

CAPITALIST INDUSTRIALIZATION IN THE THIRD WORLD: THEORETICAL AND HISTORICAL ISSUES

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The emergence of significant cases of capitalist industrialization in what are now referred to as the newly industrializing countries (NICs) of the Third World in Latin America and Asia continues to provoke major critiques of development theories and strategies. While it is true that the NICs represent but a minor and perhaps anomalous current in the vastly differentiated social formations of the Third World, their experiences seem to represent so far the most forceful challenge to the core assumptions of both mainstream and radical theories of development in the Third World.

By their increasingly important role in the world economy, the NICs have shifted the terrain of contemporary debate on development from one that posits the continuing underdevelopment of the Third World, to one that investigates the specific conditions and practices that make possible capitalist industrialization of the Third World within the world economy.

PARADIGMS OF CAPITALIST DEVELOPMENT IN THE THIRD WORLD

Much debate and controversy mark the theoretical efforts to understand the nature of capitalist development in the Third World. These theoretical differences, in turn, lead to varying and at times, contradictory development

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policy prescriptions. Two broad paradigms to the problem may be identified: the classical/diffusionist and the radical/dependency paradigms.

The classical/diffusionist paradigm assumes that the capitalist mode of production is a historically progressive form that sets off a more or less inevitable process of accumulation and economic development. This process springs naturally from within a given society or is imposed from without through the expansion of the world capitalist market. In the case of the Third World as pointed out by Brenner (1977, p. 25), this paradigm envisions, "a more or less direct and inevitable process of capitalist expansion: undermining old modes of production, replacing them with capitalist social productive relations and, on this basis, setting off a process of capital accumulation and economic development more or less following the pattern of the original homelands of capitalism.

The classical paradigm subsumes the disparate theoretical and political perspectives of both orthodox Marxism and the liberal, evolutionary theories of economic development. Both schools share the paradigm's "domain assumptions" on the nature of capitalism and the process of its expansion and impact on the Third World (Werker, 1985, p. 82). For instance Seers (1984) stresses that Bill Warren (1973, 1980) who articulates the most robust assumptions of orthodox Marxism on the inevitability of capitalist industrialization in the Third World, comes to much the same conclusion as do the neo-classical economists. Aside from both schools having their roots in the classics, Seers (1984, p. 54) also points out that:

Both doctrines assume competitive markets and the overriding importance of material incentives. They are both basically internationalist and also optimistic, technocratic, and economicist. In particular, they both treat economic growth as "development" and as due primarily to capital accumulation.

Such shared "domain assumptions" do not obscure the fundamental differences that separate Marxists from their liberal, neo-classical counterparts

particularly in their contrasting views on the future of capitalism as an economic system.¹ Both schools, however, affirm the fundamental premise that the expansion of capitalism beyond its natural frontiers, whether by implantation or endogenous growth develops the productive forces and industrializes the non-capitalist, backward ones.

On the other hand, the radical/dependency paradigm argues that capitalism has had a far more problematic trajectory of growth and impact on the non-capitalist, backward world. Various authors sharing this perspective contend that capitalist expansion has served to "prevent, arrest, or distort" economic development in the periphery. Within this paradigm, two broad theoretical and political perspectives may be seen: the stagnationist/underdevelopment perspective primarily identified with Baran and Frank²; and the various approaches to theorizing the non-stagnationist but nevertheless special and distinctive effects of capitalist penetration and development in the Third World as contrasted with the classical experience in the capitalist homelands. This contradictory process is variously seen as the dynamics of a new (colonial) mode of production specific to the colonies and peripheral countries (Alavi, 1975; Banaji, 1972, 1977); as the prolonged dominance of merchant capital in the economically backward social formations (Kay, 1975); as the articulation of capitalist and pre-capitalist modes of production (Wolpe, 1980; Rey, 1982); as the "internationalization of capital" (Palloix, 1975; Cypher, 1979); or as special forms of "dependent development" (Cardoso, 1972; Evans, 1979).

¹ Much rethinking, however, has taken place among Marxist and radical circles about the future of capitalist and socialist systems in the light of the upheavals in the "actually existing socialist countries."

² The classic works on underdevelopment theory include the following books: Paul Baran, *The Political Economy of Growth* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1957); and G.F. Frank, *Capitalism and Underdevelopment* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1967); and *Latin America: Underdevelopment or Revolution* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1969).

ON CAPITALIST INDUSTRIALIZATION IN THE THIRD WORLD

In the Third World, the reaction to capitalist penetration and incorporation into the world economy has differed from place to place and continues to vary in significant ways. At a general level, explanations of capitalist industrialization in the Third World stress either the primacy of the changes taking place in the capitalist world economy or factors that are more specific to the history and internal structure of the country itself. At one level of integration, the relationship between external and internal forces can be seen as "forming a complex whole whose structural links are not based on mere external forms of exploitation and coercion, but are rooted in coincidences of interests between local dominant classes and international ones, and, on the other side, are challenged by local dominated groups and classes" (Cardoso and Faletto, 1979, p. xvi).

The point of departure for explanations stressing the changes in the world capitalist centers as the main determinants of Third World industrialization revolves on how industrial capital has broadened its sphere of operation internationally (Palloix, 1975; Hymer, 1972), resulting in a "new international division of labor" (Frobel, Heinrichs, and Kreye, 1980). These new conditions for the internationalization of industrial production have been facilitated by the tremendous improvements in production technology related to transport, communications, information and organization, and new process technologies allowing for the decomposition of complex production processes into elementary units for Third World operations. As pointed out by Frobel *et al.* (1978, p. 23):

... the classical international division of labor — on the basis of which a small number of industrialized countries and a much greater number of underdeveloped countries (integrated into the world economy essentially as suppliers of raw materials and occasionally cheap labor) stood ranged against each other — is being replaced by a new international division of labor. For the first time in centuries the underdeveloped countries are becoming sites for manufacturing industry on a vast and growing scale. Concomitantly, the new international division of labor entails a growing fragmentation of the production process into a variety of partial operations performed worldwide at different production locations.

Another important reason cited for the internationalization of the circuit of productive capital concerns the crisis of capital accumulation in the advanced capitalist nations. Some of the developments pointed out to support this view include the cyclical imbalances arising from overproduction or underconsumption (de Janvry and Garramon, 1977); falling rates of profit in the center (Mandel, 1975); and intensified competition between individual capitals in the advanced capitalist nations (Bienefeld, 1981). In short, these conditions presumably make the investment of productive capital in the advanced capitalist nations relatively less attractive compared with those of the Third World.

However, neither the assumed "homoficent"³ nature of capitalism nor the internationalization of capital has resulted in an undifferentiated pattern of industrialization in the Third World. After all, very few countries have shown the capability or sustained capacity for capitalist industrialization that has marked the growth pattern of the four tigers of Asia and those of the major Latin American industrializing countries of Mexico, Brazil, and Argentina. Furthermore, even among these countries there are important differences in their conditions for industrialization and development strategies (Evans, 1987; Gereffi and Wyman, 1978).

Without losing sight of the importance of the conjunctural crises or historical breaks provided by changes in the capitalist world economy, it is critical to theorize the internal patterns of class relations, political processes and practices that enable certain countries of the Third World to respond favorably to such crises and opportunities. By theorizing the nature of the environment that capitalism relates to in its expansion path, the highly complex, diverse, and differentiated result of this process is better understood.

³ A term used by Aidan Foster-Carter to refer to "doing the same thing," or "having the same effect", a characteristic attributed to capitalism as a mode of production. See Aidan Foster-Carter, "The Articulation of the Modes of Production Controversy," *New Left Review* 107 (1978).

ON DEPENDENT CAPITALIST DEVELOPMENT

In the light of the varying degrees of capitalist industrialization now taking place in the Third World, there is a need for an explanatory framework that goes beyond the stagnationist perspective of underdevelopment theory and at the same time, understands the specificities of this process of growth and change. Cardoso and Faletto (1979, p. xxiii-xxiv) situate the problem in this manner:

By pointing to the existence of a process of capitalistic expansion in the periphery, we make a double criticism. We criticize those who expect permanent stagnation in underdeveloped dependent countries because of a constant decline in the rate of profit or the 'narrowness of internal markets,' which supposedly function as an unsurpassable obstacle to capitalistic advancement. But we also criticize those who expect capitalistic development of peripheral economies to solve problems such as distribution of property, full employment, better income distribution, and better living conditions for people .

What is at issue therefore is not the efficacy of capitalist development in addressing problems of exploitation and inequality — this crucial problem requires a different analysis altogether that is beyond the scope of this study. In the context of this research, "capitalist development" means primarily the "progress of productive forces, mainly through the import of technology, capital accumulation, penetration of local economies by foreign enterprises, increasing numbers of wage earning groups, and intensification of the social division of labor" (Cardoso and Faletto, 1979, p. xxiv).

The "dependent development" pattern associated with some Third World countries typically occurs "where capital accumulation and diversified industrialization of a more than superficial sort are not only occurring . . . but are dominating the transformation of its economy and social structure (Evans, 1979, p.32). The major Latin American NICs have been studied within this perspective (Cardoso, 1973; Evans, 1979; Gereffi, 1983). Although there is less consensus on the applicability of this framework for the Asian NICs, there are a number of shared problems whose analysis as "concrete situations of dependency" can enrich the "dependent development" model (Evans 1987).

What constellation of historical and institutional conditions, external linkages and socio-political forces have made this developmental pattern work in some countries? How can this growth and industrialization pattern throw light on the failed or problematic developmental efforts by other countries like the Philippines?

CLASS FORCES AND CAPITALIST INDUSTRIALIZATION

In a study of the roots of economic development in preindustrial Europe, Brenner presents a basic framework for understanding the causal relationship between class forces and economic progress. He argues:

Economic development can only be fully understood as the outcome of the emergence of new class relations more favorable to new organizations of production, technical innovations, and increasing levels of productive investment. These new class relations were themselves the result of previous, relatively autonomous processes of class conflict. (Brenner, 1976, p.37).

In the context of the Third World, however, the process by which old class relations are perpetuated and new ones formed has to be situated within the linkages that bind the entire social formation to the world economy. The makeup of ruling classes or hegemonic coalitions can lead to different sets of developmental outcomes. Cardoso and Faletto illustrate this relationship very clearly in the case of the classic dependency situation in Latin America during the period of outward expansion (1850 - 1930). They point out that countries which exerted national control over their export economies (Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay, and Colombia) had more powerful and active local capitalist classes and industrialization policies dominated by private rather than state initiative. On the other hand, countries like Mexico, Bolivia, Venezuela, Chile, Peru, and the Central American nations whose export sectors had been controlled by foreign capital, developed relatively weak bourgeoisies and experienced more state participation in the early stages of industrialization. To further illustrate the point, this time in a different era in Latin America, Gereffi (1983, p. 20) extends the argument thus:

...in the situation of associated dependent development that has characterized the industrialized countries of Latin America such as Argentina, Brazil, and Mexico since 1955, the shift of foreign capital from the extractive into the manufacturing sector has been coupled with a greater measure of national autonomy as the state has expanded its role in economic regulation and the formation of new capital (Cardoso, 1973; Cardoso and Faletto, 1969, pp. 149 -176; Evans, 1979). . . Although levels of industrial development have risen for nations in this situation, many of the previously existing dependency links nonetheless have been maintained or redefined (e.g., foreign domination of key industries, technological dependence, increasing foreign indebtedness, TNC control over export networks). . .

In terms of their direct and long-term impact on industrialization patterns and strategies, at least three interrelated features of the class structure of Third World social formations have to be clarified. First, how significant is the landlord class and related land-based elites who may serve to obstruct industrialization measures. Second, what is the nature of the indigenous bourgeoisie and what is its strength and capability as a class for any project of industrialization. Third, are the dominant classes or popular forces sufficiently cohesive and organized to either oppose or support industrialization initiatives.

The existence of a "progressive national bourgeoisie" interested in developing the national economy by doing away with its internal feudal restrictions and opposing imperialist domination has long underpinned one tradition of radical theory (Gordon, 1973; Kolko, 1989). In liberal modernization theory, this concept is matched by assumptions about the emergence of new entrepreneurial elites or "middle sectors" who can challenge the landed oligarchy and seek to reorganize the social and economic structure in accordance with the values of a modern industrial society (Johnson, 1958; Rostow, 1971).

There have been generally two responses to these claims about the progressive role of the indigenous bourgeoisie. One perspective is represented by those who argue that the local bourgeoisie that emerged from the colonial and classic dependency period are basically of the *comprador* type exporting

and importing mercantile bourgeoisie as against a productive industrial bourgeoisie that has no interest in transforming the stagnant production relations in the countryside and industrializing the economy (Baran, 1957; Frank, 1967, 1972; Stavenhagen, 1968; Vitale, 1968). Baran (1957, p. 195) sums it up thus: "What results is a political and social coalition of wealthy *compradores*, powerful monopolists, and large landowners dedicated to the defense of the existing feudal-mercantile order. To end this stagnation, the only viable alternative posited is that of the socialist transformation of society.

Opposing this stagnationist comprador perspective is a view best articulated by Warren (1973, p. 42) that the social forces compelling capitalist industrialization in the Third World are now fully at work and that "we need no longer associate industrialization with any particular ruling class and specifically not with a national bourgeoisie conceived of as relatively well-developed" He overturns the conventional wisdom on this contentious issue by arguing thus:

Significant capitalist industrialization may be initiated and directed by a variety of ruling classes and combinations of such classes or their representatives, ranging from semi-feudal ruling groups (northern Nigeria) and including large landowners (Ethiopia, Brazil, Thailand), to bureaucratic military elites, petty bourgeoisies and professional and state functionaries (especially in Africa and the Middle East). These "industrializers" may themselves become industrial bourgeoisies or may be displaced by the industrial Frankensteins they have erected or they may become fused with them (Warren, 1973, pp. 42-43).

The case of the NICs in both Latin America and Asia provides a fresh basis for theorizing the role of the local classes and particularly the indigenous bourgeoisie in the industrialization process. At the very least, the experience of some industrializing Third World countries shows a system of class relationships far more complex than that of a dependent bourgeoisie in an invariant comprador relationship with foreign capital. Higgot and Robison (1985, p. 49) assert that in the Southeast Asian context as well as in other Third World states, the national bourgeoisie is in an "ambiguous relationship, exhibiting both confrontation and alliance with foreign international capital."

In his classic study of "dependent development" in Brazil, Evans (1979) provides a sophisticated model for understanding the role that local capitalists play in effecting industrial growth in close coordination with international capital and the state. Acting as the linchpin of this industrialization strategy is the "triple alliance" between multinationals, the state, and local capital. In this alliance, the relationship between local and foreign capital is seen as "collaborative as well as antagonistic" and has encompassed both "denationalization" as well as the "simultaneous and differentiated expansion" of different kinds of capital. Evans (1987, p. 221) further claims that a "triple alliance" also fuels the capitalist development in East Asia (South Korea and Taiwan), one in which transnational and local private capital are essential actors, but where the state is clearly the dominant partner. While Evans makes it clear that the Brazilian experience is not intended for application to most Third World countries, his "triple alliance" model for Brazil provides new insights to understanding the problems and strategies for capitalist industrialization in the Third World.

THE STATE AND CAPITALIST INDUSTRIALIZATION

The state has played a leading role, and in many cases, the decisive role in the industrialization projects of the Third World whether in capitalist or socialist regimes. The state's major role in economic development and industrialization is by no means unique to the Third World, given the equally important role played by the state in the industrialization of the capitalist metropolises (Polanyi, 1944; Gerschenkron, 1966). In the Third World, however, colonial and imperialist rule has substantially shaped the social formation, leading to a more interventionist and activist role in the economy by the state.

At a general level, the "disarticulated" nature of social and production relations as a result of colonial and imperialist hegemony necessitates a state structure that can oversee effectively both political order and the reproduction of the economy. In Amin's words (1976, p. 202): "The mutilated nature of the natural community in the periphery confers an apparent relative weight and

special functions upon the local bureaucracy that are not the same as those of the bureaucratic groups at the center.”

For instance, Alavi (1972) notes the “overdeveloped state” as a special character of post-colonial societies that makes the post-colonial state a “relatively autonomous” structure of class mediation and preserver of the social order. Other authors like Saul (1974) point out the “centrality” of the state in post-colonial societies as shown by its privileged access to society’s surplus product and dominion over the indigenous social classes.

The concept of the “relatively autonomous” or autonomous state has figured prominently in recent theories of the state (Poulantzas, 1969, 1973; Miliband, 1969, 1970; Offe, 1972; Nordlinger, 1981; Block, 1977, 1980; Skocpol, 1979, 1985; Evans, *et al.* 1985). This theorizing about the state draws from a tradition of both Marxist and non-Marxist writings which recognize the significance of the autonomy of the political in the social formation. Thus, the concept provides a framework by which to gauge the extent of the state’s capacity to “formulate and pursue goals that are not simply reflective of the demands or interests of social groups, classes or society (Skocpol, 1985, p. 9). Drawing on the experiences of the East Asian NICS, Evans (1989) has also put forward the concept of “embedded autonomy” as the essential feature of the developmental state. He argues that “the efficacy of the developmental state depends on a meritocratic bureaucracy with a strong sense of corporate identity and a dense set of institutionalized links to private elites” (Evans, 1989, p.561).

In exploring the applicability of the concept of the “relatively autonomous” or autonomous state in the context of the Third World, it is important to stress that the state’s autonomy must be weighed not only in terms of its relations with local social classes but also with foreign actors. For instance, there are cases when the access to increased foreign resources may serve to enhance the state’s autonomy vis-a-vis the dominant local classes but without ensuring the state’s stability or legitimacy as in the Peruvian example documented by Stallings (1985).

The industrialization process in the NICs of both Latin America and East Asia provides clear examples of states enjoying substantial degrees of autonomy from the dominant social classes as well as from those of the dominated classes. In both regions, this initial autonomy was enhanced by the general weakness of the native bourgeoisie but with the Latin American states confronting relatively stronger local capitalists and agrarian elites. In the East Asian experience, both South Korea and Taiwan embarked on their export-oriented industrialization strategies unencumbered by the presence of either an agrarian elite or a comprador bourgeoisie (Koo, 1987, p. 172).

During critical stages in the industrialization projects of the NICs, the state managed to insulate itself from the demands of the dominated social classes through repressive, exclusionary mechanisms. In Latin America, this was done by dismantling the populist coalitions that underpinned the "easy phase of the import-substitution period" as a political necessity for the deepening of the industrialization process (O'Donnell, 1973; Collier, 1979). In South Korea and Taiwan, the state brutally suppressed the mass uprisings in their respective countries (Cumings, 1981). Although these actions were not immediately tied to a conscious project for the deepening of the industrialization process as in Latin America, they also resulted in the depoliticization of the masses and the elimination of opposition popular movements that could challenge the official industrialization strategy.

Another important condition for assessing the effectiveness of state intervention in the economy concerns the state's possession of a bureaucratic apparatus with sufficient corporate coherence (Rueschemeyer and Evans, 1985). In this regard, the East Asian NICs have developed planning agencies and bureaucracies that compare favorably with the Japanese model and which have proven their capabilities for short and long-range planning, central coordination, and high flexibility in moving in and out of industrial sectors (Cumings, 1987). In the major Latin American NICs, particularly in Brazil and Mexico, the unusually strong states have also developed "sophisticated administrative apparatuses capable of promoting and protecting local interests" (Gereffi and Evans, 1981, p.31).

In summarizing the comparative lessons of the industrialization process in the East Asian and Latin American NICs, Evans singles out the role of the state. He writes:

Perhaps the most important impact of the East Asian cases is to extend previous dependencista thinking on the role of the state in dependent capitalist development. In East Asia, as in Latin America, there is clearly a triple alliance behind dependent capitalist development, one in which transnational and local private capital are essential actors, but in East Asia the state is the dominant partner. Latin America produced a variety of evidence in favor of the proposition that a more active and entrepreneurial state was essential for successful capital accumulation at the local level. The major East Asian NICs increase the evidence in favor of this hypothesis by offering cases where both the relative autonomy of the state apparatus and the effectiveness of state intervention are well beyond what can be observed in Latin America — and where the success of local capital accumulation is also more pronounced (Evans, 1987, p. 221).

CLASS AND STATE AND PHILIPPINE INDUSTRIALIZATION

In recent development theory, the Philippines has acquired some notoriety as a “very important deviant case” to the success stories of the East Asian NICs (Evans, 1987). While achieving the highest growth rates for the entire Southeast Asian region in the 1950s, the Philippines, since the seventies, has become the laggard in the region with no easy prospects for economic recovery or growth.

Based on my investigation of the top domestic manufacturers in the Philippines from 1950 to 1986, there are several interrelated points crucial to understanding the peculiarities of the manufacturing bourgeoisie that emerged in the country and its impact on capitalist development. First, the leading segment of the local manufacturing bourgeoisie that went into import substitution during the 1950s and 1960s was dominated by the major landed families and merchant capitalists who had diversified into manufacturing. However, the conversion of some of the landlords into manufacturing capitalists in the Philippines did not result in a class transformation strong enough to drive industrial growth and development. Thus, while state policy and initiatives in the 1950s pushed some of the landlord families into

manufacturing, the economic and political power of the class as a whole remained largely intact because of the failure of land reform programs. Throughout the period under study (1950-1986), the domination of the local manufacturing sector by the landed classes survived regime changes (post-colonial elite democracy to authoritarian rule), and shifts in industrialization strategies (import-substitution to export-orientedness). Thus, unlike in the East Asian NICs (primarily Taiwan and South Korea), there was no decisive severing of linkages between the landed and merchant classes and the emergent local manufacturing class in the Philippines. Consequently, the contradictory set of interests brought by the landed capitalist families into manufacturing weakened the initial social coalition for industrialization.

Second, the protracted ascendancy of foreign capital precluded the emergence of an independent, socially hegemonic manufacturing class in the colonial and post-colonial periods. During the era of protectionist ISI policies, the forging of extensive and varied linkages (joint ventures, equity and non-equity linkages) with foreign corporations by the leading local manufacturers further served to foreclose the possibility of developing a more independent and autonomous type of capitalist industrialization in the country.

Third, state policies, including those during Marcos's 15 years (1972-1986) of authoritarian rule did not undermine the economic power of the landlord class, particularly its ascendant exporting faction. Marcos sought to create elite support for his authoritarian regime by favoring one faction of the traditional elites, his own kin and familial clients, and by building up his clique of "crony capitalists". While in power, Marcos temporarily disempowered one faction of the ruling class, particularly his elite political opponents, but left untouched the land ownership of the landed exporting families. By preserving the economic bases of power of the landlord class, the state, in effect, allowed the persistence of a class structure that proved inimical to industrial growth and development. Through these policies, the state also enabled the landed families to dominate the manufacturing sector, thus empowering a class whose commitment to industrialization was compromised from the very start by its

continuing ties to land, agricultural exports and other primary industries such as mining and logging. Combined with the predatory character of the state apparatus and its ruling clique, the monopolistic and oligopolistic structure of the manufacturing sector left little room for a dynamic process of accumulation. In the latter years of authoritarian rule, the economic practices of the regime increasingly favored the cronies and provoked opposition from the non-crony factions of both the ISI and EOI bourgeoisie. Finally, the massive popular resistance to authoritarian rule undercut any further possibility that an effective social coalition for industrial growth could be built under Marcos.

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