1974

The concept of modernization and development in Marx's, Lenin's and Marxist-Leninist thought.

Barry Blufer
University of Massachusetts Amherst

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.umass.edu/theses

Retrieved from https://scholarworks.umass.edu/theses/2498

This thesis is brought to you for free and open access by ScholarWorks@UMass Amherst. It has been accepted for inclusion in Masters Theses 1911 - February 2014 by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks@UMass Amherst. For more information, please contact scholarworks@library.umass.edu.
THE CONCEPT OF MODERNIZATION AND DEVELOPMENT IN MARX'S, LENIN'S AND MARXIST-LENINIST THOUGHT

A Thesis Presented
By
Barry Blufer

Submitted to the Graduate School of the University of Massachusetts in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of MASTER OF ARTS

August, 1974

POLITICAL SCIENCE
THE CONCEPT OF MODERNIZATION AND DEVELOPMENT IN MARX'S, LENIN'S AND MARXIST-LENINIST THOUGHT

A Thesis presented
By
Barry Blufer

Approved as to the style and content by:

[Signatures]

(Chairman of the Committee)

(Chairman of the Department)

(Member of the Committee)

(Member of the Committee)

August, 1974
PREFACE

The purpose of this study is twofold. Mainly it is a study of the reception that Marx's theory of modernization encountered in the writings of P.N. Tkachev, and of the transformation that it underwent in the hands of Lenin. And in part, it traces the development of Marxist-Leninist theory of modernization, as the Soviet theory of modernization is called, in its relation to Soviet foreign policy in the non-communist underdeveloped world.

In choosing a method for this study I have encountered two widely accepted but conflicting approaches. The first emphasizes the context of political, social and economic factors which determine the meaning of political writings and, which consequently must be reconstructed if we are to understand them. Whatever are its merits, however, it is prone to serious methodological problems. It is deterministic in that it generates a belief that political writings are mere reflections of their respective societies and their historical epoohs. Furthermore, due to the rapid changes of the socio-economic and political environment
it assumes that the political thinker will change his views accordingly. It is precisely this type of thinking, in my opinion, that continues to cling to the false dichotomy between the "young" and the "old" Marx, and encourages the same trend in the study of Lenin's political thought.

The second approach, and the one adopted in this study, emphasizes the importance of texts as being sufficient in themselves for understanding the ideas contained in them. This is not to say that it does not recognize the influence of the social environment or the historical age on the works of a political thinker, but rather that it allows a thinker the possibility to transcend the particularities of his age and society.

Lastly, the text approach although sensitive to the possibility of a political thinker contradicting himself or even changing his mind, it assumes that, generally, during a life-time his thought does not undergo a series of epistemological breaks, but is rather characterized by continuity as we shall see later in our discussion on Marx and Lenin.

The first part of this study traces the concept of change and development in Western political thought, and analyzes Marx's theory of modernization and development. The second part examines the reception and the transformation of Marx's theory of modernization in the hands of Tkachev and Lenin respectively. And,
the final part traces the development of Marxist-Leninist, or Soviet, theory of modernization in its relation to Soviet foreign policy in the non-communist underdeveloped countries since Lenin's death.

Before closing this prefatory note, I should like to convey my appreciation to those who have helped to make this study possible. First, I wish to express my deepest gratitude to Professor Karl W. Ryavec under whose supervision I have been privileged to prepare this study. His erudition, understanding and tolerance are deeply appreciated. To Professor Peter J. Fliess — who guided my first steps in the study of Communist Political thought — I owe my awareness of the inseparable link between Marx and Hegel, his advice has been of immense help. I also wish to thank Professor Gerard Braunthal for his part in the completion of this study. To Professor Ferenc A. Vali, for his friendly advice and encouragement which are deeply appreciated. I also wish to thank Professor Glen Gordon and Professor Robert Shanley for their kindness in the past year. My wife Barbara, has given help and advice throughout the preparation of this study and, above all, lent her gift of clarity whenever I needed it, which seemed to be very often. My debt to her, is greater than can be expressed in words.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

APPROVAL ................................................................. i
TITLE PAGE ............................................................... ii
PREFACE ................................................................. iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS .................................................. vi
CHAPTER ONE ............................................................ 1
  INTRODUCTION
CHAPTER TWO ............................................................ 8
  MARX ON MODERNIZATION
CHAPTER THREE ......................................................... 25
  THE RECEPTION AND CHALLENGE
  TO MARXISM IN RUSSIA
  — THE CASE OF P.N. TKACHEV —
CHAPTER FOUR .......................................................... 42
  LENIN'S TRANSFORMATION OF MARXISM
CHAPTER FIVE ........................................................... 66
  CHANGING SOVIET PERCEPTIONS
  OF MODERNIZATION AND DEVELOPMENT
  IN AFRICA AND ASIA
CONCLUSION ............................................................. 86
BIBLIOGRAPHY ........................................................... 91
CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

The idea of social development is as old as Western political thought, going back to ancient Athens and Rome. It makes its first appearance in the writings of a pre-Socratic philosopher, Heraclitus, who perceived change in every aspect of life, though mainly in biological terms. Everything was always in a state of flux or change; and this meant to Heraclitus that everything in the state of perpetual transformation was growing and developing like plants and animals. On this conception of growth Heraclitus constructed his theory of physis or nature, with nature conceived to be the pattern of development and actualization found in each and every object. Thus, an understanding of something, whether a plant, an animal, a man or a polity, meant knowing its pattern of development. This method is most clearly manifested in Aristotle’s social theory, in which inquiry is directed to an object’s origins, its

form of growth, the processes that sustain the growth, and the final purpose of the growth. In his The Politics, written in a period of decline of the Greek city-state, Aristotle makes it clear that like organisms and plants, states are also subject to organic growth. "The city-state," writes Aristotle, "is a perfectly natural form of association, as the earlier associations from which it sprang...."2 States, then, according to Aristotle, have their origins and their purposes. They move inevitably through their cycles, with one state emanating from another, maturing and degenerating only to have the process start all over again. Within this biological framework, time being the sole requirement for growth and development, the study of social life became identified with the examination of relentless change.

In the hands of Augustine, a Christian thinker of the Fifth Century, the Greek conception of social change was incorporated into the sacred Judeo-Christian tradition and evolved into a philosophy of history that continues to influence Western social thought today.

In combining these ideas, Augustine was able to alter the Greek conception of development in two significant ways. First, Augustine conceived of universal rather than

---

parochial development. That is, he applied the concept of growth and development not just to particular societies, but rather to mankind as a whole. And secondly, and perhaps most important, he rejected the cyclical view of history for an unilinear concept of development, unfolding according to divine will and, in the process, lifting to pre-eminence the idea of historical necessity. In *The City of God*, Augustine makes it clear that the journey from the city of man, the realm of evil, to the city of God, the realm of spiritual good, represents a journey of psychological and spiritual development even on earth. *In the Augustinian system, material development appears to be irrelevant to psychological and spiritual development.*

The social evolutionary theories of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries were largely an extension of the premises of "natural" and "necessary" development, contained in the writings of Aristotle and Augustine, to people whose history fell outside the realm of Judeo-Christian experience. Professor Barraclough writes:

For the men of the Enlightenment the idea of world history was particularly congenial. It fitted with their notion of progress, their view of mankind, advancing steadily from primitive barbarism to reason and virtue and
civilization. Whatever were the differences between Hegel, Turgot, Vico and Voltaire, they all shared the assumptions that social change was natural, necessary and directional. They were, on the whole, satisfied with what was; and, were committed to rational and full understanding of the unfolding of the universal order.

In the hands of Marx, the theory of social development underwent a dramatic transformation. The theory became more revolutionary than evolutionary. Marx discarded the notion of "natural" and gradual material and psychological development and perceived social and historical development as a result of human action. This historical progress or development was a development of human needs and the satisfaction of those needs. Hence, this progression was a dialectic one through an interaction between the passive, i.e., the material or economic element, and the active, i.e., the human element. "All revolutions require a passive element, a materialist basis," young Marx wrote in 1843. "Theory is actualized in a people only insofar as it actualizes their needs."4

---

3 Geoffrey Barraclough, "Universal History", in Approaches to History, a Symposium, ed. by H.P.R. Finberg (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1962), p. 84.

This method is best expressed in his later works. In his Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy, Marx writes:

It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness... Therefore mankind always sets itself only such tasks as it can solve; since, looking at the matter more closely, it will always be found that the task itself arises only when the material conditions for its solution already exist or are at least in the process of formation.5

The development from a primitive consciousness to a more modern consciousness is, according to Marx, conditioned on the abolition of primitive economies and their replacement by modern economy, i.e., capitalism. However, through the awareness of this fact, man becomes an essential part of this process and sees himself as an actor rather than a helpless spectator. Consequently, social development, for Marx, is not directed by a supernatural invisible hand, but rather by human visible hands. In Thesis on Feuerbach, a polemic tract against vulgar or mechanistic materialism, Marx writes:

The materialist doctrine that men are products of circumstances and upbringing, and that, therefore, changed men are products of other circumstances and changed upbringing,

forgets that it is men that change circumstances and that the educator himself needs educating. Social life is essentially practical. The philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways; the point, however, is to change it.\(^6\)

And, in contemporary political science literature, the theorists of modernization, who usually define modernization as political and social changes which accompany industrialization,\(^7\) are, though perhaps unaware, working within a crude framework of Marxism. For, although Marx does not use the term "modernization", we do find a pattern of thought in his writings, especially on India and Russia, within which such a concept could derive meaning and could develop. Or, as Professor Robert C. Tucker remarked, "Although the term 'modernization' does not appear in Marx's and Engels' writings, the theme frequently does."\(^8\)

However, whenever Marxist thought is taken into consideration in the current debate on modernization, it

\(^6\)Ibid., Vol. II, pp. 403-405.


generally tends to be confined to Lenin's theory of imperialism; which, though a significant component of Marxist-Leninist thought today, is not an account of Marx's contributions to the study of modernization. Marx himself, the initiator of the theory of modernization, is usually passed over in silence because Lenin and his successors illegitimately but successfully claimed the Marxian heritage. Let us then turn to an examination of Marx's view of modernization emphasizing the revolutionary functions that he attributed to the bourgeois class.
CHAPTER II
MARX ON MODERNIZATION

Marx is known as a European thinker, primarily interested in the impact of industrialization on Western Europe, and above all, as a severe and uncompromising critic of Nineteenth Century capitalism. But in order to understand Marx as a revolutionary thinker, it is essential that we recognize that he was a great admirer of that technological progress which shook Europe. Indeed, none of the liberal apologists of capitalism in his own time could match the enthusiasm that Marx displayed in *The Communist Manifesto* in describing the achievements of the bourgeoisie in this era:

The bourgeoisie, during its rule of scarce one hundred years, has created more massive and more colossal productive forces than have all preceding generations together. Subjection of nature's forces to man and machinery, the application of chemistry to industry and

---

agriculture, steam navigation railways, electric telegraphs, clearing of whole continents for cultivation, canalization of rivers, whole populations conjured out of the ground— what earlier century had even a presentiment that such productive forces slumbered in the lap of social labour?10

Thus, it is against the background of the Industrial Revolution and particularly its reception in Marx's thought as a progressive force that we are able to recognize his conception of universal modernization. "The bourgeoisie," Marx pointed out, "cannot exist without constantly revolutionizing the instruments of production, and thereby the instruments of society."11

This revolutionary function of the bourgeoisie was not to be confined to any national territory or a particular region. It was the nature of capitalism, Marx argued, to enmesh all the people of the world in the net of the world market:

The bourgeoisie by rapid improvement of all instruments of production, by the immensely facilitated means of communication, draws all, even the most barbarian nations into civilizations. . . . . . . It compels all nations on pain of extinction, to adopt the bourgeois mode of production; it compels them to introduce what it calls civilization into their midst, i.e., to become bourgeoisie themselves. In one word, it creates a world after its own image.12


11 Ibid., p. 37.

12 Ibid., p. 38.
According to Marx then, social development necessarily assume a catastrophic form. The ancient or traditional order is violently disrupted by capitalist industrialization, and a modern pattern of thought as well as modern social institutions unfold in the midst of this social upheaval. In Marx's view then, the revolutionary function of the expanding capitalism was twofold:

England has to fulfill a double mission in India: One destructive, the other regenerating—the annihilation of old Asiatic society, and the laying of the material foundation of Western society in Asia.¹³

Such an approach, of course, allows Marx to disassociate moral indignation from historical judgment. Indeed, he explicitly stated that the British colonization of India was immoral.¹⁴ However, after weighing the immoral aspects of colonialism against its universal


¹⁴ Marx, "The British Rule in India", in On Colonialism, Articles, p. 36. "There cannot......remain any doubt, but that the misery inflicted by the British on Hindustan is of an essentially different and infinitely more intensive kind than all Hindustan had to suffer before."
revolutionary consequences, Marx concluded in favor of the latter. "Whatever may have been the crimes of England," Marx wrote, "she was the unconscious tool of history in bringing about that revolution." The significant aspect of Marx's discussion of modernization in Asia is that he entirely attributes it to the bourgeois revolution and technological change. This stands in sharp contrast to his discussion on modernization of Western Europe. In Europe, he tells us, the Industrial Revolution itself was predicated on prior changes in social institutions as well as social mores. "From the serfs of Middle Ages," Marx writes in The Communist Manifesto, "sprang the chartered burghers of the earliest towns. From these burgesses the first elements of the bourgeoisie were developed." In the West, then, according to Marx's subsequent discussion in Das Kapital, modernization constituted a series of interconnected social changes which led to economic diversification within an advanced industrial technology.

\[\text{\textsuperscript{15}}\text{Ibid.}, \text{p. 41.}\]
\[\text{\textsuperscript{16}}\text{Marx and Engels, Selected Works, Vol. I, p. 35.}\]
The socio-historical development described in *Das Kapital* pertained only to Western Europe. Marx strongly emphasized this point in a letter to the editor of *Otechestvennye Zapiski*, (*"Notes on Father-land"*) in 1877, in connection with an article by a certain Mikhailovskii, objecting to the latter's attempt to transform, "My historical sketch of Western Europe," wrote Marx, "into a historico-philosophical theory of the general path every people is fated to tread, whatever the historical circumstances it finds itself... But I beg his pardon. (He is both honoring and shaming me too much.)"18 On the contrary, Marx had already indicated, as was shown above in *The Communist Manifesto* and other succeeding writings, that the process of modernization in the non-Western world was to be reversed. There, it was the historic mission of the bourgeoisie to initiate a revolution from above by laying down the material basis necessary for setting in motion a social revolution in the East.

Did Marx perceive the non-Western world as a world behaving to different criteria than those of the Western world? Here, Hegel's influence on Marx is profound. One respected student of Marx's ideas,

Eric J. Hobsbawm, recently pointed out that, "...before 1848.... probably they (Marx and Engels) knew no more about oriental history than is contained in Hegel's lectures on the Philosophy of History..."\(^{19}\) Hegel, in his chapter on "The Oriental World" sees the oriental world as static and devoid of any internal means to change itself. This is because, according to Hegel, consciousness in the oriental societies is expressed in one person, the monarch, rather than on the society as a whole. As a result, Hegel concludes that the oriental societies exhibit, "... duration, stability—unhistorical history... without undergoing any change in themselves, or in the principle of their existence..."\(^{20}\)

During the summer of 1853, when Marx began seriously to consider the non-Western world, he did not discard Hegel's conceptual framework but merely infused it with material content from the works of the classical economists. The basic differences between the


two is that Hegel, an idealist, treats the basic characteristics of the Oriental world as a philosophical-psychological phenomenon. For him, history is synonymous with the development of the consciousness of freedom. Marx, on the other hand, a materialist, treats these basic characteristics as a socio-economic phenomenon, and in the context of specific social relationships. In other words, according to Marx, it is not the thought that molds or determines the existence and the experience, but rather, it is the experience that molds the thought.

In letters and articles on the British colonization of India, Marx and Engels set out the fundamental characteristics of the non-Western world or the Oriental mode of production.

On June 2, 1853, Marx, commenting on a letter by Engels on Oriental cities and religion,21 asserted that, above all, the fundamental peculiarity of the non-Western world is the lack of private land ownership. "The absence of private property in land," Marx wrote, "this is the real key, even to the Oriental heaven...."22 In addition, in the same letter, he

21Marx and Engels, Selected Correspondence, pp. 95-97.

22Ibid., p. 99.
notes another significant distinction between the Eastern and Western societies in the Nineteenth Century. Marx points out the quite accidental development of the cities in Eastern societies, and their strict subordination to the monarchs or their satraps. In the East, Marx observes that:

The King is the one and only proprietor of all the land in the kingdom, from which it follows as a necessary consequence that a whole capital city, like Delhi or Agra, lives almost on the army and is therefore obliged to follow the king if he takes to the field for any length of time. For these towns are not, nor can be anything like Paris, being virtually nothing but military camps, only a little better and more conveniently situated than in the open country.  

Thus, there is a need only to produce what is essential for subsistence of the individual and the community of which he is part. This means, Marx concludes, that production remains, almost exclusively, production of use values. However, it is the development of the production of exchange values in the towns, that is, producing surplus over and above what is needed, that makes possible preparation for the predominance

---

23Ibid., p. 98.

24Ibid., "How such a great number of men and animals, can subsist in the field...... So long as they (the Indians) have their kicheri or mixture of rice and other vegetables, over which they pour melted butter, they are satisfied..... And the camels graze in the open country where they eat whatever they can find...."
of capital. On June 6, Engels replied, approvingly noting that, "... the orientals did not arrive at landed property, even in its feudal form..." In his view this was due to the climatic and geographic conditions of the Orient. The property of agriculture in the Orient requires grand hydraulic works.

"Artificial irrigation is here the first condition of agriculture...." This irrigation requires, Engels states, nearly everywhere, a central authority to regulate it and to undertake large scale works. As a result, a centralized state, quite independent of the economic factors of society, provides for public works, mainly the irrigation and the roads.

In two articles published on June 25 and August 8, 1853, in the New York Tribune, Marx agreed with Engels' analysis on the relation of desert-like climate to public works in Asia. But there he added another crucial characteristic of the non-Western

25Marx, Pre-Capitalist Economic Formations, p. 110.

26Marx and Engels, Selected Correspondence, p. 99.

27Ibid.

28Ibid. Engels: "An oriental government never had more than three departments; finance (plunder at home), war (plunder at home and abroad), and public works (provision for reproduction). See also Karl A. Wittfogel, Oriental Despotism: A Comparative Study of Total Power, Chapters 1, 2, and 9, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957).
society, what he termed the "village system". Marx wrote:

The Hundu, on the one hand, leaving, like all Oriental peoples, to the Central Government the care of the great public works, the prime condition of his agriculture and commerce, dispersed, on the other hand, over the surface of the country, and agglomerated in small centres by the domestic union of agriculture and manufacturing pursuits — these two circumstances had brought about, since the remotest times, a social system of particular features — the so called village system, which gave to each of these small union their independent organization and distinct life.

Therefore, Marx warns, "We must not forget that these idyllic village communities, inoffensive though they may appear, had always been the solid foundation of Oriental despotism."\(^{29}\)

This combination of highly cohesive primitive village communities with a powerful centralized state, according to Marx, enables the latter to concentrate the greater of the social surplus product in its own hands, which causes the appearance of social strata maintained by this surplus and constituting the dominant power in society, hence the term, "Oriental despotism".\(^{30}\) Consequently, the state, in the Oriental society, is too strong and subjects thoroughly all

\(^{29}\text{Ibid.}, \text{p. 41.}

\(^{30}\text{Marx, Pre-Capitalist Formations, pp. 68-71.}\)
intellectual and scientific life to the requirements of agriculture thus eliminating the possibility of a process equivalent to that of the primitive accumulation of capital and the formation of modern industry and the proletariat which occurred in Western Europe. Thus, the internal logic of an Oriental society is inclined toward stagnation and a high degree of stability in basic production relations.  

In the non-Western world, the "Oriental mode of production" created a totally different socio-economic and political culture from that of the Western world. In the Oriental societies, the existing social classes such as hereditary castes in India, confronted by the powerful centralized oriental state apparatus, can never acquire the social and political power to initiate changes leading to feudalism, then capitalism and eventually socialism. These classes at best are only capable of desperate outbreaks. They do not possess objective social power. That is, the ability to paralyze production as a whole and the ability to organize themselves collectively, two characteristics which, according to Marx, are necessary for a social class, the motive force of history, if

31Ibid., p. 70.
it is to initiate the transformation of the present day society. And since for Marx, social class, and the development of production forces are the generators of all social conflict and change, which ultimately leads to human salvation, i.e., communism, he concludes that the non-Western societies are devoid of any internal societal mechanisms for change. If left to themselves, Eastern societies would remain non-dialectical and unchanging. Thus, his dramatic pronouncement, nearly identical to Hegel's, is that, "Indian society has no history, at least no known history. What we call its history is but the history of successive invaders who founded their empires on the passive basis of that unresisting and unchanging society."  

The consequences of such views on the nature of non-Western societies led Marx to an endorsement of European colonial expansion as the only guarantee for modernization and change in the non-Western world. This endorsement, it is important to point out, was independent of any judgment about the morality of

---

32 Marx and Engels, Selected Works, p. 34. "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles." See also John Kautsky, "Introduction", in Political Change in Underdeveloped Countries, ed. by John Kautsky, (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1962).

33 Marx, "Future Results", p. 81.
this outcome. This is perhaps best revealed when Marx says:

All the English bourgeoisie may be forced to do will neither emancipate nor materially mend the social condition of the mass of the people,..... But what they will not fail to do is to lay down the material premises for both. Has the bourgeoisie ever done more? Has it ever effected a progress without dragging individuals and peoples through blood and dirt, through misery and degradation?  

And since Marx's view of socialist society was predicated upon a prior universalization of capitalism it may be forcefully argued that colonialism like capitalism is an historical necessity. He states:

The bourgeois period of history has to create the material basis of the new world — on the one hand the universal intercourse founded upon the mutual dependency of mankind, and the means of that intercourse; on the other hand, the development of the productive powers of man and the transformation of material production onto a scientific domination of national agencies. Bourgeois industry and commerce create these material conditions of a new world in the same way as geological revolutions have created the surface of the earth.  

Capitalist colonialism then, is a precondition for the achievement of a socialist transformation of world society. In 1858, in a letter to Engels, Marx expressed his fear that the socialist revolution in the West may be jeopardized due to the slow pace of thoroughly

\[34\text{Ibid.}, \ p. \ 85.\]
\[35\text{Ibid.}, \ p. \ 87.\]
colonizing and modernizing the East. He wrote:

The specific task of bourgeois society is the establishment of a world market, and of production based upon this world market. As the world is round, this seems to have been completed by the colonization of California and Australia and the opening up of China and Japan. The difficult question for us is this: On the Continent the revolution is imminent and will immediately assume a socialist character. Is it not bound to be crushed in this little corner, considering that in a far greater territory the movement of bourgeois society is still in the ascendent.35

Successful socialist revolutions, then, are only possible first in the most industrially developed countries. The weakest link in the world capitalist system, for Marx, is where it is most industrially developed, namely, Western Europe.

The principle impact of colonialism is its modernizing effect. In the West, modernization constituted a succession of interconnected social changes which led to economic diversification within an advanced industrial technology. In the Eastern societies, according to Marx, due to their peculiar socio-economic and political conditions, the process of modernization was to be reversed. The bourgeoisie

35Marx and Engels, Selected Correspondence, p. 134.
was to initiate the revolution from above in the non-Western world by destroying both the powerful oriental state and the primitive village communities. The British cannot plunder India, Marx commented, without at the same time helping to industrialize it. "They intend now on drawing a net of railroads over India. And they will do it. The results must be inappreciable. The railroad system will...become, in India, truly a forerunner of modern industry.... Modern industry, resulting from the railroad system, will dissolve the hereditary divisions of labor upon which rests the Indian castes, these decisive impediments to Indian progress and Indian power...." 37

Such pronouncements seem to indicate that, for Marx, modernization was not just the availability of economic means but also of societal institutions conducive to it, and perhaps even causing it. This certainly is in line with his arguments against mechanistic materialists that ideas do not simply reflect material reality, but rather exist in a reciprocal relationship with it. Marx, however, did not fully elucidate the precise nature of this reciprocal relationship. As a result, his theoretical

37 Marx, "Future Results", pp. 83–85.
scheme seemed to embody two somewhat contradictory principles reminiscent of the differences, such as they are, in theology between predetermination and predestination. This perhaps explains the appeal of Marx's theory for both the Social Democrats as well as the Communists. And although the distinction between Marx's materialism and mechanistic materialism did exist, in his writings, as seen above, the borderline was vague from the very beginning and with time faded out. In modernizing India, Marx observed that the English bourgeoisie were, "to lay down the material premises," for both, "the development of the productive process," as well as, "their appropriations by the people." In other words, the changes in material conditions precede the changes in social modes of thought as well as social institutions. For Marx, psychological modernization unquestionably lags behind material process. Social revolution then, is not prior to modernization, but rather, Marx argues, is the outcome of it.

At a certain stage of their development the material forces of production in society come into conflict with the existing relations of production.... Property relations....turn into their fetters. Then comes the period of social revolution.38

In summation then, for Marx there are two distinct types of underdeveloped societies, Western and non-Western. The path toward modernization, however, for Marx is only one, based on the Western European model of development. Thus, it is obvious that Marx, while disavowing, "the master-key of a general historical-philosophical theory whose quality is that of being super-historical," indeed sought to impose a pattern on historical development. However, he both overestimated the destructive impact of the bourgeoisie, and underestimated the resisting power of traditional institutions in the East to Westernization.

---

39 Marx and Engels, Selected Correspondence, p. 377.
CHAPTER III
THE RECEPTION AND CHALLENGE TO MARXISM IN RUSSIA
-- THE CASE OF P.N. TKACHEV --

Having argued in the previous chapter that Marxism is a theory of and for the industrialized West, our task for the next two chapters is to come to grips with what has often been referred to as the "paradox" of Marxism. That is, "Marxism" coming to power first in backward and agrarian Russia rather than the industrialized West. In the following pages, we shall examine Marx's and Engels' image of Russia's social and economic stage of development as it related to their general theory of modernization. And, we shall also consider the political thought of P.N. Tkachev, which in my judgment, constitutes an important case study of the reception and the transformation of Marxism in Russia.

Both Marx and Engles saw and appreciated the great social changes that were taking place in Russia, in the 1860's. For example, the emancipation of the serfs after the Crimean War and the Tsarist policy of

---

40Marxism, as defined here, is only what Marx and Engels said and wrote.
rapid industrialization. But it was only after coming in direct contact with the emigre circles of Russian revolutionaries that Marx and Engels began giving serious considerations to the economic, social and political conditions of Russia.

In 1847 in numbers 117 and 118 of Der Volkstaadt, Engels editorialized his observations on the emigre literature of Russian revolutionaries and ventured some guidelines as well as prospects for the revolutionary movement in Russia. The main target of Engel's criticism in the two editorials was P.N. Tkachev, one of the first Russian revolutionaries to characterize himself as a Marxist in public. Tkachev had published an article that year in an emigre journal, Vpered, ("Forward"), entitled, "Problems of Revolutionary Propaganda in Russia", in which he argued that Russia was ripe for a socialist revolution. Engels admonished Tkachev for his belief in Russia's readiness for a socialist revolution and called him immature and a green schoolboy. "If your people are ready at any time for the revolution, if you

---


have arrogated yourself the right to summon them at any time to that revolution," Engels wrote, "then why do you bother us with your nonsensel, why the devil don't you begin."43

In his reply, "Open Letter to Gospodin ("Mister") Engels", Tkachev reproached Engels for his "total ignorance" of the social conditions and the revolutionary prospects in Russia. Any practical guidance offered by Engels was useless and should not be considered seriously by the Russian revolutionaries. Tkachev wrote:

What is needed is basic knowledge of the situation.... And it is why your 'lessons' should provoke the kind of response you would have exhibited, had a Chinese or a Japanese learned the German language, but who had never himself been to Germany nor followed her literature, but to whom an original thought occurred to teach the German revolutionaries from the heights of his own Chinese or Japanese greatness about what they should and what they should not do.

Therefore he continued,

...although we are in accord with the basic socialist principles of a European workers party we are not in agreement on tactics and never will be or should be on questions concerning practical realization of socialist principle and the revolutionary struggle waged in its name. The situation in our country is totally exceptional, it has nothing in common with the situation in Western Europe. The means for struggle suitable to the latter, are at the very least, suitable for us.

43Ibid., p. 459.
We require a completely special revolutionary program, which is unlike the German program, insofar as the socio-political conditions existing in Germany differ from those in Russia.  

The crucial point in Tkachev's argument is his emphasis on uniqueness and peculiarity of Russia's social and historical conditions. In Russia, he pointed out, the social system differed radically from those in Western Europe. In Western Europe, Tkachev argued, the socio-economic system determined the content of the state, while in Russia, he concluded, the state was not the product but the producer of social "classes" and as a result, they were heavily dependent on the state. The Russian state, Tkachev asserted, had no social basis and, as he put it, was merely, "hanging in the air". This conception of the Russian state and the prevailing socio-economic conditions closely correspond to Marx's concept of Oriental despotism, discussed in the preceding chapter, a condition where the state stands above the economic and the social structures, and totally subordinates the two to its own needs. And Marx, as was already shown, favors the destructive role of the western bourgeoisie in the East and her civilizing historical mission in laying the "material foundations" for the formation of social classes and class struggle,

---

44Ibid., pp. 88-89.
which eventually results in the establishment of a socialist society. It is clear that Marx's commitment to support the global modernization and the world revolutionary cause was in accordance with his theory.

Tkachev, on the other hand, unlike Marx, was impatient with the universal development of history. His commitment to a socialist revolution was practical rather than theoretical. Tkachev rejected the preparational aspects for socialist revolution, both material and agitational, and urged the Russian socialists to embark on an immediate campaign of terror and violence with the purpose of seizing political power and instituting socialism. Because of Russia's peculiar socio-economic situation, it was senseless for Tkachev to discuss its revolutionary struggle in terms of prevailing economic conditions and class struggle. Instead, Tkachev argued that the revolutionary struggle in Russia was one between the people and the state, the chief obstacle to social development in Russia. However, although Tkachev did perceive the Russian people in general as "instinctively revolutionary, despite their seeming ignorance, and the lack of consciousness of what they do," he was quick to point out that because they were not intellectually

---

46Ibid., p. 91.
equipped, they lacked the knowledge of socialist principles and direction, elements necessary for achieving the socialist order in Russia. Therefore, Tkachev concluded that the realization of socialism in Russia was to be accomplished by a small revolutionary party of intellectuals imbued with superior social consciousness and with advanced social ideals.

Anticipating Lenin's *What is to be Done*, Tkachev wrote, "Neither now nor in the future will the people, if left to themselves, be able to bring about the social revolution. Only we, the revolutionary minority, can do this; and we must do it as soon as possible."47 This small socialist-revolutionary elite, the spiritual and the moral representative of the masses, could undermine and finally overthrow the Russian autocracy if and only if, maintained Tkachev, it possessed an organization based on hierarchy and centralization of power.

Forshadowing the Leninist concept of democratic centralism and the notion of subordinating individuality to the party's cause, Tkachev asserted, "The individual initiative is to be subordinated to the central leadership which brings common purpose and unity (yedinstvo)

47Ibid., p. 268. "At the present time the people are incapable of doing anything for themselves, but in the near future even if they should get enlightened and self-conscious the opportunity (for revolution) will not exist."
to the activity of all its numbers." It must be pointed out that it is not clear whether Tkachev views this subordination of individuals as a condition desirable in itself and therefore should be permanent. However, it is clear that he does see it as a necessary evil that should not be strictly limited in time and scope until the desired goal, namely socialism, has been achieved. And although Tkachev does not use the term, "the dictatorship of the proletariat", the notion, in the Leninist sense, is clearly presented in his writings.

The revolutionary minority, having freed the people from the yoke which had oppressed them and from the fear of terror of the old regime, directs creatively the destruction of the enemies of the revolution. In this manner, the minority can deprive the enemies of all means of resistance or counterattack. Then by making use of its force and its own authority, it can proceed to the introduction of new, progressively communist elements into the conditions of national life of the people from their age-old chains and breathe life into its cold and dead forms.

This quote illustrates that the state was to be a creative weapon rather than merely a distributive one of an already developed abundance of wealth, as Marx conceived it would be. As Professor Tucker writes, in his influential study, "The economic mission of the proletarian revolution," for Marx, "would not be to develop the productive powers of society, but to free them from the 'fetters' clamped upon

\[\text{\textsuperscript{48}}\text{Ibid.}, \text{p. 447.}\]
\[\text{\textsuperscript{49}}\text{Ibid.}, \text{p. 266.}\]
them by the nature of capitalist society."\textsuperscript{50} For Tkachev, on the other hand, it was after the socialist revolution that the socialist state was to create simultaneously the industrialized base and the economic wealth as well as a new social order based on absolute equality, social harmony and justice.\textsuperscript{51}

We should note that in the 1870's Tkachev's views were not shared by a majority of the small group of Russian Marxists. During this period, the Russian Marxists, on the whole, were ideologically divided in their views on Russia's path of development. A majority were of pessimistic conviction. They viewed Russia as having been pushed behind the West by the historical process and, therefore, destined to emulate the Western path of development. The small minority, adhering to an optimistic conception, argued that capitalism was not an inevitable and necessary stage for development in the direction of socialism and, that capitalism was in fact undesirable for the achievement of socialism in Russia.

Tkachev undoubtedly was the most forceful proponent of the optimistic line of reasoning. According

\textsuperscript{50}Tucker, \textit{The Marxian Revolutionary Idea}, pp. 103-104.

to him, the stabilization of capitalism in Russia would certainly delay the socialist revolution or perhaps even make it impossible. "As capitalist classes come into being," Tkachev wrote, "the chances of success of a violent revolution will grow increasingly problematical. That is why we cannot wait. That is why we claim that in Russia a revolution is, in fact, indispensable for the present moment. Let us not allow any further postponement, and more delay. Now, or at the very least very soon—or never...." 52

For Tkachev, Russia's backwardness constituted an advantage for making a socialist revolution. In a letter to Engels, Tkachev turned the very backwardness of Russia into a privilege.

We do not have the urban proletariat this, of course, is true, but we also do not have the bourgeoisie. Between the suffering people and their oppressive despotic government we do not have the middle class; for our workers, the forthcoming struggle is against the political power—the power of capital here is only in its embryonic stage.

You, dear sir, should know that the struggle against the former is much easier, than against the latter.... In this regard, we have better chances for achieving a revolution than you. 53

This quote clearly shows that for Tkachev, the non-existence of the Russian bourgeoisie was an important argument for the feasibility of a socialist revolution in Russia.

52Tkachev, Izbrannye Sochinenia, ("Selected Works"), pp. 69-70.

53Ibid., pp. 90-92.
The weakness of Russian capitalism, Tkachev maintained, meant that the Russian government in its struggle against revolutionaries would lack support of an important social force, which in Western Europe was the most powerful antagonist of socialism. Or in other words, the weak link of world capitalism, for Tkachev, was in the backward and underdeveloped areas of the world. Clearly such a view contradicts the determinism of dialectical-materialistic conception of history which sees historical process as a series of distinct but interdependent stages progressing by means of conflict and resolution, with each stage incorporating the accumulated experience of the preceding one. It is a process in which every historical stage plays a valuable and necessary role and where the very process of epochal transcedance, (Aufhebung), is as much an incorporation as it is a rejection. Tkachev, with his emphasis on the advantage of backwardness, substitutes the determinism of historical dialectics with the notion of "historical leaps" or skipping stages under the guidance of a revolutionary organization imbued with higher moral principles.54

We should observe that Tkachev's hostility

54Tkachev's notion of historical leaps was developed in his essay on "The Peasants War in Germany" (1524-1526), in which he attributed Munzer's failure largely to a lack of organizational skills. Izbrannye Sochinenia, ("Selected Works"), Vol. I, pp. 234-258.
toward industrialization in general as in the case of the populist ideologues.\(^5^5\) Furthermore, his notions of revolutionary elitism were incompatible with the populist principle of action through the people. It should be clear by now that Tkachev was anti-populist and not, as it is frequently asserted, a populist.\(^5^6\) And despite his elitism and his non-deterministic view of historical development, that is, elevating politics over economics, Tkachev still, rather curiously, considered himself a Marxist of sorts. For, as he wrote, it was beyond any reasonable doubt that,

all phenomena of a political, moral, or intellectual nature, in the last analysis, are the result of causal phenomena in the economic sphere and the 'economic structure' of society as expressed by Marx. The

---

\(^5^5\)The father of Russian populism, Alexander Herzen, following his return from the West, where he came into direct contact with the urban proletariat and took part in the revolution of 1848, wrote in "Ends and Beginnings", in his *By Past and Thoughts*, trans. by Constance Garnett, Vol. IV, (London: Chatto and Windus Publishers, 1968), pp. 11-16, "I had grown to hate the crowding crush of civilizations..... I looked with horror mixed with disgust at the continually moving, swarming crowd,.....it is content with everything and can never have enough... This is the all powerful crowd of 'conglomerated mediocrity'....."

development and direction assumed by the economic bases of society are the condition for the development and direction assumed by political and social relations in general and make their mark on the intellectual process itself taking place in society—on its morals, on its social and political philosophies...

This demonstrates that Tkachev's social and political views were indeed a curious mixture of heterogeneous elements. His idealization of the small, morally superior, revolutionary elite and his notion of "historical leaps" or skipping stages were grafted in his scheme of ideas on Marxian materialism and historical determinism. One plausible explanation of this curious blend of incompatible ideas, in my judgment, was due to the fact that in his challenge to Western Marxism, Tkachev did not intend to go beyond the tactical matters and into the fundamentals of theory. Marx and Engels, of course, thought to the contrary.

At Marx's urging, Engels replied to Tkachev's challenge. His response, published in 1875, stressed that a socialist revolution could take place only after the intensive development of capitalist production and the growth of the bourgeois-proletarian class struggle.

And that the necessary condition of socialism is the high

---

level of economic development, a consequence of capitalist industrialization. Engels wrote:

The revolution sought by modern socialism is the victory of the proletariat over the bourgeoisie and the reorganization of society by the abolition of class distinction. To accomplish this we need not only the proletariat which carries out the revolution, but also a bourgeoisie in whose hands the productive forces of society have developed to such a stage that they permit the final elimination of all class distinctions.... Only during a very high stage of the development of the productive forces of society does it become possible to increase production to such an extent that the abolition of classes becomes a truly progressive move.... This stage of development is only reached under bourgeois production. The bourgeoisie is consequently equally as necessary a precondition of the socialist revolution as the proletariat itself. A person who says that this revolution can be carried out easier in a country which has no proletariat or bourgeoisie proves by this statement that he has still to learn the ABC of socialism.  

Engels' position was in perfect harmony with that of Marx. For Marx, writes Professor Avineri, "...communism is nothing else than the dialectical abolition (Aufhebung) of capitalism, postulating the realization of those hidden potentialities which could not have been historically realized under the limiting conditions of capitalism..."  

Therefore, for Marx and Engels, there are no shortcuts or leaps to socialism. A society, Marx wrote in *Capital*, "...can neither clear by bold leaps, nor remove by legal enactments the obstacles offered by the successive phases of its normal development." He asserted that the non-Western backward countries must pass through the same phases of economic development that the developed countries of the West have already completed. "The country that is more developed industrially," he wrote, "only shows to the less developed the image of its own future."60

For Marx and Engels, Russia belonged to the non-Western part of the world. In his letter to Tkachev, Engels pointed out that the existence in Russia of "a complete isolation of the individual village communes from each other... is the natural basis of oriental despotism... From India to Russia this type of social structure has always found its completion in this form of government."61 Nevertheless, Engels concluded that the Russian revolution, led by the educated elements and the incipient bourgeoisie, would occur prior to the socialist revolution in the West. "A revolution," he


wrote, "which will be of the utmost importance for Europe, simply for the reason that it will destroy, the last, until now intact, reserve of all European reaction . . . ." The Russian autocracy was viewed by Marx and Engels as the gendarmerie of Europe, whose elimination, especially after the events of 1848, was crucial for the socialist revolution in Western Europe. However, neither Marx nor Engels entertained any illusions about the possibility of proletarian revolutions in backward non-Western countries first. Both had expected an anti-despotic revolution in Russia. This is the meaning of their statement in the "Preface" to the Russian edition of the Communist Manifesto, (1882), that the Russian revolution would act as a signal for the proletarian revolution in the West. And it would be a misinterpretation of Marx and Engels, in my opinion, to suggest that toward the end of their lives they compromised their earlier insistence that Russia was to follow the path of Western Europe and that socialism as a form of economic and political life could only follow, and never precede

62 Ibid., p. 215.

63 Avineri, Social and Political Thought of Marx, p. 256. In 1877, Marx also described the Russian state as, "the unbroken bulwark and reserve army of counter-revolution."

64 Lichtheim, Marxism, pp. 326-329.
capitalist development.

Tkachev, on the other hand, perceived socialism as a specifically Russian remedy to the unique problems of Russia. Socialism, in his thought, was devoid of all the economic and social content that it had in Marx's thought; and was transformed into a purely political concept. He emphasized the morally advanced revolutionary elite and their use of the state to create both the material and psychological prerequisites of socialism after the actualization of the socialist revolution. He ignored the implications of Marx's concept of Oriental despotism, despite Plekhanov's writings to him on the despotic nature of the Russian state and the warnings against its possible resurgence if the revolutionary elite should seize power before the necessary objective conditions matured. This was, incidentally, the same warning that Plekhanov issued to Lenin two decades later. Clearly then, it is not the social being that determines social being. There is certainly nothing Marxian about this view.

However, Tkachev did view himself as a Marxist, considering himself not as an ideological innovator but rather being more concerned with the practical tasks of modernizing Russia. The result was Tkachev's total insensitivity to the question of ends and means in politics, and his lack of appreciation for the complex
relationship between practical matters and theoretical considerations. Consequently, Tkachev not only failed to elucidate his own theory of modernization but neglected to justify or incorporate his innovation into the Marxian vocabulary. It is this fusion of Tkachev's ideas with Marxian terminology that seems to be the key to Leninism.

Let us then turn to Leninism, calling special attention to certain common elements in the theories of modernization developed by Tkachev and Lenin—common elements which, in my judgment, are important for our understanding of Soviet "Marxism".
CHAPTER IV
LENIN'S TRANSFORMATION OF MARXISM

Lenin was the first to carry out a "socialist" revolution in an industrially underdeveloped country without awaiting prior socialist revolutions in the industrially advanced countries of Western Europe. As a result, the product of Lenin's revolutionary leadership, Leninism, emerged as a peculiar form of Marxism applicable to the conditions of semi-feudal, semi-colonial and colonial nations of the East. In the following pages, we shall examine those elements most characteristic in the transformation of Marxism; Lenin's views on the peculiarity of the socio-political conditions in Russia, his concept of the Communist Party as the vanguard of the proletariat, his views on the historic role of Western colonialism, and his conception of the "dictatorship of the proletariat" as the creative weapon in the construction of socialism in the East.

A close examination of Lenin's theory of modernization and revolution suggests that, at crucial points of his intellectual development, he emphasized Russia's unique and peculiar socio-historical development. In his very first published work, What the 'Friends of the
People! Are and How They Fight the Social Democrats.

Lenin explicitly acknowledged that Marxism, for him, "does not base itself on anything else but the facts of Russian history and reality..." 65

Russia's socio-political reality, as Lenin perceived it, differed from the social and political conditions of Western Europe. Consequently, he came to the conclusion that, the Russian situation demanded a different mode of revolutionary action that that of Western Europe. Lenin however, did not stop at this point, as did Tkachev, but went further, emphasizing the need for a new theoretical formula to accommodate the socio-political and economic conditions of backward Russia. It is on this point that, in my opinion, we find the most significant differences between Lenin and Tkachev, as we shall see later. And it is this necessity of action and theory, for Lenin, that constitutes the basis for his conscious adaptation and consequent distortion of Marx's theory of modernization. In his pamphlet, "The Tasks of the Russian Social Democrats," written in 1898, the year of the foundation of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party, Lenin summarized his views on Marxian theory and its relevance for Russia.

He wrote:

We do not regard Marx's theory as something completed and inviolable. On the contrary, we are convinced that it has only laid the foundation stone of the science which socialists must develop in all directions if they wish to keep pace with life. We think that an independent elaboration of Marx's theory is especially essential for Russian socialists; for this theory provides only general guiding principles which in particular are applied in England differently than in France, in France differently than in Germany and in Germany differently than in Russia.\textsuperscript{66}

According to Lenin, the revolutionary struggle in Russia was essentially between the Tsarist bureaucracy and the "people", a view, we may recall, which was consistently and relentlessly expounded by Tkachev to Marx and his close followers two decades earlier. In his pamphlet, quoted above, Lenin noted that in semi-Asiatic Russia... numerous and varied strata of the Russian people are opposed to the omnipresent, irresponsible, corrupt, savage, ignorant and parasitic Russian bureaucracy." And although this description does not conform to the Marxian conception of class struggle in the capitalist society, Lenin declared to the nascent Russian Social Democratic Party that its great task was to unite these varied and numerous strata of the Russian people, "into one whole,

\textsuperscript{66}Ibid., Vol. IV, pp. 211-212.
into the single class struggle of the proletariat."

It is clear that Lenin makes no attempt to differentiate theoretically the proletariat from the amorphous mass of the "people". But as Krupskaya observed in her memoirs, during this period (1898-1900) of his political and intellectual development, Lenin's primary concern was to "translate Marxism into the language of Russian facts," and not vice-versa. This translation, as we shall see later, amounted to a deliberate transformation of Marxism.

Lenin's early writings already contained, in my judgment, the seeds that proved to be crucial for his later transformation of Marxism. These writings are characterized by the lack of theoretical differentiation of the proletariat from the amorphous mass of the "people". This notion of the homogeneous oppressed "people" rising against the parasitic state bureaucracy connotes a nationalist rather than a class insurrection. And it is this pattern of thought that provided the intellectual springboard for Lenin's strategy of the


"worker-peasant" alliance. Moreover, this lack of theoretical distinction between the proletariat and the "people" invariably led to the non-recognition of the proletariat's independence as well as the non-recognition of its leading role in the socialist transformation. However, it was not until some four years later, in Lenin's What is to be Done?, after he had thoroughly familiarized himself with the thought of P.N. Tkachev, that he explicitly and systematically repudiated the leading role of the proletariat in the socialist transformation. But in order to better understand the significance of What is to be Done?, in its transformation of Marxism, it may be useful to recall the new developments in the Marxist movement in the late Nineteenth and early Twentieth Centuries.

In the "Introduction" to the first reprinting of The Class Struggles in France, in March 1895—only a few months before his death—Engels, indulging in a rare moment of self-criticism, observed that the major error made by Marx and himself at the time of the 1848

69Lichtheim, in his influential work, Marxism, p. 335, states that, "...the record shows that with Lenin the vision of 'total' revolution preceded the 'totalitarian' party structure. As early as 1898—four years before he outlined the 'vanguard' concept—he was already waging the strategy of such a revolution upon the nascent Social Democratic movement."
revolution was that they treated the European situation as ripe for socialist transformation. He wrote:

History has proved us, and all those who thought like us, wrong. It has made clear that the state of economic development on the continent at that time was not by a long way ripe for the elimination of capitalist production; it has proved this by economic revolution, which, since 1848, has seized the whole of the continent and has made Germany positively an industrial country of the first rank...  

As a result, he noted, the revolution of 1848 failed because it was a minority revolution. "Even when the majority took part," Engels wrote, "it did so—whether wittingly or not—only in the service of the minority; but because of this, or simply because of the passive, unresisting attitude of the majority, this minority acquired the appearance of being representative of the whole people." Therefore, Engels concluded, "Where it is a question of a complete transformation of the social organization, the masses themselves must also be in it, must themselves already have grasped what is at stake, what they are doing in body and soul. The history of the last fifty years has taught us that...." The proletariat was to become fully cognizant of its role in

---

71 Ibid., p. 124.
72 Ibid., p. 130.
history and its method of struggle through trade union and parliamentary activity. Of the German Social-Democratic Party, Engels said:

The two million voters whom it sends to the ballot box with young men and women who stand behind them as non-voters, form the most numerous, most compact mass, the decisive 'shock force' of the international proletarian army.... Its growth proceeds as spontaneously, as steadily, as irresistibly, and at the same time as tranquilly as a natural process.... To keep this growth going without interruption until it of itself gets beyond the control of the prevailing governmental system, that is our main task. 73

Four years later, in 1899, there emerged an influential group of Russian Marxists, the "Economists", who in their approach to Russian modernization attempted to deal with the questions that Engels raised in his 1895 "Introduction" to The Class Struggle in France. Their political programme called on the nascent Russian proletariat to concentrate its struggle largely in the economic sphere. The trade unions, the "Economists" maintained, were the best schools for the development of proletarian consciousness. This position, we may add, was not only consistent with Engels' argument in his "Introduction", but was in harmony with Marx's position as well, best illustrated in the latter's 1867 interview with a German trade union official in which he asserted

73 Ibid., p. 135.
that.

The trade unions are the schools for socialism. In the trade unions, the workers are educated to become socialists, because there they have the struggle with capital before their eyes day after day. All political parties whichever they may be inspire the mass of workers only temporarily, the unions however, tie the mass of the workers to themselves permanently, only they are able to represent a real labor party and to oppose the power of capital. The greater mass of the workers has attained the insight that their material situation must be improved, may they belong to any party they like. But if the material situation of the workers is improved he can devote himself better to the education of his children, his wife and children need no longer go to the factory, he himself can better cultivate his mind and look after his body, he becomes a socialist without an inkling of it.\textsuperscript{74}

The "Economists", like Marx and Engels, also relied upon the spontaneous movement of the proletariat to yield the desired political results. The task of the Marxist party, the "Economists" argued, was to adjust its political aspirations to the historically possible at any given stage.\textsuperscript{75} In concrete terms, of course, this was interpreted to mean that Russia, still being largely in the pre-capitalist stage, would first have to undergo a


\textsuperscript{75}Ibid. Marx wrote: "If the trade unions are to fulfill their functions, they must never be connected with or made dependent on a political organization. To do this is to give them a death-blow..."
revolution, anti-feudal and bourgeois in character, which would replace the tsarist autocracy with a parliamentary democracy. And the attempt to stage a socialist revolution before the bourgeois order fully developed was considered as an act of irresponsible utopianism which was bound to fail and would delay the ultimate socialist transformation. 76 Lenin, on the other hand, after a short stay in Geneva in 1900, thought differently.

Lenin's stay in Geneva in 1900 was of crucial importance for his intellectual development and crystallization of Leninism. For it is during this period that Lenin thoroughly familiarized himself with most of the writings of P.N. Tkachev. This historical relationship between the two men was noted by one of Lenin's close associates, Vladimir D. Bonch-Bryevich, who was, in 1900, the unofficial librarian for the Russian emigres in Geneva. "Vladimir Illyich," (Lenin), Bonch-Bryevich wrote in his memoirs, "read through and examined most carefully all of this old revolutionary literature paying particular attention to Tkachev, stressing that this writer was closer to our viewpoint than any of the others." 77

76 See Engels' reply to Tkachev, supra, p. 37.

77 Vladimir D. Bonch-Bryevich, "Bibliateka i arkhiv RSDRP v Zheneve", quoted in, Weeks, The First Bolshevik, p. 3.
Furthermore, Bonch-Bryevich observed:

Not only did V.I., (Lenin), himself read these works of Tkachev, he also recommended that all of us familiarize ourselves with the valuable writings of this original thinker. More than once, he asked newly arrived comrades if they wished to study the illegal literature, "Begin" V.I. would advise, "by reading and familiarizing yourself with Tkachev's Nabat.... This is basic and will give you tremendous knowledge." 78

This profound influence of Tkachev on Lenin's thought was most clearly evident in his famous attack on the "Economists" in What is to be Done?.

It must be strongly emphasized that Lenin, in What is to be Done?, is not disputing the "Economists'" claim that there is a positive correlation between the maturation of the economic system and the improvement in the material conditions of the workers. His dispute with the "Economists" is over the assumption that this in itself shows why the revolutionary class struggle would necessarily follow. This, in my opinion, Lenin sees as being the major shortcoming of the Marxian theory of modernization as a theory of revolution. For Marx and the "Economists", as we have already seen, this problem was reduced to economic determinism.

Lenin did not see the economic determinants as being particularly compelling reasons for revolutionary

---

78 Ibid., p. 5.
struggle in the midst of capitalist growth. On the contrary, he saw this process of capitalist growth hindering rather than promoting the possibility of socialist transformation. He observed that the workers of Western Europe, as well as Russia, with the maturation of capitalism, found their own economic improvement on the whole rather exhilarating despite the persistence of inequality. The workers now hoped for a better life under capitalism. And their attacks on the capitalist system as a totality sharply diminished while their demands for piecemeal economic and political reforms increased.

Lenin, in *What is to be Done?*, was the first Russian "Marxist" since Tkachev to raise the issue of the impossibility of the economic evolution of capitalism into socialism. He was also the first since Tkachev to express optimism in the possibility of achieving socialism in Russia through the actions of a small centralized and theoretically superior revolutionary elite. This elite, Lenin maintained, was partly due to the peculiar features of socio-political conditions in Russia, as well as the "undesirable" tendencies exhibited by the workers in the industrial countries. He wrote:

The history of all countries shows that the working class, exclusively by its own efforts, is able to develop only trade-union consciousness, i.e., the conviction that it is necessary to combine in unions, fight the employers, and strive to compel the government to pass necessary
labour legislation, etc... The theory of socialism, however, grew out of the philo-
sophic, historical, and economic theories elaborated by educated representatives of the propertied classes, by intellectuals.... 79

In the above quote, Lenin following Tkachev's example of distinguishing revolutionary instinctiveness from revolutionary consciousness, also draws a sharp distinction between "trade-union" consciousness and class or socialist consciousness. The former, as we mentioned above, was a spontaneous product of the economic struggle, while the latter could only be introduced into the working class from the outside by the theoretically advanced Marxist intellectuals. "Modern socialist consciousness can arise only on the basis of profound scientific knowledge," Lenin asserted. "The vehicle of science is not the proletariat but the bourgeois intelligentsia.... Socialist consciousness is something introduced into the proletariat class struggle from without." 80

According to Lenin, the spontaneous labour movement simply wastes the revolutionary energy of the workers in sporadic clashes with the individual employers and the government agents. They are disconnected and

79 Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. V, p. 375. "By their social status, the founders of modern scientific socialism, Marx and Engels, themselves belonged to the bourgeois intelligentsia."

80 Ibid., p. 383.
uncoordinated outbursts of dissatisfaction, in which the workers give vent blindly, without the understanding of the social order that confronted them and without an image of the socialist society which was to replace it.

In order to become effective, Lenin asserted, the labour movement had to be subordinated to the small theoretically advanced Marxist revolutionary party which would coordinate and guide the workers toward the realization of socialism. In a "Letter to a Comrade on Organizational Questions," September 1902, Lenin wrote:

While in the matter of ideology and of practical control of the movement and the revolutionary struggle we need the maximum possible centralization for the proletariat, so far as concerns information of the movement the center needs the maximum possible decentralization... We must centralize control over the movement. We must likewise... decentralize as much as possible the responsibility before the party of each individual member....

In short then, the necessity of nature socio-economic conditions for the transition to socialism, as postulated by Marx and Engels, was simply rendered superfluous by Lenin. Thus, what we see in his early writings is an

81 Again to show Tkachev's influence on Lenin, let us compare the remarkable similarity between their conceptions of the party organization. In an article entitled, "What is to be Done Now?", Tkachev wrote: "The success of the revolution is possible only with the creation of an organization which welds together the disparate revolutionary elements into one living body, acting according to one common plan, submitting itself to one common direction—in short, an organization founded on centralization of power, and the decentralization of functions." Izbrannye Sochinenia, Vol. III, p. 445.
implicit assumption that economic growth under capitalism in itself does not constitute "progress", i.e., lead to socialism. But, an explicitly systematic theoretical formulation on this subject was not completed by Lenin until 1916, in his well known work, *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism*.

There is an important continuity between *What is to be Done?* and *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism*. In fact, the latter, in my opinion, can be seen as a theoretical explanation of the ideas advocated in the former. That is, why the political organization and the backward countries of the East had to replace the general proletarian movement of the industrial West as the initiators in the global transition to socialism. Thus, Lenin's theory of imperialism is an attempt to explain the embarrassing fact of why the socialist revolution predicted by Marx had not materialized in the developed countries. Let us now examine Lenin's argument in *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism*, emphasizing those elements which significantly differ from the original Marxian image of capitalism and colonialism.

Stated simply, Lenin argued that capitalism

---

underwent a dramatic change from the time of Marx to the late Nineteenth and early Twentieth Centuries. As a result, he maintained, Marx had not anticipated the possibility of a capitalist system finding a way out of its fully developed contradictions and the impending revolutions by its expansion into the backward Eastern part of the world. The East is then transformed by the Western capitalists into a dumping area for surplus capital and surplus commodities, as well as into a source of cheap raw materials and cheap labor. It is this expansion, Western capitalist expansion into the backward East, that Lenin terms imperialism.

The result of this expansion by the Western Capitalists and their extraction of super-profit from the East, Lenin emphasized, enabled them to bribe their own working class by simply granting it mere economic benefits and extending its political liberties. "The proletariat in the imperialist countries," Lenin remarked, "lives partially at the expense of hundreds of millions.

---

83 This argument amounts to a falsification and misrepresentation of Marx's ideas. For Lenin to suggest that Marx did not anticipate capitalist expansion into backward East, is to suggest that Marx's perception of capitalism was national or regional in character. This, of course, is not the case. Capitalism for Marx, is a universal phenomenon which, "...draws all, even the most barbarian nations into civilizations...." For complete quote see supra, p. 9.
of uncivilized peoples." The workers of the industrially developed countries of Western Europe, according to Lenin, have become the aristocracy of the world labour movement and ceased being its vanguard. The conclusion that Lenin drew from his analysis of imperialism was that the socialist transformation will not occur first in the industrially developed West where bribery and "trade-union" consciousness were prevalent but, rather that it would come first in the backward semi-colonial and colonial countries of the East.

With time, Lenin attached more and more importance to the role of the backward East in the global socialist transformation. Speaking at the Second All-Russian Congress of Communist Organizations of the Peoples of the East, on November 22, 1919, he stated:

The period of the awakening of the East in the contemporary revolution is being succeeded by a period in which all the Eastern peoples will participate in deciding the destiny of the whole world, so as not to be simply objects of the enrichment of others.85

Lenin's belief in the backward East as being the determining factor in world socialist development was again reaffirmed only four days before the stroke that incapacitated him, when he wrote:

85 Ibid., Vol. XXX, p. 160.
The basic reason for this tremendous acceleration of world development is that new hundreds of millions of people have been drawn into it. The old bourgeois and imperialist Europe, which was accustomed to look upon itself as the centre of the universe, rotted and burst like a putrid ulcer in the first imperialist holocaust. 86

Clearly then, Lenin's theory of imperialism marked a dramatic departure from the original Marxian conception of Western bourgeoisie being an agent of global modernization. For Lenin, Western colonialism is the pillager of the backward East and the cause of its impoverishment and underdevelopment. It strengthened the bourgeoisie, the most potent adversary of the workers, by de-radicalizing them, that is, instilling in the workers "trade-union" consciousness, and hence, weakening them. As a result, Lenin arrived at a conclusion similar to that arrived at by Tkachev thirty years earlier, which was that backwardness and the absence of the bourgeois class, and by implication, the proletariat, were an advantage rather than an impediment to the realization of socialism.

In a letter to the American workers in 1918, Lenin wrote, "We know that circumstances brought our Russian detachment of the socialist proletariat to the fore not because of our merits, but because of the exceptional backwardness of Russia...." 87 And in the following

87 Ibid., Vol. XXVIII, p. 75.
year, in an address to the representatives of the Communist organizations of the backward East, Lenin declared, "You are confronted with a task which had not previously confronted the Communists of the world, you must adapt yourself to specific conditions such as do not exist in the European countries.... conditions in which the task is to wage a struggle against medievil survivals and not against capitalism." Hence, it is important to note that although Lenin's theoretical framework in *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism*, assures that the backward countries of the East are "objectively", or naturally, anti-Western and anti-capitalist, he equally emphasized the importance of the "subjective" factor, Communist party control in these areas. Thus, as Lenin's statements demonstrate, although he does not use such terms as "historical leaps" or "skipping stages", the notion is clearly present in his writings.

To bypass the capitalist stage of development, Lenin, as we have already established, advocated an immediate seizure of state power by the Marxist revolution-ary elite, i.e., the Communist Party. To be sure then, however sincere Lenin may have been to the Marxian commitment to "smash and destroy" the bourgeois state, it is certain that he was all too eager to replace it with

38Ibid., Vol. XXIII, p. 351.
the "dictatorship of the proletariat," which he defined as "the organization of the vanguard of the oppressed as the ruling class." Lenin, like Tkachev, insisted that the revolutionary elite, after overthrowing the old order were to retain total control and power over the social order.

In the hands of the revolutionary elite, the state was to be both a repressive and a creative weapon, repressive for the purpose of instituting power from above for perfect social order and industrialization based on socialist principles. "The proletariat," Lenin wrote, in *The State and Revolution*, "needs state power, the centralized organization of violence, for the purpose of crushing the resistance of the exploiters and for the purpose of leading the great mass of the population—the peasantry, the petty bourgeoisie, the semi-proletarians—in the work

89 V. N. Chikvadze, *Leninskoye Uchenie o Dictature Proletariata* ("Lenin's Teachings on the Dictatorship of the Proletariat"), (Moscow: Izdatelstvo Nauka, 1970), p. 47. "The (state) apparatus—Lenin taught—need not be smashed. We must wrest it from the subordination to the capitalists, we must cut-off and eliminate the capitalists with their strings of influence on it, and must subordinate it to the proletarian Soviets."

90 Ibid., p. 13. On the eve of the October coup, Lenin wrote: "The doctrine of class struggle as applied by Marx to the question of the state and of the socialist revolution, leads inevitably to the question of recognition of the political rule of the proletariat, of its dictatorship, i.e., of power sharing with none...."
of organizing the socialist economy." Thus, regardless of what one may say about Lenin's conceptual ambiguities and inconsistencies, it is safe to say that his theory of modernization, unlike Marx's, elevated politics over economics and indeed, assigned to the political superstructure, i.e., the state, the creative role over the economic substructure. Consequently, the economic prerequisites, which were of primary importance for socialist transformation to Marx, Engels and the Russian economic materialists Akimiv and Plekhanov, became secondary in Lenin's thought.

In one of his last and perhaps least known articles, "Our Revolution", published exactly one year before his death, Lenin dealt not only with the Russian revolution but with the approaching socialist transformation in the East. In it, he asserts that the indisputable lack of economic prerequisites for modernization can be compensated by political prerequisites and that the latter can and must become the basis for the former. "If a definite level of culture is required for the building of socialism (although no one can say what the precise 'level of culture' is, for it differs in every West European country)," Lenin wrote, "why can't we begin by

---

first achieving the prerequisites for that level of culture in a revolutionary way, and then, with the aid of the workers' and peasants' government and the Soviet system proceed to overtake other nations?"  

In considering this and other assertions by Lenin, examined in this chapter, it is clear that for Lenin, as for the founders of scientific socialism, there are two distinct types of underdeveloped societies, the "Eastern" and the "Western". But, whereas Marx absolutized the West European pattern of modernization and as an economic materialist perceived the economic-technological prerequisites preceding the modernization of consciousness, Lenin, on the other hand, absolutized the Bolshevik and the Soviet experience and perceived psychological modernization, at least in a small group of Marxist revolutionaries, prior to and independent of the economic, cultural and technological development.  

In other words, for Lenin, it is not the social being that determines consciousness, but rather, consciousness that determines social being. There is certainly nothing Marxian or materialistic in this view. Moreover, a view that excludes the material and holds the immaterial or consciousness as the sole determiner of social transformation is devoid of dialectics in the Marxian sense.  

of the term. Thus, in regard to the theory of modernization, we may safely conclude that Lenin, under the influence of Tkachev, stood Marx on his head.

In closing, we should point out that despite the remarkable similarity in the political ideas of Tkachev and Lenin, it goes without saying that there was also a substantial difference. Tkachev, as we recall, was almost exclusively concerned with a rapid modernization of Russia, therefore, discarding the Marxian theory of development, which relegated "Eastern" Russia to the tail end in global modernization. Lenin, on the other hand, although primarily preoccupied with modernizing Russia, also emphasized the importance of the revolutionary theory for achieving modernization. Thus, he consciously set out to transform Marxism to fit the Russian reality. Or, as Krupskaya cogently stated, to "translate Marxism into the language of Russian facts." The facts however, as we have seen, were perceived by Lenin from a Tkachevian rather than a Marxian perspective. The result was the fusion of parochial concerns with the universal terminology of Marxism. Consequently, Lenin's thought is expressed in terms of epochs and world development.

Nevertheless, in my judgment, Lenin remains closer to Tkachev than to Marx in his views on modernization and development. Lenin's question, like Tkachev's, is, "What is to be Done?", which focuses only on the means
and not on the content of the action. Hence, effectiveness and efficiency are the main criteria of any action. Consequently, when Lenin concluded that the working class, (the proletariat), could not accomplish the mission which, according to Marx, history gave it, he without hesitation substituted the Russian Communist Party\textsuperscript{93} for the proletariat; and following the revolution, equated the party with the Soviet state.

In Lenin's thought, contrary to Marx, there is no separation between the realm of necessity, i.e., industrialization or modernization, and the realm of freedom, i.e., socialist transformation. Leninism is a theory of necessity, or "What is to be Done?". Extending necessity into the realm of freedom, stressing regimentation, subordination and total suppression of the individual to the Communist Party, the sole repository of historical truth, before and after the socialist transformation.\textsuperscript{94} In short, Lenin's is a prescriptive theory of the methods of overthrowing the old political order and affecting rapid

\textsuperscript{93}Proletarian consciousness which, in Marx's view is a property of the proletariat, in Lenin, stands outside the thing of which it is a property. In this respect, Lenin may be compared to Plato, who maintained that the idea of whiteness was outside of white things.

industrialization from above in the underdeveloped areas of the world. As one distinguished student of modernization and development recently wrote:

Marxism is a theory of history. Leninism is a theory of political development. It deals with the bases of political institutionalization, the formation of public order... This is what makes the Leninist theory of political development relevant to the modernizing countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America. In returning then to the question that we posed at the beginning of the previous chapter on the so-called "paradox" of Marxism, we conclude that it is not a "paradox" at all. For in fact, what came to power in Russia in October 1917, was not Marxism, but Leninism.

CHAPTER V

CHANGING SOVIET PERCEPTIONS
OF MODERNIZATION AND DEVELOPMENT
IN AFRICA AND ASIA

The Marxist-Leninist theory of modernization, as Soviet "Marxist" ideology is usually called, has not been static for the past fifty-six years. On the contrary, it has evolved by a process of elimination, addition and redefinition. In this final chapter, we will trace the changing Soviet perceptions of non-communist underdeveloped countries, from Stalin through Brezhnev, and examine Soviet theoretical schemes for evaluating modernization or development prospects in these backward countries.

For Lenin, the cause of underdevelopment in the East was Western colonialism and the world capitalist system. Therefore, he was sure that the underdeveloped East would be objectively anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist in its path to development and modernization. This is not to say that Lenin ignored the importance of the subjective factor, that is, the role of the communist party in the process of modernization in colonial and feudal areas of the world. Consequently, when speaking at the Second Congress of the Communist International (Comintern), Lenin declared both the nationalist bourgeoisie
and the communists of the backward East to be progressive forces in the development of their respective countries and the whole world. In other words, for Lenin, although the Communists constituted the most advanced and most reliable element in the process of development. Nevertheless, they did not have the prerogative on modernization but rather shared it with the nationalist bourgeoisie.

After Lenin's death, Stalin also initially advocated support for the nationalist bourgeoisie in the East. In his lectures on "The Foundations of Leninism," delivered at Sverdlov University in April 1924, Stalin declared that,

The revolutionary character of a national movement under the conditions of imperialist oppression does not necessarily presuppose the existence of proletarian elements, the existence of a revolutionary or a republican programme of the movement the existence of a democratic basis of the movement.... the struggle that the Egyptian merchants and bourgeois intellectuals are waging for the independence of Egypt is objectively a revolutionary struggle, despite the bourgeois origin and bourgeois title of the leaders of the Egyptian national movement, despite the fact that they are opposed to socialism... The view of the nationalist bourgeoisie as a revolutionary and modernizing agent was modestly altered by Stalin

---

96 Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. XXXI, pp. 144-152.

97 J.V. Stalin: Works, Vol VI, p. 148. "...in other, larger colonial and dependent countries such as India and China, every step of which along the road to liberation even if it runs counter to the demands of formal democracy, is a steam-hammer blow at imperialism, i.e., is undoubtedly a revolutionary step."
one year later.

In his report to the Fourteenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union on "The Immediate Tasks of the Communist Elements in the Colonial and Dependent Countries," Stalin asserted that in the countries like Egypt and India, the nationalist bourgeoisie had now split up into "revolutionary" and "compromising" factions. The latter, Stalin stated, "fearing revolution more than it fears imperialism, and concerned more about the interests of its own country. The victory of the revolution cannot be achieved unless this bloc is smashed." Therefore, at this historical juncture, Stalin concluded, "The communists must pass from the policy of a united national front to a revolutionary bloc of the workers and petty bourgeoisie...." 99

This position of not underestimating the revolutionary possibilities of the communists nor overestimating the idea of the national front was maintained by Stalin until 1927. But the near massacres of the Chinese Communist Party in April 1927 at the hands of their revolutionary bourgeois allies, who until then were considered to be revolutionary, brought about a dramatic reorientation in Stalin's view on the problems and the

98Ibid., Vol. VII, p. 149.
99Ibid.
policy of development in colonial countries of the East.

The Sixth Congress of the Comintern, held in Moscow from July 17 to September 1, 1920, reflected these dramatic changes in Stalin's perceptions. In the thesis on, "The Revolutionary Movement in Colonial and Semi-Colonial Countries," the Congress declared that the national bourgeois betrayed the cause of revolution and went over into the camp of reaction. Industrialization of the backward East based on capitalist principles was declared to be non-progressive. "Capitalist exploitation operated by the British, French or any other bourgeoisie," the Congress declared, "hinder the development of the productive forces.... Real industrialization of the colonial country is hindered." And, the policy adopted by the Congress called for an immediate transition to socialism in these backward areas of the East. The main prerequisite for real industrialization and modernization, it was asserted, was the existence of a strong communist party in control of the state apparatus. Thus, the elements in the underdeveloped East were instructed to concentrate on building strong communist parties. The Congress declared:

---


101 Ibid., p. 534.
It is absolutely essential that the Communist parties in these countries should from the very outset demarcate themselves in the most clear-cut fashion, both politically and organizationally, from all petty-bourgeois groups and parties...

It is clear that the Chinese experience of 1927 had a traumatic effect on Stalin, shattering his optimism for rapid world socialist transformation and shifting the stress from the objective factors to the subjective factors in the Soviet scheme for world revolutionary development. And this was essentially the Soviet position and policy until 1953.

After World War II, the Soviet Union bypassed any effort to establish political and economic relations with the newly independent states of Africa and Asia. The nationalist leaders of these new states were viewed by Stalin as suspicious and unreliable in the world struggle between the Socialist and Capitalist camps; and instead, the Soviet support was given to local communist parties to seize power. Thus from 1928 to 1953, the Soviet theoretical formula for evaluating developmental prospects in non-communist ex-colonial countries called for immediate communist revolutions and claimed

102 Ibid., p. 542

industrialization and modernization as a prerogative of the communist parties.  

Stalin's death in March 1953, marked the turning point in Soviet perceptions and policies toward the ex-colonial countries of Africa and Asia. This change, however, from the pessimistic and militant policy of Stalin to the more optimistic and flexible policy of Khrushchev, was not arrived at abruptly or suddenly but rather gradually. The persistence of the old Stalinist concepts was evident long after Khrushchev and Bulganin began courting the nationalist leaders of the new countries.

In November 1954, I. Tishin, in Kommunist, an authoritative organ of the Central Committee of the C.P. S.U., in an article entitled, "The Struggle of the Peoples of the Near and Middle East for Peace and Independence," stated that Nasser and the ruling nationalist bourgeoisie of Egypt were compromising their country's interests by conspiring with the western capital to exploit and


105 Jan F. Triska and David D. Finley, *Soviet Foreign Policy*, (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1968), pp. 492-494. In addition to a series of personal visits to Afghanistan, Burma and India, Khrushchev also extended 9.8 million dollars to Afghanistan and 134.8 million dollars to India for economic development at 2½% interest, repayable in 12 years.
plunder—Egypt. "The only element that is capable of leading Egypt toward real industrialization and modernization," Tishin wrote, "is the working class and its vanguard, the communist party."\(^{106}\) And it was not until the conclusion of the Soviet-Egyptian arms deal, with Czechoslovakia acting as an intermediary that the changed Soviet position on the national bourgeoisie and the national liberation movements in the backward countries of the East was officially revised.\(^{107}\)

At the Twentieth Party Congress of the C.P.S.U., Khrushchev officially modified theory to accommodate Soviet policy changes in the underdeveloped world. A significant aspect of Khrushchev's theoretical innovations, it is important to note, is that they were based on an optimistic assessment of the international situation. For our purpose, we need only consider two of Khrushchev's theoretical innovations, the three camp thesis, and the thesis of different roads to socialism.

Khrushchev's "three camp" thesis officially replaced Lenin's and Stalin's dichotomic world view. According to Khrushchev's reasoning, a new anti-imperialist force emerged after World War II, namely, the newly independent ex-colonial countries of Africa and Asia.

\(^{106}\) No. 16, p. 91.

This "third camp", he pointed out, due to the objective laws of development, was necessarily moving toward socialism. The forces of socialism were strong and getting stronger, Khrushchev reasoned optimistically, while the forces of global capitalism were getting weaker. In effect, Khrushchev's "three camp" thesis closely resembled Lenin's theory of the weakest link of imperialism. The progressive collapse of world capitalism and the transition to global socialism was now largely dependent on the struggle of national liberation. In other words, the "third world" was now considered to be virtually the deciding factor in the development of world revolution.

Following the Twentieth Party Congress, Semyonov, a recognized Soviet authority on the "third world" echoed Khrushchev's "three camp" thesis in an article in Kommunist. He wrote:

their (the countries of the East) struggle for political and economic independence for their sovereign rights, is objectively an anti-imperialist fight and shakes the big imperialist powers domination in international relations and strengthens the position of the peace supporters throughout the world.108

The second theoretical contribution made by

Khrushchev at the Twentieth Party Congress was his rejection of Stalin's Soviet model of modernization as the only correct way to build socialism. He quoted a saying of Lenin's, that, "All nations will arrive at socialism, but not all will do so exactly the same way." Thus, the policy of demanding strict adherence to the Soviet model of development was modified to allow certain, but undefined in degree deviation from the Soviet path.

For the ex-colonial underdeveloped countries of the East, the concept of "many roads to socialism" implied that with Soviet assistance, the non-communist nationalist bourgeoisie were capable of achieving real industrialization and modernization. This was clearly a dramatic about face in Soviet appraisal of development prospects in the underdeveloped countries of Africa and Asia. However, let us note that both the Soviet leaders and the Soviet analysts of the "third world" up until 1960 had failed to elaborate on just how the "progressive" states of the "third world" would make that necessary transition to socialism.

In November 1960, in the Moscow Declaration, issued at the end of the Conference of Representatives of Eighty-one Communist and Workers Parties, the Soviet

---

109 The thesis of different roads to socialism was reaffirmed in practice in the "Soviet-Yugoslav Joint Declaration", Pravda, June 21, 1956.
Union introduced a new theoretical formula for evaluating developmental prospects of the underdeveloped countries. This formula was entitled, "A State of National Democracy" and defined as:

a state which consistently upholds its political and economic independence, fights against imperialism and its military blocks, against military bases on its territory; a state which fights against the new forms of colonialism and the penetration of imperialist capital; a state which rejects dictatorial and despotic methods of government; a state in which the people are insured broad democratic rights and freedoms (freedom of speech, press, assembly, demonstrations, establishment of political parties and social organizations) the opportunity to work for the enactment of an agrarian reform and other democratic and social changes, and for participation in shaping government policy.  

And, "all the patriotic forces" in the underdeveloped countries were called upon to unite in, "a single national democratic front," to carry out these progressive tasks. In concrete terms, this meant that the communists were to complete the struggle against imperialism and feudalism in an alliance in which they were to be subordinate to and under the leadership of the nationalist bourgeoisie.

The declaration, also stressed the transitory nature of the national democratic states. It stated that the main function of a national democratic states, was to set in motion the economic and social forces which

---

eventually would overwhelm the nationalist bourgeoisie leadership and force their replacement by the working class and its vanguard, the communist party. Only the communists, the Soviets argued, were capable of taking the radical measures of expropriating both domestic and foreign capital and relying on the Soviet Union for their economic and political support. Thus, according to the theory of "national democracy," the transition to socialism was dependent upon the growing influence and the eventual preponderance of the communist parties in the united national front coalitions. The significant aspect of this theory is that it did not draw a strict dichotomy between politics and economics or assume the primacy of the former over the latter. Instead, it fused the two and in a deterministic fashion, and elevated economics over politics.

From 1961 to 1963, a number of important economic and political developments in the non-communist underdeveloped countries again prompted the Soviets to revise their formula for evaluating developmental prospects in these ex-colonial areas. Nationalist bourgeois leaders like Ben Bella of Algeria, Nasser of Egypt, Nkrumah of Ghana and Sukarno of Indonesia, extended the state sectors of their economies by nationalizing all of large-scale industry and the greater part of small-scale industry and, in the process, moved to a policy of
greater reliance on the Soviet Union. This was certainly far beyond the expectations of Moscow reflected in the theory of "national democracy". Hence, theory again was modified to accommodate these unexpected developments in the underdeveloped countries of Africa and Asia. In 1963, the theory of "national democracy" was supplanted with the theory of "revolutionary democracy", the non-capitalist path of development.

While "national democracy" implied a two stage process in which the nationalist bourgeois were bound to promote capitalism but, in turn, were to be succeeded by socialism, the "revolutionary democracy" on the other hand, asserted that certain segments of the nationalist bourgeoisie were capable of bypassing the capitalist stage and leading their countries along the non-capitalist path of development. That is, it was capable of undertaking radical measures of expropriations of both domestic and foreign capital, as well as supporting the Soviet Union in any ensuing conflict with the West. G. Mirskyi, a noted analyst of the Middle East, claimed that the revolutionary democratic regimes constituted the best guarantee for rapid and resolute transition to socialism. He wrote:

The doctrines and dogmatists will reply: wait. Restrict the movement to the aims of bourgeois democratic revolution, and promote capitalism in the anticipation that the working class will mature sufficiently to lead the socialist revolution. Experience,
however, has shown that in our day with the socialist world system so decisively influencing the course of world events, this long 'classical' path is by no means obligatory. The national liberation revolution can immediately break out of the framework of bourgeois democratic revolution and begin the transition to socialist revolution...... If the conditions for the proletarian leadership have not yet matured the historic mission of breaking with capitalism can be carried out by elements close to the working class. Nature abhors vacuum.111

There were great expectations that the "revolutionary democrats" would embrace communism and declare their countries "socialist", as did Castro in Cuba. Terms like African socialism, Arab socialism and Islamic socialism were now gaining currency in the Soviet press. Ben Bella, for instance, after being awarded the title, "Hero of the Soviet Union", was quoted in Pravda as having promised, "to continue in the socialist road of development."112 Let me again stress that this theoretical revision, which further emphasized the objective factors of social development over the subjective, i.e., the hegemony of the communist party, reflected the optimism of the Soviets as a result of pre-Soviet developments in the ex-colonies of Africa and Asia.

Khrushchev fell in October 1964, and his successors, Brezhnev and Kosygin continued his general policy toward the underdeveloped world and adopted his theoretical formulas for evaluating developmental prospects in the ex-colonial countries of the East.

However, beginning with 1965 and after, a number of important changes occurred in the "third world". These important events had their repercussions on Soviet perceptions of development prospects in the "third world".

In 1965, Ben Bella and Sukarno were overthrown by military regimes. Their policies of extending the state sectors of the national economies was almost immediately reversed by the new military leadership, who granted concessions to domestic and foreign capital. Thus, on June 4, 1965, A. Iskenderov, writing in Pravda, observed that, "The implementation of radical and progressive measures such as nationalization and agrarian reforms, do not automatically lead to socialism." And, G. Hirskyi, an early protagonist of the theory of "revolutionary democracy" and non-capitalist development, in November 1965, admitted that the optimism of his previous writings was premature and warned of a noticeable trend to the

---

113"Uroki Borby za Edinstvo", ("Lessons of the Struggle for Unity"), p. 3.
right in many "third world" countries.\textsuperscript{114}

The notion of different nationalist types of socialism, used widely under Khrushchev, was now being repudiated in the Soviet press. Fedor Burlatskyi, an often cited authority on ideological matters, in an article entitled, "Liberation Movement and Scientific Socialism," in Pravda, wrote:

There is not and there cannot be a Russian, German, Chinese or African socialism.... The bourgeoisie leaders who try to justify their personal rule and dictatorial powers by the need to overcome the difficulties of building socialism underestimate the need to rely on a political party with socialist aims which results in many cases with a retreat from the struggle of socialism.... Communists welcome all social forces genuinely striving for socialism but they do not wish to be dissolved among them.\textsuperscript{115}

This clearly signifies a reassessment of the deterministic and materialistic aspects of "revolutionary democracy" and non-capitalist development. Burlatskyi's argument now emphasized the need for a more independent and vigorous communist activity in the "third world".

\textsuperscript{114}G. Mirskyi, "Klassy i Klassovaia Borba v Razvivajushcheja Stranah", ("Classes and the Class Struggle in the Developing Countries"), Mirovaia Ekonomika i Mezhdunarodnove Otnoshenia, No. 3, March, 1966 p. 65.

In 1966, Nkwame Nkrumah of Ghana, another Soviet typed "revolutionary democrat" was toppled by a military regime. Following the coup in Ghana, the Soviet commentators on the "third world" began to echo Burlatskyi's argument, attributing the reversals in the "revolutionary democratic" states to the, "absence of a well-organized vanguard party capable of rallying the masses to the defense of their gains."\(^{116}\) Thus, the determinism, or the primacy of the objective factors, following the Soviet reversals in Algeria, Ghana and Indonesia, was discarded and replaced by the "leading stratum" or vanguard theory of modernization.

The term, non-capitalist development, first used in conjunction with the theory of "revolutionary democracy", was now redefined and given a new meaning. "The non-capitalist path of development," one Soviet commentator stated, "does not constitute some sort of a 'Third' road — this path is socialist."\(^{117}\) Several Soviet analysts proclaimed Mongolia to be the new model of non-capitalist development.\(^{118}\)

---


\(^{118}\) Ibid., p. 35.
The first elaboration on the newly revised theory of non-capitalist development came from the pen of the distinguished Soviet Orientologist, R.A. Ulianovskyi. In an article entitled, "Lenin's Concept of Non-capitalist Development and the Present," in Voprosy Istorii, he asserted that the implementation and the preservation of socio-economic prerequisites for non-capitalist development were dependent, "on an active dedication of their leaders and other cadres to the ideals of socialism, the growing organizational standards of the proletariat and their influence in the affairs of the state, as well as the close alliance with the world socialist systems, constitute the most important internal and external guarantee for non-capitalist development."\(^{119}\) Clearly, non-capitalist development for Ulianovskyi is, above all, a political phenomenon and not just economic growth. It denotes the communist accession to power in order to "paralyze the growing influence of the national capital."\(^{120}\) And, G. Mirskyi, in his most recent essay in Kommunist, added that economic growth not based on


\(^{120}\) Ibid., p. 127.
socialist principles is, "growth without development." \(^{121}\)

This signifies a return to the strict dichotomy between and the primacy of politics over economics in the Soviet theory of modernization and development. The concept of backwardness or underdevelopment has been drained of its economic and social content and is being defined simply in terms of ideology and politics.

However, an important and peculiar feature in recent Soviet writings on modernization and development has been that despite the renewal of the militant vanguard or the "leading stratum" theory of modernization, the Soviet analysts are openly admitting its irreconcilability with the socio-political reality in the "third world". Conditions are not yet ripe for undivided political power to go into the hands of the working people," Ulianovskyi wrote. "Participation of the national bourgeoisie in political power is due to their being better prepared politically, ideologically, organizationally, and economically than any stratum for active political life and participation in political power." \(^{122}\) Thus, the

---


\(^{122}\) Ulianovskyi, "Lenin's Concept", p. 129.
current Soviet policies of compromise and cooperation with nationalist bourgeoisie in the "third world", nearly identical, incidently, to those pursued by Khrushchev, are termed as being realistic, under the present conditions, and advantageous to the cause of international proletarianism, i.e., the Soviet Union. But, there is no indication at this time in Soviet literature of the recognition of the possibility and ability of many underdeveloped countries to "develop" in directions other than those envisaged by the Marxist-Leninist theories of modernization and development. Certainly any approach that does not take into account the historical and cultural factors of the process of modernization in the underdeveloped countries cannot be considered to be realistic. Instead, divorcing theory from policy and focusing more on the question of immediate action is a sign of practical and opportunism rather than realism and necessity by the Soviets.

In summarizing Soviet formulas for evaluating the modernizing and developmental prospects, and Soviet

123For this strange inconsistency between theory and policy, see V. Kondratyev's "An Important Prerequisite for Social Progress," International Affairs, Moscow: No. 4, (April, 1974), pp. 47-52; and, A. Levkovskyi, "Spetsifika i Granitsy Capitalizna v Pereduxnom Obshchestve 'Tretego Mira'", ("Specifications and Limits of Capitalism in the Transitional Societies of the 'Third World'"), Mezhdunarodnye Otnoshenia, No. 1, (January, 1974), pp. 112-120.
policies in the "third world" for the past fifty-six years, we must conclude that both the formulas and the policies have been in constant reappraisal and revision. However, while we have seen theory make a full circle, from Stalin's militant vanguard theory of modernization, to the deterministic and materialistic formulas of Khrushchev, and back again to the militant vanguard or "leading stratum" theory of modernization today, this has not been the case in the realm of policy. The remilitarization of theory, from 1965 on, was not accompanied by the militarization of Soviet policy toward the "third world".

This distinction between what is desirable and what is possible, that is, between theory and action, is a peculiar feature of recent Soviet literature on modernization and development. This sets it apart from previous Soviet writings on that subject and, constitutes a significant departure from the long established practice of simply adjusting theory, or ideology, to fit Soviet foreign policy in the "third world".
CONCLUSION

There are two distinct traditions in the Marxist-Leninist theory of modernization and development. While Marx wrote in response to the problems of the industrially developed West, he in the process, absolutized the West European model of development. The economic phenomena and consequently the socio-political characteristic of Western Europe in Marx's view was universally compulsive. Or as he stated in his *Das Kapital*, "The country that is more developed industrially only shows to the less developed the image of its own future." According to Marx then, no society could leap through history or bypass the socio-economic stages of development. Every society had to pass through the capitalist stage in its path toward communism. Indeed, without the highly developed capitalist production for Marx the ultimate stage of history was unattainable. Thus, this impetus for global modernization for Marx emanated from Western Europe in the form of colonialism.

Lenin, on the other hand, whose eminent fore-runner was the non-Marxist Russian intellectual P.N. Tkachev, wrote in response to the problems peculiar to the agrarian and backward East. For Lenin, Western colonialism, i.e., imperialism, was not a vital
and revolutionary phenomenon but rather a parasitic force signifying the death or the last stage of world capitalism. It was this exploitation of the backward East, Lenin contended, that enabled the Western capitalists to bribe their working class with the extra profits from the colonies and extinguish the revolutionary potential in Western Europe. Consequently, according to Lenin, the impetus for world socialist development eminated not from the industrial West, but rather from the agrarian and backward countries of the East, who are then naturally or subjectively allies of the Soviet Union in its struggle against world capitalism. Therefore what we have established in the preceding chapters is that the Marxist-Leninist theory of modernization, as the Soviet theory of modernization is called, is a misnomer insofar as it implies Marx to be the precursor of Lenin and consequently treats Leninism as the realization of Marxist unity of theory and practice.

In assessing the various Soviet formulas for evaluating modernization and development in the non-communist underdeveloped countries in the last fifty-six years, it is clear that they are all based on Lenin's theory of imperialism. And Soviet literature has shown no visible attempt to alter Lenin's theoretical achievement. The simple dichotomy of Lenin's system
which envisaged the backward societies developing in the direction of the Soviet model, has on the whole been retained. Basically the Soviet writings on modernization examined in this study lack three important consideration in their assessment of the underdeveloped world. First, they do not recognize the great variability of different types of underdeveloped and modern societies beyond the ones envisaged by both Marx's and Lenin's theories of modernization. Secondly, they do not recognize that the underdeveloped countries may be developing in directions other than those posited by Marx and Lenin. And finally, the Soviet writers fail to take into account the importance of historical and cultural factors in the process of modernization. However, even though Soviet writings have not altered Lenin's theory of modernization, there have been variations or shifts within his theory which are significant in themselves.

Throughout these shifts, from emphasis on the importance of the subjective factors, i.e., the role of


the communist party, in the process of modernization, 1928 to 1955; to emphasis on objective factors in 1956; and back again, at present, to emphasis on the subjective factor, we see that this pattern has been a response to the successes and failures of Soviet foreign policy in the "third world". In 1928, and in 1965, for example, the emphasis on the subjective factor in the Soviet theory of modernization and development was occasioned by the catastrophic and traumatic setbacks in Soviet foreign policy in the underdeveloped world. Khrushchev's emphasis on the objective factors in Lenin's theory of modernization, on the other hand, reflected for the most part his success in influencing the nationalist bourgeoisie through his policies of economic and military aid.

As we noted in the last chapter, there is a distinction between theory and policy in the recent Soviet literature on modernization and development which precludes the conclusion that Soviet theory wholly depends on policy and consequently, simply reflects it.

Recent Soviet literature on modernization and development, with its espousal of a theory that is militant in structure and its advocation of policies that are compromising and conciliatory in content, stringly suggests that the Marxist-Leninist theory of modernization, above all, is an indicator of the successes
and failures of the Soviet Union in penetrating the ex-colonial underdeveloped countries of the East.
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

BOOKS


and Selected Correspondence. Moscow: Foreign Language Publishing House, 1953.


Tkachev, Peter N. Izbrannye Sochinenia. ("Selected Works.") Edited by Boris F. Kuzmin. 5 Vols. Moscow: All Union Community of Political Prisoners and Exiled Settlers, 1933.


ARTICLES IN JOURNALS OR MAGAZINES


Mirskyi, G. "Klassy i Klassovaia Bozba v Razvivajushcheja Stranah." (*Classes and the Class Struggle in the Developing Countries.*) Mirovaja Ekonomika i Mezhdunarodnye Otnoshenia. No. 3 (March, 1966), 59-69.

"Osobennye Zadachi Natsionalno-Revolutionogo Dvizhnia." (*Special Tasks of the National Liberation Movement.*) No. 9 (June, 1974), 124-128.


NEWSPAPERS
