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Modernization and Its Discontents  
A Perspective from the Sociology  
of Knowledge

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**MODERNIZATION AND ITS DISCONTENTS**  
**A Perspective From the Sociology of Knowledge**

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## **SECTION 1**

### **Modernisation and its Discontents**

## Modernisation and its Discontents

This essay represents an intellectual journey of sorts. It is at once the product of and an attempt to describe, the tension between the universe of those who study the Third World and the universe of those who inhabit this world.

Like most other students of development, especially those from the so-called developing countries, I have long had serious doubts about the wisdom of many aspects of this body of knowledge, but was inclined to regard them merely as minor disagreements over a few policies or actions. Recently, however, I began to realise that these doubts derive from fundamental differences over 'ways of seeing' the world, rather than from a few specifics. It is this shift in comprehension that I shall attempt to develop here in the hope that it is relevant for current debates in the Third World.

While I believe, as I must, that the ideas presented here are important for a more complete understanding of the problems of development and progress, I am aware that they would not have been very relevant (and indeed, might not even have taken shape in my own thinking) were it not for the widespread feeling of a crisis in development theory. The current uncertainty in the profession has been a catalyst for many new attempts, particularly

in Third World countries, to develop alternative approaches which can take into account more centrally the problems and failures of the process of modernisation. This essay is one more attempt in this direction.

Simply stated, I argue that in order to understand the current crisis we have to look at the impact of the entire corpus of Modernisation and Development Theories rather than at particular instances of their application. As such, the ultimate objective of this essay is to provide a critical perspective on the development of modernisation theory in the last half-century.

The essay also seeks to shift attention towards the intellectual, philosophical and moral bases of the theory, and away from specific policies or actions which emerged from it under different circumstances. This is done by seeing modernisation theories as artefacts of the culture which produced them and which contributed to their strengths as well as their weaknesses.

To preface the succeeding remarks, I see a particular assumption - 'that impersonal relations are inherently superior to personal relations' - to be the distinguishing element of the modernisers' world view, and one which places them very firmly within 'Western' culture. This elegant and pedigreed assumption, which I have taken the liberty of labelling the impersonality postulate, introduces a powerful asymmetry in the analysis of social

issues by concentrating intellectual energies only on those aspects of social behavior which can be encompassed within an objectivist matrix. Alternative proposals, such as the one presented here, can then be interpreted as attempts to replace this asymmetry with a more balanced approach.

To avoid mis-understanding, I should clarify here that it is not my contention that the wise and able social scientists engaged in what appeared to many people as a wholly admirable endeavour, namely the economic and social modernisation of the Third World, were less than well-intentioned, or that they sought willingly to bring about the pathologies and crises that have so stymied the profession today. My argument is that one cannot look at peoples' actions in most situations without taking account of the social, moral and political contexts in which these actions take place. This is also true of those development theorists who, notwithstanding their noble motives, may also have contributed unwittingly to a host of problems.

Since the use of the term 'West' in this connection is likely to be misinterpreted, a clarification is in order. I use this term as a label for the 'ideal type' of the 'West,' that which is presented as a model for Third World societies as also for recalcitrant members of 'Western' societies; I decidedly do not mean to refer

to the observable culture lived and experienced by countless people in Europe and North America, except to the extent that their articulated form of self-definition is based on this 'ideal type.' Nor am I using 'West' as an antithesis of the Socialist 'East.' These points will become clearer by a reading of Section 4 below.

The paper begins in Section 1 with the current crisis in modernisation theories and its various articulations, intellectual as well as political. From this, Section 2 goes on to discuss the underlying similarities between various strands in modernisation theory, and those between the different forms of challenge and critique; this is done in the framework of a sociology of knowledge, i.e., a theory of why people write what they write. Section 3 uses this sociology of knowledge to provide a critical review of the evolution of developmental thought in the previous four decades. Section 4 is the theoretical core of this paper; it argues that the crises of development and the differences between modernisers and their critics stem from an underlying difference in world-views which reveals the strengths as well as weaknesses of modernisation. In Section 5, the argument of the previous section is used to draw an alternate picture of social progress by focussing directly on such fundamental issues as freedom and welfare.



## 1. The Crisis in Modernization Theory

The period following the second World War has witnessed the advent of a massive and unprecedented project of social engineering in Third World countries, variously termed industrialization, modernization, or development<sup>1</sup>; and justified on the basis of a supposed superiority of Western economic and political institutions and (initially at least) of Western values over non-Western ones. While the philosophical roots of the belief in the superiority of Western values can be traced back to the Enlightenment ethic of 'the rational pursuit of human freedoms', and the Colonial ethic of 'the White Man's burden', contemporary writers generally legitimate their actions on relatively partial (and therefore more defensible) grounds, namely the need for and the desirability of transferring modern Western technology to Third World countries in order to bring about increases in per capita output (particularly in the high-productivity industrial sector), or the expanded provision of "basic needs" (i.e., formal education, modern health facilities, piped water supply, and so forth). Such transfer is argued to be speeded up by other forms of institutional and structural change such as "state-building" (i.e., the expansion of State power conjointly with the introduction of parliamentary and

democratic institutions), and the inculcation of a particular set of development-enhancing "modern" (i.e., of course, "Western") values and habits among the people of traditional societies.

The early days of this project were characterised by an unalloyed confidence in the ability of social scientists to help the people of Third World countries banish their inherited problems and construct a new social reality from scratch<sup>2</sup>. Of course, even in that age of unbounded optimism there were several voices of doubt and dissent regarding the sagacity, desirability or feasibility of such a gigantic endeavor; but the self-assurance of the theorists was so unequivocal and belief in their nostrums so widespread that doubters could readily be dismissed as irrational and misguided 'cranks' if not as malicious mischief-makers. Accusations of failures could similarly be disregarded as resulting from weaknesses not in the theory but in the application, because of the endurance of backward behavior, values and institutions in the countries concerned, or (at a later stage) from the inefficiency or veniality of politicians and bureaucrats. Matters have changed, however. Although it may be too early to begin writing an epitaph for development theory, it is certainly not inopportune to record the passing of the era of blind faith<sup>3</sup>.

Today there is a crisis in modernisation theory. Hardly a book or journal on development issues comes out which does not express disappointment, disillusionment or dissatisfaction with the ability of what Ashis Nandy has called a 'secular theory of salvation,' to live up to its promise to expand human freedoms<sup>4</sup>.

Many factors have contributed to this emerging crisis. The most obvious one is the extremely uneven record of development: of the persistence of poverty amid increasing affluence, of the increase in unemployment despite expanding production, and, in general, of the failure in ameliorating the condition of people in the poorest countries of Africa and Asia. A second reason is the increasing association of modernization and development with ecological disasters: the devastation of tropical rain-forests and mountain watersheds, the deleterious (and unanticipated) ecological consequences of large dams and large irrigation systems, the loss of subsistence agricultural land to desertification in Africa and to waterlogging and salinity in Asia, and the high energy-requirement and vulnerability of modern technologies. Another contributory factor is a similarly increasing association of development with higher levels of conflicts and tensions in much of the Third World, in almost all parts where the developmental project has been under way for a significant period of time, where

such conflicts as wars, civil unrest, civic and ethnic violence, political repression and urban crime appear to have increased tremendously<sup>5</sup>. Responsibility must also be placed at the door of a fourth consideration namely the onset of a period of confusion, muddled groping and search for new paradigms in Economics as well as Political Science, the two mother disciplines of development theory<sup>6</sup>.

Notwithstanding the importance of each of the above, however, it seems that the single most important reason for the spreading disillusionment is a 'loss of hope' as Mary Kaldor once put it, an erosion of the myth that development can create a just and humane society. This erosion has also permitted the increase in popularity and self-assurance of non-Western (and often anti-Western) social, cultural and political movements in Third World countries. Some of the above reasons can be summarised here.

- 1) First, there is growing recognition that it is not possible, given the earth's resources, for the entire planet to be able to emulate the consumption pattern of Western countries.

- 2) Second, tremendous unanticipated social and political problems accompanying development have raised the concern that, even if it were possible to 'become like the West,' attempts to do so in the shortest possible time could be socially harmful.

- 3) Third, growing familiarity of Third World citizens with the mode of existence in the West has created serious reservations about

the desirability of following this line of development. These reservations have surfaced in the West as well, and have no doubt helped to re-inforce those in the Third World.

4) Fourth, this process of doubt and discovery has been hastened by the events of the seventies (Watergate, Vietnam, OPEC, economic crises, the decay of cities, and the plight of elderly or minorities in Western countries), which led to the gradual erosion of the myth that people in Western societies were in greater control of their destiny.

5) Fifth, a similar disillusionment seems to have set in with regard to the Soviet model, with the publicisation of the Stalinist purges, expansion of State control over peoples' lives, and a generalised denial of freedoms.

6) Sixth, escalation of the irrational arms race between the two superpowers and the accompanying intensification of belligerent rhetoric, despite widespread popular resistance, have created doubts about the ability of the rational model to even ensure the survival of the species.

As a result of these and other factors, the two dominant Western models of progress have relinquished their hold over the imagination of Third World intellectuals, and a shift towards indigenous values has become more legitimate.

In this essay we take the resulting crisis in modernisation theory as a point of departure to argue that it is essentially a variation on earlier themes, and derives not from the discovery of some hitherto unobserved social costs, but rather that these costs have helped reinforce deep-seated dissatisfaction about the modernisers' perspective on human society; and

therefore, that in order to understand this failure and to search for reasonable and coherent alternatives, it is necessary to go to the roots of the world-view which helps sustain the impugned theory.

## **SECTION 2**

**Towards a Sociology of Knowledge**

## Towards a Sociology of Knowledge

There are several strands in contemporary modernisation theory. Each strand, while reflecting an independent literature, and often an independent area of expertise, supports and is in turn supported by the assumptions and conclusions of the others. The motivating idea behind these different literatures is a search for explanations of the massive differences in income and productive capacity between Western countries (with Japan recently admitted as an honorary member) and countries of the so-called Third World; and the use of these explanations to discover methods by which the disparities can be overcome. Although some changes have occurred in recent years, the explicit objective of most such writings continues to remain one of teaching Third World countries how to 'become like the West,' and how to do so in the shortest possible time; disagreements between various writings derive mainly from differences over the proper definition of the 'West', and over efficacious means of reaching this goal.

The list of sub-disciplines in this literature would include: (1) Development Economics<sup>7</sup>, the cutting edge of the endeavour, with its competing paradigms<sup>8</sup> of institutionalist mainstream, neoclassical and structural approaches<sup>9</sup>. (2) The Political Economy<sup>10</sup> approach rooted



in the Marxian tradition, including the World Systems approach<sup>11</sup>, the Dependency school<sup>12</sup> and non-dependency Marxists<sup>13</sup>. (3) Political Development, concerned with issues of state-building<sup>14</sup>. (4) Finally, Social Modernisation theory which perceives 'correct' social values and behaviors as necessary prerequisites of development<sup>15</sup>.

While there are significant and profound differences between writings in the various sub-fields listed above, there are common grounds as well. These include<sup>16</sup>:

1) A linear view of history, in which Western countries are further along the path of progress than Third World countries, notwithstanding significant differences over the attractiveness of the contemporary social conditions in the former countries.

2) Again, notwithstanding significant differences over ultimate causes of the dramatic economic progress in the West, there is broad agreement that the proximate cause was the unfettering of rationality: the application of science to production, an objective view of social relations, and an increased emphasis on efficiency.

3) Broad similarities in the analyses of core values, such as freedom, justice, equality, creativity, or even power as experienced and defined in the West.

4) Finally, although once again there are very significant differences over this issue, there is an implicit positivist assumption in a broad subset of these writings that the means for achieving social ends are separable from the ends themselves; and often also that moral considerations apply primarily to ends rather than to means.

The subject of our analysis are precisely these common grounds: how, despite tremendous internal differ-

ences amongst the protagonists of modernisation are these common grounds preserved in the face of substantial and often devastating critiques by outside theorists and activists?

## 2.1 Towards a Sociology of Knowledge

In order to delineate this evolution, we have to begin with a sociology of knowledge of modernisation theories, in other words, of a theory of why people write what they write. Here, we follow the popular practice which sees the development of ideas in terms of challenge and response between theorists and their critics. To find our way through the complexity of this literature, we shall use as our Ariadne's thread, the notion of the 'external' critique, in other words, criticisms of modernisation theory by those who do not share the moral or intellectual perspective of its protagonists.

Theoretical progress and innovation, in this view, results from the creative effort of theorists to adapt their theories, assimilate new ideas into their paradigms, or to successfully reject the claims contained in the challenge of the 'external' critique<sup>17</sup>. The set of feasible responses is, however, constrained by other goals of the theorists. Borrowing from the approach taken by the sociologist Paul Attewell (1984), we see these goals to be: 'paradigm maintenance', 'prescriptive

relevance , and the 'moral defense of modernisation, the tension between which provides the principle endogenous mechanism of theoretical innovation. The goal of prescriptive relevance demands a response to external critiques, but this response is often conditioned, constrained or even inhibited by the need to maintain the paradigm and to defend modernisation.

The most common response to an 'external' critique is the development of an 'internal' critique, i.e., one which shares the analytical and intellectual perspective of modernisation theory, as well as the modernists' goal of 'moral defense of modernisation,' yet criticises some of the assumptions or implications of the accepted view<sup>18</sup>. In the short run this can introduce paradigmatic innovations over which a prolonged intellectual debate can ensue. Occasionally, a new paradigm might emerge from the discussion, effectively dividing the profession into two groups. Often, however, paradigm maintenance is ensured by the 'policing' efforts of the orthodoxy, through which innovation can ultimately be incorporated into older paradigms. In some instances, of course, it is possible that the new ideas are rejected out of hand for being irrational or unfounded.

In any event, what this means is that while the 'external' critique presents a challenge to orthodox theory over its manifest failures, the 'internal' critique

provides a means of addressing and assimilating this challenge<sup>19</sup>. Similarly, while the 'external' critique often seeks to undermine the theory by attacking its moral base, the 'internal' critique seeks mainly to complete a theory by extending it to areas hitherto ignored. The discussion would be helped by a brief digression on the two types of critiques.

### 2.1.1 'Internal' and 'External' Critiques

'Internal' critiques of modernisation, i.e. forms of criticism which accept the underlying moral argument for modernisation and which are, therefore, assimilable into existing theories, include: (1) Intra-Paradigmatic criticism, i.e., the questioning of the assumptions and propositions of theories within the framework of a given paradigm<sup>20</sup>; and (2) Inter-Paradigmatic debate, i.e., the criticism of writers in disciplines related to the impugned paradigm, who may share its world-view though not all of its maintained assumptions<sup>21</sup>.

'External' or 'alternative' critiques, on the other hand, are resistant to assimilation into modernisation theories because they reject the basic notions of welfare and behavior implicit in such theories, particularly those deriving from a presumed superiority of Western values and institutions. These can be either purely (3) intellectual challenges to modernisation, or examples

of (4) socio-political resistance and protest which undermine the certitudes of the regnant theories.

Intellectual challenges, i.e., 'alternative' intellectual or scholarly formulations of the problematic of social change and progress, includes, in addition to the writings with a specific Third World focus<sup>22</sup>, the literature which looks primarily at the problems emerging in Western countries after two or more centuries of capitalist development without any explicit reference to the concerns or predicament of Third World countries<sup>23</sup>.

Socio-Political resistance includes, on the one hand, instances of political mobilisation, resistance and protest which challenge the attitudes and institutions supporting and enforcing modernity; and, on the other hand, examples of socio-psychological dysfunctioning or other non-intellectualised manifestations of popular disaffection with the results of development and modernisation. Besides the various religious and ethnic revival movements, examples of such protest would include popular environmental movements (such as the 'Chipko' movement in India), non-governmental organisations [sic] including various social welfare movements, women's movements, or movements of cultural interpretation and articulation (such as the 'Lokayan' movement in India), or the formation of 'base communities' around the liberation theology teachings in Latin America<sup>24</sup>.

### 2.1.2 Challenge and Response

What emerges from this discussion is that there is a hierarchy of critiques when viewed from the perspective of a single paradigm. At the farthest remove in this hierarchy is political resistance and protest as well as popular disaffection with the results of modernisation, manifested in the form of socio-psychological dysfunctioning. The next level is that of intellectual and scholarly critiques of modernisation, those which reject the notions of welfare and behavior implicit in development theories and thus challenge the assumption of the superiority of Western values and institutions. Next come criticisms within the modernising world view, but from outside a specific paradigm. Lastly, there are the criticisms of policies or simplifying assumptions from within a paradigm<sup>25</sup>.

It can also be noted that each successive level of criticism brings the argument closer to a given paradigm; 'alternative' theorists interpret popular dissatisfaction and make it intelligible to Western intellectuals; sister paradigms make intelligible and manageable the criticism from extrinsic sources; and intra-paradigmatic critiques provide means by which such sisterly strictures can be assimilated and responded to.

It also follows from this discussion that the terms 'external' and 'internal' are relative to the subject of analysis. If we wish to examine a specific paradigm, only the intra-paradigmatic critique will be seen to be internal. On the contrary, if we look at the entire corpus of scholarly literature on social change in Third World countries, all critiques except for socio-political challenges by anti-establishment forces will have to be treated as internal. We adopt a middle course here, in seeking to analyse the development of modernisation theories alone, and see this development as a series of creative responses to the challenge posed by 'external' critics, whether intellectual or political.

To summarise, social theorists are challenged by many different critics as well as by some obvious failures in their predictions. They respond to these challenges creatively by adapting or modifying their assumptions, or by assimilating the criticism within their theories. This process, which gives theoretical systems their dynamism and strength, is in the case of modernisation theories, conditioned and constrained by the need of theorists to maintain their paradigms and to defend modernity.

The stability and resilience of the dominant world-view derived from its ability to assimilate or dismiss (as illogical, fanatical, or reactionary) the external

critiques, whether from intellectuals or popular movements. However, the increase in theoretical and analytical writings from contrasting perceptions, and the increase in self-assurance of the alternative popular movements have strained the capacity of modernisation theories to adapt or assimilate the criticisms, and have thus created a crisis in the dominant paradigms.



## **SECTION 3A**

### **A Review of Modernisation Theory**

## A Review of Modernisation Theory

In the next two sections, we use the notion of the 'external' critique as the Ariadne's thread which will help us trace the evolution of modernisation theories in the post-World War II period. This exercise relies on a highly schematic construct of stages of intellectual challenge and response, the stages being: (1) dualism, (2) the role of values, (3) the 'meaning of development', (4) political development and political stability, (5) political participation versus organization, (6) appropriate technology and the social role of knowledge, (7) ecological, environmental and natural resource questions, and (8) the cultural critique. Each stage represents a different challenge (or a modification of an earlier challenge) to modernisation theorists from political and social developments and/or from 'alternative' intellectual criticism, and invites a different response. A simplified picture of this evolution is presented in a table on page 2 and in narrative form on pages 3-4.

Although the following description will, at times, read like a chronological development, such is not the intent. First, many of the developments, particularly in stages 5-7, were more or less concurrent with each other and could have been presented in either order.

Schematic Description of Modernisation Theories

St- age	Title	External Critics	Political Event	Response of Theorists
1	Dualism	Boeke, Furnivall Anthropology	Political Independence	Harmonious (Economic) Dualism
2	The Role of Values	Scott, Wolf Hobsbawm  Myrdal, Hirschman	Peasant Wars	The Rational Peasant  Modernising Values etc.
3	Meaning of Development	Myrdal, Goulet Schumacher, Berger	Political Conflicts, Civil wars	Distribution Poverty Basic Needs
4	Political Development	Dependistas  Anthropology	Political Instability, Civil Wars	Political Development, Stability
5	Alienation, dis-enfran- chisement	Schumacher Berger, Gran Gramscians	anti-systemic movements (NGOs)	same Rural Dev't Participation
6	Technology, Social role of knowledge	Appropriate Technology, Geertz	NGOs, ethnic violence, unemployment	Wrong Prices Technologist State action
7	Environment and Resources	Ecologists Greens Club of Rome	Ecological movements anti-vivisectionists	Externalities Managerial Neo-fascist
8	Culture and Resistance	Nandy, Geertz Uberoi, Fanon Freire, Dumont neo-struct'sm Shariati	Indigenous Revival Movements	Neoclassical medicine Gang of Four example Paradigm

Second, the notion of a 'stage' in the evolution of modernisation theory represents the time when some ideas become popular or respectable, rather than when they first emerge. Intellectual roots of a controversy can often be traced back to many earlier writings, but the interesting question for sociologists of knowledge pertains not to these earlier (sporadic) works, but rather to the transformation of these ideas into a subject of concerted attention and debate in the profession<sup>26</sup>. This means that while a loose chronological ordering can be observed in the intellectual debates as asserted here, there is no necessary ordering in the emergence of ideas which are salient in these debates.

The table on page 2 presents the stages in schematic form. In the first stage, the recognition of significant socio-cultural differences within and across societies (dualism) caused some writers to construct alternative theories of economic behavior, while others sought to demonstrate that existing paradigms of development could incorporate the observed differences. In the next stage the nature and timing of changes in these differences became a matter for discussion, calling for the involvement of sociologists and psychologists who hypothesized the existence of different values in traditional societies, and argued for the most part that such values needed to be eradicated and replaced by modern ones; while only a

small minority asserted that alternative values may be important in their own right. The debate over values combined with some spectacular developmental failures to give rise to two related issues, the 'meaning of development', and the priority of political development. Next, these debates, together with expressions of political and intellectual dissatisfaction, gave rise to the argument over popular participation in development and the role of development theory in denying such participation. At the same time, concerns surfaced over ecological and natural resource problems, particularly with regard to the absence of popular control over decisions affecting the environment; and over a similar loss of control because of the nature of modern technology. In more recent years, these issues have been brought together in the form of alternative views of culture, development and social welfare, which are taken up in the next section.

### 3a.1 Dualism

As has been observed earlier, development theories can be interpreted as adaptive responses to the puzzle of massive differences in income, consumption, and productivity between Western and non-Western countries. A corollary which, in retrospect, seems to have evolved only in the years following the second World War, is the

search for prescriptions which could enable the latter to transcend their unenviable situation.

One of the earliest explanations of the above differences was based on the observation that industrialised countries were sufficiently homogeneous, while the so-called developing countries were characterised by 'dual' societies, in other words by the co-existence of a 'stagnant' traditional sector alongside a 'dynamic' modern sector which reflected conditions in Western countries. Accordingly, development was seen as a process in which the modern sector expands until it fills the entire social space. However, the normative and prescriptive content of 'dualism' has gone through very important changes since its inception. In particular, it seems to have changed from a 'conflictual' model of dualism to a 'harmonious' version more in accord with the imperatives and needs of development policy.

The term 'dualism' was coined originally by the Dutch economist J.H. Boeke in his study of pre-Independence Indonesian development, to refer not to the co-existence, but rather to 'the clashing of an imported social system with an indigenous social system of another style [emphasis added].'<sup>27</sup> While Boeke provided a name for this conflict, the idea itself was not new. In a recent book, Ian Little (1982) traces another version of this notion to colonial economists like J.S. Furnivall who, unlike modern develop-

ment economists, considered 'development' (i.e., opening up of an area for economic exploitation) to be antithetical to, and indeed inimical to, 'welfare' (i.e., the well-being of indigenous people)<sup>28</sup>.

Seen in the above light, assertions of dualism were a form of an 'external' critique, intended to bring out the deleterious effects of development on the local populations because of the underlying cultural conflict. The response of development theorists to this assertion is very interesting. Rather than interpret dualism as a clash of two different life-styles, it was immediately transformed into a 'displacement,' as Henry Bruton was to put it later, of a backward and undesirable life-style by a dynamic and desirable one. In other words, the concept which had hitherto been a reflection of the conflict between development and welfare, was transformed by the development profession to represent instead a congruence of the two concepts. As a result, current development literature invariably uses the concept of 'dualism' to mean the inferiority of the traditional mode of existence.

An innovation development which is of particular importance in this context, and without which this transformation from 'conflictual' dualism to 'harmonious' dualism may not have been possible, is the 'linearisation' of the concept of development. In the first place this

occurred with the emergence of 'measures' of development, the most important of which, deriving from Simon Kuznets' earlier work, was the notion of national income or output. This allowed the construction of a linear scale on which industrialised countries were unequivocally ahead of the Third World, and the 'modern' sector similarly unequivocally ahead of the 'traditional' sector within the Third World. Another contribution to the 'linearisation' of development, though not with the same mathematical precision was Walt Rostow's influential theory of the Stages of Growth.

The timing of the shift from 'conflictual' to 'harmonious' dualism is particularly interesting. It coincides with the achievement of independence of erstwhile colonies, whose new indigenous elites would need such justification in order to be able to defend the notion of development and its attendant policy aspects to their supposedly emancipated compatriots. Less cynically, it is related to the fact that after independence the 'modern' sector was no longer purely expatriate but rather was increasingly composed of indigenous elements who had evolved from their earlier 'backward' status. As such, the earlier conflict between foreign and local interests could now be argued to have metamorphosed into the problem of transforming the rest of the society in



the same manner as had already been experienced by the elite minority.

Be the above as it might, a few other aspects of the use of the concept of dualism in development theories are of special interest. First, when the concept arrived in economic theory, it was immediately redefined in economic terms. Thus, instead of it representing two different cultural formations, it was modified to mean two different modes of economic behavior co-existing primarily because of differences in labor supplies in the two sectors (as in the Lewis<sup>29</sup> and Ranis-Fei<sup>30</sup> models), or two different levels of technological or resource endowments (as in the Jorgenson<sup>31</sup> model).

Second, partly as a corollary of the first observation, the transformation of the traditional sector into the modern sector was no longer conceived of as a conflictual, but was seen rather as an inevitable, desirable and harmonious process which occurs as people get pulled from the village to the city through the process of urbanisation and industrialisation, and economic rationality moves from the city to the village as rural lifestyles change due to the import of capital and other resources and the consequent emerging shortages of labor. These notions set the stage for the next step in the evolution of modernisation theory, namely the question of social values of participants as well as theorists.

The different meanings of dualism can also be seen to underly differences between various schools of economic development. Note that the contrast between 'modern' and 'traditional' sectors in Third World countries is analogous to that between industrialised and developing countries in the context of the global economy. In other words, international 'dualism' is as much an organising concept in the development literature as is internal 'dualism.'

Once again, this idea can be examined in its harmonious or conflictual varieties. 'Harmonious dualism' can be seen to have fathered the emergence of 'institutional' development economics (an alternative to the orthodox neoclassical variety) which sought to incorporate cultural and behavioral differences into the formulation of economic theory and policy. This incorporation, however, was done at the expense of theoretical rigor, and led to an extended debate between proponents of the two schools over the appropriateness of theoretical innovations, a debate which continues to this day.

The conflictual notion of international dualism is at the base of another very important paradigmatic innovation, this time in Marxist writings, namely dependency/world systems theory. This view considers the appropriate unit of analysis to be the entire world rather than nation-states, and sees Third World and

industrialized countries in ways analogous to the development theorists' perspectives on 'traditional' and 'modern' sectors respectively within one country. In a like manner, the development (or underdevelopment) of the Third World is argued to be the result of a dynamic interaction with the imperatives of the industrialised world. The dependency approach raised many other important issues, most notably with regard to the relationship between local and foreign elites, and the role of the state in peripheral societies.

### **3a.2 The Role of Values**

The next stage in the evolution being traced out here is in response to two stimuli. First, there was a strong external critique of the desirability as well as the feasibility of the displacement of the traditional sector, by writers who asserted the existence of the 'rationality' and even the moral 'superiority' of traditional ways. These included Eric Wolf, and later Eric Hobsbawm<sup>32</sup>, Jim Scott and the 'Subaltern Studies' school in India<sup>33</sup>, and from a different perspective Albert Hirschman. The arguments of Wolf and Scott, derived from a Marxist perspective, are aimed at re-discovering the moral nature of the traditional (peasant) economy. They assert the existence and functional importance of such values as multi-stranded ties (particularly of the

patron-client type) between individuals, of the corporate nature of the village and of social guarantees of economic and social security through mechanisms of resource sharing and reciprocal exchange. To get a little ahead of the story, these assertions about the peasant economy fall into the category of the 'personal' cultural map discussed in Section 4 below, and were intended as a critique of the unquestioning acceptance of the instrumental and 'impersonal' values of modernity.

These 'external' critiques of modernisation derived their legitimacy from the fact that the introduction of 'modern' institutions and practices into 'traditional' societies was strongly resisted, particularly by peasants in the form of peasant rebellions, which seemed to belie the assertion of harmonious processes of change. This resistance, political as well as cultural, was particularly noticeable in South East Asian countries (Viet Nam, Cambodia, Laos, and later the Philippines and Indonesia), but it was also visible in South Asia and Africa. Looked at in another way, the intellectual critiques of dualism were attempts to make intelligible to modernisation theorists, in scholarly terms, the values and aspirations which rural people in Third World countries seemed to be expressing in the form of political and social resistance.

In addition to overt political resistance, there were also examples of diffuse social and cultural resis-

tance because of which the posited change was not proceeding apace. Examples of such resistance would include the reluctance of traditional people to send their children to school (or sometimes even to burn schools), or to act upon various incentives (such as those for modern investment) provided by the government.

### 3a.2.1 The Rational Peasant

In response to these criticisms, there have been three different developments in the modernisation field. Writers of the so-called 'Rational Peasant' school (Sam Popkin, Theodore Scultz, Sol Tax, Raj Krishna) have tried to show that behavior and values in peasant societies can be interpreted along the lines of conventional economic theory, and that therefore there was no difference in the morality to be ascribed to the peasant as opposed to his or her more modern counterpart. The literature on the 'rational peasant' can also be seen as an attempt to interpret behavior and institutions in non-Western societies along impersonal and functional lines, and thus to assimilate the concerns expressed by the first 'external' critique regarding the imperfection of modernising theory. It may be noted that the 'alternative' theorists also insisted that the peasants were 'rational,' but they claimed that there were 'different' forms of rationality, all of which were equally valid.

### 3a.2.2 Social Modernisation

A somewhat different response came from writers of the 'Social Modernisation' school (Everett Hagen, David McClelland, Alex Inkeles and David Smith, Bertholt Hoselitz, Lucian Pye and Sidney Verba), who sought to re-establish the moral superiority of 'modernity' by looking at the socio-psychological determinants of social values and value changes. Following the direction suggested by Max Weber's notion of the Protestant Ethic as a pre-requisite for capitalism, and later by Talcott Parson's pioneering work on pattern variables, these writers drew up lists of 'modern' values<sup>34</sup> and adduced socio-psychological explanations for their existence in particular cultures. The argument is that delay in adopting 'modern' values was due to the inherent conservatism of 'traditional' societies rather than to cultural resistance to domination. Furthermore, in the interest of the supposedly shared objective of modernisation, this literature implicitly legitimates the forcible introduction of modernising values into traditional societies.

While Hoselitz simply states that fundamental value orientations must change from particularistic to universalistic and from ascriptive to functional, McClelland and Hagen go into child-rearing mechanics to discuss how

such changes are to be brought about. They argue, independently, that the underlying difference between tradition and modernity lies in the fact that the former induces a conforming attitude towards authority and the latter a questioning one. These ultimate values of questioning or conformity, it is argued by McClelland, are acquired in mid-childhood experience of safe behavior. Hagen goes on to explain that the emergence of a questioning attitude took place initially among the children of 'blocked minorities' who rejected their fathers' values. The overt prescriptive impact of these writings has been somewhat limited by the fact that it perceived the source of change to lie in mid-childhood experiences and the relatively resilient child-rearing practices<sup>35</sup>.

Inkeles and Smith (1974), however, argue that the existence of modern institutions will, in itself, lead to the establishment of modern values in the populace<sup>36</sup>.

In contrast to the above views, some writers, such as John Lewis and Morris Morris have argued that the requisite cultural factors exist in all societies, and no change is necessary to induce development. Albert Hirschman (1965) goes one step further to assert that these so-called obstacles may actually be assets, or could be made into assets. In fact, he goes on to say that the attitudinal changes recommended by social theorists may be self-defeating because of the cognitive

dissonance they introduce into the lives of constituent citizens.

### 3a.2.3 Theorists' Values

Lastly, some writers (Gunnar Myrdal, Albert Hirschman) used this debate to assert the need for a sociology of knowledge of development theory, and particularly for the development theorist to become conscious of his or her own motivations in prescribing value changes or other policy prescriptions which derive from their own values, and will often reward those who share these values. This takes us directly into the next stage of evolution of modernistic theories, where the issue was the meaning of development, and whether it was possible for social scientists to have an objective view of the aspirations of people in developing societies.

### 3a.3 The Meaning of Development

The debate over cultural values raised many issues, among which an important one was the relativism of the values of the theorist himself or herself. Gunnar Myrdal, among others, pointed out that the cultural alienation of theorists could be due to the geopolitical situation of western countries vis-a-vis the Third World, and that it was exacerbated by their haste in applying pre-determined approaches to new-found problems. The mid-1960s, when



these questions were being raised, was also a time of increased political conflict and tension in many rapidly growing economies (Pakistan, Ghana, Nigeria, Brazil)<sup>37</sup>.

The resultant instability revealed not only that there was latent dissatisfaction with the direction of social change in the countries concerned, but also that rapid growth could be self-defeating if it led to a subsequent slowdown. The first concern became expressed in various writings on the 'meaning of development,' which asked whether the assumed goals of development policy were indeed the ones sought by people who were supposed to benefit from this policy. The second concern led to questions on political evolution in third world countries and to the emergence of the sub-discipline of 'political development,' which is discussed in the next section.

The origins of the 'meaning of development' debate lie somewhat beyond Myrdal's criticism. In addition to the emerging political conflicts and tensions in Third World countries, particularly those enjoying respectable growth rates, there were also political and journalistic expressions of disaffection with the targets and goals of development policies. These were largely non-economic and often expressed in popular rather than scholarly language<sup>38</sup>. In addition, many economists also challenged the unequal nature of development (e.g., Mahbub ulHaq's criticism of increasing economic concentration in Pakistan,

Albert Fishlow's work on inequality in Brazil, or Marxist critiques of asymmetric power relations under capitalism and the consequent effect on distribution of income and consumption).

Once again, we can observe an external political critique being translated first into anti-modernity language, and then into anti-development and finally into anti-growth language by intellectual intermediaries. At the scholarly level, the resulting debate on the 'meaning of development' has roots in social welfare theories, and heuristically, it asks whether growth in income increases happiness, and if not, whether the pursuit of this goal is a reasonable human activity. Arthur Lewis (1955), who first raised this question in the development literature, suggested that happiness was not the issue, that what development did was to increase the range of choices available to a certain society. Other writers (Paolo Freire, Denis Goulet, Kenneth Wilber) were to ask whether development was the means to enhance peoples' core values, and if so, whether treating values as means of pursuing development was appropriate.

At this level, the question was one of larger values of freedom, liberation, or emancipation. However, by the time the debate arrived in the area of development economics, it had been translated almost completely into economic terms. As such, instead of discussions of

liberation or emancipation which might be questions of the process of development, there were discussions only of desired outcomes, such as income distribution, poverty elimination, or basic human needs<sup>39</sup>.

Another aspect of the economists' response to this issue was perhaps unintended, namely that their contributions seemed to be designed to defuse the volatile political questions which had triggered the debate<sup>40</sup>. The concentration on an apolitical measure of inequality, namely the Gini coefficient, rather than on more political measures like functional, regional, or ethnic distribution of income is very instructive. So also is the almost immediate shift to other politically diffuse targets like basic needs or poverty eradication, and the direction of attention towards groups who had historically been politically passive or even resistant to social intervention, namely the rural masses in some countries. In other words, challenges to the theorists' right to intervene in the social and political life of the people of Third World societies were met by renaming goals, priorities or even target groups in order to re-assert the legitimacy of intervention. Stephen Marglin puts it very well when he accuses development theorists of seeking to combat the demons (released by external critiques) by naming rather than by exorcising them.

To recapitulate, we see the underlying motive for the political resistance to be the massive social intervention made in peoples' lives by their governments as well as by foreigners of various sorts. Critical theorists explained this resistance to be aimed against inappropriate types of government activity. Development theorists translated the issue into a need for discovering the popular (but equally objective) ends, which could then be pursued by benign governments. Development economists very carefully introduced alternative goals such that they would satisfy the theorists, but which would not become the subject of concerted political action or defense. Moreover, in so doing, they also managed to discover a moral basis for rejecting the demands of urban or other politically active pressure groups, by invoking the poverty of the rural masses. It is not surprising, then, to note that despite vociferous discussion and controversy, alternative indices of development (equity, basic needs, quality of life) are not given much genuine attention by policy makers, nor do they seem to excite much attention among the majority of the populace<sup>41</sup>.

### 3a.4 Political Development

A related consequence of the political unrest of the 1960s was the emergence, as an offshoot of what used

to be called comparative political systems, of a new sub-discipline, political development, dealing with the nature of political evolution in Third World countries. As noted by pioneering writers in this sub-field (Gabriel Almond, Samuel Huntington, Lucian Pye and Sidney Verba), the optimistic ('benign line') view of political development - that economic development will automatically bring about beneficial changes in the political environment - was belied by the emerging conflicts and instability in growing Third world economies; and, therefore there was a need to analyse the determinants of stable political evolution.

'Beneficial political evolution' meant, in this literature, a progress towards the 'ideal type' contained in Western political philosophy literature dating back to Locke, Hobbes and Hume. In many treatments, however, this ideal was assumed to coincide with existent political institutions in Western countries, most notably those of the 'nation-state': professional bureaucracies, electoral democracy and political stability.

An important influence, even if indirectly, was Gunnar Myrdal's notion of 'hard' and 'soft' states<sup>42</sup>, the latter referring to the absence of the 'social discipline' necessary for modernisation. Myrdal suggested that due to cultural or historical reasons - namely a 'legacy [of] a set of anarchic attitudes with an ideolo-

gical and emotional force deriving from memories of resistance against the colonial power'<sup>43</sup> - many Asian countries had 'soft' states, because of which 'rapid development will be exceedingly difficult to engender.'<sup>44</sup> The only exception in Asia, which Myrdal cites approvingly from a traveler's report, are China and Japan<sup>45</sup>. Other writers in the political development tradition were to see the difference in institutional rather than in cultural terms, implying that the necessary conditions for modernisation could be created through policy.

Accordingly, political development theories focussed on the need for 'state-building,' which includes the establishment of institutions that help 'expand' the level of 'power'<sup>46</sup> in a society, as well as those which increase the legitimacy of its exercise<sup>47</sup>. 'Expansion' of power required the strengthening of the bureaucratic machinery, particularly in its coercive activities, but also in technical efficiency, methods, processes, selection, training and so forth. 'Legitimation' of power required the acceptance of the exercise of state power by the populace. Improved organisation and acceptable mechanisms for recruitment to the bureaucracy would also help in this respect. At a macro level, depending on the specific circumstances of each country, legitimacy could be increased either by expanded participation or by elite dominance.

An interesting deviation from this linear view of political development was provided by Myron Weiner (1965), who pointed out, in his work on Indian political development, that after independence two distinct political cultures, the 'elite' and the 'mass,' emerged in that country, and operated at different levels of society<sup>48</sup>, and both had their strengths as well problems. In particular, this thesis of 'political dualism' pointed out very clearly the authoritarian bent of the rational and impersonal 'elite' culture, as well as the democratic possibilities of the relational and personal 'mass' culture. It is fair to say, however, that despite Weiner's personal eminence in the profession, the very provocative implications of his line of reasoning have not been followed up in the mainstream development literature.

Another impetus for the emergence of political development as an independent discipline was provided by Marxist and dependency theorists' writings (Paul Baran, Fernando Henrique Cardoso, Celso Furtado) on the unequal distribution of power between the 'center' countries of the world and those in the 'periphery,' and the distorted nature of political change in the latter as a result. Contrary to the view of the liberal thinkers, these writers saw the state itself as an arena of conflict as well as a reflection of the distribution of power in

society<sup>49</sup>, rather than as a custodian of general welfare or popular needs and aspirations.

The prescriptive content of the political development literature was somewhat limited, partly on account of the cultural factors pointed out by Myrdal, but for other reasons as well. Included was the advice to strengthen the institutions of the state (to which reigning powers would presumably take kindly) and the establishment of stable mechanisms of transfer of power (which might be resisted) in addition to the inculcation of 'right' attitudes and behavior among the populace (which might not be very feasible). As indicated, however, by the title of one of Huntington's later books, No Easy Choice, the prognosis is not very optimistic.

The prescriptions which did have an impact were those aimed at increasing the legitimacy of policies or the stability of regimes in politically unstable societies, and therefore increasing the 'hardness' of a state. Two examples should suffice. Some writers, concerned presumably with urban political instability, introduced the notion of counter-vailing rural groups who could be co-opted by modernising elites to counter the power of urban groups. This is reminiscent of Louis Napoleon's advice to the Prussian government to introduce universal suffrage because 'in this system the conservative rural



population can vote down the liberals in the cities'<sup>50</sup>. Similarly, the periodic invocation of the interests of 'the real poor concentrated in rural areas,' while quite unsuccessful in persuading 'rural poverty' to conveniently disappear, did succeed in becoming a legitimisation, perhaps unintentionally, of inegalitarian urban policies.

Other writers, such as Shahid Javed Burki (1976), argued in favour of efficient but superficially inequitable farm policies, because they supported the profit-maximising 'middle farmers' - a concept with dubious empirical or theoretical backing - against the 'political maximising' large farmers, even if the policies hurt the 'small farmer.'<sup>51</sup>

To summarise the last two sub-sections, two different inferences were drawn by social theorists from the political resistance and protest of disenfranchised groups in modernising societies. First, that the goals of development chosen by government planners were unacceptable to many people; and second, that political unrest could effectively undo the gains made through the adoption of development policies. The first inference led to a debate on the meaning of development and to the search for objectively defensible goals. While this direction led into a series of interesting policy innovations (growth with equity, basic human needs, rural development) with which the profession seemed to be

fairly satisfied, it did not really address the cause of the discontent, and so the popular critique as well as the resistance continued. This revealed, among other things, that the true source of popular dissatisfaction might have had more to do with the process, rather than with the objectives, of government decision-making.

The second inference indicated that economists had been mistaken in disregarding the political consequences of their prescriptions and in focussing only on the purely economic effects. The economists were, however, saved the extra effort because of the timely assistance of pioneering political scientists, who set up a new sub-field of development theory, political development, to deal with this issue. But this, too, turned out not to be a satisfactory resolution of the discussion, since it was soon discovered that political development theorists did not have much in the way of prescription, and the little that they did have could be interpreted as attempts to legitimate the impugned actions of the ruling elites.

Furthermore, discussion of political stability and development brought to the fore another hitherto ignored issue, namely that of participation in civic or political affairs, which was not observed to increase necessarily with the establishment of the nation-state or even with the introduction of electoral democracy. These concerns were further re-inforced by the legitimation provided by

social scientists to emergent authoritarian and repressive governments because of the latter's association with growth-oriented policies. All these concerns were expressed by 'alternative' theorists, and used to challenge basic assumptions of mainstream theory.

### 3a.5 Participation versus Organization

Political resistance to the state can be interpreted somewhat differently. Instead of seeing it as an opposition to particular policies of the state, or to a particular regime, or even to the system of functioning of a succession of regimes, we can see it as a questioning of the very concepts of the centralised, impersonal and bureaucratically organised nation-state. Political development theory focussed only on the pathologies of particular regimes, not on the idea of the nation-state as such. The emergence of conflict and instability in the Third World was also ascribed, in one way or another, to 'incomplete' modernisation: absence of necessary political institutions, persistence of traditional behavior patterns, or the like; rather than to a resistance to the rationalisation and impersonalisation of social existence entailed in the drive towards the formation of the nation-state.

Such an alternative interpretation, however, has indeed been the subject of a substantive literature in

the West as well as in what is now the Third World, which questioned the disenfranchising potential of the modern nation-state. A classic example is the argument of writers on 'anarchism' (Godwin, Proudhon, Kropotkin, Bakunin)<sup>52</sup>, even though their bias towards individualism created some paradoxes and conflicts<sup>53</sup>. Despite Marx's important differences with anarchist writers, most notably Proudhon, this also finds resonance in Marx's notion of self-alienation in capitalist social arrangements. Another writer who took up this argument was Max Weber, when he predicted the potential bureaucratisation of capitalist society, mainly on account of the efficiency of the bureaucratic social organisation.

In the twentieth century, significant contributions along these lines have been made in social philosophy by the Frankfurt School (Herbert Marcuse, Jurgen Habermas)<sup>54</sup>, in political theory by Marxists like Antonio Gramsci and his followers (N. Poulantzas, Norberto Bobbio)<sup>55</sup>, and in economics by radicals like Stephen Marglin (1974), and Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis (1986). In the context of the Third World countries, such ideas found their earliest expression in the works of writers like Peter Kropotkin<sup>56</sup>, M.K. Gandhi and Lewis Mumford<sup>57</sup>, and later by Peter Berger (1976), Pierre Clastres (1977), Guy Gran (1983), Ivan Illich (1981), Ashis Nandy (1980, 1984), E.F. Schumacher (1973), and Elman Service (1975).

These writings sought to re-open some settled questions of Western political theory in the area of participation and responsibility. While there are several arguments here, a common theme is the rejection of the Hobbesian notion of the state of nature as the 'warre of every one against every one,' and thus, equally of the large and centralised organisations considered necessary today to maintain the public weal; and a criticism of the disenfranchising effect of such organisations. Another theme is the distinction between the state and culture (or, in Gramsci's terms, civil society) as alternate means of social discipline, and the rejection of the former as the preferred alternative.

These critical writings drew their legitimacy from the continuing and heightened levels of political conflict and political resistance in Third World societies, notwithstanding the efforts made to strengthen state machineries. The continuing level of tension and conflict was later supported by the rise of what Immanuel Wallerstein has termed 'anti-systemic' movements in Third World countries<sup>58</sup>.

The response of modernisation theorists to this criticism can be divided into three categories. First, there was the 'internal' criticism of neoclassical economists who claimed that government intervention in the economic sphere was undesirable on grounds of its

manifest inefficiency as well as its authoritarian implications for society. This has led to a shifting of the debate from various specific issues of development theory, towards the single issue of freedom of exchange and liberalisation of markets. Some relevant aspects of this shifting will be taken up in Section 3B below. It should suffice to note here that, paradoxically, the governments which chose to pursue a 'free market' path of development, were among the most authoritarian in the Third World<sup>59</sup>. Perhaps inadvertently, these examples were used to prescribe an authoritarian form of political development for the remaining developing countries.

Second, there was a set of critiques by mainstream development theorists (e.g., Tony Killick, 1976)<sup>60</sup>, who attacked the simplistic notions of the state and of government policies implicit in economic theory, and sought to replace them with more complete formulations. Partly as a result of this criticism, mechanistic planning exercises and social cost-benefit analyses, which seemed to be the rage in the 1960s, have become 'passe' in recent years. Plans are increasingly seen more as 'inputs into the process of economic decision-making,' in terms of Killick's recommendations, 'rather than as outputs of this decision-making.' In contrast to the neoclassical critique, which appeared to favour 'hard'

states, this criticism tended to undermine the 'hardness' by casting doubt on the certitude of theorists.

Finally, and perhaps somewhat paradoxically, some writers re-asserted basically the superiority of the Western model of political development in general, and of the managerial approach to social issues in particular. This relied on the possibility of increased social and political participation through concerted government effort<sup>61</sup>, through bureaucratic re-orientation (BRO)<sup>62</sup>, through increasing efficiency of government decisions<sup>63</sup>, or finally, by shifting the focus of development to areas hitherto neglected<sup>64</sup>. The main argument is that not only is it possible for a bureaucratic or impersonal machinery to be responsive to the needs of constituent citizens through the introduction of appropriate checks and balances, but that this is in fact the best means of ensuring the defense of freedom and sovereignty.

Once again, this literature can be interpreted as a synthesis of a tension between external critiques of modernisation and the need for paradigm maintenance and moral defense of modernity in the face of such criticism. The primary challenge came from democratic or populist movements, particularly in Latin American countries, where the imposition of rational-bureaucratic governments was resisted, notwithstanding their supposed edge in bringing about rapid economic growth. 'Internal' critiques

focussed primarily on the freedom of the market, or else on the question of political stability, rather than on the broader issues of participation and freedom.

### 3a.6 Technology and Knowledge

The existence of civic resistance and protest has been interpreted in other ways as well, particularly as being against the effects of the introduction of modern technology and its attendant institutions into society. Apart from the obvious actions of organised industrial labour, examples of such protest would include broad-based political action directed against the economically powerful groups in society, protest movements against specific projects or activities (e.g., against large dams, nuclear plants, and so forth), and an unwillingness or inability to be subjected to industrial discipline. Actions like these and others have been interpreted by a large number of writers as being an indictment of the process of modernisation.

This resistance can be interpreted either, as a protest against the nature and process of work in modern societies, or as a rejection of the outcome of these processes. It is fair to say that the 'alternative' critique has emphasised the former, while the 'internal' critique of modernisation has focussed on the latter.



One of the earliest of such critiques is Marx's argument of the alienation of the industrial worker from the product and the process under capitalism<sup>65</sup>. A key point is the fact that technical division of labour under capitalism increasingly takes away from the worker the control of the nature, the pace and the intensity of work, and that this loss of control is the ultimate cause of the social and political resistance<sup>66</sup>. Just as the notion of a bureaucratic state can be argued to lead to disenfranchisement, so can centralized and hierarchical forms of economic organisations. In fact, this is the heart of the issue over development and modernisation, since it has often been asserted that modern culture is essentially a way of organizing people, resources or ideas in a more efficient manner than traditional cultures. As such, critiques of organization as a means of disenfranchisement hit at the very core of modernisation.

Writers of the Frankfurt School (Marcuse, Fromm, Habermas) used Marx's argument to question the social basis of modernity, namely its technological and organisational imperative, not only in production, but also in consumption, distribution, and in the very processes of creation and dissemination of knowledge and information. This argument has been taken further by Marglin (1987), who sees the problem to lie not only in the institutional

arrangements for work, but in the very system of knowledge which gives rise to these institutional forms.

In the Third World context, critics like J.S. Uberoi (1978), Ashis Nandy (1986, 1987), Reynaldo Iletto (n.d.), Fre'de'rique Apffel-Marglin (1987), have argued that the 'scientific' approach to knowledge is not only far from perfect, but that it might lead to problems which were avoided by more 'humanistic' approaches. One of the main criticisms of this view have been with regard to the violent and undemocratic nature of modern scientific ways of understanding the world. This approach has often been used to criticize modern science and technology for not serving the needs of people. Since the modernising approach is based on the inherent superiority of the scientific method of understanding and manipulating the physical and social environment, these alternative views present a challenge to their legitimacy.

The response of modernisation theorists to these challenges has not been atypical. Rather than perceive the protest as being directed against the process of economic and social organisation, or against the system of knowledge which gives rise to these processes, they have tended to focus attention on the outcomes of these processes. The internal critique which has been quite effective and forceful here is an 'economistic' version of Marxism, which sees the problems of capitalism to be

essentially those of distribution (of consumption as well as leisure) and unemployment, and the solution to be a socialist state which will guarantee full employment and a more egalitarian distribution of income. The modern welfare state owes its existence, in part, to the popularity of such arguments.

One group which did recognise the social resistance to modern industrial organisation, was that of management experts. They saw it, predictably enough, as a managerial problem. The most celebrated of these views is Abraham Maslow's notion of a 'hierarchy of needs,' in which the need for physical survival ranks above other needs such as prestige or self-fulfilment. Social resistance, in this perspective, was seen to emerge from the rising expectations of a class who had managed to achieve the lowest needs in its hierarchy and wished to go on to the next ones in line. Accordingly, they saw the solution in managerial terms, in a move towards greater participation of workers in decision-making activities.

Another response, this time specifically in the Third World context, is that from the 'appropriate technology' school. By 'appropriate technology' is meant technology which is appropriate for the resource base of a country, and which will therefore not lead to unemployment of labour in labour surplus countries. Three broad reasons are advanced for the existence of

'inappropriate' technology (and therefore, of unemployment) in Third World economies. Some writers argue that there is only 'one best way' of doing things, and that the question of appropriate or inappropriate technology is moot. In their view, the problem lies not in science, technology, or knowledge, but rather in the absence of social and cultural factors which encourage enterprise.

Those of a neoclassical persuasion argue that the problem is 'wrong' prices, set by government fiat or other political action, which interfere with market clearing. They argue that this problem can be corrected by getting the prices right, which often means lowering wages and raising interest and exchange rates.

An alternative view is given by 'technologists,' who think that the public goods character of appropriate technology inhibits research and development, and therefore that the solution is to subsidise research and development through government effort.

The contrast between these responses and the alternative view is based on differing notions of popular sovereignty. The alternative view would consider a technology to be appropriate only if it was under the direct control of the people who were affected by it (cf. A.K.N. Reddy, Rudolf Bahro), or through people who were directly involved in the life of those so affected. The modernising response perceives market competition,

governmental control, or legal remedies as suitable and sufficient substitutes for popular control. The connection between this controversy and that over popular participation should be self-evident at this point, as also would be the connection to environmental and ecological questions.

### 3a.7 Natural Resources and Environment

The concern with the loss of sovereignty was also expressed in relation to a very important aspect of social life, namely the association of environmental deterioration with the replacement of community or social forms of control by bureaucratic arrangements. Similar concerns have also been expressed at the rapid depletion of non-renewable resources (Meadows et.al.) due to the expansionary nature of capitalism. Following Ramachandra Guha, we can identify the alternate critics as falling into two groups, the 'Idealists' (Lynn White, Theodor Roszak, Sunderlal Bahuguna, Rudolf Bahro), or Ecological Socialists (Barry Commoner, A.K.N. Reddy, C.P. Bhatt). These groups place the blame for the observed problems on the instrumental, impersonal, and vivisectionist attitudes towards nature in the modern world view. The former group sees these attitudes derived from the Judaeo-Christian ethic of the West, while the latter writers perceive it to emanate from the

nature of Western technology, and the asymmetrical social relations which determine this technology. Once again, we can categorize these critiques as derived from 'alternate' perspectives on social arrangements.

The alternate writings often connect the notion of environmental decay with ideas of violence. To see this point, one has only to notice the relationship of violence to excess, or of going beyond certain limits. In the behavioristic bent of the modern, impersonal world-view, the idea of internal constraints (relational or contextual limits) on people has been replaced by external constraints (market, state). However, these external constraints will work only if they are ubiquitous. If not, we will have the situation of 'market failure' or 'government failure'. While examples of these types of failure can be seen in various social inter-actions, the destruction of the natural environment is the most obvious example. To follow this line of argument, the safeguarding of the environment cannot be done as long as the dominant value is one of external constraints.

These intellectual critiques of the impact of modernisation have also been related to and supported by popular environmental movements in the West (various anti-nuclear movements, the Greens Party in Germany) as well as the Third World (Chipko Andolan movement in

India, various popular movements in Asia and Latin America against large dams or nuclear energy).

The response of the defenders of modernisation can be divided into three groups. Other than those who deny the criticism on the ground that technological change or price adjustments will take care of resource depletion, there are the 'managerialists' (Club of Rome, Paul Ehrlich, B.B. Vohra), who argue for integrated environmental management, and technocratic control, in other words, the expansion of external constraints; and the proto-fascists (Garrett Hardin) who propose population control in addition to punitive sanctions, particularly against the poor and Third World countries to release the pressure on resources.

Once again, it can be argued that the criticism against the effect of modernisation on the environment and resource availability had its roots in a world-view based on more personal connections to land and nature (the idealist view). The intellectual element of the critique brought the argument home to modernisers, who then proceeded to assimilate it into their world-view by translating these concerns into managerial and economic issues, and presenting solutions which would meet some of the criticism, yet help retain the legitimacy of their own intervention into alien social and natural environments.

**SECTION 3B**

**Cultural Critique: The Last Stage**



## Cultural Critique: The Last Stage

Implicit in the discussion so far is the idea that the various challenges to modernisation theory share a few common themes. However, since these different critiques were being made in different spheres of thought and action, they could be isolated and assimilated or dismissed separately because of their lack of congruence with the dominant mode of analysis. The term 'cultural critique' implies a recognition and assertion of the underlying unity of the various strands in the argument, of the recognition of an 'Aquarian Conspiracy' in Marilyn Ferguson's terms. In our view, this confluence is both the cause and consequence of the greater self-assurance generally of people of non-Western cultures, and particularly of the intellectuals who seek to articulate the world-views of these cultures for a scholarly audience.

The emergence of this unity should, however, be seen as the strengthening of a tradition of thought and action with a long and respected pedigree. An academic and intellectual critique of modernisation on cultural grounds has long been expressed by a small but increasingly influential group of writers, who identify, as the cause of many of the problems emerging in Third World countries, the very notion of a human being and human welfare implicit in dominant theories (and by implication in modern

Western culture) used by the modernising elites of these societies to impose unacceptable and undesirable policies and conditions upon an unwilling populace. As such, these writers criticise the very basis of development, namely the supposed superiority of the institutions, arrangements, or achievements in Western societies.

The fact that this literature has found new protagonists as well as a larger audience can be traced back to three reasons. First, the increasing evidence of the dysfunctioning of societies, whether in the North or the South, which cannot be explained satisfactorily by available theories; second, because of the frustration with attempts to make piece-meal amendations in dominant modes of thinking; and lastly, because of the emergence of powerful anti-systemic and often anti-Western social and political movements of cultural revival in Third World countries as well as in some countries of the West.

### 3b.1 Social Dysfunctioning

A key reason for the strengthening of the cultural critique is an exponential increase in the dysfunctioning of societies undergoing rapid modernisation. Entire regions, previously peaceful and tranquil are now almost unlivable due to endemic civil war, ethnic conflict, political unrest, social and political oppression by

militarised states, urban polarisation and decay including a rise in violent crimes, environmental deterioration such as desertification, waterlogging, climate changes, or deforestation. There seem to be similar increases in socio-psychological problems assailing people in westernised sections of the Third World, and rapidly extending to other areas as well.

A related reason is the emergence of somewhat similar problems in Western countries, something to which one can give the somewhat melodramatical title, 'the decline of the West.' Vietnam, Watergate, OPEC, macroeconomic problems (unemployment, inflation), micro-social problems (decay of cities, quality of life of old people, women, and minorities) in western countries seem to have shattered the myth that people in these societies are in greater control of their lives than are the people in 'backward' societies. Naturally, one of the reasons for the growing disaffection is the increasing familiarity of Third World citizens with the mode of existence of the West, an idea expressed charmingly by a character in 'Mon Oncle d'Amerique,' a French film of a few years ago, 'America does not exist,' he said, 'I've been there.'

A similar disillusionment seems to have set in with regard to the Soviet model, with the publicisation of the Stalinist purges, expansion of State control over

peoples' lives, and a generalised denial of freedoms, bringing in its wake a growing disaffection with the other 'Western' vision of the good society.

As a result of these and other factors, the two dominant Western models of progress have relinquished their hold over the imagination of Third World intellectuals, and a shift towards indigenous values has become more legitimate.

### **3b.2 Frustration With Existing Theories**

A related issue is the growing intellectual disaffection with the fact that piece-meal challenges to the orthodoxy do not seem to have any impact whatsoever. The succession of criticisms and controversies in development literatures outlined in the above pages, appears only to have helped legitimate and re-inforce existing prejudices, rather than to eradicate them. It is not surprising, then, that the focus of critical attention has shifted from particular controversies or problems towards a deeper issue, expressed with the appropriate degree of irony by the sociologist Gordon Allport, 'Social science,' he said, 'never solves any problems. It just gets tired of them.' Opportunities for soul-searching by modernisation theorists appear at regular intervals and disappear with equal regularity, leaving

scarcely a trace on the focus and direction of the subsequent discourse.

### 3b.3 Socio-Political Resistance

The single most important reason for the strengthening of the cultural critique is, of course, the direct political action by people in the form of a resurgent resistance to modernisation and a related adherence to traditional and religious world views and ways of life. It is precisely these forms of resistance which are being interpreted and translated for a western audience by the 'alternative' critics.

As an example of this form of resistance, take a phenomenon which has attracted a great deal of attention, in recent years, in the United States and elsewhere in the West, namely the turn towards religious values in Islamic countries. In our view, seeing this as an isolated occurrence in Islamic countries, and that too through the prism of dramatic<sup>67</sup> or tragic<sup>68</sup> events or of State activity<sup>69</sup>, ignores three important considerations. First, such indigenous revival movements are by no means restricted to Islamic countries, although for reasons of geopolitics and recent history, the latter have grabbed the greatest attention in the Western media; in fact, anti-systemic movements searching for a 'third way' out of the current impasse, often by invoking indigenous religious

and traditional value-systems, are quite active in many parts of the globe, not excluding European countries<sup>70</sup>.

Second, while these movements often involve an explicit and emphatic rejection of Western capitalism, this has not, for the most part, led to a swing towards Marxism, since the conception of the West implicit in this rejection seems to encompass orthodox Marxism as well.

Third, whether in the context of Islamic societies or others, the use of the term 'revival' could be a little misleading, since a majority of the population had never entirely relinquished their traditional values or traditional modes of thinking in the first place. These movements are but contemporary articulations of beliefs and values which have long existed in these societies. In many cases, the change is only in the attitude of a Westernised minority which was previously alienated from traditional values<sup>71</sup>.

What this example illustrates is that it would be more appropriate to think of recent socio-political developments in many parts of the Third World, as the result of a sense of discomfort with, or even an emphatic rejection of, the rational-technological model upon which people in the West as well as those in the developing world had pinned their hopes for the establishment of a humane and just society.

Among the Westernised elites in Islamic countries, this has taken the form of a rejuvenation of respect for Islamic values and ideals; in other societies, this has naturally taken other forms. Besides other religious and ethnic revival movements, mention can also be made of popular environmental movements the most notable one being the Chipko movement in India; the rise of non-governmental organisations [sic] in various countries of the world, notable ones including various social welfare movements, women's movements, or movements of cultural interpretation and articulation, such as the 'Lokayan' movement in India; and the formation of 'base communities' around the liberation theology teachings in Latin America.

It is also pertinent to note that the fears and concerns expressed by these movements have been echoed, and in some cases, anticipated by similar movements in Western countries. Particularly noteworthy in this respect are the Womens' movements, the Peace movement in Europe, and the Greens movement in West Germany.

### **3b.4 Intellectual Challenges**

Very few intellectuals, whether in Third World countries or in the West, felt confident enough to jettison entirely the framework and assumptions of the social science disciplines with which they were connected. Nor were most of them ready to take up alternative,

'backward', 'traditional', or religious discourses as a means of communicating their ideas. This situation is the one which seems to be undergoing the most rapid change in many Third World countries under the impact of the anti-systemic popular movements<sup>72</sup>.

As mentioned earlier, however, the intellectual roots of the current challenge to the intellectual orthodoxy go far back in history. In the twentieth century alone, a large literature critical of the multi-faceted modernisation project, has emerged in Western countries as well as in the Third World. While each of these sets of writings are very diverse in their approach, and have raised many different issues which cannot all be summarised here, a common theme can be identified. These writers tend to see the association between modernisation and socio-economic deterioration as endogenous rather than exogenous<sup>73</sup>, and supported and strengthened in particular by legitimations provided by 'neutral' social scientists. As a result of these considerations, this group of writers has chosen to focus their analysis on the discovery of causal connections between the project of modernisation and the symptoms of social dysfunctioning. It needs scarcely worth re-iterating, however, that despite their many differences, these disparate critics of the functioning of modernity seem to share, at a deep structural level, an alternate 'way of seeing,' with different



notions of human behavior, welfare, progress, or the role of knowledge in these processes.

In the Western literature can be included the works of the Critical Theory school of Marxist analysis (Theodor Adorno, Erich Fromm, Jürgen Habermas, Max Horkheimer, Herbert Marcuse), post-Wittgensteinian social philosophers (Jon Elster, Maurice Godelier, Richard Rorty); neo-structuralists and semiotists (Paul Feyerabend, Michel Foucault, Stephen Resnick and Richard Wolff), psychologists who raise the issue of alienation and socio-psychological anomie in modern societies (Christopher Lasch, Robert Bellah and others, James Hillman, Phillip Slater, Jacques Ellul); and cultural anthropologists (Louis Dumont, Clifford Geertz, Marshall Sahlins, Stanley Tambiah) who point to the cultural specificity of modern Western values and institutions.

The comparative literature with an exclusive Third World focus is, if anything, even more disparate than the first one, but this work is similarly unified by a shared scepticism of the fruits of modernisation and development. These writings would include the 'humanistic development' school (Peter Berger, Richard Falk, Denis Goulet, Guy Gran, Ivan Illich, E.F. Schumacher), writers who link the neo-colonialism of developmentalist approaches with the psychological effects of political colonialism (Aime Césaire, Franz Fanon, Ashis Nandy), advocates of

a culture-based approach to welfare and progress as well as to notions of political conflict and to epistemological and methodological issues (Arjun Appadurai, Paolo Friere, Reynaldo Ileto, Ashis Nandy, J.S. Uberoi) and writers in various religious traditions particularly including Islam (Fouad Ajami, Fazlur Rahman, Ali Shariati) and the liberation theology school in Catholicism (Denis Goulet, Gustavo Gutierrez).

### **3b.5 Neoclassical Response: Trade Theory**

In earlier cases of isolated critiques, some modernising thinkers took up the challenge and tried to assimilate it into their own world-views while the rest of the profession continued on its pre-determined path. Today, there are expressions of confusion and disillusionment mentioned in the opening section of this essay, but very little constructive engagement. Paradoxically, the most common response of the development profession is a re-assertion of the ideological purity which had been lost during piecemeal concessions to alternative views.

Such responses have generally come from neoclassical theorists, in the nature of a fresh declaration of faith in the market. A polemical expression of this view is in Deepak Lal (1983), which claimed that Development Economics (meaning the mainstream or non-neoclassical version) was dead, having been proved to be counter-

-productive for the purposes for which it was intended<sup>74</sup>. Similar arguments, albeit with less polemic and more reasoning have been made by other neoclassical authors including Bela Balassa (1982), Peter Bauer (1981), Anne Krueger, Ian Little (1982), among many others.

The common element in all these writings is the interpretation of spectacular growth in the so-called Gang of Four countries of East Asia (South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore), as a vindication of free market policies, and therefore as an indictment of the dirigiste prescriptions of non-neoclassical approaches. The experience of these countries was retro-actively labelled 'export-led growth,' partly to acknowledge their superior export and growth performance, and partly to point to the trade and exchange rate policies which were claimed to have brought about this desirable outcome. The substantive aspects of this argument need not detain us. I have criticised these elsewhere<sup>75</sup> on account of their selective reading of the evidence, deliberate inconsideration of the dirigiste aspects of the South Korean and Taiwanese economies<sup>76</sup>, and the inattention to the dramatic failures of attempts to replicate elsewhere the so-called free market policies of these countries<sup>77</sup>.

At this stage, it might be more interesting to note the effect of the neoclassical argument on development literature as a whole. Since the 'free market' aspects

of the 'Gang of Four' economies pertained to their macroeconomic trade and exchange rate policies, it began to appear as if the only relevant question for Development Economics was whether or not the liberalisation of trade and exchange rate regimes was the panacea to all the ills of development as claimed by neoclassical experts. It became a commonplace to suggest that Development Economics had been taken over by Trade Theorists. As issues of trade theory assumed central importance in development literature, there was a concomitant decline in attention accorded to other problems, except to the extent that they had a bearing on the issue of openness<sup>78</sup>.

This development was further re-inforced by the problems faced by many Third World countries (especially those in Latin America) of adjustment to the various external shocks of the late 1970s and early 1980s. Neoclassical writers, particularly those associated with the World Bank and the IMF, claimed that difficulties in adjustment were caused by the inward orientation of the problem economies, and could be cured by the same liberalisation policies which had earlier been recommended as solutions for growth problems. Both these institutions initiated programs for financing structural adjustment, which provided additional incentives for the acceptance of these theories by resource-hungry governments.

### 3b.6 Mainstream Response

This resurgence of neoclassical wisdom is surprising, coming at a time when even the relatively greater cultural sensitiveness in the method of institutional development economics is being assailed for its alienness. However, the non-neoclassical group of development economists, even though on the defensive, were not entirely silent. As already mentioned, trade theorists in this group engaged the neoclassical school on the latter's assertion of the supposed beneficence of trade liberalisation and other neoclassical measures. Others sought to identify the roots of the larger crisis, and to find ways of addressing them.

The most interesting of these responses are in the nature of 'internal' critiques of mainstream development theory by such culturally sensitive writers as Henry Bruton (1983), Paul Streeten (1984), Albert Hirschman (1981, 1984) or Amartya Sen (1983). They have argued, independently, that the paradigm of development economics is in need of a drastic overhaul, particularly with respect to the 'mono-economics' claim of some of its sub-fields. They have also identified quite clearly many of the problems expressed in the popular critiques of modernisation. In particular, they have questioned very effectively, the theoretical certitude which often lies behind policies which are pushed to unwise extremes

by their unsceptical advocates. Their recommendations are well-taken and thought-provoking for the development profession, specially those related to the need for a better understanding of the non-economic bases of economic behavior and economic institutions. It is fair to say, however, that these ideas, however timely, are still at the fringes of the development profession.

The only objection one can raise to the suggestions made by the above group of authors is that they seek, implicitly or explicitly, to defend the right of the outside theorist or advisor (including indigenous 'outsiders') to intervene, on the basis of superior knowledge, in the social milieu of Third World countries, without introducing any fresh safeguards against the type of problems which emerged in earlier years from the use of knowledge then considered similarly superior. To argue that this is not a trivial problem, we have to wait until the next section, where we introduce the notion of culture as a 'way of seeing,' and use it to guide us in the choice of theoretical frameworks.

We have argued that the main distinction between the 'modernisation' and the 'alternative' approaches outlined above was the cultural foundation which underlay their respective theoretical formulations. In order to make this notion tractable, we need to discuss our use of the term 'culture.' To this task, we now turn.

## **SECTION 4**

**Culture, Behaviour, and Values**

## Culture, Behaviour and Values

A wit once said that all reviews of Hamlet have a good part and a bad part. The good part is where the reviewer criticises all other theories; and the bad part is where s/he presents her/his own theory. It is time to inflict the bad part of this essay on the patient reader.

It is our argument that the many external critiques of modernisation are unified at a deeper level by an alternative 'way of seeing' the world, and that this unity has found expression, naturally, in what is called the cultural critique. In this section, we shall elaborate on this argument in order to bring out more specifically the differences in 'ways of seeing' or 'cultural perspectives' between protagonists and antagonists of modernisation. The object of the discussion is to present at the same time an alternative theory of behaviour, an alternative perspective on values, the alternative view on modernisation theories, and an analysis of the legitimising role of these theories in respect of certain values and actions.

### 4.1 What is 'culture?'

In the following discussion, we treat the terms 'culture', 'world-view,' 'cognitive system' or 'way of



seeing' as synonyms. The use of these concepts is derived from a long literature in sociology, psychology and anthropology which goes back at least to Max Weber's (1931, 1947) distinction between 'rational' and 'traditional' behaviour and their relationship with the 'problem of meaning,' to Emile Durkheim's work<sup>79</sup> on the primacy of social structure in human behaviour and construction of meaning, Talcott Parson's synthesis<sup>80</sup> of these two writers and his own views on the 'structuration' of human agency through meaning systems and the legitimacy provided to existing social institutions by such construction, and George Mead's (1934) analysis<sup>81</sup> of behaviour as a tension between the 'I' and the social roles derived from the expectations of others (the 'me'). In anthropology, these ideas were taken up subsequently in the writings of Claude Levi-Strauss, Louis Dumont, Clifford Geertz and Stanley Tambiah among others.

Much of what is said below is not new. The attempt is essentially to synthesise four well-known strands of thought in social science literature: the distinction between rational and traditional behaviour, the role of cognitive systems in determining behaviour, the 'structured' nature of cognitive systems, and the perception of behaviour as a tension between two aspects of this structured reality.

It is appropriate to begin with a definition of 'culture.' An elegant definition, provided by Geertz (1973), is that of a superstructural system which fills the 'information gap' between 'what our bodies tell us and what we have to know in order to function'<sup>82</sup> or, to use a more recent metaphor, as the human 'software' which fills the gap between human needs and the available genetic 'hardware'<sup>83</sup>. This means, in Geertz's words, that there is<sup>84</sup>:

'[No] such thing as human nature independent of culture. ... [Our] central nervous system ... is incapable of directing our behavior or organising our experience without the guidance provided by systems of significant symbols. ... Such symbols are thus not mere expressions, instrumentalities, or correlates of our biological, psychological, and social existence; they are prerequisites of it. Without men, no culture, certainly; but equally, and more significantly, without culture, no men.'

Culture, this system of symbols, can thus be likened to a 'map' of the universe which we carry in our heads, and which enables us to integrate our values, choices, and actions. It is a 'design for living,' a filter through which we access all experience, physical as well as social, and which enables us to act in situations presented before us. 'All human action,' said George Mead, 'is interaction - with others, ourselves, our natural and created physical world - within culturally defined contexts that determine not only action, but its meaning.' It is scarcely worth mentioning here that these 'culturally

defined contexts,' like languages, differ from society, indeed from 'culture' to 'culture.'

#### 4.1.1 'Personal' and 'Impersonal' Maps

Theories of modernisation are located in a particular ('Modern' or 'Western') culture which is unique in a very important sense. In order to bring out this uniqueness, we will have to introduce the concepts of 'personal' and 'impersonal' maps. To get a little ahead of the story, these maps are integral elements of every cultural system, whether 'traditional' or 'modern'; the tension between the two provides the principal dynamic of cultural evolution and social change; and what distinguishes one culture from others is, in part, the uniqueness of the tension or balance between its component parts.

Now, what are these two 'maps'? It is easier to first, describe them separately as two independent 'cultures' and then to talk about the blend or the balance between them in an observed cultural system. This not to say, of course, that these maps exist in isolation anywhere; indeed, even the distinction between the two is unique to what we call 'modern' culture. To simplify matters, we shall concentrate on three key dimensions of the cultural maps: theories of the self (ontology), of knowledge (epistemology), and of the universe (cosmology)<sup>85</sup>.

The 'impersonal' map can then be imagined as a culture in which everyone perceives herself or himself to have an impersonal relationship with other people, with the natural environment and with knowledge. The distinguishing characteristic of this cultural perspective would be a perception of the individual as being separable or detached from the social, physical or intellectual environment; and the environment itself as being divisible into a finite number of partitions.

A 'personal' map, in contrast, can be imagined as a culture in which every person sees himself or herself to have only personal relationship in each of the three dimensions. In this case, the sense of identity is created through identification rather than through separation. In fact, in this cultural system, the notion of an 'individual' (observer, agent, actor, what have you) is very hard to construct. Furthermore, the relational identity will not permit the conceptualisation of the social or physical environment in terms of a finite number of attributes<sup>86</sup>.

The differences between the two maps are not merely cosmetic. They have implications for our values, orientations and actions. Impersonal relations and attitudes are reflected in organisation, rationality, linearity, and control; they need to be static and rigid, to constantly define terms and freeze them in place, to perceive

time as discrete rather than continuous, and to place the world in a conceptual grid. Not surprisingly, therefore, 'hard' social sciences such as economics and political science focus on relationships of exchange and power respectively, both of which belong in the impersonal sphere.

Personal relations and attitudes are manifested in spontaneity, fluidity, and bilateral vulnerability; they must evolve dynamically and have to be flexible, concepts and definitions keep changing and evolving, time is seen as continuous, and attention is directed mainly towards those aspects of social reality which elude the conceptual grid of impersonality.

Modern culture is unique in a very special sense. It is the only one which wishes consciously to separate these two dimensions of culture, one from the other, and to place them in a hierarchy in which the 'impersonal' is superior to the 'personal'<sup>87</sup>. This is what I have called the impersonality postulate of modernity: 'That impersonal relations are inherently superior to personal relations.' Before arguing this point, it would be helpful to have a more detailed description of the three dimensions of culture.

With regard to self-definition or ontology, the 'impersonal' view can be described by what the anthropologist Louis Dumont calls 'individualism,' a character-

istic of those (Western) societies, which 'value, in the first place, the individual human being: every man is, in principle, an embodiment of humanity at large, and as such he is equal to every other man, and free.' Dumont contrasts this with 'holism,' a characteristic of those contemporary or ancient societies in which value is placed 'in the first place, on order: the conformity of every element to its role in society - in a word, the society as a whole.'<sup>88</sup> This means, among many other things, that individualism provides a sense of personal identity independent of relationships, and based on such abstract or 'impersonal' elements as abstract rights, attributes, desires, preferences or even professional occupation<sup>89</sup>.

In contrast, the 'personal' view can be termed 'relationalism', in which the individual sees herself or himself simply as the nexus of a web of relationships<sup>90</sup>. These relationships and roles acquire a metaphysical and symbolic (as opposed to a literal) quality; the culture tells us what, for example, it means to be a spouse, a neighbour, a friend, a patron or a client, but is silent on what it means to to have preferences, attributes or rights<sup>91</sup>.

Similarly, in our theories of the universe or cosmology, the impersonal view is represented by what can be called 'instrumentalism', i.e., perceptions of such

things as land, the village, the home, trees, forests, animals, stars, goods and even people, primarily as sources of gratification. Alternatively, the 'personal' view would see all these entities in a relational context: a home is not just the place where you are living at the moment, but also an integral part of your history as well as of your future.

The 'instrumental' view sees everything as being replaceable or substitutable, whereas the 'relational' perspective finds everything unique and irreplaceable. It follows that 'impersonality' implies the attribution of only a finite set of qualities or characteristics to each object, while 'relationality' sees an infinite dimensions in each in terms of its attributes.

Lastly, it is also possible to identify two broad alternatives in the theory of knowledge or epistemology provided by a cultural map. The impersonal view is represented by the Cartesian 'positivism/literalism' which found its most forceful exposition in the works of the logical positivists of the Vienna Circle<sup>92</sup>. In this view, valid knowledge derives only from the separation of the observer from the object of knowledge, and the expansion of knowledge takes place through its division into separate self-contained divisions with cause and effect relations restricted to each subdivision<sup>93</sup>.

Alternatively, in the 'personal' view designated by such terms as 'communication,'<sup>94</sup> 'hermeneutics'<sup>95</sup>, or 'semiotics,' valid knowledge derives from identification with the object of knowledge, in other words through a personal relation between the observer and the observed, which precludes the attribution of finite dimensions or of independent cause and effect relationships in each of these dimensions of analysis.

#### 4.1.2 Culture and behaviour

To paraphrase Anthony Giddens, these cultural 'maps' are both constituted by human agency and yet at the same time they are the medium of such constitution: they exist prior to each individual, and yet at the same time each individual determines, through personal experiences and actions, not only the precise configurations of their own 'maps' but also of people connected to them.

A little reflection will reveal that the two 'maps' are in no sense alternatives for each other. Both of them exist in every culture. Indeed, in our everyday lives we commonly rely on both ways of seeing without consciously distinguishing between them. Every culture provides people with 'impersonal' as well as 'relational' identities, with symbolic as well as instrumental connections



to nature, and with semiotic or hermeneutic as well as 'rational' explanations of natural or social phenomena.

Approached in this manner, social values as well as individual and social behaviour can be seen to be derived from the specification of cultural maps. The issue of values discussed in more detail below. Here it suffices to mention that it can be approached from two different directions. The first approach would take up some broad and presumably shared value, such as freedom from domination, and to ask how this value may be expressed differently in different cultures, and how these differences in perception might lend support to very different social, economic and political structures in different societies. This line of argument is followed in Section 4.3 below.

An alternative approach would focus on the differences in individuals' perception moral values, and therefore of moral dilemmas. One version of this approach, adopted by psychologists like Carol Gilligan (1982), in her classic discussion of the difference between masculine and feminine ways of perceiving the world. Gilligan argues, in effect, that moral values can emerge from each of the two dimensions of culture, and therefore that moral dilemmas are interpretable either as conflicts between abstract principles in an impersonal (and in her

terms, masculine) world-view, or as conflicts between obligations in a relational (or feminine) view.

Another version of the psychologistic approach, perhaps more important for our purposes here, is the one adopted by George Mead (1934), who interprets moral conflict as a tension between the (impersonal) 'I' and the (relational) 'me.' This approach is pertinent here because it leads us directly from the discussion of values into the analysis of social behaviour.

To follow this line of argument, in every culture a decision, whether individual or collective, represents the resolution of a tension between the conflicting demands of the two maps. This suggests that while all humans are alike in the sense that their actions represent a playing out of the tension between the 'personal' and the 'impersonal,' yet they are all different because each individual (and indeed, each action) represents a different resolution of the tension.

In the same sense, all cultures are similar yet different. All cultures manifest themselves in the form of a tension between the two cultural maps, but each represents a unique balance and a unique tension. This point is worth elaborating.

Cultures differ from one another because of three different factors. First, it is only a slight exaggeration to say that the 'personal' map is context specific while

the 'impersonal' map is universal; in other words, cultural specificity derives in the first instance from the 'personal' map. Second, they will differ also in the relative weight they give to the two maps in different spheres of human activity, in other words in how they blend and balance the two maps in the consciousness of their constituent individuals. Lastly, as has already been noted, the nature and intensity of the tension between the 'personal' and 'impersonal' maps will be different in different cultures.

Indeed, the tension between the two maps can be seen as the primary source of cultural and social change. In other words, 'culture' is not a static phenomenon, but rather is something which changes endogenously through the resolution of the tension between its component elements. All cultures can be seen as unique and evolving resolutions of the dialectic between the 'impersonal' and the 'personal.'

In fact, it is possible to go even further and to argue that the co-existence of the 'personal' and the 'impersonal' is not coincidental. In fact, the two ways of seeing are necessary as complements to each other. They are necessary for each other, because each helps to limit the excesses which can result from an unfettering of the other<sup>96</sup>. No human society can exist without both of these maps as components of its culture.

## 4.2 The Impersonality Postulate

The project of modernity has, however, taken upon itself precisely the task of distinguishing between the two maps by asserting a hierarchy between them. It has the confessed task of 'rationalising' the whole world, of placing the world in a conceptual grid, and therefore of separating the two halves of human consciousness and strengthening one at the expense of the other.

As Polanyi (1944), Dumont (1977, 1980), and others have pointed out, 'modern' culture is unique in a very important respect. It is the only one which creates an explicit dichotomy between the two forms of self-definition, and, at least in its articulated and conscious form, concentrates only on the imperatives of the impersonal aspect, relegating the notion of personal connections to a supervenient 'private' sphere. In other words, the 'way of seeing' in modern cultures is motivated by a powerful asymmetry, which we call here the impersonality postulate: 'Impersonal relations are inherently superior to personal relations'. Despite its apparent 'irrationality', this postulate is pervasive as the foundational element of various Western theories, in fact, of the entire sensibility which, without seeking to be polemical, is generally described as 'Western'.

This asymmetry in the modern culture, to borrow Thomas Merton's eloquent words, is at once its strength, its torment, and its ruin. While it provides for a tremendous (perhaps temporary?) increase in the ability to control nature, it is also the cause of a myriad of problems including a loss of meaning in peoples' lives, increase in alienation and anxiety, creeping disenfranchisement, an unprecedented rationalisation of violence, and destruction of the environment.

This attitude has not been internalised by people in any society, West, East, North or South. Witness the resistance implicit in the refusal at great personal cost, of people in the Third World as well as in the West, to give up traditional approaches to knowledge; or in the rejection of such impersonal institutions as the state, the market, the school, the media, or social experts; or even the social and psychological dysfunctioning observed in places where there is a protracted history of the forcible intrusion of impersonal institutions.

Yet it is evident that Western culture in general and its articulated intellectual form in particular reflect precisely an acceptance of this postulate. To elaborate on this argument, it would be helpful to discuss the nature of assumptions in the dominant analytical schools of social science.

#### 4.2.1 Impersonality and Modernisation

The literature on modernisation is replete with adverse references to the existence of personal relations in traditional societies, which impede the smooth functioning of the economy. Examples would include, multi-stranded instead of single-stranded relationships<sup>97</sup>, kinship ties, labor immobility, restrictions on the sale of land, subsistence rather than market production, mystical or religious instead of scientific ways of approaching production, gift or reciprocity instead of commodity exchange, among many other examples. Similar observations are found in anthropological analyses, most often without the derogatory connotations; e.g., gift or reciprocity instead of commodity exchange, the existence of particularism and personal relations in the organisation of social life in traditional environments<sup>98</sup>.

The attitude that behaviour based on impersonal considerations is the only legitimate form of behaviour, is even more pronounced in the 'objective' or 'hard' social sciences, such as economics, political science, political economy, and their offshoots in the area of development theory.

It is most in evidence in neoclassical economic theory, which clearly defines the self as separate from the environment by treating preferences and attributes as

metaphysical entities and the environment as an external datum. In other words, instead of seeing behaviour as the result of a tension between the demands of the 'personal' and 'impersonal' maps, with this assumption neoclassical theory allows itself to focus only on conflicts between different objectives within the impersonal sphere alone.

This would not be an invalid approach if the impersonal sphere were conceded to be clearly dominant, or if the personal side were completely irrelevant for this purpose. In this case, if the various desires of the impersonal self are stable over time then empirical observation would also lead to predictive ability, which is the claim made by neoclassical economics<sup>99</sup>.

In a like manner, political science perceives individuals to be in pursuit of power, and political institutions to be the means for the efficient exercise and the legitimacy of power in society. Economic determinists see this simply as an alternative way of saying that individuals pursue higher utility, since power may be a means to the achievement of goods which provide such utility. Nevertheless, as a result of this perspective, political philosophy has helped legitimise the existence of the modern 'nation-state,' with its impersonal and bureaucratic authority for the regulation of the behavior of its citizens on the basis of reason and

consent, as the 'rationalisation' of civil society, and hence as a modernising ideal for the Third World.

What is common between both these disciplines is an emphasis on the 'impersonal' facet of society, whether in the sphere of exchange or of power, to use these supposed sources of human motivation to discover empirical regularities in society, and a refusal to look at other sources of motivation even if they are more relevant and of greater predictive value in a particular instance.

This approach could be justified on either of three grounds:

1) That the theory is meant to apply only in the limited number of situations where impersonality is dominant. This could mean a demarcation of the area within the purview of theory, as that where relationships are clearly perceived as impersonal<sup>100</sup>.

2) In addition to (1), that the domain of impersonal relations is the only important area of social interaction, either because (a) other aspects are intrinsically less important, since they do not determine issues like production, distribution, or consumption, nor those relating to power; or (b) that the arena of personal connections is not similarly subject to change, and hence can be assumed to be parametric; or, finally (c) that the area of impersonal relations is the most predictable, and hence the most susceptible to control.

3) Finally, that everything is reducible 'in the last instance,' to impersonal desires. In other words, it is possible to interpret even personal commitments as forms of impersonal desires<sup>101</sup>; or, more strongly, that all relations are impersonal.

Even though one occasionally finds disclaimers in economic and political science texts to the effect that



the theory is not universally applicable, such humility is rare. Economists, in particular, believe that their theories apply to all possible times or places<sup>102</sup>, and that choice is ultimately reducible to a conflict between different impersonal preferences<sup>103</sup>. In fact, a great deal of effort is expended in proving this type of reducibility.

Institutional economists acknowledge the weakness of this assumption, and modify the analysis to allow behavior to be constrained by existing social or political institutions, or to be motivated by considerations other than the pursuit of profit. Yet, in many cases there are problems because of the mechanical way in which institutions are introduced into the analysis.

Rather than focus on the conflict between the demands of the 'personal' and 'impersonal' maps, these analyses often refer to the former only as the generator of a set of boundary conditions within which the conflict within the conflict within the latter is to be analysed. While such a concession may increase the predictability of some models, it is not likely to be infallible, since it requires the institution to act as a rigid constraint rather than as the basis of a continuous tension with impersonal desires<sup>104</sup>. Furthermore, this concession also aims to preserve what may be the hidden target of the alternative critique, namely the right of the outside

bureaucrat, policy maker, advisor or theorist to intervene in the social milieu. Related to this is the fact that these approaches sought to introduce the impersonal institution of the state to supplement or balance the other impersonal institution of the market, which led to debates over 'government failure' versus 'market failure,' discussed earlier.

Marxian political economy presents an interesting ambivalence over the impersonal/personal divide. While many of the ideas on the alienating influence of modern social and economic arrangements had been developed by the 'early' Marx, they have not been pursued too vigorously by orthodox Marxist-Leninists. In Marx himself, we can see the transition from a perspective which saw the conflict as being within individual consciousness, to one in which it was transferred to social classes; and it was this later 'economistic' phase of Marx which has been incorporated more extensively into his own subsequent theoretical writings, as well as into mainstream Marxist literature<sup>105</sup>.

In this economistic phase, one can discern a bias in favor of impersonal forms of self-definition, albeit from a very different perspective and with very different objectives. Karl Marx saw the history of all hitherto existing societies to be a history of conflict between classes. In pre-capitalist societies, this conflict was

mediated by the presence of all types of personal connections between the elite and the subordinate classes. The uniqueness of capitalist society lay in the fact that the dominant class, the bourgeoisie, did not claim any but the cash nexus with the subordinate class of the proletariat; and this, in a nutshell, is why the proletariat will become conscious of the nature of its exploitation, and will act to overthrow it. The bourgeoisie emancipated itself from the myriad personal connections and restraints which (ineffectually) held earlier dominant classes in check, and this emancipation created conditions whereby the proletariat would also emancipate itself, first by becoming like the bourgeoisie, and then by overthrowing it.

#### **4.2.2 Legitimation of Modern Values**

Not only is the asymmetry between the impersonal and personal forms of understanding implicit in Western social theories, these theories have actually helped to legitimate this asymmetry as intrinsically desirable, and to make it an important and valued aspect of Western culture. To see this, it is only necessary to remark upon the way these theories have conditioned the discussion of valued goals in society. To give but a few examples:

- 1) Exchange Theory: Impersonal relations between buyer and seller ensure freedom of

exchange. In many writings, this is seen to be one of the primary forms of freedom.

2) Production Theory: Impersonal relations between employers and employees ensure that resources will flow to their most efficient uses.

3) Jurisprudence: 'Blindness' of justice, and the principle of natural law, 'that no man shall be a judge in his own cause,' suggest that impersonal relations between the judge and the litigants are necessary to ensure justice.

4) Education Theory: The separation of the content of education from the personality of the educator may be necessary not only for the pursuit of efficiency, but also to maintain the myth of the equality of opportunity.

5) Political Science: A bureaucratized, efficient State is seen as one which will be able to implement most effectively the will of the citizens, leading not only to effective decision-making, but also to the protection of freedoms.

6) Technology: The notion of experts, and the partitioning of knowledge that it entails is legitimated on grounds of efficiency, as well as innovation and growth.

7) Moral Philosophy: based on abstract, rather than relational principles, is legitimated on the grounds of it being universal and objective - and thus, fair.

8) Communication: That a free, impersonal, and impartial press will provide true information, in contrast to the tainted news supplied by politically motivated sources.

The upshot of the argument is that core values like freedom, justice, equality, fairness, universality, efficiency, and growth, are all being seen through the prism of impersonality. As such, it is not only social theory which perceives a focus on impersonal relations

to be useful for pedagogical or substantive purposes; rather, the view that core values of society can be safeguarded only by understanding everything through the lens of impersonality, has gradually become the dominant form of conscious belief in Western societies. This is not the place to go into a discussion of why such an evolution took place; suffice it to say that the legitimating endeavors of social theorists played no small role in it, as also did the unprecedented economic growth which accompanied this process, and the tremendous social costs which were imposed (and are still being imposed) on those who resisted its advance.

#### **4.2.3 Alternative approaches**

The 'alternative' approaches discussed in the previous sections can be interpreted as being critical of the assumed superiority of the impersonal over the personal as a way of thinking about the world; and indeed to go so far as to suggest that the primary objective of the modernist hierarchy is not pedagogy but control; not to help understand the world, but rather to help maintain existing (often oppressive) structures of power; not to expand human freedoms, but to legitimate the denial of sovereignty to the populations of the third world, as also to the common men or women in Western countries.

Another basis for the alternative critique is the fear that since self-definitions are culturally determined, the acceptance of impersonality as socially desirable at an intellectual level can actually result in it becoming a dominant value at a popular level<sup>106</sup>, and that this may not be in the long run interest of the human society.

The above arguments have their roots in the familiar criticism of the hegemonic panopticism inherent in Western liberalism's method of binary opposition; in the supposed hierarchical rather than dialectical relation between health/sickness, truth/error, objectivity/subjectivity, Universality/contextuality, purpose/drift (spontaneity), light/dark, Apollo/Dionysius, or stability/volatility<sup>107</sup>. In a fashion similar to the above, critics of the impersonality postulate would argue that the assumption of dichotomy and hierarchy between the impersonal and the personal be replaced by one of a dialectic between the two.

So what does this alternative perspective propose about possible ways out of the mess? At this stage, the following suggestions can be indicated:

- 1) The assumption that the impersonal world-view is the only important and relevant one for understanding human behavior is seriously flawed. A more complete model will also take into account the underlying tension between the two modes of self-definition.

- 2) Economic theory assumes all actions to be reducible to the impersonal aspect of behavior. It is possible to reverse this assumption, and

to see all actions deriving from a conflict between different obligations and commitments.

3) Similarly, economics assumes that 'no one enters into an exchange unless if s/he is made better off.' In contrast, one can suggest that people might enter into exchanges to sustain durable human relationships; an 'economic' exchange is only the limiting form of such a relationship, where the expected duration of time is zero. The entire discussion on gift and reciprocity becomes relevant in this issue<sup>108</sup>.

4) In production, the same type of arguments would apply, since the 'exchange' of labor for wages may be equally determined by social and relational factors, as by abstract needs and attributes<sup>109</sup>.

5) The inadequacy of the theory manifests itself in the form of poor predictive power<sup>110</sup>, as well as in the breaking down of the economic system wherever such predictive ability is used for prescriptive purposes<sup>111</sup>.

This implies that the current crisis in development theory has the potential of suggesting alternative ways of thinking about such basic values as progress, freedom and social change, not only for the Third World, but also and perhaps more importantly for the Other Worlds of this planet. These alternative ways of thinking have embedded in them alternative prescriptions for action, whether individual or collective, and alternative suggestions for institutional and social reform. Rather than look very generally at some social values and preferences, we shall focus on the issue of freedom and oppression to guide the discussion on the issue of the long-run impact of the impersonality postulate.

### 4.3 Culture and Values

To go from behavior to values, we need to re-open some settled questions. Development theory had accepted uncritically the notion that progress in the Third World is identical to a progressive emulation of the social, political and economic institutions in Western countries. Once this certainty is questioned, there arises the need for a new definition of progress to begin the discussion.

Ashis Nandy (1981) has provided a definition, to which, we believe, there can be little opposition. Nandy defines progress as 'an expansion in the awareness of oppression.' The assumption is that it is the awareness of oppression which creates resistance, and hence leads to its melioration. Since oppression is directly related to the notions of freedom and domination, this definition can be used as a starting point to discuss the specific role played by modernising theories in human emancipation.

All cultural systems recognize the need for interdependence of people in a society, and hence of the existence of constraints upon their behavior. To analyse these issues, we distinguish between 'internal' (i.e., stemming from the individual's self-definition) and 'external' constraints (i.e., those stemming from the individual's recognition of certain or probable loss of personal utility if the constraints are violated).



In each category, we can further distinguish between 'personal' or 'impersonal' constraints, depending on whether they are imposed in the context of a personal relationship, or by an impersonal agency respectively.

Finally, in every particular situation, a constraint could either be 'acceptable' or 'unacceptable,' and, if the latter, would give rise to a situation of unfreedom and resistance. 'Acceptability' means, in case of internal constraints, that they are consistent with one's self-definition; and in case of external constraints, that they are considered to be legitimate. Before we discuss this, however, it would be useful to give names to these constraints. This is done in the following diagrammatic summary:

	Impersonal	Personal
External	property rights	status, prestige
Internal	universal morality	contextual morality

Here, the socialised notions of freedom and fairness become important. In the approach taken by and legitimated by modern social theory, it is only the impersonal constraints which are considered to be 'fair' or acceptable, and only the external constraints which are considered necessary or reliable<sup>112</sup>.

As such, it is also possible to perceive the introduction of modernity as an attempt to replace personal and internal forms of constraints with impersonal and external ones. The shift in our perception of the natural environment from one which saw it as a personal constraint with the modern view of it as an impersonal constraint, has been noted and criticised by a number of psychologists from Carl Jung to James Hillman<sup>113</sup>. A devastating critique of this trend is in a proposal for a new 'dialogue with nature,' made by the Nobel Laureate physicist Ilya Prigogine to avoid the destructive social and environmental implications of the profound and implacable silence which greeted the post-Newtonian attempt at such a dialogue, paradoxically, since the self-awareness of the 'rational' man was necessary for the dialogue<sup>114</sup>.

#### **4.3.1 Constraints and Property Rights**

In social theory, external constraints are often referred to as 'property rights,' which are supported by two institutions: the market, and the State. The latter enforces property rights, while the former allows you to do whatever you like as long as you can provide adequate compensation. Economic theory considers the creation and expansion of property rights to lead to freedom, and the absence of such rights, referred to as

'externalities', to lead not only to unfreedom, but also to social conflict, inefficiency and sub-optimal performance.

However, merely the creation of rights is not enough; they also need to be enforced. Ubi jus, ibi remedium, says the legal maxim, 'where there is a right, there is a remedy.' The converse is also true, 'if there is no remedy, there is no right.' So, in order to obtain the desired solution, it is also required to create a legitimate enforcement mechanism.

This position has several problems, not the least of which is the fact that property rights can suffice for the creation of a free and harmonious society only if they can cover all possible transactions. Given the necessity of enforcement mechanisms, one can expect either an increase in surveillance and monitoring of individuals; or to increase the cost of violation of rights, whether perceived to be acceptable or not, either through the threat of starvation, or more directly through the expansion of terror in society<sup>115</sup>. These two tendencies are increasingly apparent in all three 'worlds' today as the modernisation project makes headway.

Another problem pointed out by several writers, beginning with Adam Smith in the Theory of Moral Sentiments, is the idea that the pursuit of self-interest in economic matters was acceptable only if everyone (or

almost everyone) followed a generally recognised moral code and had a common sense of justice; in other words, if there were sufficient internal constraints. Durkheim (1933), goes one step further to argue that impersonal constraints need to be complemented by personal ones; in his terms, given the uncertainty surrounding our actions, it is not possible for a social system to be based purely on 'contractual solidarity,' and that 'organic solidarity' was a necessary ingredient for the smooth functioning of the economy.

For the fact of the matter is that the inculcation of internal restraints also requires the acceptance of personal constraints. Notwithstanding the behaviorist school of psychology, it is difficult to imagine that rewards and punishment by an impersonal authority will suffice to teach moral values, rather than creating incentives to beat the system.

The shift from personal to impersonal constraints, and from internal to external ones, has three important consequences. First, it creates a strong advantage for centralized organizations, since such organizations are consistent only with strongly centralised forms of control and acceptance of impersonal authority; as such, this forces people to form organizations, simply in order to defend themselves against other organizations. Also, as noted, they are accompanied by the establishment

of powerful and impersonal structures of surveillance and control at the level of knowledge (technology), politics (organization) and architecture, which are to a certain degree irreversible.

Second, the imposition of such structures is resisted by people as a loss of their sovereignty, and has to be introduced by force. Such resistance is strongest where the penetration of impersonality is the most widespread, and where the cultural community is the most self-assured.

Third, it is generally possible only to wean away the younger people to this new form of thinking, and as such it requires the undermining of the authority of their elders. All of these developments can be recognized as part of the process of the introduction of modern values and institutions. As such, we would see the rise of various forms of resistance to modernisation as a rejection of the above changes in society.

#### **4.3.2 Culture as Resistance**

While each of the above changes re-inforces the others, and so cannot really be addressed in isolation, we can begin the discussion from the one which is most directly connected to the issue of freedom and resistance, i.e., the shift from personal to impersonal constraints. Note that resistance of whatever form is associated with the existence of unacceptable constraints upon one's

behavior, and of a general absence of freedoms. Hence, if impersonal constraints are not recognized to be fair and just in a society, their imposition is likely to be resisted. Thus, differences between various theorists over the interpretation of cultural resistance stem from underlying differences over definitions of freedom and of acceptable constraints.

Now, the acceptability or otherwise of these constraints arises from the nature of the world-view and self-definition imparted by a cultural system. Internal constraints emerging from one social role may be unacceptable if they come into conflict with the needs of another role; likewise, if they come into conflict with the notion of the rights and needs of the abstract individual. Conversely, external constraints imposed by legal or contractual obligations, or by paternalistic intervention may be unacceptable if they come into conflict with implicit notions of social relationships or of abstract rights<sup>116</sup>. As we discussed earlier, this conflict plays itself out in every decision, and alters the nature of the underlying roles and relationships<sup>117</sup>.

Be the above as it might, it is useful to ask how people respond to the introduction of impersonal constraints. Under a purely impersonal view of the relationship through which such constraints are manifested, they create incentives for evasion. In a personal

view, they create incentives for the 'humanization' of the constraints, and of changing the nature of relationships through loyalty, submission, and even resistance, but above all by the establishment of personal connections<sup>118</sup>. In both events, there will be a decline in efficiency of the operation, either through non-cooperation, or through the introduction of non-rational factors in the relation.

To summarize, the above argument raises three issues. First, that external constraints are not sufficient by themselves to establish a harmonious society; second, that the inculcation of internal constraints requires the strengthening of personal connections; and finally, that the imposition of impersonal constraints is resisted by people by various methods. The last point carries us back to the observed sources of dissatisfaction in third world countries today, since, as we argue, this dissatisfaction is related not to any new costs of modernisation, but to the establishment and multiplication of impersonal constraints.

Accordingly, we interpret the resistance of 'traditional' cultures to 'modern' values and practices as an attempt to avert problems which arise on account of this asymmetry, and to retain control over their own actions and their own environments. Development theory had set for itself the task of breaking down this resistance,

and of facilitating the introduction of modernity into the midst of traditional cultures. The abandonment of this project would require a re-evaluation of the built-in cultural biases of the theory, and cannot be restricted to a marginal change here or there.



**SECTION 5**

**Progress, Welfare, and Development**

## Progress, Welfare and Development

The above discussion was aimed at bringing out a few related points. First, the underlying unity of various modernising approaches and theories, notwithstanding the evidence of considerable debate and controversy among them. Second, a similar unity in the 'alternate' critiques of modernisation. Third, the sense in which the evolution of modernisation theory can be interpreted as a series of responses to the challenge posed by alternative critics. Fourth, the resilience of the project of modernisation in the face of continuous and substantive intellectual criticism as well as increasing evidence of political unrest and disaffection. Lastly, that the recent evidence of confusion and disarray in modernisation theory can be attributed to a convergence of the various critiques into an integrated one, namely the rejection of cultural colonialism by Western social scientists. We have suggested that this unity can be understood by using the notion of personal and impersonal relations as means of organizing reality.

Modernisation theories present us with a vision of the future, a 'theory of 'salvation' in Ashis Nandy's words, based on the superiority of the impersonal world view and the untenability and undesirability of personal constraints upon action. They promised an end to the

oppression created by poverty, under the assumption that whatever actions were adopted in pursuit of this goal would have no deleterious effect on other aspects of human freedoms, and could in fact provide a positive stimulus to those as well. The history of the last four decades tells another story, as the levels of State-sponsored oppression as well as civic violence in most countries has increased exponentially. It is possible to argue that notwithstanding the justification of modernity as a means of enhancing human freedoms in the Third World, it has served invariably to reduce freedom and to deny sovereignty to people wherever it has been introduced, and that the target of popular protest and resistance is precisely this disenfranchisement.

In the search for an alternative vision, we started with the notion of progress as being 'the expansion of the awareness of oppression in society,' and argued that contrary to the claims of modernisation theorists there is no direct relationship between impersonality and progress; indeed, in the modern world it is possible to infer the existence of an inverse relationship between the two. This, however, is only a negative comment. To go from this to a positive vision of the future as contained in the 'alternative' writings, the following points can be made.

The alternative vision is based on a theory of change fundamentally different from that which forms the basis of theories of modernisation. The latter generally invoke the existence of a crisis situation in the region of interest to argue that immediate action is necessary for the amelioration of the problem. The justification of immediate action then creates the legitimacy of large scale and centralised intervention, which has as a by-product the loss of sovereignty mentioned earlier. This does not mean, however, that the problems are resolved. Witness the snail's progress on such 'crisis' issues like poverty, hunger, malnutrition, environmental damage, among many others. It does mean, however, that the government or other centralised bodies will feel justified in their actions.

Now, a shared sense of a crisis may exist over some extreme situations (e.g., a famine or an epidemic) in some parts of the Third World, and in these cases immediate action would be fruitful, in part because the urgency of the situation would help in mobilising the populace for necessary action. But such extreme situations are rare. In other places, while there may be many problems, the absence of a shared sense of crisis means that centralised interventions will not only be ineffective, but may actually create more problems than they can or do solve.

The alternative vision starts with a denial of the legitimacy or even the desirability of these 'quick fixes.' Hence, it must deny also the theory of discontinuous change which follows from the invocation of a crisis. This is replaced by a theory of continuous change, a change which takes place as the result of resistance, protest, and challenges from below, rather than from an imposition from above. In fact, the main task of the theorist, in this sense, is to help strengthen resistance against oppressive institutions, so that the institutions can gradually be made redundant.

A corollary of this approach is to cast doubt upon the legitimacy of the expert, who relies upon impersonal, universal and objective knowledge. Clearly, the legitimacy of the expert derived from the belief that s/he has a claim to truth by virtue of their superior understanding of social phenomena. The manifest failures of the developmental project, however, help cast doubt on such an unequivocal claim, not because economists, for example, do not understand economics, but because they do not understand politics, sociology, psychology, and other areas in which the policies of economists have induced pathologies and problems.

This means that the traditional division of social science into independent and unrelated disciplines is not a useful way of approaching issues in the Third

World. It would be more productive to divide up the area of knowledge into geographical or cultural sub-divisions. But if we do this, then the contextuality of knowledge will increase, making the expert, trained in universal sciences, an anachronism. Furthermore, as Jurgen Habermas has indicated, the validity claim of someone speaking in a geographically isolated context, would be based on 'sincerity' and not 'Truth,' and therefore be subject to various other stresses and strains.

Second, the demand that this imposes on the social theorist is, in Tambiah's (1985) words, to take responsibility for the longer run consequences of their prescriptions, including those which are normally the subject-matter of other disciplines.

Third, this approach will seek to legitimise and strengthen indigenous ways of knowing, particularly those based on a direct personal relationship with the limits of the social and physical environment; and will desist from creating elite ways of knowing which cannot be used by the subjects themselves.

Given the prescription for resistance to impersonal intervention, it is obvious that the alternative approach will have a relatively long time horizon, and will not seek to create a new world overnight. What will be the features of the longer-run objective?

The popular and intellectual resistance to processes favouring centralisation of authority, power, and knowledge indicate that a vision of the future in the Third World must explicitly be one of a decentralised polity, economy, and society. In addition to the obvious forms of political and economic decentralisation, there is also a need for what may be termed epistemological decentralisation.

At the political level, the role and function of the nation-state has come under a great degree of stress. Given the centralisation of power and authority in the institutions of the modern state, it has been practically impossible for most countries to maintain even a semblance of democracy for any significant length of time. Ethnic and linguistic differences in most of these countries have exacerbated the pressures on the state, as also have the dramatic increases in urban population, far faster than the increase in the governments' ability to manage the cities. It seems to us that a shift towards a decentralised polity is the only solution for most Third World societies.

Such decentralisation would mean an increase in the powers and functions of 'local' governments, whether at the level of a village, a group of villages, small towns, or of possible sub-divisions of large cities. 'Increase in powers' refers to the ability to raise revenues, to spend them on development, redistribution, or on the

maintenance of social peace. Such a system would also necessitate the establishment of institutions which can coordinate the actions of decentralisation units.

Decentralisation also implies bringing the political unit to the level where the shared values and cognitive systems can facilitate the development and maintenance of 'organic solidarity' in Durkheim's words.

Legal decentralisation would imply the transfer of legislative and executive powers to the decentralised units. Economic decentralisation refers to the development of production systems which can facilitate direct participation in economic decision-making by people involved in the production process. This is related to the notion that the knowledge as well as action should be responsive to the environmental (social as well as physical) boundaries of the participants' world.

This notion of limits has a relationship with the notion of non-violence - violence against humans as well as violence against nature. Impersonal and instrumental forms of knowledge permit violence, understood as actions which go beyond acceptable limits and are therefore irreversible in a larger social sense. This is exhibited in the wanton destruction of the environment which has become a fact of life in many parts of the Third World - deforestation, pollution, wasteful use of non-renewable energy and other materials - as well as in the organised



forms of violence against human beings. The shift in perception away from these universal and impersonal perspective towards one based on direct human connections can help create the notion of sustainable development as a fundamental human value, and therefore also the basis for popular resistance against violence.

In our view, however, the most important issue is that of epistemological decentralisation. This means the approach to knowledge which emphasises its shared nature. Repeated experience in the Third World (as well as in the West recently), have shown that alien forms of knowledge can be accepted by people in a situation of crisis, or as a temporary measure, but not in 'normal' times as a permanent feature of social existence. For example, there is the common observation that it is easy to build systems (e.g., factories, transport systems, other urban services) in the Third World but very difficult to maintain them. The first can be accepted as a temporary feature, but the second requires a radical shift in orientation which is difficult to bring about. The only solution is to cast the problem in the indigenous metaphor, whether of ritual or science. The idea behind this line of argument is that systems should be looked at in terms of their susceptibility to popular control, rather than to technical efficiency or some such.

Finally, it may be added that a vision of this type is simply a means of organising ideas and for indicating the possibility of alternatives. The actual details may differ from place to place in accordance with the specific cultural characteristics peculiar to that place.

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## **FOOTNOTES**

## FOOTNOTES

1. Other terms, such as westernisation or rationalisation have also been employed to bring out relevant aspects of this process. We use 'modernisation' as an omnibus term to refer to the overall process of social change within which one or more specific streams may be present.
2. The self-confidence of the scientists derived in great measure from the unqualified support they received from nationalising elites (such as India's Prime Minister Nehru) in the receiving countries whose faith in the beneficence of Western rationality was, if anything, even more unequivocal.
3. While different writers suggest different dates for the onset of this period of disillusionment (in some cases as early as 1960), we see the mid-to-late 1970s as the watershed. One reason is the series of events - Vietnam, OPEC, Watergate, prolonged recession - which helped to destroy the myth of permanent Western superiority.
4. Prominent examples of such criticism from notable experts would include, Henry Bruton (1983), Albert Hirschman (1983), Amartya Sen (1983), and the various references cited therein. Equally important but less prominent are the expressions of disillusionment in influential textbooks on development: Meier's (4th edn., 1984) opening sentence talks about the "dissatisfaction with the result of development efforts over the past three decades" (p. 5); in a similar vein, Chapter 1 of Yotopoulos and Nugent's (1976) textbook is entitled "The Record of Economic Development and the Disillusionment With Development Economics". Other examples could be given.
5. And some of these, perhaps relatedly, in industrialised countries, most notably the United States, as well.
6. As Attewell (1984) argues, such redefinitions of the paradigms are also evident in recent Marxist thought.
7. Development Economics focusses on economic factors, and seeks to bring about an increase in per capita output of third world countries, the assumption being that other desirable attributes of Westernization will follow more or less automatically.
8. The various schools differ from each other in medium term targets as well as in assumptions of exogeneity and endogeneity. The neoclassical approach considers the



unfettering of the market as the key to economic development, the institutionalist and structuralist approaches, less sanguine, recommend direct action by the government.

9. The tension between these schools is resolved in the form of sub-strategies which have themselves acquired the status of paradigms (e.g., basic needs, redistribution with growth, import substitution, export promotion, or rural development). The sub-strategies are both, attempts to adapt development goals to popular needs; and (more cynically) efforts to make the development project more acceptable politically and hence more feasible.

10. While the Political Economy school has provided the major share of the criticism of mainstream theories (and hence should be placed in the category of 'alternative' views), its orthodox wing also shares with mainstream writers, the linear view of progress according to which developing countries are on an evolutionary trail blazed out by the industrialized countries. Recognizing this dualism, we have categorized such writings among the modernizing group as well as among the critical group.

11. The World Systems approach was pioneered by the seminal work of Immanuel Wallerstein (1974) and built upon the ideas developed by dependency writers. Its distinguishing feature is an attempt to get away from the nation-state as a natural unit of analysis, and to see the emergence and development of capitalism as a global phenomenon.

12. The distinguishing feature of dependency theory is the analytical distinction between 'center' and 'periphery' countries as a means for understanding the twin phenomena of 'development' in Northern countries and 'underdevelopment' in the South.

13. Unlike the other two Marxian paradigms, non-dependency writers give less importance to external factors and more to internal class conflict in explaining social evolution.

14. The prescriptive content of this discipline, derived from normative (western) political philosophy, is the advocacy of "superior" western political institutions, including an efficient bureaucracy, some form of electoral democracy, political parties and pluralist associations, and the acceptance of abstract political rights. In theoretical terms, the issues boil down to a discussion of two dimensions of power in society, namely its expansion and legitimation. The former, brought about mainly by increasing the efficiency of the bureaucratic machinery,

makes for more effective policy intervention; while the latter, whether through electoral means, media persuasion, or elite dominance, ensures that this effectiveness is not at the cost of future political stability (and, hence future policy effectiveness), nor that of social and political rights. See, e.g., Pye (1965).

15. These include the inculcation of Max Weber's Protestant Ethic (later modernized in the form of Talcott Parson's pattern variables, McClelland's "need for Achievement" and Inkeles and Smith's Overall Modernity Index), or Schumpeter's entrepreneurial values; or the overcoming of Banfield's "amoral familism", or Hoselitz's ascriptive relations and diffuse functional identities. Once again, these writings assumed that the factors under consideration were exogenous, and that the overcoming of obstacles generated by their absence would lead to the breaking of other bottlenecks, and of an expansion in economic growth.

16. For another argument on the common grounds between mainstream and radical theories of development, see Wilber and Jameson (1984).

17. Thomas Kuhn's influence should be obvious in this discussion. Kuhn's introduction of notions like, 'the priority of the paradigm,' or 'normal science as puzzle-solving,' as well as the role of anomalies and crises in theoretical evolution have been the major source of ideas in the sociology of knowledge literature. See Kuhn (1970) particularly Chapters IV to VIII.

18. The various writings will generally be unified as a 'moral defense of modernisation' only at a metaphorical or 'deep structural' level, to use a term popularised by Naom Chomsky, even though there might be substantial differences in their 'surface structure.'

19. It may be noted, however, that the distinction between the two types of critiques may be somewhat arbitrary in many instances, especially when it comes to the work of such "iconoclasts" as Albert Hirschman, Paul Streeten, or Amartya Sen, who combine the critique with a way of assimilating it into the theory.

20. The term 'Intra-paradigmatic' critique is perhaps self-explanatory. An example from the literature on Development Economics is the controversy over culturally specific institutions (e.g., the extended family) which influence behaviour in traditional societies. Some writers contend that the existence of such institutions

be taken as parametric and economic theory be tailored to incorporate their effect on behaviour and welfare; others take a more functionalist approach to argue that these institutions serve a 'rational' purpose and therefore should be derivable from rational axioms of behaviour. Also, that their raison d'être will disappear with the advent of modernity.

21. Examples include disagreements between political scientists and development economists over the role and function of the state, or that between sociologists and economists over the proper analysis of institutions, or even the disputes between orthodox neoclassical development economists and those of a more eclectic persuasion.

22. These writings include the 'humanistic development' school, critics of the violent and disenfranchising nature of modern science and technology, and of their effects on social arrangements or the natural environment, writers who link the neo-colonialism of developmentalism with the psychological effects of political colonialism, advocates of a culture-based approach to welfare and progress as well as to notions of political conflict and to epistemological and methodological issues, and some writers in various religious traditions. See Section 3.8 for a more detailed discussion.

23. This literature would include the writings of the Critical Theory school of Marxism, social philosophers (Elster, Rorty) who focus on the uniqueness of unfettered rationality, Gramscians and other political theorists and political anthropologists who question the notion of the nation-state as a rationalisation of social discipline; neo-structuralists and semiotists who highlight the hegemonistic role of science and scientific methodologies, psychologists who raise the issue of alienation and socio-psychological anomie, and cultural anthropologists who point to the cultural specificity of modern Western values and institutions. See Section 3.8 for a more detailed discussion.

24. The concerns expressed by these movements have been echoed, and in some cases, anticipated by similar movements in Western countries. Particularly noteworthy are the Womens' movements, the Peace movement in Europe, and the Greens movement in West Germany.

25. It may perhaps be apposite to note here that these distinctions between various criticisms are for purposes of clarification only, and need not have any direct congruence with particular writers or even particular articles, although in most cases this will indeed turn

out to be the case. As mentioned earlier, "iconoclastic" writers, such as Hirschman, Streeten, or Sen, may often fall into more than one category, even in the space of the same paper.

26. To give an analogy from another field of economics, the 'Rational Expectations' school of macroeconomics emerged in the late 1970s in response to the failure of existing theoretical approaches. It is this date which sociologists of knowledge will look at when trying to understand the evolution of modern macroeconomics, even though the idea of 'rational expectations' had emerged as early as 1959 in the writings of John Muth.

27. Boeke (1953).

28. See Little (1982: 385ff), "The liberal economists' assimilation of 'development' to 'welfare' constitutes a persuasive use of language, which is new as compared with the usage of colonial economists and writers before World War II".

29. See Lewis (1954).

30. See Fei and Ranis (1964).

31. See Jorgensen (1967).

32. Hobsbawm does not fit this group entirely. While he celebrates the heroism of the rebels, he regards them as 'primitive' (as evidenced from the title of his classic, Primitive Rebels), as archaic social movements which were 'against' history and hence doomed, but which were creating obstacles in the path of class resistance.

33. cf. Ranajit Guha (ed, 1982); also Guha (1983).

34. These include McClelland's Need for Achievement (i.e., things like punctuality, efficiency, long time horizon, pursuit of excellence, etc.), Hoselitz's formulation based on Talcott Parson's famous pattern variables: ascription/achievement, universalism/particularism, specificity/diffuseness, Pye and Verba's trust and loyalty to the nation state rather than to personal connections. Most writings are quite explicitly pejorative of traditional values, though this leads to ironic outcomes. For example, Inkeles and Smith, after waxing eloquent about modernity, mention that they preferred the label "modern" for these set of values instead of "bureaucratic" or "organizational", because the latter (although not inappropriate) had derogatory connotations.

35. However, they have probably had a fairly important effect on the thinking of theorists and policy makers. To give but one example, Everett Hagen's theory of 'blocked minorities' may have no direct policy relevance, but the effect of the legitimation provided by modernising theories as well as by supportive institutions (the school, the media, the state), can be seen to have created a 'blocked majority' in Third world countries, whose values and ideas are being rejected by its children as being irrelevant for the problems facing them.

36. With the exception of Inkeles and Smith, who consider change taking place due to exposure to modern institutions, such as the factory, the city, the political party, or the school. They argue that such changes can take place during adulthood as well.

37. Every country in Africa had a coup or some form of civil unrest during the 1960s. The situation in Latin America was not much different. See the various articles in Uphoff and Ilchman (eds, 1972), particularly Nulty and Nulty, and Zolberg.

38. These would include, for example, the political and spontaneous expressions of disaffection in East Pakistan (now Bangladesh).

39. This is not surprising, considering that economists often declare themselves incapable of dealing with non-economistic questions.

40. Similar 'de-politicising' responses emerge in other areas as well, and result from a type of technological fix, which sees economic and political questions as being distinct. For a technologist response to the environmental criticism of development, see Enzenberger (1974).

41. cf. Bruton (1983).

42. Myrdal (1968, pp. 895-900).

43. Myrdal (1968, p. 897).

44. Myrdal (1968, p. 899).

45. For a criticism of this notion in the case of India, see Bardhan (1984), particularly Chapter 9.

46. The term 'expansion' of power is used in Huntington's sense, namely to represent an increase in the ability of the 'rational' state to influence social decisions. A

common remark in political development writings is that traditional societies have very little power but it is heavily concentrated in a few hands, whereas modern societies have a great deal of power which is distributed somewhat more widely.

47. For example, Huntington (1968) argues that political instability is the result of an explosion of mass political participation (due to urbanisation, industrialisation and educational expansion) relative institutional capacity which can absorb the new participants.

48. Weiner refrains from calling the two cultures 'modern' and 'traditional,' since he believes that that would be an over-simplification and, given his unequivocal support of modernisation, an unwarranted normative judgement that the former is good and the latter bad.

49. Which meant, in the context of the Third World, groups connected with the 'center' countries, in collusion with the purely indigenous groups.

50. Quoted in Bardhan (1984, p. 76).

51. See Burki (1976). For a criticism of Burki's argument and methodology, see Alavi (1976).

52. For an excellent overview of the nineteenth century literature on anarchism in Europe, see Woodcock (1986). As Woodcock notes, the association commonly made between anarchism and violence or terror may have contributed to the marginalisation of this train of thought.

53. Such as Rousseau's familiar dictum on the difference between representation and participation in the context of the discussion on the general will. Anarchism's almost total acceptance of individualism and impersonality not only as values but also as essential human characteristics, distinguish it from much of the Third World literature on participation. One anarchist writer who takes an alternative position on this subject is Peter Kropotkin. See Woodcock, op. cit., pp.11-31.

54. For a condensed description of the work and impact of the Frankfurt School, see Bottomore (1984).

55. For a recent discussion of Gramsci's work and its political and intellectual impact, see the various articles in Mouffe, ed., (1979).

56. Peter Kropotkin was, after Proudhon, the pre-eminent writer of the anarchist or anti-authoritarian tradition. In his classic (1902) study he presented detailed historical and anthropological evidence to argue, in opposition to the then popular Social Darwinist position, that mutuality and cooperation were significant forces in society, and that the coercive force of the state created obstacles in its exercise.

57. Mumford's (1961) classic study traces the evolution of the city from the dawn of civilisation to the emergence of the megalopolises of the twentieth century. It contains a devastating critique of the disenfranchising and oppressive consequences of political centralisation associated with modernity. See particularly, pp. 568-576.

58. These include such non-governmental organizations as women's movements in different parts of the world, cultural interpretive movements such as the Lokayan in India, 'base communities' formed under the auspices of liberation theology in Latin America, and the start of a return to rural areas in African countries.

59. See, for example, Sheahan (1980), Hirschman (1981).

60. Killick (1976) argues that economists should replace their monistic vision of the society and the state with one, which recognises the existence of tension and differentiation in them, and thus to see policy as a balancing act, rather than the actions of a benevolent and omnipotent entity.

61. See Huntington (1968).

62. See Rondinelli et al. (1983) for a review of the experience of decentralisation in development.

63. This is exemplified by the introduction of more sophisticated models of economic and political functioning as a solution for the inadequacy of earlier models. For example, the simple macroeconomic models of yesterday have given way to mammoth Computable General Equilibrium models.

64. See Lipton (1977) for an ingenious explanation of the persistence of rural poverty as the result of an 'urban bias' among the national elites, indicating that it could, in principle, be cured.

65. It has to be clarified here that in Marx's works, the existence of alienation is not restricted to capitalist society. However, alienation in production does increase

under capitalism. For a review of the issues, see Josephson and Josephson (1962).

66. See Marglin (1974).

67. For example, the Iranian revolution, the Iran-Iraq war, the oil embargo and other actions by OPEC countries.

68. Sadat's assassination, the Lebanese crisis.

69. Islamic laws in Pakistan, the Panchsila approach in Indonesia, the efforts to build an Islamic society in Libya.

70. Examples might include "liberation theology" in Latin America [see Gutierrez (1973)], various Gandhi-ist, environmentalist, and cultural revivalist movements in India [See Nandy (1984)], as well as the Green movement in West Germany [See Bahro (1986)]. Many other examples could be given. For instance, the journal World Development devoted an entire issue (July/August 1980) to the subject, "Religious Values and Development". For an excellent review and discussion of the role of alternative movements, see Nerfin (1985).

71. There were many earlier Islamic revival movements, such as the ones inspired by Jamal-al-Din Afghani in Afghanistan, Syed Ahmed Shaheed in India, Sanusi and the Mahdi of the Sudan, among many others. For a brief description of these movements, see Mortimer (1982). As mentioned in the text, these share certain similarities with other indigenous revival movements. The distinctly traditional flavor of various African nationalist movement has been noted by many writers; Hindu revival movements in India can be seen as intellectual precursors of the current rejection of westernization. However, as Nandy (1983) explains in his penetrating analysis of the impact of colonialism, unlike Gandhi's approach, many of the visionaries in these movements tended to accept the norms of the colonisers while rejecting their domination.

72. To give but one example, up until the 1960s, radical intellectuals in Muslim countries like Pakistan used to perceive religion as completely antagonistic to their values and principles. Today, many radicals who are strongly opposed to orthodox religious parties or leaders as well as to the militaristic or pro-state views of these parties, will generally employ the Islamic idiom in their own political opinions, and even make explicit reference to the role of religion and tradition in determining their ideals. In other words, rather than accepting the overall dictates of the modernity project



and opposing it at one or the other edges, these intellectuals are searching for an alternate framework to unify their different critiques.

73. e.g., political instability; ethnic and racial violence; political repression by the increasingly centralized states; the disenfranchisement of the population not only by the respective governments, but also by the introduction of new technology and institutions resistant to popular control; the alarming deterioration in the physical environment; rapid urbanization, with attendant costs in terms of social disintegration and decay.

74. For a critical review of Lal's polemic against mainstream development economics, see Stewart (1985) or Toye (1985).

75. In a joint paper with Edward Amadeo (1987). See also the various references cited in that paper, particularly Taylor (1987), Pack and Westphal (1986), Hughes and Singh (1987), Fishlow (1987), Aghazadeh and Evans (1985).

76. See also Stewart (1985) and Toye (1985).

77. For the last strand in the argument with regard to the failure of the neoclassical experiment in Chile, see Foxley (1982).

78. This is not to suggest that there were no writings on these other issues. It simply means that issues of trade theory were the center of everyone's attention, and the way to gaining prestige in the profession.

79. Durkheim's view, presented in his two classic works, The Division of Labor in Society (1933, first published 1893) and Suicide (1951, first published 1897), is of society as interaction or relationship, rather than as a contract between individuals; the relationships defining a moral order bound by shared sentiments. He rejected the then popular notion of the individual being prior to society, and argued that the understanding of society, including our approach to observed pathologies, had to take place at the social rather than the individual or psychological level.

80. Parsons' synthesis of the works of Weber and Durkheim (and Malinowski) derive from their shared interest in the 'problem of meaning.' Parsons noted that there was a complementarity between Weber's historical analysis of the variability of social structures in terms of their

cumulative intellectual traditions, and Durkheim and Malinowski's work on contemporary societies which drew the distinction between intellectual processes for the construction of meaning on the one hand and those aimed at the solution of practical problems on the other. See Parsons (1954, pp. 204-210).

81. Mead (1934) stressed the role of communication in the development of the human agent. Communication allows individuals to assume the roles of others, and thus facilitates the simultaneous development of individualism as well as sociability. This led him to the observation that human behaviour will reflect the tension between the imperatives of these two roles, which he termed the 'I' and the 'me' respectively. Much of Mead's work complemented that of Freud.

82. Geertz (1973), pp. 50. The flexibility and learning capacity that this implies has often been remarked upon as the humans' source of advantage over other animals; equally, though less noted, is the disadvantage of our extreme dependence on such a system of learning.

83. This analogy was suggested by Oldrich Kyn in a seminar at the Applied Economics Research Centre at Karachi.

84. Geertz (1973), pp. 49.

85. See Uberoi (1978) for a discussion of modernity and its conceptions of ontology, epistemology, and cosmology.

86. This point is rather obvious, but worth belaboring nonetheless. Think of the difference between a house and a home, between an animal and a pet, between the person in the street and a friend, etc. In each case, the former can be thought of in terms of a finite number of impersonal attributes (based on our needs?), while the textured nature of our relationship to the latter makes it impossible for us to perceive them only in terms of a few attributes.

87. This impersonal/personal contrast has close analogies with Dumont's Individualism and Holism, Tonnies' Gesellschaft and Gemeinschaft, Maine's Contract and Status, Durkheim's Contractual Solidarity and Organic Solidarity, Sen's Self-interest and Commitment, and Habermas' Rational-purposive action and Communicative action.

88. Dumont (1977: pp. 4). This broad distinction has a wealth of implications. For example, in individualistic societies, but not in holistic ones, relations between men are subordinated to the relations between men and

things; and economic aspects of society are segregated from the remaining part of social arrangements.

89. That 'modern' societies are 'individualistic,' where the goals and preferences of individuals are taken to be metaphysical entities, has also been noted by various other authors. For example, see Polanyi (1944: pp. 163-91), Durkheim (1964: 200-32), Slater (1970), Lasch (1979). A similar distinction is made by Sen (1977). Our differences with Sen are along the lines taken by Das and Nicholas (1982).

90. A somewhat similar distinction is made by Gilligan (1983) between 'masculine' and 'feminine' forms of self-definition in Western countries. Gilligan sees men defining the world in terms of moral absolutes, while women define it in terms of relationships.

91. The last sentence should indicate quite clearly that the 'personal' and 'impersonal' maps are not intended to represent any real society or culture, since it is difficult to imagine any culture which would be silent on the role of personal attributes or preferences in forming one's identity.

92. For a discussion of the effect of positivism on economic thinking, see Caldwell (1982).

93. For a critique of the authoritarian implications of this approach to knowledge, see Nandy (1987). Habermas's distinction between rational-purposive action and communicative action is also relevant here. See Habermas (1984), particularly pp. 157-85, and 186-215.

94. This sense is related to Habermas's distinction between rational-purposive action and communicative action, the latter aiming at legitimacy, sincerity, and comprehensibility, rather than at 'truth' defined in an abstract and universal sense. See Habermas (1986). A related notion emerges from Mead's view of the development of thinking as the result of communication. See Mead (1934).

95. See Rorty (1979), particularly Chapter VII.

96. Here, it may be useful to suggest an analogy. Just as we argue that the impersonal and personal maps are necessary for each other because they help limit each other's excesses, it can be argued that the notions of 'cultural relativism' and 'cultural absolutism' are also necessary for each other, since they similarly limit the excesses which might result from an asymmetric

reliance on one or the other viewpoint as a guide to behavior.

97. See Scott (1976), Popkin (1979).

98. See, e.g., Donham (1981) on labor exchange in the Malle, or Wiener's (1978) account of the role played by yams in Trobriand social life.

99. It should be noted here though, that if the personal aspect was dominant instead of the impersonal one, even then the primary tension would be readily resolved, and would similarly give rise to another secondary conflict - that between different relationships, or different obligations. This has obvious parallels to Gilligan's (1983) argument, regarding different ways of perceiving moral dilemmas, either as conflicts between principles, or as conflicts between obligations. Here also, if a model could be specified with as much precision as the neoclassical model, a similar predictive ability could well be obtained.

100. On this point, see the illuminating discussion by Godelier (1972), pp. 251-79.

101. On this point, see the very insightful analysis in Sen (1977).

102. An extreme, but by no means isolated, example of this attempt at universalisation is Gary Becker's (1974) application of the neoclassical method even to the analysis of personal and intimate relationships.

103. It should perhaps be pointed out here that it is equally possible to reduce the analysis in the other direction, and to perceive even the impersonal form of self-definition as another socially determined 'role,' which can come into conflict with personal 'relationships,' i.e., other 'roles.' So, for instance, it is just as possible to say, 'I may be a businessman, but I am also your friend,' as it is to say, 'I may be your friend, but I am also a person.'

104. The argument here borrows from Leibenstein (1976) and the surrounding debate over X-efficiency.

105. The Protean nature of Marxist theory makes this a somewhat unfair comment. As Attewell (1983) among others has pointed out, recent radical writings can be seen as a responses to new problems and challenges, often with a significant adaptation of the basic paradigm. There is also the existence of such schools as the

Structuralists, or the Critical Theorists, who see the central contribution of Marx to lie in his epistemological breakthrough. See Resnick and Wolff (1982). It is fair to say, however, that the mainstream of Marxist theory is liable to the accusations levelled at it in the text.

106. Modernity is often said to have universalized the market as a social mechanism, but the reverse effect has not been given equal attention, namely that the impersonal relations expressed through a market exchange are also important for modernity to have continued to maintain its hold on peoples' consciousness.

107. See, e.g., Spanos (1985).

108. See, e.g., Sahlins (1972), Chapter 4,5.

109. On this point, see the excellent discussion by Donham (1981).

110. Such ineffectiveness in prediction is often remarked upon in case of Third world countries, but it could apply equally well to the areas of economic theory in the West, where personal factors are important, but not given adequate recognition. The most obvious example would be wage behavior.

111. This might include alienation and its attendant psychological problems, the increase in violence, declines in productivity, etc.

112. In case of internal constraints, this is self-evident in the superiority accorded to universal over contextual or relational morality [see Gilligan (1983)]. Similarly, for external constraints, it is equally obvious in the notion of "rule of law", or a criticism of "paternalism"; in the delegitimation of the authority of those who have a direct personal interest in the welfare of whoever is subject to such constraints; as also in the increased legitimacy of the authority of impersonal agents, be they law-enforcers, managers of organizations, sellers of products or of expertise, or those fulfilling a contract.

113. See Hillman (1975). He argues that many problems in psycho-analysis as well as in social functioning can be traced back to the de-personification of nature. He is loosely in the Jungian tradition of archetypal psychology, although he is criticised by many Jungian psychologists for being a deviant.

114. See Prigogine and Stengers (1984).

115. For an analysis of these consequences, see Bowles and Gintis (1986), Chapter 5. Also see Berger (1976) and the various works by Foucault on panopticism, particularly (1980).

116. As Gilligan (1983) has shown, it is possible to argue from both perspectives. We can say that there is a conflict between two abstract attributes, loyalty and truthfulness; or that there is a conflict between two social roles/relationships.

117. This point arises in the elegant critique levelled at Western liberal theory by Bowles and Gintis (1986). They argue that the notions of freedom and democracy in liberal political thought was strongly grounded in a separation between 'learners' and 'choosers.' While the latter were thought to be fully formed individuals, who had the right to make choices without any unnecessary constraints, the former (i.e., children, workers, people from non-European cultures or races) were implicitly regarded as unready for such a responsibility, and therefore to be denied this freedom while they were in the learning stage. We can take their argument one step further, and raise the issue that, after all is said and done, "learning" does require a submission of the ego, and hence the acceptance of external constraints, and the problem is not so much in the fact that 'learners' do not have freedom of choice, but rather that people are placed in this category only to sustain and legitimate the existing distribution of power; and more importantly, that these constraints over the "learners" are intended to be impersonal in character.

118. See Scott (1976) for an analysis of peasant resistance and protest in an alternative cultural setting. Also see Janeway (1981) for an argument on the ability of the 'weak' to create autonomy and challenge oppression.