

## THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE THIRD WORLD AND THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM

The relationship between scholarship and ideology presents many difficulties. After adequate concepts have been formulated, the traditional ideologist places an interpretation upon fresh political data in such a manner that his downright claims are not accepted by further empirical studies. It is instructive to take a look at some manifestations of the principle of *cognitive dissonance* which can be a source of anxious concern to those in the Third World who wish to participate in a rational analysis of the international environment. The failure to utilise *cognitive inputs* from Viet Nam turned the American "dream" into a "nightmare" and a feature of this nationwide shift is a pervasive scepticism about the central notions of official American ideology. The politically corrosive effect of neo-colonialist ideology comes into sharp focus in the following statement in "*The British Survey*", May 1962, when the British Government had not shed its *hubris*: "Who are the 'Angolan leaders'? If there existed any prospects of a genuine negro government formed by persons manifestly enjoying mass support throughout the territory and having such competence in political and economic management as have the majority of those who have come to the fore in the independent Frenchspeaking states of Africa, for instance, or in Nigeria, there would be so strong a case for the transfer of powers, that no Portuguese Government could resist it in the existing climate of opinion. We, for our part, should be the first to recommend it. But it is sheer dishonesty to pretend that any such situation exists." The contemporary British policy in Angola had learnt a new dimension of "honesty" in 1975 when it was in certain fundamental ways different from the prevailing view of Dr. Henry Kissinger, before he was silenced by the U. S. Congress and forced to abandon an interventionist role in Angola.

What again is equally obvious is that Dr. Kissinger's verbiage of pragmatism did not represent the kind of synthesis of idea and action which would have fitted the pluralistic situation that existed in Angola. It was at the United Nations in September, 1973, that he had declared: "Independently of bilateral diplomacy,

the pragmatical agreements and the dramatic steps of the past years, we have in mind a comprehensive, institutionalised peace". This statement did not modify the American ideological impulse to start viewing Angola in the context of Super-Power conflict in the year that followed.

In spite of its indubitable advantage over the United States and other Western powers, the Soviet Union's macro-learning about the Third World and its place in the international system has not been free from confusion and avoidable frustrations. One great problem is that Soviet official ideology, while gaining significant acceptance in the Third World after the 20th Congress of the C. P. S. U., has shown either constraint or passivity in developing adequate political categories which can convey truly objective knowledge about the underlying processes of rapid change of Third World social systems. A line of investigation is the careful study of Umberto Melotti on Marx and the Third World which makes a meticulous analysis of the genuine Marxist content of the Soviet ideological view of "historical development". The roots of the problems that have arisen in the application of Soviet foreign and economic policies in the Third World lie in the inherent characteristics of a "uni-linear scheme" for which the evidence is not convincing that it is universally applicable. On the contrary a creative Marxist response to the "new" questions posed by the Third World would require that Soviet experience should not be made too absolute and due recognition must be given to the distinctive adaptation to historical forces in different societies. If Soviet foreign policy is to make a sustained contribution to the long-run development of the international system, the Soviet official ideology will have to permit *cognitive inputs* which are not fictionalised accounts of Third World historical development. The Melotti model visualises the following elements in its analysis :

1. The principal works of Karl Marx, *The Communist Manifesto*, *Das Kapital*, *The poverty of Philosophy*, as well as the relatively recently discovered *Grundrisse*, do not support the uni-linear position adopted as a comprehensive ideology to support the logic of Stalinist developments in the Soviet Union.

2. The false identifications and theoretical flaws of the Stalinist uni-linear position are shared by bi-linear position of Plekhanov

which cannot claim greater validity in the analysis of the general aspects of the world-wide historical process.

The neo-unilinear approach of Godelier, Chesnaux and Suret-Canale, also do not contribute to the solution of the problems raised in the discussion.

4. To avoid the difficulties and weakness of the "traditional" approaches Marxism can explain the changing historical conditions by utilising the multi-linear approaches which have been long neglected by official theoreticians. The study of problems in the multi-linear context is a decisive factor in the Marxist contributions of Eric Robsbawn, Maxime Rodinson and Guy Dhoquois. A broad and stimulating discussion of Marxist theory leads to a multi-linear Marxist theoretical model which in turn helps in finding a creative path towards the improvement of the analysis of the Third World in the international environment.

5. The Melotti model distinguishes (a) parallel from (b) successive socio-economic formations. This has profound consequences for understanding the dissolution and transformation of the *primitive community*. The discussion compels clear thinking about 1. Asian Society 2. Ancient (European) Society and 3. Feudal Society. These are viewed as "three specific developments on a secondary level".

6. The identification of Third World problems arises out of the historical development of Asian societies like those of Indian and semi-Asian societies like those of Russia. The line of development in Europe is in the break-up of ancient society on account of internal crises and external pressures; this is followed by the breakup of feudal society through the development of capitalism. The important key to Asian society is that it "resists the test of time". The Asian transformation from semi-colonialism to colonialism and onwards to imperialism takes place when Asian society clashes with Western capitalism. This led in the case of India to the "development of under-development" because the Indian society was brought into line with Western historical development but deliberately confined to a "peripheral position". By contrast, in the case of Russia (a semi-Asian society) the Western

impact was felt less deeply. The transition takes place from the Asiatic mode of production to the "bureaucratic-collectivist" mode of production. The Soviet Revolution is therefore strictly comparable to the Western transition from Feudalism to Capitalism, although the faith which inspires is noble and exalted.

7. The essential parameters of the international system from a Marxist Multi-linear point of view cannot be understood until it is conceded that the structures and institutions of contemporary political societies do not fulfill Marx's own requirement of socialism: "the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all". The spread of official ideology on the claim that socialism already exists in one or more states is the result of linear political thinking.

8. The Melotti model specifies contemporary tasks on the basis of Marx's conviction that every country in the world today can transform itself to socialism. Thus the three contemporary forms of political society (1) Advanced Capitalism (2) Bureaucratic Collectivism (3) Third World Societies (ranging from peripheral capitalist, pre-capitalistic and feudal types) must all pursue lines of dynamics which lead to the world society of the future. From these considerations emerges the main task of eradication of exploitation which originates in the "metropoli" of imperialist capital in order to ensure the harmonious development of international society.

The Globalism of the United States and the Soviet Union expresses itself as enormous ideological pressures in the Third World. The goal of international peace and security in the new horizons held by the great powers gives scant attention to the hopes for new vistas for achieving freedom and growth without the "paternalism" which the colonial regimes had employed in their assault upon the national-cultural identity of Third World societies. This "paternalism" can be illustrated quite clearly in the numerous instances of psychic gratification which American and Soviet ideologies derive by contrasting the intellectual entrenchment of Western Judaeo-Christian ideology or the sophisticated perspective on "the Future" of Soviet-style Marxism with the amorphous and plebeian parochialisms that are the verbal expression of Third

World political experience. After the creation of a new detente-relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union, the problems of the Cold War have ceased to be of practical import. The Third World countries, however, find themselves in a condition of incessant Cold War in the international environment in which their bargaining positions are sought to be impaired by self-reinforcing of ideological sanctions whose outcome is to suggest that feelings of autonomy in developing countries contravene the long range tasks of the emancipation of man and his creative potential. The realisation of a "single" supra-national proletarian interest or the convergence of "elite" attitudes to a common scientific-technological or technotronic concept will be the prelude to complete conformism and the fulfilment of the imperialist-colonialist dream of destroying the creative autonomy of societies in the Southern Hemisphere.

The existential response of the Third World points to several flaws in the current ideological theories which inspire Western and Soviet political strategies to the developing countries :

First, while narrowing the limits of action in their mutual confrontation, at the deep ideological level, neither the Soviets nor the Americans possess analytical perspectives which would link instabilities in Third World countries to the antagonism and bitterness injected into the international system first by their Cold War political rivalries.

The functional-technical rationality which exists in the domestic policies of the dominant political coalitions in the Western Capitals does not help in discovering the determinants of policy decisions which involve what Julius Nyerere has aptly called "international bullying". The dubious nature of values and schemes of peace and justice in some Third World societies does not exonerate the *industrial-military complex* which is a major source of political cynicism in any serious discussion of the future of the international system. A realistic appraisal of the situation must also include a discussion of the paradoxical trend of the use or threat of use of military force between states with defined attributes of socialist ideology.

The range of issues and political norms in Third World societies

are very much affected by the pervasive threat systems and war industries of the great powers. As Leo Mates observes : "... the logic of the cold war increasingly pushed confrontation with the rival power or powers to the forefront and even minimal consideration of the particular interests of the people of these countries was respected less and less. This policy ultimately developed to the point where it was precisely the United States that waged the last great colonial war in history, even though it did not have a colonial empire and despite the fact that it had never had any vested interests in that part of the world, in Indochina." Instead of elevating issues and acting as a benign influence on the social fabric in the Third World, both the torch bearers of technological revolution have in the course of winning spheres of influence occasionally imagined themselves to be operating in an environment very close to the Hobbesian state of nature.

Second, the substantive value of "equality" has been missing in the generalised process of the Third World's interaction with the great powers. In an era of decolonisation Third World politics, committed to their own way of life, have found, to their dismay, that the game of international politics has primary significance for disruptionist activity against the common care of shared national experience. Nyerere asserts : "I am neither a Marxist nor a Capitalist. I do not believe that every human value is, or need always be, sacrificed to economic interests." Specifically Third World leaders are explicit in saying that their societies will resist indoctrination into principles of economic development which are inherently manipulative of universal maxims of national ethics. The reason for this assurance is simply that economic and financial penetration has often converted the friendly outsider into the ultimate arbiter and supreme decision maker in past as well as recent history.

Third, having acquired inter-continental strategic capabilities the super nuclear powers, as they proceed to institutionalise the SALT arrangements, are likely to come into conflict with the legitimate security aspirations of other countries. This is not a matter of trivial importance as far as Third World areas are concerned. India's experience with the U. S. S. Enterprise and the expressed goals and priorities of the Americans and the Russians in the Indian Ocean will repay careful attention and may be of more general interest for all developing countries.



Fourth, in the lack of a balanced approach to the exchange of information, a good deal of interest and controversy has been generated. Information has important implications for international political analysis and policy preferences are conditioned by learning biases determined by information flows. The New Delhi conference recently attempted to explore tentatively the media and information problems facing the non-aligned. The western media has defined attributes of "exploitation" vis-a-vis the Third World as the interpretation of evidence from western sources clearly shows. In spite of the sympathy of the Soviet Union and East European countries for the revolutionary struggle in the Third World it is doubtful whether "socialist bloc" media would meet the stringent tests of the Non-aligned countries to gain an objective and empirical basis for information flows in the international society of tomorrow.

In guiding social and political change in China, Mao Tse-tung and his associates found a natural vocation for themselves as a global catalyst for a new international system. They relied upon Marxism as the authorised scripture for generating popular political awareness as well as the textbook for undertaking the process of special alchemy. Mao Tse-tung affirmed: "Marxism-Leninism has by no means exhausted the wealth of truth but is only providing ever new roads towards the practical realisation of truth." Although the Chinese communist political tradition avoided the type of ideological self-sufficiency which was beloved of Soviet orthodoxy, yet in portraying the name of Third World interrelationship the Maoist ideological view, although enlivened by deep conviction, remained largely simplistic. As a model of Marxism, the Chinese variety promotes the same irrational identification with the "uni-linear" approach and thus leads to extravagant propositions about the historical process in the developing countries and an assertive but undocumented Chinese role in them.

The disappointments and paradoxes of the Chinese role in the Third World as well as China's efforts at spokesmanship are largely traceable to a "forward strategy" combined with a "role-ambiguity". The international involvement of China has fluctuated in a manner which has made it look, at times, like an old fashioned imperial power and at other times as a symbol of a new inter-

national society based on new non-exploitative structures. To the faithful adherents of Maoism, China will always remain the Delphic Oracle but a broader non-dogmatic view would suggest that there are numerous examples of substantial gap between Maoist rhetoric and political reality : ( a ) Peking's concentration on Super-power problems and an operational style embeded in the search for a place in the two-way communication process between the Soviet and the Americans. ( b ) China's acute problems in harmonising its action with the majority of Third World countries in Bangla Desh, Chile, Rhodesia and South Africa. ( c ) China's poorly organised efforts in controversial domains like the tribal strife between Ruanda and Burundi and the appalling conflict in Biafra. ( d ) Problems caused by China's needs to invest her trade earnings in Western technology which in turn affects her trade and aid pattern with Third World countries.

There is, however, room for guarded optimism as one makes a prognosis of China's further development. If a multi-linear model comes to be accepted the Chinese political consciousness could have benign systematic consequences for the Third World. To quote Roger Garaudy : " As the Chinese Revolution has shown, it is possible to proceed directly from a grarian-feudal society to socialism without any intermediate capitalist phase. Hence it would seem probably that economic and technical backwardness could be overcome, not by industrialisation of the old type but by a less indirect approach to the new scientific and technological revolution. The question of the diversity of developmental criteria arises at all levels. "

Professor Garaudy, however, gives a clear warning to China if she is to avoid a Faustian drama : " Where China is concerned, it would be a disaster were she to isolate herself by dogmatization and by the extrapolation of her own model on to the rest of the world instead of using her experience to help other countries and other socialist parties towards a better understanding of the need for a diversity of socialist models and for development criteria; towards a better understanding too, of the need for objectivity in regard to values and to the types of civilisation and socialism that have evolved in the Western world. "

In spite of a sustained scholarly study of the power elites in



major countries and a coherent system of ideas on elite values and preference, there are grounds for concern that this approach has not yielded rewarding results in terms of insights on the actual patterns of developments in the Third World.

In a book entitled *The Real and the Negative*, Basanta Kumar Mallik provided a typically Indian insight into political and social change. Looking at the prevailing stage of human conflict he wrote: "The implication is that values appear in two distinct forms: (a) The form in which the function with regard to them is negation or abstention—this appears in conflict. (b) The form in which the function with regard to them is affirmation or realisation—this appears in harmony".

That Indian foreign policy has paid close attention to the normative dimension may not amount to an incisive political analysis. Yet the tentativeness of an initial theoretical statement in Indian official pronouncements should not prevent a systematic development and appraisal of a new internationalism which overcomes obstacles to thought and communications. The existing discussion whether in terms of "nonalignment" or the "group of 77" has yielded a partial conception of India's initiative at the international level. What is urgently needed is a methodological advance which can go beyond the preliminary exploration of issues to a discussion of the historic types of social and economic order. As Mallik says about survival in the twentieth century of societies: "Two alternatives are open to them: (a) They may go on repeating the stages of alternative success and failure of history. (b) They may be subjected to a new principle of ethics and be overhauled by a new interpretation of individual and group." To put the latter alternative in Garaudy's language: "It is also and above all necessary to demonstrate the possibility of conceiving and realising a different order, of changing the rules of the game so as to reduce the gap between what, hence forward is in fact realizable and what is actually and pitifully real."

It was, therefore, certainly no exaggeration when in her address to the Pugwash Conference, the Indian Prime Minister posed the question: "But can countries, particularly developing ones, succeed without a concomitant change in the nature of international

relationships? There is some grouping towards a new international economic order, especially after the fuel crisis. But major interest groups in the industrialised world seem reluctant to accept the implications of such change. Can it be evolved when powerful nations refuse to reduce their military budgets and their patterns of consumption? Can the small rich segment of the world's population claim four-fifth of the world's resources?" Karl Marx had expressed an important symbiotic relationship when he formulated the concept of "praxis". India's experience as a developing countries and her power in the evolving relationship of the Third World and the International system should find expression in a synthesis of idea and action which should avoid the dilemmas of uni-linear models. India's international political praxis should be identified in conjunction with the following questions: (i) What are the pitfalls of the structure of deterrence? (ii) What are the perils implicit in the hierarchy of objectives of the great powers? (iii) What can be done to avoid the breakdown of diplomacy in conditions where dogmatic ideological influences create confused reaction?

Jawaharlal Nehru University

Delhi

M. L. Sondhi