in the state, was foiled by the adverse ruling of the Supreme Court in this regard.

Globalisation, in our view, represents an aggressive self-expansion of nationally organised, hierarchically ordered oligopolist capital. The implications that we can draw from our analysis of the process of neo-liberal reforms is that under global monopoly capitalism, it is not possible to truly develop the productive forces, not to speak of building up a self-reliant economy in the peripheries. But the peripheral regions can carve out a niche for themselves in some commodities where they have the ‘comparative advantage’ or become the ‘early bird to catch the worm’ in a relatively new technological area such as in the new economy – Information Technology, Biotechnology, Communications Technology, Nanotechnology, etc. However, the massive volatilities and uncertainties that beset the global market-place are bound to accompany this model of externally oriented economic development. In any case, the choice of a model of development is not something decided by an ‘odd academic out there’ but by the collective agency of practitioners in tune with the synergy of class and social forces within a given society.

The problems of acute underdevelopment of the productive sectors in the state might give rise to the process of the further consolidation of Keralam as a nationality in terms of its material constitution. This is plausible given the high levels of unemployment in the state. Job opportunities and the income-effect created by emigration to the Gulf following oil price-hikes of 1973 had provided a safety valve effect as for the social contradictions within the state. As studies on migration have shown, most people would rather prefer to stay anchored to their social and cultural roots within the state, if only there were ample opportunities for a livelihood within the state.

Notwithstanding the economic factor, whether or not Kerala nationality would assert itself through a movement for social transformation may depend upon human agency in general and the agency of social movements in particular, besides other factors like cultural ambience. As Anthony D. Smith says, the content and intensity of particular
nationalisms is not easily explained through the workings of global capitalism or relative deprivation.27

In fact, the rather speculative portfolio investments and even the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), which is supposed to be of a rather productive nature, are found subject to the volatilities characteristic of the present-day global finance capital. Therefore, it seems to be in the fitness of things, on the part of social movements in Keralam to enable the subaltern classes to reclaim and preserve the indigenous resources like land, marine resource and other sources of indigenous capital. Hence the apparent relevance of the slogans of 'land to the tiller' and 'self-determination of nationalities'. And given the nature of the massive drain of investible resources from Keralam over the years, the plausibility of the emergence of a nationality movement in the state, on the questions such as the drain of resources, underdevelopment of productive sectors, unemployment and undesired labour migration on a massive scale, may not be ruled out. Such possibility is borne out by the experience in Assam, for instance, on the question of the drain of resources. And in this sense, having our secondary focus on the nationality contradiction, after class, has its relevance towards an amicable solution of the problem in Keralam.

Nationality aspirations have usually been associated with the aspirations of the emergent bourgeoisie within the respective nationalities. As we have already noted in Chapter III, despite acute underdevelopment of the productive sectors, chronic unemployment and massive outmigration, a peripheral affluence and a highly consumerist culture has been created in the state thanks to export-earnings and the 'Demand-Draft economy' made possible through remittances. The impressive strides in the growth of the service sector of the economy during the period of neo-liberal reforms is, in our view, a manifestation of the syndrome of dependency that has made such growth possible in the first place. Mainstream politics in the state, driven by the dominant classes, drew sustenance from vertical cross-class mobilization made possible through caste/community identity providing the basis for it. The dominant political streams have almost completely left out the marginalized social groups – Adivasis, women, fisher people, Dalits, immigrant labour – from being significant beneficiaries. The dominant middle class culture in the state may be considered a potent force for the status quo.

Against this backdrop, any genuine movement for social transformation in the state needs to ally with similar movements in other parts of India. So then, although we would view the nationality contradiction as the principal determinant of the contradictions within the nationality, an exclusivist nationality movement would not be able to provide justice to

27 Anthony D. Smith, p.361.
the subaltern classes and social groups within the nationality. This irony necessitates that
the principal task of a movement for social transformation be not directly addressed to the
principal contradiction/principal determinant. Conversely, justice may warrant class
struggles of the basic producing classes and marginalized social groups to have the
primacy and it is a nationalism of these sections with horizontal linkages to the struggles
of the deprived in other parts of the country that could ensure a pro-people outcome to
social transformation.

Let us try to further explain the crucial distinction between the principal contradiction and
the principal task: Identification of the principal determinant or the principal set of
determinants at any given stage of social development could make for a rather revealing
analysis and should therefore be considered the crux of the problem. A principal
determinant may be considered the one that primarily shapes and constitutes the various
aspects of a totality. It may be granted after Sudipta Kaviraj that sadly, "The cost of being
fundamental is to have only indirect results".\(^{28}\) In other words, a principal contradiction or
a principal Social Structure of Accumulation (SSA) may cause primarily indirect effects
on the totality of a social formation in question and that is why the direction of people’s
movements, mostly, may not be directly addressed to the principal SSA.

Critical appropriation of 'the four great legacies of the Enlightenment' might pave the
way towards such democratic transformation. It is from a Class perspective that the
contesting claims of the various identities in human society, including that of national
identity could be mediated and justice could be imparted to the various sections. This is
because most societies the world over today, are primarily Class-divided societies.
Moreover, Class perspective has an element of universalism about it as against exclusive
identities. Class is almost wholly a socially constructed category as against gender and
race, which may be viewed as social constructions on the basis natural differences,
although we do not deny that the socially constructed aspect is primary even in these
cases.\(^{29}\)

In the case of Adivasis, the 'indigenous people' in India, it is not only the question of
exclusion that needs to be ameliorated but also the question of socio-economic
oppression. For those integrated into class society as agricultural labourers, their

\(^{28}\) As paraphrased in Harriss-White, Barbara 2003: *India Working Essays on Society and

\(^{29}\) It may be possible to wholly mitigate the socially constructed aspects of inequality and
oppression. On the other hand, the natural difference needs to be maintained while seeking to
ameliorate the socially constructed aspects of gender inequality. In other words, it is
difference with equality that may be preferable in this case. In the case of race and caste, as
different from gender, there is a possibility, if not the feasibility, to abolish these categories in
favour of certain hybrid categories, through inter-marriages.
legitimate rights to agricultural land need to be asserted. As for those that do not engage in agriculture and still live in the lap of nature in the forests, their eviction from the forests needs to be precluded. As for the marginalized social groups in Keralam and India in general, gender and caste oppression are age-old practices, as compared to the socio-economic oppression of Adivasis and religious minorities, which are relatively new in their origin.

Let us also find the interface between the question of the lack of federal autonomy and the socio-economic status of the marginalised sections within the state. At the cultural and socio-economic levels, ‘feudal-casteist patriarchy’ and ‘imperialist patriarchy’ more or less co-exist in the present society. Feudal-casteist patriarchy sought to confine women to kitchen and nurseries, whereas, imperialist patriarchy sought to commodify the labour, body and beauty of women in the in the sphere of the market. The emerging pattern of gender discourse in the state today may be seen as a confluence/cocktail of feudal upper caste norms such as dowry, on the one hand, blended with the decadence of commercialism propelled by remittances and imperialist patriarchy propagated by the media, on the other. There are indications that the aspect of imperialist patriarchy is gaining ascendancy over the feudal-casteist aspect. Thus, the sex rackets, domestic violence, female foeticide, etc. are on the rise despite the fact that women in the state have been beneficiaries of the overall human development. Studies have shown that the notion of ‘male as the provider of the family’/the ‘working subject’ is essentially a contribution of colonial modernity. Studies such as of Anna Lindberg have rightly observed that the gender gap in the state has widened over the generations during the modern period, resulting in women being socially defined as housewives. Any well-considered attempt at addressing the question of women’s rights in this context would require a focus on the cultural realm. This is not to de-emphasise on the economic aspects, particularly the question of women’s property rights. In the traditional society, women from the upper castes and propertied classes suffered greater from patriarchy, particularly, family patriarchy. For instance, antarjjanams among Namboodiri Brahmans were confined to households and widows were not allowed re-marriage. Social patriarchy was a common factor that oppressed all women in society. However, women from the lower castes and classes were less vulnerable to family patriarchy, probably because they also contributed social production and fetched ‘earned income’. That the lack of federal autonomy impinges upon the socio-economic status is clear from the fact that the religious


community-wise divisions of personal laws concerning women, particularly, women's property rights is centrally defined.

There has been a cumulative process of exclusion and exploitation of the subalterns by multiple structures and agencies of dehumanisation. The Constitutional provisions for protective discrimination of Dalits such as the policy of reservations and other provisions like the abolition of untouchability under Article 17 of the Constitution, under fundamental rights have indeed been beneficial to Dalit interests. It is not certain if these were achievable without an enlightened State policy by the Union. However, the land reforms in the state which was primarily a tenancy reform gave a raw deal to the Dalits who have been the actual tillers in wetland cultivation in Keralam because it provided them ownership only over homestead land. Adivasis who in the traditional caste order, were outside the caste hierarchy, did not have to face caste oppression. They were just excluded from the general population and were confined to their natural environs. The history of the socio-economic oppression of Adivasis can be traced back to the colonial times when they began to be evicted from the forests, their traditional abode. The dominant classes had great stakes in uprooting the Adivasis from the forests, severing their harmonious relationship with nature: The Adivasi belt was home to immense forest resources, mines, big dams and hydel projects, which the dominant interests wanted to exploit. The Forest Act of 1865 by the colonial central government and the Forest Protection Act, 1980 by the Union government were major legislative instruments that made it illegal for Adivasis to stay in the forests. Control over forest resources and biodiversity seemed to be the key motivation here. If colonialism and the development policies of the State displaced Adivasis from their traditional abode, migrant settler peasants were also instrumental in dispossessing the Adivasis of the forestland in which they had lived traditionally. Herein it is necessary make a clear distinction between large owners and encroachers with political clout, on the one hand and the small and marginal peasantry, on the other, particularly during the period, post-1960s. As we have analysed in Chapters V & VI, there was a near-total tribe-Class overlap at the lowest rungs of Kerala society with hardly any internal social differentiation into Classes. Ethnic identity-based political struggles of the deprived has become a significant pattern of Class struggle in recent years and rightly did these address their demands to the State, the principal determinant and mediator of Class and other social interests. The contending discourses on the Adivasi land question by various hues of political opinion betrayed primarily Class interests, even when they did not invoke the language of Classes. However, the questions of these social relations are not amenable to reduction into an analysis on either class or nationality.
As for religious minorities, the history of their oppression began with the 'divide and rule' policy under colonialism, particularly after the revolt of 1857. Recent studies have also pointed out how the perceptions community by colonial modernity have also contributed to the present-day communal differences. The communal pattern of mobilisation against colonialism under the Congress and the Muslim League was a contributory factor. The partition riots in 1947 engineered by the proponents of the 'two-nation theory' worsened the communal relations in the country, particularly in North India and East India. With the growth of majoritarian communalism since late 1980s accompanied by liberalisation/globalisation, the discrimination and attacks on religious minorities in India reached unprecedented heights, as was evidenced by the riots after the demolition of the Babri masjid on December 6, 1992 and the carnage in Gujarat after February 27, 2002. The specificities of the problems faced by religious minorities are the discrimination and violence against them. Democratisation in this respect demands amelioration of these conditions.

We have already observed in Chapter IV how the Hindutva movement of the Sangh parivar in India is not merely anti-minorities but has a much broader anti-democratic agenda and fulfils the essential characteristics of a fascist movement such as a majoritarian, chauvinistic nationalism and other attributes such as a contradiction in its very social base. It has the potential to turn from its present status of 'fascistic communalism', i.e., with majoritarian communalism as its essence and being fascistic its attribute, to 'communal fascism' i.e., fascism in essence and being communal, its attribute in the future. The fascist movement remains a potent threat to the democratisation of Indian society. The prescription for fighting the fascist movement may still remain valid even in India: broad alliances and militant struggles. The fight at the cultural/ideological plane cannot be ignored, if Hindutva fascist movement is ultimately to be defeated in India. It is crucial for the democratic forces to face up to the grave threat of communalisation of people's/peoples' minds.

Hindutva communalism is a pan-Indian phenomenon, suffice it to say, with roots in the political economy of the country as a whole, particularly under Globalisation. The reflections of this all-India phenomenon is souring the inter-community relations in the state, which were otherwise cordial under the cultural ethos of a secular tradition of anti-caste social reform movements and the secular influence of the Communist movement, and with a larger share of the population of the religious minorities in the total population.

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of the state as compared to other states. These could be major reasons for the fascistic communal movement not being able to make major inroads into Kerala society. Nevertheless, the Hindutva movement in the state has been involved in a molecular 'passive revolution', in Gramscian terms, with a view to prepare the cultural grounds for a majoritarian religious particularism. Imperialist Globalisation and Fascistic communal movement have been the new structures/forces of domination and subjugation that have emerged since around late 1980s. We have, in Chapter IV, analysed briefly how these two are intimately inter-related. Thus the politics of the Hindutva movement, apparently, subserves the imperatives of accumulation of the nationally organised global oligopolies, of the apex capital in India and of the semi-feudal classes in India's countryside. They are supposed to be the ultimate guarantors of the status-quo. Nevertheless, we have observed how masses imbibing the fascistic and communal cultural logic could lead to a disjunction of the fascist movement from the interests of the dominant classes that it was originally intended to serve. There have been historical antecedents to such phenomena. This can lead to disastrous consequences even for the regime of sustained accumulation of the dominant classes because it is capable of tearing apart the whole social fabric.

As for the fisher people in the state, both the Union and state governments were responsible for the immiserisation of the fisher people. Developmental activities, tourism development, Special Economic Zones, etc. along the coasts have displaced the fisher people from their traditional habitats. The permission granted by the Union government to big vessels, Indian and foreign, to operate on the Indian seas since early 1990s, and the concessional fuel provided to them have, allegedly, led to significant depletion of fishery resources.

Under neo-liberal reforms, liberalised imports involving in particular, the removal of Quantitative Restrictions on imports has already created huge volatilities, bringing in a multiplicity of factors overdetermining the prices of agricultural commodities under an export-oriented, open economy framework. For now, opening up to the international market seems to offer better terms of trade. However, the implications of these volatilities can be serious for the livelihoods of the majority of the people, particularly in the case of Keralam which has been a much more externally-oriented economy, as compared to other states, right from the colonial times. By comparison, an economy producing food crops or other goods having an assured market within the state or country would not be as susceptible to such volatilities of commodity prices. The aforementioned fact underlines the crucial linkage between the macro and the micro, the constitution of the national formation in political economy terms and the prospects of livelihood of the vast majority of the poorer classes. Globalisation of capital has brought with it a host of new volatilities.
other than the volatility of prices. They include vulnerability to capital flights and economic collapses in a liberalised financial regime; volatility of labour markets outside the state; etc.

Under these conditions, the question of sustainability of the very process of growth and development comes under focus. “Sustainable Development is often defined as a strategy to satisfy the needs of the present generation without interfering with the needs of future generations.” Rightly does Bill Adams (1993) find sustainable development to be ‘a flag for many ships’. Schuurman rightly says, “The term sustainable development encompasses development strategies which range from light-green to dark-green, from romantic and nostalgic conservatism to utopian socialism, from absolute-zero growth in the economy to maintaining the present world economic growth rate.” Indeed, the concerns raised by the notion of sustainable development needs to transcend particular political/ideological boundaries.

A radical political agenda has to reckon with the delicate question of integrating the intra-societal struggles with the anti-State/anti-imperialist struggles of the broad masses of people in an era of Structural Adjustment Policies. Agitations and demands of popular movements, it seems, are increasingly being directed and addressed to the State. This could, perhaps, be seen as the fall-out of the increasing grip of metropolitan capital, both Indian and global, en route, the State and the decimation of the feudal social relations in agriculture to a great extent.

Despite claims of the land reforms having been an accomplished fact, there is enormous ‘land hunger’ among the rural landless poor, particularly among marginalised social groups like Adivasis, Dalits and fisher people living along the coasts. If land question for Adivasis was a question of dispossession, for Dalits, it was a question of denial of land rights from time immemorial under the dispensation of the caste-based feudal order. Agricultural Labour participation among Adivasis and Dalits in the state is markedly higher than among All vis-à-vis all-India. Even today, the Dalit Agricultural Labour Households (ALH) have lesser average landholding compared to the corresponding figures for Adivasis and All in the state. Landlessness to the tune of 44 per cent among All ALH, according to Rural Labour Enquiry, 1999-01 indicates the importance of class as a category of analysis in its own right.

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34 Schuurman 1993, pp. 21-22.
35 Schuurman 1993, p. 22.
36 Schuurman 1993, p. 22.
37 The apex capital is designated as ‘metropolitan capital’ because apparently, the global metropoles and the Indian ones constitute their home-base.
Although the land question is out of the policy logic of the State, it remains primary in the demands of the deprived sections of people. As we have observed in Chapter VI, land struggles in the state have taken the form of ethnic-identity based political struggles of the deprived, particularly since mid-1990s. Adivasi masses in the state have been widely mobilised on the land question. The slogan, ‘From colonies to agricultural land’ represents the increasing political consciousness among Dalits as well. If the Dalits demand agricultural land, the Adivasis demand agricultural land and the forest-dwellers among them, ‘right to habitat’ over forestland. It is the ‘right to habitat’ in the coastal areas that the fisher people demand against the encroachments over coastal land by the mining, tourism and developmental lobbies. Other landless sections and poor peasants such as those from Christian background are also organising around ethnic identities. We have argued that although these political struggles have the trappings of identity politics, they can be designated as essentially class struggles, especially if we go by the broad classificatory frame of Marx – ‘community’, ‘political organisation’, ‘national identity’. Other studies have also pointed out how the social solvent of market exchange has not been effective enough at dissolving caste identities at the lowest bottom of the caste society. Despite the development of an externally-oriented, dependent capitalist relations in agriculture, the land question remains largely unresolved. As Ronald Herring rightly pointed out, the debate on the land question gives rise to the uncomfortable question on the character of private property as such, “If rents are illegitimate, are profits?” Thus thousands of acres of forestland being illegally grabbed or legally kept in possession at nominal rates of fees to the government by factions of the Indian big capital or other dominant interests does not become a political issue in the state. Nor does the denial of the proverbial ‘six feet of land’ to bury their dead to the absolutely landless Dalit and Adivasi communities in the state become a political issue of import in the contemporary Kerala scenario. This should throw ample reflection on the class (and communal) reality of contemporary Kerala society that is often overlooked. Moreover, scholars such as

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38 See, Harriss-White 2003, p. 189.
40 If the post-1977 encroachments on the Cardamom Hill Reserves (CHR) has become a contentious issue today, it is because masses belonging to a particular community, namely, Christians are involved under the patronage of Kerala Congress (Mani group) in particular and there is a political settling of scores among dominant class parties. The issue has not been raised in a similar way where Tata or Goenka or Poabson companies are involved.
Herring had pointed out how by privileging the lease-holders, the tenancy reforms in the state in 1970 had primarily favoured the rich peasantry. Today, lease farming by agricultural labourers and poor peasants has become a major trend in the state, which is a welcome development from the angle of promoting rural livelihoods and in the interests of food production. However, it cannot be denied that it also reflects the contradiction between ‘non-owning cultivators’ and ‘non-cultivating owners’ in the agricultural sector in the state. It may also be noted that in terms of land concentration, Keralam comes as one among the top bracket of states in India. Not fracturing the multi-class rural social base of the movement has been a prime concern of the leadership of the land struggles in the state. We would also argue that it is possible to build an alliance of the ‘non-owning cultivators’, who comprise mainly of the landless and the land poor against large rentiers and large owners who have turned land-grabbers, i.e., without offending the interests of the middle rungs of the agrarian hierarchy. We would view that this is still an eminent possibility in the contemporary agrarian scenario in the state.

High density of population also places restrictions on the use of technology as it can be labour-displacing. Theoretically speaking, the contradictions internal to human society overrides the contradiction involving human beings’ struggle with nature. However, if the broad category of ‘labour’ comes to wield political power, the use of technology can reduce the monotony of mechanical labour and increase leisure by reducing the length of the working day. The existence of a rights-conscious labour within a particular state logically also leads to capital flights to neighbouring states, as was noticed in the case of Keralam. However, in the event of subaltern classes and social groups exercising political power, within the whole country, there is possibility of planned, spatially equitable pattern of development. Proposals such as of promoting petty commodity production within a particular state in the context of globalisation are bound to face the dilemmas that a welfare State inevitably faces under globalisation. So then, we would like to underline that it is through a structural transformation making it possible for living labour to control the dead labour (i.e., technology, in particular) that such dilemmas of technological lag and capital flights can be overcome. The strategy and tactics for achieving this end, however, is to be determined by the subaltern classes and social groups involved and their political collectivities, based on the contingencies of the situation.

The short-term, partial demands of welfare needs to linked up to the long-term goals of social transformation. Or else, we would fall into the trap of ‘economism’ or endless issue-based struggles that we might make a fetish of struggle itself rather than focus on the objective social change. Conversely, if we focus on total social change and ignore the
demands of welfare and a regulative order in the present, we could fall into the trap of an 'imagined paradise' because the struggle for fundamental social transformation is bound to be protracted in a country like ours with entrenched vested interests.

We have analysed in Chapter VI how the land question is important from the angle of the concerns of equity and even from the angle of productive efficiency, or for ‘productive efficiency for the sake of widely shared growth’ as scholars like Amartya Sen visualise. It is also an advance over rentier modes of social relations such as monarchism and semi-feudalism. It is also vital for the self-reliance of a peripheral/Third World economy. This is because fundamental agrarian transformation could also lay the foundations for demand growth in the indigenous economy and generate surpluses for industrialisation, as was pointed out in the Soviet industrialisation debate. It could also create a “permanent asset base” for the impoverished rural people. It could give them dignity and future striking power by saving them from the vicious cycle of poverty, helplessness and the cringing deference emerging therefrom. We would add a further dimension to the rationale for land question in our times, particularly under neo-liberal reforms: Given the volatility of the global monopoly capital under globalisation, with a slender productive base and a huge superstructure of speculative capital, we would argue that people asserting control over ‘fixed assets’ or immovables like land, water and forest resources, besides movable sources of capital like remittances and export earnings through alternative political movements could constitute an adequate challenge to the globalisation of monopoly capital and lead the way forward towards the development of productive forces in the peripheral economies. This warrants a new-old focus or renewed focus on the land the question. Self-determination is seen as the key in the parlance of both class and nationality. The oppressed/impoverished are seen as having been impoverished/oppressed by given structures and there are agencies involved in this process of dehumanisation. We hold self-determination to be the conscious act of the affected social categories of transcending these.

As of today, labour in Keralam are on the back-foot against the aggressive strides of neo-liberal reforms. Labour is fighting back with their backs against the wall. It is the offensive of capital that is the dominant trend. This is clear from the reduction in the number of strikes during ‘liberalisation’. However, we would go with the view that rather than the ‘invisible hand of the market’, the conscious agency of the subaltern classes and


\[\text{\footnotesize{We would believe that impoverishment by itself cannot lead to transformative collective action by the deprived. It is consciousness of relative deprivation and organisational strength that are surer criteria for the emergence of a political movement of the deprived.}}\]
social groups should shape the destiny of the state. Only then, can there be a shift from the current image of the Malayalees performing Herculean tasks just for eking out a living, depicted in Malayalee popular culture as street-vending on the Everest and the moon much before those who supposedly 'conquered' these peaks even reached there.

There is a world of difference, between foreign investments by transnational corporations (TNCs) in general, on the one hand and the resources that the state can legitimately lay claim to, such as the incoming remittances and the export earnings of Keralam, on the other. The former undermines the economic self-reliance of the state, whereas the latter could enhance it and yet both these categories are fluid assets that are susceptible to the bane capital flights, under neo-liberal reforms in general and under a regime of capital account convertibility in particular. On the contrary, fixed productive assets like land, forests and water resources are less susceptible to capital flights and could even better be employed as a sustainable source for the development of productive forces in the state, leading to amelioration of concerns such as poverty, unemployment and the compulsion for migrating out. These could constitute the base for generating indigenous resources/capital, which is imperative given the volatile character of globalised finance. We would, therefore, underline the continued and increased relevance, of the slogan, 'land to the tiller' under a regime of globalised finance. As for public resources, democratising the control over them may be preferred to the approach of going in for outright privatisation.

Apart from the agency of political movements that could bring fundamental social transformation, the State under globalisation needs to be brought under pressure to follow a policy of self-reliance – that of preserving indigenous assets, promoting local technologies and markets. The State should also be pressurised to initiate appropriate regulatory measures such as a viable competition policy and corporate governance/regulation. These could act as safeguards until any alternative system emerges.

We would argue that people turning away from agriculture could be symptomatic of the crisis and decline of agriculture, particularly under an open economy. Agriculture and allied activities still constitute the primary source of indigenous surpluses within the economy, as was pointed out as early as in the Soviet industrialisation debate. The fixed assets in the primary sector are not vulnerable to capital flights even under the huge volatilities brought in by the operations of global finance. Under these conditions, we would advocate a renewed focus on the primary sector in the interests of a self-reliant economic base and with a view to protecting the livelihoods of rural people. It may be remembered that rural movements with its primary social base among the semi-
proletarianised peasantry constitute the most democratic movements in peripheral countries today, posing potent challenges to a decadent global capitalism itself.43

That industrialisation in itself is no panacea for the crisis of development in the state is shown by several negative examples as that of Birla’s Mavoor Gwalior Rayons and the plantations leased out to Tata-tea, R.P. Goenka’s Harrisson Malyalam Plantations (HML), AVT company, Popson, etc. These are instances of ‘developmentalism’ as a ‘discourse of accumulation’ that does not contribute to the welfare of the broad masses of people. The possibilities of selective, prudent tourism could also be looked into instead of indiscriminate encouragement of pleasure tourism now being pursued.

A people-oriented development model, may call for a rather inward-looking, self-reliant trajectory of development with particular emphasis on food production. In this context, an anti-imperialist orientation by countries, nations and nationalities could help safeguard the markets and productive resources within a given territory, apart from serving geopolitical concerns of these peripheral regions. Yet we need to learn from the negative lessons of the capitulation to global capitalism of many a nationality movement during the post-Second World War period. A development that "subordinates export behaviour to domestic needs, treating the former as a residue", 44 has in future, to replace production for market with production for peoples needs.

Radical class struggles and nationality struggles contain the potential to unite various sections of the subaltern masses against oppressive structures like a regressive State and global capitalism and therefore have the pride of place among movements for social transformation. Yet it is not the subjective preferences of a researcher, but the collective agency of social and political movements, constrained and/or enabled by the given structures, as they are, that can ultimately determine the trajectory of social transformation and our collective destiny.

We would like to end on a sober note of caution that we do not, however, seek to valorise or idealise social and political movements. This is because we would view that every one of these movements embodies within itself an incipient State in the making. And State, may rightly be designated in the Trotskyian/Weberian terms of arrogating to itself the legitimate monopoly over violence [and regulation]. We need to learn from the negative experience of the 20th century in this respect: Revolutionary class struggles led to the eventual establishment of bureaucratic regimes and socialist construction eventually gave

44 Prabhat Patnaik 1995, p. 47.
way to capitalist restoration. It was pointed out that a substantial section of the Communist party had in these cases turned bureaucratic and degenerated from being the vanguard of the struggles of the oppressed masses to being their oppressors. National self-determination lost its substantive content owing to neo-colonial exploitation through indirect means. And of late, social liberation struggles led by the ‘global civil society movements’ is, in effect, creating a fissured social basis for anti-State, anti-imperialist resistance. It has also been pointed out that political discourses ranged against oppressive structures like semi-feudalism and imperialism, and stand for ‘independent, self-reliant development’ could fall prey to “the cunning of capitalist reason” in the sense that instead of being able to build an alternative socialist society, they could, wittingly or unwittingly, be effecting a transition to capitalist development of some sort. Notwithstanding these possible pitfalls, these are not the inevitable trajectories of social and political movements. Having critical faith in the creative potentialities of the masses and the transformative potential of organised political movements, we could muster the courage to transcend the limits of practicality the system imposes upon us.

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