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SOCIOLOGY AND SOCIAL CHANGE

"The air does not cease to have weight," writes Durkheim, "although we no longer feel that weight."¹ The point is, of course, how do we know that there is that **thing** called "air" out there if we do not feel its presence? What Durkheim was interested to show, indeed, was that those elements of reality that he came to call **social facts**² were out there, regardless of whether the individuals felt their presence or not. Actually, the individuals are almost never aware of the compelling presence of those social facts, which they have a tendency to take for granted. Sometimes, however, social facts appear unmistakably to the individual who is not even trained sociologically to discover that which is not so obvious. This awareness about the constrictive presence of social facts is often made possible by any kind of alteration to what we normally take for granted in the regularity of social events. Such breakdowns of normalcy may at times occur by accident -e.g., we make more eye contact than what is culturally prescribed with a stranger whom we mistakenly identify as an acquaintance. However, they invariably occur in the midst of drastic social changes, when completely new social situations put individuals together who are at a loss trying to find out what it is that is expected from them to do -e.g., a member of a traditionally superordinate group in society turns out to be subordinate to a boss who belongs to a socially inferior group.

¹ Emile Durkheim, **The Rules of Sociological Method**; edited and with an introduction by Steven Lukes. New York: The Free Press, 1982, p.53

² "manners of acting, thinking and feeling external to the individual, which are invested with a coercive power by virtue of which they exercise control over him". **Ibid**, p. 52

If individuals learn to recognize that which is not so obvious when they face drastic social transformations, we can assert that it is also under such conditions that sociologists further their knowledge of society and its regularities. It is thus not surprising that the scientific study of society was born in the midst of the most drastic transformations ever experienced by humankind, the 19th Century passage from a social life dictated by tradition to one in which instrumentality came to prevail. The questions then became "what is happening to the individuals?" and "how can they cope with their pain?" The palliative offered, of course, depended upon that which social thinkers identified as the source of the pain. Virtually all classical sociologists - and a good many intellectuals who did not identify themselves, nor do we identify them today, as sociologists- have participated in this search for the causes and the cure for humankind during the 1800s and early 1900s. Thus, Karl Marx wrote about alienation, as the effect of the separation between the worker and the product of his labor under capitalist labor relations. Durkheim, in turn, was concerned with anomie, a pathological -and, thus, temporary- characteristic of societies in which the division of labor does not evolve naturally, but may be forced by unequal social relations among classes. In the same line, Weber was preoccupied with the fall of substantial rationality as a logical outcome of the process of rationalization in the modern world. Sigmund Freud, in turn, identified neurosis as the malady of the modern times.

If it is not surprising that the scientific study of society was born in the midst of a profound breakdown of social normalcy, it follows that virtually all classical social thinkers were able to appreciate the relevance of social change as an object of study. Indeed, the study of social change constitutes the main object in the sociological theory and inquiry of Marx, Weber, and Durkheim. For Marx, the analysis of social change is present in an evolutionary model that contends that human history has seen a succession of modes of production -namely, tribal, ancient, feudal, and capitalist-

and that the present capitalist mode of production is bound to be superseded by the socialist mode of production.

For Durkheim, social change is represented by transformations in the social morphology -or the structure of social relations that links individuals into a coherent entity, society- and the moral structure -or the body of laws, norms, and sanctions that regulate social life. Durkheim's scheme of social change involves a contrast between a **simple division of labor** and a corresponding **mechanic solidarity**, on the one hand, and a **complex division of labor** accompanied now by what he called **organic solidarity**, on the other.

The object of Weber's study of history has been the tracing of the process of rationalization of human life. His model of social change entails a multidimensional triumph of reason, which slowly came to pervade every area of social life in the Occident and which has led to the disenchantment of the World, the fall from grace of magic, tradition, charisma, and affectivity in the legitimation of authority and wisdom.

Social change, thus, was at the core of the foundation of sociology as a discipline. The preoccupation with social change, moreover, prompted the early sociologists to conceive of developmental schemes to account for the transformation of society. We should bear in mind that the impressive advances of biology during the 19th Century, coupled with the impact of Charles Darwin's theory of evolution, must have paved the way for the conception of society as an entity that goes through a succession of developmental stages.

For a while, the developmental approach to the study of social change was circumscribed to the analysis of the Western European nations in which sociology was

founded -namely, Germany, France, and England. Later on, however, development studies also came to mean the contrasting analyses of Western, modern societies and their non-Western, traditional counterpart. In the same manner that Darwin sailed off to Patagonia³ in search for current evidences of evolution, the studies of "primitive societies" brought back by the anthropologists of the English school reinforced the developmental approach on social evolution. This approach came to view those "primitive" societies as the first links in the chain of social development and the Western, modern societies as the last, mature, and final stage. Of course, the qualifier "primitive" used for those non-Western societies announced their ethnographers' Western bias. Condescendingly, the emerging Western social science was characterizing non-Western societies as immature and as the living examples of the stages already undergone by Western societies. Western social scientists thus implied that the logical development path for the "primitive" societies meant to replicate the series of stages traversed by the supposedly more mature Western societies.

When sociology arrived in the United States, it increasingly abandoned the European concern with social change and development. The American society was indeed changing rapidly. However, the preoccupation with the ill-effects of the breakdown of the Old World normalcy found few followers on this side of the Atlantic. American social scientists, rather, optimistically considered social change as progress. Instead of conceiving of social change as posing problems of adjustment, American social scientists focused on the processes whereby innovations become adopted. Increasingly, the focus on progress as well as on the diffusion of innovations of American sociology needed to emphasize the process of human interaction. Before long, society ceased to be the main object of study of American sociology, and its

³ Patagonia is the name of the southernmost one third region of Argentina. It is identified by the territory south of the Río Negro and north of the Strait of Magellan. Tierra del Fuego, a vast island to the south of Magellan and shared by Chile and Argentina, is not considered part of Patagonia.

place was successfully claimed by community studies and analyses of small groups.

When microsociology finally dominated the scene, there was little room left for the analysis of social change -a macrosociological concern. Interestingly, the propositions formulated by American microsociology were meant to be true in any human society, regardless of the level of development. Humans being human, this microsociological perspective seemed to propose, one needs to describe human nature to be able to predict and explain the process of human interaction. To the extent that human nature was assumed to be immutable and universal, the logic went on, its study can be successfully completed within the boundaries of the well-analyzed American society. There was thus little need for cross cultural or international studies. These tendencies of the American sociology were part of the American culture's isolationist orientation that was prevalent between the 20th Century's two World Wars.

The role that the United States was to perform at the end of World War II, however, brought an end to the isolationist tendencies of the American culture. Not only did Americans have to acknowledge the existence of a World outside their borders, but their country was supposed to lead the capitalist world into the Cold War and beyond. Within sociology, this necessary acknowledgment of the international order translated into a preoccupation with macrosociology. With an emphasis on interdependence, the theory that came to dominate the sociological scene was structural-functionalism. Its leading propounder, Talcott Parsons, reintroduced the developmentalist scheme of the classical sociologists. His image of society was one of a system immersed in a constant process of increased differentiation. What he meant by differentiation was a process whereby the tasks necessary in a society to guarantee its survival are performed by an increasing number of substructures (or institutions). Rather than overlapping or duplicating their functions, new institutions take over fragments of the

activities formerly performed by a single, less differentiated (that is, specialized) institution. Such a multiplicity of tasks to be performed by an increasingly large number of institutions requires interdependence as well as coordination. The coordination is made possible by a shared system of values as well as by an increasingly differentiated subsystem of society that deals with the attainment of society's goals. The interdependence, on its turn, is facilitated by parallel differentiation processes that are taking place simultaneously in every substructure of society. Concomitantly, every newly differentiated substructure (that is, institution) of society becomes internally differentiated so as to take care of the four functional prerequisites of every social system -namely, adaptation, goal attainment, integration, and latency of tensions.

The microsociological preoccupation of American sociologists that preceded structural-functionalism was captured by a new challenge. Parsons' four functional requirements as well as his pattern variables are applicable to both the social and the personality systems. The goal turned out to find a fit between the functional requirements of the social system and the individual's orientations and personality system. Microsociological followers of Parsons thus attempted to study the process whereby innovations that are necessary for the modernization of society were adopted by individuals who still lived in "pre-modern" societies.

By the 1950s, the puzzling experience of drastic social change that had given birth to sociology almost a century earlier was all but forgotten. The notion of progress that by then dominated American sociology saw **modernity** as the solution to all past problems and as the promise of a perfect society. The theory of modernization took from Weber only the comforting elements of his notion of rationalization and ignored all its ill-effects. Indeed, Weber's thesis on the doom of democracy all but disappeared

from the sketchy translation of his work.⁴ Modernization was conceived as the logical outcome of the inherent strength of rationality. Due to its attractive accomplishments in all spheres of social life, modernization was expected to wipe away any remnants of irrationality. Theorists of modernization predicted that superstition, magic, and traditions standing in the way of rationality and progress would gallantly yield to modern scientific and technological methods and organizations. The path of triumphant modernization would start in the pre-modern world in that area of the social system that first comes in contact with the "developed" world: trade and economic relations. The economic organization of "developed" societies would leave an imprint in the economic organization of the "underdeveloped" societies. It would call for an increasing orientation towards the supposedly rational goals of the marketplace. The rest of the path to modernity would see, one by one, every aspect of social and cultural life adjusting to the needs of the rational economic system. Social scientists adhering to the theory of modernization called such a path **development**. It was meant to repeat -in a rather accelerated fashion- the triumph of modernity in the West. This would happen not only because it was functionally required by the social systems of the up-to-then pre-modern societies, but also because the individuals themselves would in the end be willing to embrace development and its modern accomplishments. The strength of development would render it prestigious and people all over the world would be willing to emulate it.

"More than any other great power, the United States is in constant contact with Latin America. This contact has had its Westernizing effect. The forms of United States contact with the area have been many and varied, ranging all the way from invasion and military occupation through cultural and constitutional influences as well as financial investment, to trade and technical assistance. It is

⁴ Weber's **Economy and Society** was first published in German in 1922. The first full English translation was only published in 1968. It is based on the second German edition, published in 1956.

true of virtually every Latin American state that its major contacts outside the area are with the United States: in Mexico, the money spent by *gringo* tourists is the fourth largest source of national income.(...)

"Economic development, a process of rapidly growing significance in the area, also has Westernizing effects. Industrialization has begun in many of the countries, and everywhere there is evidence of economic change. This process is abetted by the technical assistance programs --whether supported on a bilateral basis by the United States or multilaterally through the United Nations-- which have been operating on a large scale in Latin America since the 1940's. These programs, chiefly in agriculture, education, public administration, and industrial productivity, have elevated the standards of living in the participating countries and have imported Western technology. While the effect of the interplay between levels of economic development and political patterns is as yet unclear, it is undoubtedly true that Westernization of the economy has significant repercussions on the political scene."⁵

The prestige of the sociological promise of development was instrumental in the spread of the discipline of sociology worldwide. Sociology departments and chairs surfaced in universities of the "pre-modern" world, where its members launched projects to study the local expression of development. A recurrent theme everywhere, however, was the disappointing unevenness of development. The result of this new concern was a new concept, **cultural lag**, that would call sociologists' attention to the fact that cultural values change at a slower pace than the rest of society.⁶ Yet from the occurrence of a cultural lag did not follow that the path of development would be aborted. It would only be somewhat more complicated and -thereby- interesting to

⁵ George I. Blankstein, "The Politics of Latin America" in Gabriel Almond and James S. Coleman, **The Politics of Developing Areas**. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1960, pp.468-469.

⁶ Germani, Gino, **Política y sociedad en una época de transición**. Buenos Aires: Paidós, 1962. Eisenstadt, S. N. **Modernization, Protest, and Change**. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1966.

study.

A more serious doubt concerning the infallible path to development came from the pre-modern world. It did not originate in sociology, but it was voiced by an influential economist. For Raúl Prebisch, an Argentinean who directed the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America in Santiago, Chile, the current international division of labor precluded the "underdeveloped" countries from catching up with the "developed" ones. According to Prebisch, "developing" countries chiefly produce and export **primary** products,⁷ whereas "developed" countries are the exclusive exporters of manufactured goods. Prebisch maintained that such a division of labor between "developing" –or **periphery**–and "developed" –or **core**– countries was far from being mutually beneficial. Rather, he claimed that primary products follow a trend of declining prices compared to the rising prices of manufactured goods. Such **adeterioration of the terms of trade** for primary products, according to Prebisch, would offset any increase in the "developing" countries' productivity.⁸ His recipe was to encourage the industrialization of "developing" countries. He proposed policies that would give the local private sectors incentives to invest in the manufacturing of industrial goods rather than to import and to distribute such products locally. Chief incentives would be protectionist measures to ban or tax very heavily imported manufactured goods. In fact, this practice of **import-substitution industrialization** had been taking place in the countries of the Latin American region with the most developed economic infrastructure (e.g., Argentina, Chile, Brazil, and Mexico) since the 1930s depression. In the 1940s the war economy efforts of the industrialized countries prevented the export of manufactured goods to non-industrial

⁷ Primary products include those which are extracted from Nature through agricultural, animal husbandry, mining, fishery, or forestry activities.

⁸ Raúl Prebisch, **The Economic Development of Latin America and Its Principal Problems**. New York: United Nations, 1950.

countries, thus furthering the chances of industrialization attempts in the region. Prebisch's recommendations thus did not "cause" import substitution, but they were instrumental in justifying its protectionism from a changing world.

The promise of import substitution industrialization as a spring-board to economic development, however, was short lived. By the end of the 1950s, Latin American economists realized that the manufacturing of products for final consumption still posed the problem of trade deficits for developing societies. In fact, capital goods - such as machines, dies, tools- and highly refined materials -such as petrochemical derivatives- were not produced in developing nations at a level enough to satisfy the needs of local industry.⁹ Such trade deficits seriously limited the growth capacity of an industry that was dependent on the availability of foreign exchange resources. The **desarrollista** (Spanish for "developmentalist") school was of the opinion that it was incumbent upon the State to invest in economic infrastructure and to firmly draw policies that would encourage private investment in capital goods production. The developmentalist school was also concerned with the growing disparities between the economically developed centers of developing nations and the backward, poor areas of those same countries. In order to lessen such disparities and to spread development throughout the developing world, developmentalists recommended that, wherever possible, state industrialization policy creates "poles of development" outside the industrial centers.

If Prebisch and the developmentalists were doubtful that the Western path to development would triumph in the developing world, they were of the opinion that development could and should happen with due state intervention. A new school of thought was emerging in the early 1960s in the developing world, however, that saw

⁹ Aldo Ferrer, **La economía argentina**. Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1963.

very little room for maneuvering left to the initiatives of the State in developing countries. This new way of thinking the problem of development maintained that underdevelopment entails a stagnation situation that developing nations cannot overcome because they are dependent upon industrialized nations that benefit from the disparities between development and underdevelopment. The major factor preventing development, according to this **dependency** school¹⁰, is the structural phenomenon of dependence whereby "the economy of certain countries is conditioned by the development and expansion of another economy to which the former is subjected."¹¹

According to this school of thought, underdevelopment is not simply a stage that pre-dates development, as the evolutionist scheme of the modernization theory states. Rather, underdevelopment is the historical consequence of dependence: poor countries are "underdeveloped" because they have been colonized by countries whose development and further enrichment is based on the pilferage of the former.¹² The "classical" dependence entailed not only the extraction of mineral resources or the establishment of plantation economies that not only distort the economic and cultural lifestyles of the indigenous populations, but also the exploitation of the indigenous population's labor. In contradistinction to the increasing political and economic participation of the working-class in the "developed" Western societies, the working poor remains excluded from an enjoyment of economic gains and political participation in the dependent societies. The increasing economic participation of the Western working-classes responded to the logic of the need of an expanding consumer market. Wage increases translated there in a growth of the demand for consumer

¹⁰ Also known by its Spanish name, **dependencia**.

¹¹ Theotonio Dos Santos, "The Structure of Dependence". in **American Economic Association...**

¹² André Gunder Frank, **Development and Underdevelopment in Latin America**. New York: Monthly Review Press, 1968.

products. The logic of dependence, however, is outwardly oriented and precludes the expansion of the internal market. The interest of agricultural exporting businesses is to maintain the cost of production low. Because the market is outside -in the core countries- there is no point in encouraging an expansion of the domestic market in the form of higher wages. Therefore, development is impossible for a country whose economy is dependent upon the economy of a developed -or core- country. The dependency school insisted that the only way out of the periphery is by breaking away from a structure of dependence. Since the state is controlled by the upper classes in periphery societies, and since those classes benefit with the maintenance of the structure of dependence, the reforms Prebisch and the developmentalists recommended in the form of state intervention would do little to foster development. The only way out of this structural stagnation that limits economic growth and socio-economic development is, for the dependency school, a revolution that would bring an end to private ownership of capital, and which would foster central planning of the economy: a socialist revolution.

Industrialization, economic growth, and capital accumulation in the periphery were thus ruled out by the early propounders of the dependency school on the grounds that dependence leads to an irreversible economic stagnation. The rapid process of industrialization in some of the nations of the "dependent periphery", however, called the attention of some of the scholars associated with the dependency school. The 1970s saw an interesting revision of the notion of dependence from within the dependency school. "Capital accumulation took place in the periphery even under conditions of 'classic dependence,' that is, the export of primary products in exchange for manufactured goods. The process of accumulation as it is currently occurring in countries such as Brazil is, however, of a different order. It is different because it includes a substantial degree of industrialization, and also the more complex internal

division of labor and increased productivity that this implies."¹³ Peter Evans has labeled this type of economic growth "dependent development" because he did not consider that the kind of accumulation he analyzed in Brazil has eliminated dependence. Even with industrialization, this new generation of dependence analyses suggests, foreign capital plays an increasingly thorough penetration.¹⁴ The dependent character of development stems from the fact that the most fundamental decisions as to where -and in what- to invest are still made in the core countries, at the headquarters of transnational corporations. Therefore, if the rising price of labor in the core countries justifies the export of industrial capital to the periphery in order to take advantage of the cheaper periphery labor, dependency is still in place regardless of whether the products that labor produces are agricultural or industrial ones.

The focus of the dependency school is on the structure of dependence as experienced by dependent societies. The **unit of analysis** in the studies undertaken by dependency theorists are the dependent societies of the periphery. That the dependency theory takes the perspective of dependent societies is no doubt related to the historical circumstance that this theory was born, in the periphery, of periphery social thinkers. Another theoretical framework that shares many of the concerns of the dependency school, and which also analyzes the process whereby the core countries short-change the countries of the periphery, is the world systems theory. The world systems theory was inspired by the work of dependency theorists, but it was entirely conceived in core countries. Rather than taking the perspective of the dependent, periphery societies, the world systems theory focuses on the system of world relations as its object of study.

¹³ Peter Evans, **Dependent Development; The Alliance of Multinational, State, and Local Capital in Brazil**. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1979; p. 10.

¹⁴ "International capital is an integral part of the domestic Brazilian economy, and the representatives of international capital are an integral part of the Brazilian political and social order." Peter Evans, **op.cit.**, p.9.

The world systems theory considers the modern capitalist world system as the -so far- last in a series of world systems. Immanuel Wallerstein, a leading propounder of this theoretical perspective, characterizes the modern capitalist world system as one where the prevailing system's drive is the accumulation of wealth insofar as it can be used to accumulate more wealth. Such accumulation of **capital** thus becomes the preeminent objective of the modern capitalist world system. A continuous process of capital accumulation requires the conversion of wealth into capital. Such conversion, in its turn, requires the development of an ever expanding market where everything becomes a commodity. Without the commodification of everything, the process of capital accumulation was never completed before the modern capitalist times. The modern world system involves an international division of labor in the form of a **commodity chain** whereby items necessary to produce other products are sold and bought as commodities.¹⁵ The latter products also go in the production of further products, and for that purpose they are sold and bought as commodities. The logic of capital accumulation, however, requires that the process of commodification is not complete. The process of capital accumulation is enhanced by the persistence of non-wage (i.e., non-commodified) labor in the periphery, which is also where the more labor-intensive links of the commodity chain prevail. Non-wage labor includes the household production for self-consumption or sale in a local market. Such non-wage labor, if part of a semi-proletarian household, elicits a lesser need for cash both because the procurement of certain goods and services is satisfied inside the household rather than in the marketplace, and because the extra income generated by the sale in the local market of household-produced items brings additional cash. That additional cash will be used to cover the cost of survival of all the members of the household -including the ones who receive wages in the labor market. This means that the recipients of wages in a semi-proletarian household can afford to hire their labor out for far lower wages than those received by workers whose households

¹⁵ Immanuel Wallerstein, **Historical Capitalism**. London: Verso, 1983.

are **proletarian**¹⁶ rather than **semi-proletarian**. In consequence, the cost of production, survival, and reproduction of wage-labor is borne in good part by non-wage labor. Insofar as most non-wage labor is located in the periphery, the international division of labor in the form of a commodity chain implies that vast resources and wealth which is generated in the periphery is centripetally sucked by the core.

The world systems theory sees the world as an international stratified system with core (rich) countries, periphery (poor) countries, and the countries of the "semi-periphery" (middle-class). The relative position of each country in such an international system of stratification may vary over time. Countries that were part of the semi-periphery at the turn of the Century -like Germany, Canada, or Japan- are now well established among the core countries. Countries that today are part of the semi-periphery -such as the "newly industrializing countries" (NICs): South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore, Argentina, Brazil, and Mexico- may ascend to the core, remain in the semi-periphery, or descend to the periphery. The performance of each individual country does not alter the fact that there is a system of international inequality whereby the growth of the core countries is supported by a centripetal transfer of surplus (i.e., resources and wealth) from the periphery to the core. In the words of Bornschier and Chase-Dunn, "expansion and underdevelopment take place simultaneously", adding that in the sixteenth century "core capitalism emerged from the crisis of feudalism in northwestern Europe in conjunction with peripheral capitalism in eastern Europe and Spanish America. Since that time the capitalist world-economy has expanded to include the whole population of the globe. The

¹⁶ Strictly or purely proletarian households are rare, even in the core, highly capital-intensive economies. For example, the household chores and childcare provided by housewives in core societies also helps to maintain the price of wage-labor low in those countries. It is conceivable, however, to classify households in terms of the *degree* of expenditure income derived from the labor market. In this sense, periphery countries should present a much higher proportion of households whose expenditure income is minimally derived from the labor market.

process of uneven development has caused upward and downward mobility within the system at the same time as the overall core/periphery hierarchy has been reproduced."¹⁷

For dependency theory, as already discussed above, the deterministic external character of dependence is such that, despite of variations in the internal conditions from country to country, there is no real escape from the externally imposed underdevelopment. By focusing on the world system as a whole as the unit of analysis, rather than on individual dependent societies -as the dependency school does- the world systems theory overcomes some important shortcomings of the dependency school. Most notably, the world system perspective theorizes that the stratification between core and periphery is maintained (i.e., **reproduced**) even if individual countries move up or down the hierarchy.

Some of the critiques against the dependency school, however, have also been pointed out as weaknesses of the world systems perspective. One important theoretical flaw attributed to both **dependency** and **world systems** positions is their characterization of the periphery (and even the sixteenth century Western European societies) as capitalist rather than pre-capitalist.¹⁸ This is seen by Chinchilla and Dietz as doing "violence to much observable reality".¹⁹ Whether the periphery is characterized as capitalist or precapitalist is theoretically linked to how capitalism is defined. Although deriving many of their concepts and theoretical propositions from Marxism (and Lenin's theory of imperialism), both dependency and world systems perspectives

¹⁷ Volker Bornschier and Christopher Chase-Dunn, **Transnational Corporation and Underdevelopment**. New York: Praeger, 1985; p. 2.

¹⁸ Ernesto Laclau, **Politics and Ideology in Marxist Theory**. London: Verso, 1979.

¹⁹ Norma S. Chinchilla and James L. Dietz, "Toward a New Understanding of Development and Underdevelopment", in Ronald H. Chilcote (ed.), **Dependency and Marxism; Toward a Resolution of the Debate**. Boulder: Westview Press, 1982.

focus on the unevenness of the **distribution** of wealth between core and periphery.²⁰ Marx, however, pointed out that what characterizes each **mode of production** are their corresponding **relations of production** (rather than relations of exchange and distribution that take place in the marketplace). For Marx, the relations of production refer to the organization of the productive activities in society, with special reference to the class divisions that determine asymmetric relations in the workplace. From a Marxist viewpoint, the problem with the relations of exchange and distribution in the marketplace is that they depict the relations between capital and labor as contingent upon the laws of supply and demand that impersonally regulate the price of labor. This way, the **intrinsically exploitative** relationship between the class of the capitalists and the class of the proletarians becomes obscured by the appearances of the marketplace. In order to overcome such appearances, thereby, it becomes necessary for Marxists to emphasize the **political** conflict of classes -in the class terms of control of the division of labor, work environment, and the appropriation of the product of labor.

According to modern Marxist critics, both the dependency and world systems perspectives emphasize the relations of exchange and distribution in the process of capital accumulation. This emphasis views the process of accumulation of capital as a consequence of a (monopolistic) control over the marketplace: those who are able to control the marketplace are able to short-change all other economic agents. The main thrust of both theories focuses on the inequality resulting from the exchanges between core and periphery. This marketplace approach stresses the core/periphery conflict of interests as more relevant than the (Marxist) emphasis on class conflict. The ensuing Marxist criticism is that such a stress on the core/periphery (or **geographical**) conflict prevents the analysis of class conflicts. Such a stress, they claim, leads to depict the

²⁰ Robert Brenner, "The Origins of Capitalist Development: A critique of Neo-Smithian Marxism", in **New Left Review**, 104 (July-August 1977), 25-92.

national bourgeoisie (i.e., the local owners of capital) as hurt in their attempts at accumulating capital. This would make the national capitalists natural allies of their nations' working class in the interest of overcoming their dependence on the core. This type of criticism, therefore, dwells on which is the **main contradiction**: class or geographical region? Dependency as well as world system theorists emphasize the contradictions between the **geographical** regions of core and periphery -also emphasized by Prebisch. Marxists, on the other hand, emphasize **class** contradictions in the analysis of social change.

The early 1980s saw the advent of two new Marxist directions in the analysis of development. One direction tries to overcome both the tendency to label the entire world capitalist, and the modern/traditional dualism espoused by the modernization theory. The **articulation of modes of production** analysis conceives of the possible coexistence of (and mutual interconnections among) more than one mode of production in a single society (or **social formation**). Usually one mode of production (and its corresponding ruling class) becomes the dominant one. The character of the interconnection (or **articulation**: interaction, linking, relationship) among the modes of production within the social formation depends upon which mode of production becomes dominant. This modes of production approach does not propose general laws that enable to predict the course of social change in the different "social formations". Rather, its propounders suggest a strategy for the analysis of development and underdevelopment.²¹

The other Marxist direction concentrates on the class aspects of the relations of production. The **class analysis** approach proposes to study social change in terms of

²¹Norma S. Chinchilla and James L. Dietz, "Toward a New Understanding of Development and Underdevelopment", in Ronald H. Chilcote (ed.), **Dependency and Marxism. Toward a Resolution of the Debate**. Boulder: Westview Press, 1982; pp. 138-147

the relations of production. The strategy it pursues is to concentrate on the processes that lead to the formation of classes as well as to focus on the alliances and conflicts between classes on the national and international level.²² Some authors within this direction emphasize the process of internationalization of capital accumulation as the approach to understand international relations. Since the capitalist exploitation of the working class results in the process of accumulation of capital, they reason, modern international economic relations should be analyzed in terms of the logic of capital accumulation in the advanced stages of capitalism. In the words of one of the proponents of this approach, "increasingly the dynamics of the world capitalist economy cannot be understood with reference to a single nation or group of nations. Productive decisions are now made on a global scale."²³ For this approach, thus, it is not the asymmetrical relations between "core" and "periphery" what matters, but the exploitative relations that enable international capital to continue accumulating.

²² James Petras, "Dependency and World System Theory: A Critique and New Directions", in Ronald H. Chilcote (ed.), **Dependency and Marxism...**, pp. 148-155.

²³ David Barkin, "Internationalization of Capital: An Alternative Approach", in Ronald H. Chilcote (ed.), **Dependency and Marxism**, pp. 156-161.