

Socialism and nationalism in the third world in the age of third worldism

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Abstract

This article investigates the relationship between socialism and nationalism with a special emphasis on its Third Worldist variant. The Third Worldist orthodoxy of the post-colonial age blurred the boundaries between nationalism and socialism, with Third Worldist nationalism being an expression of resentment directed against imperialism and the uneven development produced by capitalism. Socialism was understood within this Third Worldist moment in terms of a nation's political and economic liberation from foreign imperialist powers and their internal collaborators. Socialism was seen as something which would make nations politically and economically independent and developed.

Key words: Third Worldism, socialism, national liberation, developmentalism.

1. Introduction

In his work, *The National Question in Marxist-Leninist Theory and Strategy*, Walker Connor (1984: 19-20) points to three different strains of thought within the Marxist legacy in terms of its relationship to the national question. These strains can be read in a chronological sequence as the historical and intellectual sources of the gravitation of socialism towards nationalism from the mid-19th century to the post-colonial era. The first strain is represented by the “classical Marxism” of Marx and Engels and their leading disciples, which emphasized the primacy and indispensability of class struggle, therefore seeing socialism as being irreconcilable with nationalism. The second strain, generalizing the principle of the recognition of the right of self-determination in the realm of action, seems to have been crystallized in the historical experience of the Russian Revolution, opening the door to the implementation of socialism first in Asia and then in other geographies of what would later become the Third World. The third strain is represented by the “national Marxism” of Stalinism, which propagated the idea of “national”

communism and the model of developmentalist state socialism/capitalism in one country. We can now extend this historical sequence by adding a new fourth strain, the Third World experiences of the post-colonial era, which emphasized the nation and geographical divisions rather than class and class divisions.

After the Second World War and the fall of the colonial system of the preceding age, Third Worldism became a dominant mode of political imagination on the fringes of the world system, blending socialism with the idea of national liberation and the strategy of independent and national development. The incorporation of idioms of nationalism into socialism by this Third Worldist imagination created a conception of socialism as a nation's liberation from foreign imperialist domination. What was suggested was the substitution of nation for class, national struggle for class struggle and anti-imperialism for anti-capitalism. In this article, I will analyze this articulation of socialism with nationalism with a focus on a historically specific version of this articulation in the Third World of the post-colonial era. After a brief account of the relationship between socialism and nationalism with reference to the classical Marxian explanations of the national question, I will first elaborate on the notions of Third World, Third Worldism, Third World socialism and the idea of national liberation. After that, I will turn my attention to the idea of economic nationalism and developmentalism in the Third World, arguing for the possibility of economic and social development in the Third World through an independent and national development strategy.

2. Before third worldism

The history of the ideological and practical accommodation between socialism and nationalism can be extended back to the writings of classical Marxist figures.¹ The history of this accommodation from the mid-19th century to the Cold War era reflects a change from 'socialization of the nation' to the 'nationalization of socialism', and shows us how this relationship changed from a critical distance to affinity (Wright, 1981: 148). Marx's (and Engels's) early cosmopolitanism, which assumed that nations and nation-states would wither away in the near future through the internationalization of capitalism and the rise of the international working class movement, gave way to a new account of the national phenomena after the upheavals of 1848/9, the first significant historical encounter of nationalism with socialism in Europe. This new conceptual framework, further elaborated by their disciples, became the classical Marxian account of the emergence of modern nationalism and the nation-state: the rise of the modern nation-state was seen primarily as the result of the drive to create a unified market

¹ There has been a great deal of discussion and analysis of the relationship between nationalism and socialism, especially Marxist socialism. See, for instance, Davis (1967), Forman (1998), Harris (1993), Löwy (1998), Munck (1986), Nimni (1994), Szporluk (1991).

for capitalist development. The issue was understood within the process of the consolidation and development of the capitalist mode of production. Marx and Engels not only linked the history of the modern nation to the history of capitalism, but also began to support some national movements of their age with various political and strategic reasons. Their work is relevant to the nationalism-socialism nexus in two senses. First, it stressed the notion of the dichotomy of dominant and oppressed nations (“the nation that oppresses another cannot be free”). Second, it came up with the idea that the liberation of the oppressed nation contributes to the revolutionary struggle of the working class in the dominant nation. It was through this distinction between “oppressed” and “oppressing” nations that the Second International and its leading social democratic parties in Europe developed the strategy of supporting the right of all nations to self-determination.

The period of the Second International was the golden age of Marxist theory on the national question, comprising the competing works of the leading figures of the International in the years preceding the outbreak of the First World War, and the dissolution of a number of major European empires including the Ottoman, the Russian, the German and the Austro-Hungarian. During this period, the debate on the national question oscillated primarily between the competing formulations of Austro-Marxists (like Otto Bauer), Rosa Luxemburg and Lenin. As an unyielding disciple of Marx, Luxemburg embraced an uncompromising internationalism within this debate, insisting on the primacy of class over nation. At the opposite pole was the culturalist approach of Austro-Marxism, one of the first systematic attempts within the classical Marxist tradition to reconcile nation and nationalism with socialism. Neither the legacies of Luxemburg and Bauer had a real impact on the century that emerged after the First World War. Rather, during the 20th century the fate of the relationship between socialism and nationalism was determined in the Russian context.

Among the leaders of European social democracy, Lenin came to place the greatest emphasis on issues associated with the oppression of national minorities, and on the need for dominant nationalities to show their rejection of this oppression. He rejected both Luxemburg’s anti-nationalism and Bauer’s national cultural autonomy, instead underlining the political dimension of the national question. For him, national self-determination was a matter of political democracy and an instrument to support the unity of the working class and the achievement of international socialist revolution.

Lenin’s strategy of national self-determination was based on the Marxian distinction between oppressed and oppressor nations, originally developed by Marx himself to contrast English and Irish nationalisms. Lenin, however, “extended the distinction between oppressed and oppressor nations to the colonial context and declared Asian and African nationalism progressive, while European nationalism comes to be seen as reactionary” (Avineri, 1991: 645). Behind this attempt to extend

the strategy of national self-determination to the colonial context and combine the colonial and national questions stood Lenin's theory of imperialism, which should be seen, according to Shlomo Avineri (1991: 645), as Lenin's major contribution to the Marxian theory of nationalism under twentieth-century conditions. Nationalism on the periphery was thus "an anti-capitalist force, as the national movements in the non-European colonies emerge as a response to the exploitation of the colonial people by the European capitalist powers". As Richard Pipes (1954: 35) has suggested, there are three separate stages in the development of Lenin's approach to the national question. In the first stage, from 1897 to 1913, he developed his basic strategy on the question. In the second phase, between 1913 and 1917, Lenin related the national question to the strategy for overthrowing Tsarism. In the third phase, from 1917 onwards, it was a matter of practical politics, and Lenin related the issue to the overthrow of world capitalism. Once this preoccupation with revolution was extended worldwide, the significance of national liberation became much greater and less conditional. In this phase, Lenin's strategy was to establish an alliance between European workers and the national liberation movements of colonial and semi-colonial areas of the underdeveloped world.

In the period beginning with the mid-1920s, especially in the 1930s, the idea of world revolution began to be replaced by the defense of the Russian "fatherland", and evolved into the idea of "socialism in one country". This doctrine represented a departure from the original policy of seeing the Russian Revolution as one part of an international socialist revolution (Carr, 1959: 36-51). After 1924, the priority was shifted from internationalism to national pride, self-sufficiency, and seeing revolution as a Russian achievement, with Stalin emerging as the most important political figure in this process of the "Russification" of the October Revolution. Internationalism, for Lenin, had always remained a point of reference; for Stalin, it was an instrument to be used in geopolitical struggles. Lenin had never suggested a proletarian nationalism; Stalin, however, based his project on it. In the Stalinist era, socialism in Russia itself changed its meaning from "the self-emancipation of the working class" to national economic development, thereby being reduced to a mode of industrialization, to a strategy for rapid national economic development. Socialism became a technical project that presupposed the creation of appropriate tools to increase productive capacity.²

The experience of Stalinism in Russia, a developmentalist state socialism in one country, also served as a model for national liberation socialism in the Third

² Stalinism in the literature on the nature of Soviet Russia is generally considered within the concepts of "state socialism", "state capitalism", "degenerated workers' state", "bureaucratic collectivism". It is distinguished by a centrally administered economy, controlled by state and party bureaucracy. For the Marxian debate about the nature of the Stalinist regime in Russia see, Van der Linden (2007).

World, a new model of industrialization and modernization for the Third World countries and their intellectuals and politicians. Thus, the long and complex history of socialism in the Third World was shaped under the impact of the development and experiences of Stalinism and state socialism/capitalism in Russia. As in Russia, in the Third World context, socialism meant the rapid national economic development and national liberation of forces of production. This revised version of Marxian socialism was adopted by the revolutions and national liberation struggles in the Third World; and in turn, these Third World revolutions and Third Worldist regimes made their own unique contributions to this process of the transmutation of Marxian socialism (Roxborough, 1979: 133-4).

3. Third world, third worldism and third world socialism

After the Second World War, the centers of gravity of both socialism and nationalism moved from the West towards Asia, Africa and Latin America. This move was an important historical moment in the articulation of nationalism with socialism; a move which brought socialism and nationalism into very close contact. Perry Anderson provides us with a useful description of this shift from “West” to “East” and “South” in terms of the changing relationships within the matrix of capital, labor, nationalism and internationalism:

[I]n the new phase that opens in 1945 and runs till, let us say, 1965, there occurs a sudden, spectacular exchange in the respective relations of capital and labor to nationalism and internationalism... Hitherto the dominant forms of nationalism... were always an expression of the propertied classes, while from the 19th century onwards the corresponding forms of internationalism... were an expression of the laboring classes. After 1945, this double connexion -capital/the national, labor/the international- capsizes. Nationalism becomes predominantly a popular cause, of exploited and destitute masses, in an intercontinental revolt against Western colonialism and imperialism. Internationalism, at the same stroke, starts to change camps –assuming new forms in the ranks of capital... The new type of nationalism that became dominant on a world scale after 1945 was anti-imperialism, and its principal geographical zones were Asia, Africa and Latin America (Anderson, 2002: 16-7).

After 1945, a nationalist interpretation of socialism became one of the dominant political idioms of social change and development on the periphery of the world. Socialism under the spell of the Third Worldist orthodoxy of the post-colonial era was understood primarily as national liberation from imperialist subjugation. The logical basis of this articulation of nationalism with socialism was the claim that, in the Third World, national goals cannot be separated from demands for social revolution. Socialism, in this picture, was presented as a national attribute that was assumed to lead the nation in its struggle to overcome the

wretchedness of underdevelopment and achieve independent and national social-economic development. The assertion of national identity in the Third World was therefore interpreted as a form of response to foreign economic and political domination. That is to say, if we borrow the terminology of Tom Nairn (1981) and Michael Hechter (1975), nationalism on the periphery of the world was a reaction to the *uneven development* of capitalism. It is this conception of the uneven geographical development of capitalism that makes possible the transformation of theories of imperialism and dependency into a theory of nationalism. The main claim of this kind of argument “is to place peoples rather than classes as the central actors on the world stage and it is thus especially appropriate as the basis of a theory of nationalism” (Orridge, 1981: 15). The integration of “revolutionary nationalism” into socialism in the Third World opened the door to new revisions within socialist ideology in the period following the Second World War. In the Third World, as George Lichtheim (1971: 147) has argued, “nationalism is identified with socialism, the peasantry with the proletariat, anti-imperialism with anti-capitalism, until all the distinctions painfully elaborated in Marxist literature for a century are cast overboard in favour of a simple dichotomy: Western imperialism versus the starving masses of the Third World”.

This identification of socialism with nationalism was realized in a very specific historical context, within the Third Worldism of the post-colonial age. The idea of the Third World (and Third Worldism) is generally conceived in the literature to be the outcome of the de-colonization process in the post-Second World War era, by which the former colonies of Asia and Africa and the Middle East acquired their political independence.³ Third Worldism, as a world-historical movement, is thought to be the result of the activities and ideas of the proponents of national liberation movements and their efforts to integrate romantic interpretations of pre-modern and pre-colonial traditions and cultures with the experiences of state socialisms and the Western understanding of modernization, industrialization and development (Berger: 2004: 11). Third Worldism, in this sense, as “an anti-imperialist ideology of national self-determination” was the total sum and outcome of the interactions of political ideas, such as socialism, nationalism, developmentalism, with historical experiences like colonialism and socio-economic underdevelopment (Malley, 1996: 8).

Third Worldism, in its first formulations, came to refer to those Third World countries that were reluctant to align themselves with a great power during the Cold War period and who instead supported a nonalignment (neutrality) strategy. The non-aligned movement ‘was specifically designed to be based on the coexistence of states with different political and social systems,’ with its emphasis on “peaceful coexistence, equality in inter-state relations, and the end of colonialism”

³ For Third World and Third Worldism see, Berger (1994: 257-75), Berger (2004: 9-39), Dirlík (2004, 131-48), Harris (1986), Prashad (2007; 2012); Tomlinson (2003, 307-21), Worsley (1970).

(Kubalkova and Cruickshank, 1989: 131). The Bandung Conference of 1955, held in Indonesia and attended by representatives from new nation-states and national movements from Asia and Africa, was the first international platform for the propagation of the idea of non-alignment, and was regarded as the first symbolic event which “became the touchstone of a wide array of initiatives associated directly or indirectly with Third Worldism” (Berger, 2004: 10). Under the impact of the legacy of the Bandung Conference, a substantial number of nationalist proponents of the idea of Third Worldism, such as Nehru, Sukarno, Nasser, and Ahmet Ben Bella, came to define the notion as an alternative third way between the liberal capitalism of the West and the state socialism/capitalism of the Soviet Bloc. These first generation Third Worldist regimes of the 1950s and 1960s were followed by a broader second wave of Third Worldist movements and regimes during the 1960s and 1970s, expanding from Fidel Castro’s coming to power in Cuba in 1959 to the Sandinistas experience in Nicaragua at the beginning of 1980s. What brought these different experiences together under the same banner was their endorsement of economic nationalism or developmentalism realized in their common strategy of state-guided national development. The historical model behind their strategy of national development was the Stalinist version of development and industrialization, originally experienced in Russia after the 1930s. What these Third Worldist leaders advocated was a synthesis of nationalism and state socialism/capitalism in one country. The Third Worldist agenda in their strategy made it possible to develop a strong discourse on political and economic independence, linking nationalism, economic development, and industrialization to the struggle against neo-colonialism.

As already noted, after the Second World War the centre of the socialist movement moved from the West to those Third World countries struggling against colonialism and neo-colonialism. The Chinese Revolution was one of the most significant epicenters of this shift. The Chinese experience was also a significant attempt at synthesizing nationalism with socialism. But what was the nature of this synthesis? In the Chinese version of the “three worlds” theory, China was seen as the natural leader of the Third World. In this schema, the First World included two super powers of the international hierarchy, the USA and the USSR, which were portrayed as imperialist powers responsible for the exploitation and oppression of the Third World.⁴ In the Chinese theory, each world was identified with a social class: the Third World with the proletariat and the First World with super-power imperialism. Between these two worlds lay the other advanced industrialized countries; that is to say, the Second World (the middle class), which could be won

⁴ The Chinese variant of Third Worldism was formulated within the context following the Sino-Soviet conflict after Stalin’s death. The Maoist theory of three worlds claims that the USSR had experienced a transformation which turned the country into a social imperialist power. For the Chinese “three worlds” theory see, Amin (1980: 218-224) and Kubalkova and Cruickshank (1989: 99-112).

over by the Third World in its struggle against world imperialism. In this definition, relations between states take the place of relations between social classes. Nations in the Third World were portrayed by three worlds theories as “proletarian nations”. The reason is simple: the exploitation and suffering of third world countries under the yoke of world capitalism and imperialism gave those countries a proletarian character in their unequal relationship with the imperialist powers. As Kubalkova and Cruickshank have argued,

The nationalism inherent in the theory of the proletarian nation is obvious. There was the implicit assumption that class differences within China have dissolved in the face of China’s external enemies. If, then, the entire nation was proletarian, the national struggle and the class struggle were one, and nationalistic interest and motivations were sanctioned as legitimate forms of China’s contribution to the world revolution. The theory in fact implied that China had a special role to play in the international proletarian struggle, for if indeed the whole Chinese nation was proletarianized, then China was presumably more revolutionary than the capitalist nations of the West... The proletarian nation theory raised China to a position of superiority, for the revolutionary struggle thus redefined had no longer anything to do with oppressor and oppressed classes but instead with oppressor and oppressor nations (Kubalkova and Cruickshank, 1989: 110-1)

Anouar Abdel-Malek (1981: 92) argues that what constitutes the Chinese case is the transformation of the universal principles of Marxism on the basis of the specific conditions of China, with the purpose of finding the proper mixture of national liberation and socialism. He claims that Third World Marxists (or if we use his conceptualization, Tri-continental Marxists) transform the principles and methodology of Western Marxism within (and adapt them to) the national framework of their own countries. To be a Marxist in the Third World, Abdel-Malek asserts, requires a deep nationalism. Nationalism is the most important constitutive component of Third World Marxism or socialism: “in many tri-continental countries, one finds an insistence on the *national* character of Marxism; it is always regarded as the first consideration... And one never, or almost never, finds it relegated to the second place” (Abdel-Malek, 1981: 99).

This position was very well revealed in the report of one of the leading members of the Chinese Communist Party, Liu Chao-Chi, to the 7th party congress: The practical struggles of the Chinese people, added to the experience acquired in them would inevitably lead to the formation of our own great theories, making of the Chinese nation not only a nation capable of sustaining a war, but one endowed with a modern, scientific revolutionary theory. Mao Tse-Tung’s thought is the theory that brings together the practical Marxist-Leninist thought of the Chinese Revolution -Chinese Communism, or Chinese Marxism. Mao Tse-Tung’s thought is a new development, an admirable

example of the nationalization of Marxism; it is Chinese and, at the same time, it is entirely Marxist. It is the highest expression, and the highest theoretical level of Chinese wisdom (Quoted in Abdel-Malek, [1981: 92]).

The result of the nationalization of Marxism was to abandon the classical Marxist theses and instead invent and provide new ones. The intimate relationship between nationalism and socialism in the Third World context blurs the boundaries of notions such as “class”, “nation” and “people”. The principal question was who would be the historical agent of the social, political and economic transformation in the peripheral societies. The working class now lost its historical significance as the subject of the revolutionary transformations in the Third World societies. As Harris (1993: 183) has argued, “the nationalists expropriated the concepts of the left, and the left became dominated by nationalism. The social basis for revolutionary change became equivocal. The vehicle for the emancipation of the world had been, for Marxists, and even for many other socialists, the industrial working class. But in the post-war period, the agency of change became different things at different times: the people, the poor, the peasantry, even the lumpen-proletariat, sometimes students, ethnic minorities, and many others”.

However, the new significantly rising social class in the post-colonial era was the peasantry. The peasantry occupied an important place in the Chinese Revolution, coming to be seen by many intellectuals and radical political movements as the chief revolutionary class. As Roxborough (1979: 133) has observed, “although the working class had played no role in the revolution, the Chinese leadership continued to describe their revolution as ‘proletarian’. The word changed its meaning; it no longer referred in a way to a specific social class; rather it defined a particular constellation of ideological themes”. It was assumed that the peasantry rather than the working class constituted the principal revolutionary force in the Third World. In most cases this process was even taken one step further so that the working class, Marxism’s historical agent of social change, was replaced by more vague notions like “the people”, or “popular masses”.⁵ The consequences of this revision were “the elevation of national over class struggle and the eclipsing of the proletariat by the people” (Dirlik, 2005: 45-6).

Comprehending the world capitalist system and the relations between its hierarchically divided parts in terms of geographical and spatial classifications became an orthodoxy in both scholarly and popular discourses of the period. Dependency theory of the late 1960s and 1970s was the best known example of these discourses. Dependency theorists’ definition of capitalism puts the emphasis on exchange and commercial relations. They reduce capitalism to a system of unequal *exchange* relations, in which the center, by using its

⁵ For the legitimation of the replacement of “the class” with concepts of “the people” or “popular masses” in the Chinese context, one can see Mao’s (2007: 67-102) “On Contradiction”.

monopolistic position, determines the terms of exchange itself and transfers the surplus from the periphery. Seeing capitalism in terms of production for exchange on the world market significantly differs from the Marxian account of capitalism which concentrates on relations of production, the wage relations between the direct producers and their exploiters.⁶ In the dependency approach, the economic hierarchy is identified with a spatial hierarchy of world nations. Frank (1975: 101) holds that “looking at the capitalist system on a world scale the conflict between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat in the metropole now appears as only one aspect of capitalist exploitation, which now takes the relation between metropole and periphery, between development and underdevelopment, as its principal and most acute form”. Dependency theorists reduce relations of exploitation between social classes to relations of transfer of value among geographical regions. However, the removal of value from one region to another does not automatically mean the same phenomenon as the direct exploitation of labor power.

Considering class relations as occurring between geographical categories opened the door to the growing articulation of socialism with radical Third World nationalism. As this idea was applied to the everyday radical politics of the Cold War era, the fundamental contradiction of the system came to be seen as occurring between the underdeveloped periphery and the developed center, between the poor masses or people of the periphery and the capitalists of the center. Thus, “‘exploitation’, supposedly for Marxists a relationship between capital and labor, came to describe relations between governments or countries or groups of countries. In the more extreme cases, countries became homogenous classes, with ‘proletarian’ nations being exploited by ‘bourgeois nations’” (Harris, 1986: 122). This articulation of socialism with nationalism also produced its own “internationalism”, which was very different from the Marxian internationalism that had advocated international unity and the power of the working classes of all countries. Instead, the working class was substituted by the nation, which now appeared as the new candidate for the agency of the revolution and internationalism. The idea of the international solidarity of the working classes of different countries

⁶ For critiques of the dependency approach see Brenner (1977: 25-92), Laclau (1971: 19-38). It should also be noted that Laclau’s (1977: 143-199) another work on the concept of populism (“Towards a Theory of Populism”) is also relevant as a source of reference in our discussion of the replacement of the “class” with the “people” in radical politics of the Third World. In his discussion of the concept of populism, Laclau positions himself against class reductionism and determinism and argues that classes do not exist at the ideological and political levels in a process of reduction, but in a process of articulation. “Classes only exist as hegemonic forces to the extent that they can articulate popular interpellations to their own discourse.” That is to say, “classes cannot assert their hegemony without articulating the people in their discourse.” In this sense, blending socialism with nationalism and the replacement of the class with the people in the third world in the post-colonial era can be seen as an historical example of this articulation.

against their respective ruling classes was replaced by unity between backward countries and oppressed nations against imperialist/capitalist countries. In this formulation, “alliances of states replaced the alliance of the workers against all states” (Harris, 1974: 186).

4. Socialism as national liberation

In the Third Worldist orthodoxy of the post-colonial period, the era following the Second World War was depicted as the age of national liberation and the retreat of imperialism in the Third World. According to this account, the emergence of the Third World resulted from the breakup of the colonial system under the pressure of national liberation movements in Asia, Africa and Latin America. It deserved to be defined as the most significant development of this period of turmoil, which put its mark on the post-world war period and dramatically changed and shaped the whole pattern of international relations.

The national liberation struggles, aiming at a full political and economic independence, were perceived by many radical intellectuals of the post-colonial era as progressive movements for revolutionary change in the Third World, as the initial stages of a long transition to socialism on the fringes of the world. This perception was based essentially on the analysis of neo-colonialism as a new form of imperialist enslavement and exploitation. The claim of a growing current of theories of neo-imperialism or neo-colonialism, which became popular after 1945, was that, although Third World societies had gained their political sovereignty, they nevertheless remained economically dependent on, and subject to the control of the major world powers. According to Kwame Nkrumah (1965: ix), the essence of neo-colonialism is that “the State which is subject to it is, in theory, independent and has all the outward trappings of international sovereignty. In reality its economic system and thus political policy is directed from outside”. According to this analysis, former mechanisms of direct colonial domination were replaced by new imperialist methods of domination, which were concealed this time in the form of relations of economic (and political and military) dependence. The new mechanisms of imperialism aimed to keep the underdeveloped countries of the Third World within the orbit of the world capitalist system, to continue the exploitation, and to hamper the progress of the oppressed people and the underdeveloped countries towards national liberation, economic and social progress and socialism. In this new context, political independence by itself was not enough to provide a complete and genuine independence, and was not sufficient to solve the immediate social and economic problems of developing countries. Therefore, the movement for political recognition and independence had to be accompanied with a demand for national economic liberation and independence.

The question, however, was which path Third World countries should follow in order to overcome their problems of economic and social underdevelopment and to reduce their dependence on imperialist powers. The Third Worldist ethos of the period developed its alternative theories of development for Third World societies. Most of these theories proposed a “third way” between capitalism and socialism, which was supposed to bypass capitalism and evolve gradually into socialism. The sources of inspiration of the third way strategies adopted by socialists and radical intellectuals in many Third World countries of the post-Second World War period were mostly Soviet or Maoist types, like “national democracy”, “non-capitalist development”⁷ or “new democracy”⁸. The common suggestion of these formulations was a transitional stage, a “bridge”, between the initial phases of national liberation and the phase of socialist construction, which, in most cases, resulted in the glorification and idealization of the transitional stage itself. The alternative third way was developed as a transition to socialism in the Third World, where indigenous capitalism was not developed, social stratification was weak, and pre-capitalist forms of production relations and forces were predominant. The degree of economic and social development in the backward countries of the Third World made an immediate and complete socialist transformation impossible. Nevertheless, they did not have to choose a capitalist way of development either; they could instead enter, without experiencing the hardships of capitalism, into a third path, a transitional and preparatory stage, which would allow them to initiate an independent and rapid national development strategy. The historical aim of this stage was to create the material preconditions for the further transformation of backward societies, and to prepare the ground for building socialism.

⁷ The Soviet state (and academia) was one of the principal sources of the official formulations of ‘stage-ism’ for the national liberation movements of the Third World. The idea of the “non-capitalist way” (and “national democracy”), formulated and popularized by names like Solodovnikov and Ulyanovsky in the 1960s and 1970s, was concerned with the possibility of the gradual transition of the underdeveloped Third World countries to socialism through a transitory stage, without entering into a capitalist path of development (see, Solodovnikov [1973: 6-63]; Solodovnikov and Bogoslovsky [1975]; Ulyanovsky [1966: 75-99]; Ulyanovsky [1984]).

⁸ In his work *On New Democracy*, Mao (1967) outlined a new historical stage suitable to the immediate needs of backward (semi-colonial, semi-feudal) countries like China, a historical stage which is neither bourgeois nor socialist, but designed as a necessary step to prepare the way to the construction of socialism in the Third World. Mao placed the Chinese Revolution in the category of democratic revolution struggling for national liberation, national economic development and consolidation of a national state, led by a coalition of different classes, and directed against imperialism and its internal allies. He (1967, 16-7) writes: “This new-democratic republic will be different from the old European-American form of capitalist republic under bourgeois dictatorship, which is the old democratic form and already out of date. On the other hand, it will also be different from the socialist republic of the Soviet type under the dictatorship of the proletariat ... [A] third form of a state must be adopted in the revolutions of all colonial and semi-colonial countries, namely the new-democratic republic”. For him (1967: 28), “the present task of the revolution in China is to fight imperialism and feudalism, and socialism is out of the question until this task is completed”.

This “third way” strategy brought together different classes, social groups and strata behind the politics of creating genuine political and economic independence, implementing rapid national development, and struggling against imperialism and its non-national internal allies, that is, the comprador bourgeoisie and feudal landlords. In the age of imperialism, according to this strategy, the bourgeois class was no longer the leader of the national liberation against feudalism and imperialist oppression. Any bourgeoisie appearing very late on the historical scene was thus a conservative force and incapable of providing a democratic and revolutionary solution to the problems created by feudalism and imperialism.

The anti-imperialist, national revolutionary democracy was supposed to be based on a broad, national anti-imperialist front composed of workers, peasants, the petty bourgeoisie, radical and patriotically minded military and civil bureaucrats and intellectuals, and in most cases even the national bourgeoisie. The primary struggle in the Third World context, it was claimed, took place not between working class and the bourgeoisie, but between an entire nation (and its representatives) and imperialism (and its non-national domestic allies). Because of the special social and economic conditions of the underdeveloped countries, and because of the weakness of the working class and bourgeoisie, the leadership of the national movement was mostly controlled by radical petty bourgeois elements (known also as intermediate elements). These were considered to be independent of and above the social classes, and supposed to represent the interests of a broad front of national anti-imperialist forces. In backward countries, “when a historical task faces a society and the class that traditionally carries it out is absent, some other group of people... implements it”. It is in such a historical condition that these intermediate elements appear as the leader and the unifier of the nation, representing the interests of the whole nation as against conflicting sectional class interests. The members of this intermediate stratum “are great believers in efficiency, including efficiency in social engineering. They hope for reform from above and would dearly love to hand the new world over to a grateful people, rather than see the liberating struggle of a self-conscious and freely associated people result in a new world for themselves. They care for a lot of measures to drag their nation out of stagnation, but very little for democracy. They embody the drive for industrialization, for capital accumulation, for national resurgence” (Cliff, 2000: 45-6).

5. Economic nationalism in the third world

The idea of economic independence and development came to occupy a central place in the nationalist objectives of the Third Worldist strategies of the post-colonial era. As James Mayall (1990: 116) has argued, “third world nationalism was, in most countries, almost synonymous with the drive for economic development”. One of the drivers of nationalist ideology on the periphery of the world appeared to be the responses to the underdevelopment imposed by the uneven

development and expansion of capitalism. Third Worldist nationalist discourse seemed to be fostered through the resentment directed against imperialism, which was seen as the cause of economic and social backwardness, and through the drive for development and industrialization. Economic nationalism was generally associated with policies such as “the pursuit of self-sufficiency, the protection of domestic production against foreign competition and a favorable trade balance” (Mayall, 1990: 72). It was defined within the conceptual matrix composed of notions such as “statism”, “industrialism” and “protectionism”. In this definition, development and industrialization appear as the ultimate goals of the nation. These goals in the Third World can only be achieved by breaking all ties with the world capitalist system, fostering political independence by economic liberation, and implementing a state-led, independent and national development strategy. The state was supposed to remove the remnants of pre-capitalist relations in the rural social structure, nationalize the major means of production, and control the flow of foreign capital.

Stalinism, as an example of “a militarized ‘*blitzkrieg*’ process of capital accumulation” for undeveloped countries, had a profound impact on the construction of Third Worldism in the post-world era. The transformation of the discourse of Marxism, in particular, and socialism, in general, into Third Worldism occurred within the legacy of Stalinism, “along with an admiration for a heroically simplified account of Russia’s economic development” (Harris, 1986: 181). The Stalinist experience in Russia in the 1930s led to a series of radical changes in the classical meaning of Marxian socialism, which resulted in new formulations of “socialism in one country” and the substitution of the principle of the liberation of the working class by the emancipation of the means of production. In this formulation, socialism was identified with economic planning and state ownership. It changed its meaning from the abolition of the state to an obsession with the state, and the construction of the most rigid and centralized mechanisms of state control. An ideology of rapid economic development guided by the state was attractive to radical political movements and regimes in the Third World. It was therefore this version of socialism that gained importance in the Third World, particularly in the experiences of national liberation struggles in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Roxborough (1979: 134-135) argues that “in common with a familiar post-Stalin transformation of Marxism in the Third World, socialism ... came increasingly to be viewed as a recipe for economic growth rather than as the self-emancipation of the working class”. In this transformation, socialism “takes the place of technocratic incrementalism. Again, the Stalinist equation of socialism with economic planning and state ownership of the means of production is reproduced”.

This development strategy of the post-colonial period was based on a collection of propositions about the possibility of an independent national economic development in the periphery of world capitalism, becoming an orthodoxy, a norm

for the underdeveloped countries of the Third World after the Second World War. This strategy was based on the observation that a country might be formally independent, yet could remain economically dependent at the same time. Introducing independent economic development in the Third World could only be achieved by breaking all the links with neo-colonialism. This idea was also reinforced by the neo-Marxian dependency theories of 1960s and 1970s. For the proponents of dependency theory, underdevelopment was not seen as a consequence of the internal conditions in the underdeveloped countries, but as a result of external factors. It was through the mechanism of the metropolises/satellites dividing the world economy in a hierarchical way that economic surplus was transferred from the periphery to the centre; it was this mechanism that prevented national economic development on the periphery, and condemned it to underdevelopment. Independent national economic development could only be achieved on the periphery if underdeveloped countries disassociated themselves from the world capitalist system by breaking the chain of metropolis-satellite relations.

The policy of controlling imports from the advanced industrial societies of world capitalism under the control of the state, which was called “import-substitution industrialization”, was at the center of an independent national economic development program, being seen as an essential instrument to increase the level of growth of indigenous manufacturing industry in the Third World. The import-substitution program of state-guided industrialization, according to Harris, was directed at creating a national economy independent of the rest of the world. The growth of this economy was “to be sustained by the growth of the domestic market, a ‘self-sustaining’ growth. For such an economy to be reasonably self-sufficient at a tolerable level of income, it would have to produce all the main sectors of a modern economy; it would become a microcosm of the world economy... and would have no specialized role in world trade”. The emotional, moral and political principles of this new strategy were based on a nationalist position: “local companies should be owned by local peoples, profits should be invested at home rather than sent to other countries, innovations in technology should be developed in the country concerned rather than imported” (Harris, 1986: 118). The import-substitution strategy, by its proponents, was seen as an effort to build up an independent national economy, an attempt at national economic self-determination, and was presented as a natural complement to national political liberation. As Harris (1986: 246) has argued, in the post-war era, “national liberation became explicitly and emphatically a struggle for national *economic* independence- a movement to halt, reverse or eliminate economic integration. The right to political self-determination now needed to be also an assertion of economic self-determination”.

6. Conclusion

The attempt at creating a distinctive and coherent idea of the Third World in the post-war era was undermined by a series of dramatic changes in the balances of inter-state relations and new orientations in the field of international political economy during the late 1970s and 1980s. One of the most important developments in this period that contributed to the dissolution of the radical Third Worldism was the open confrontations and wars between Third Worldist regimes, especially in Southeast Asia between Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos and China. These rifts and cleavages in Third World “internationalism” were accompanied by the onset of the Second Cold War, initiated under the leadership of the neo-conservative administration of Ronald Reagan in the USA, directed against the Soviet Bloc and “radical” Third Worldist regimes (see, Halliday [1987: 11-23]). The period of the late 1970s and 1980s also witnessed a restructuring of the world economy according to neo-liberal principals endorsed by the neo-conservative governments of the Western world, such as Reagan in the USA and Thatcher in the UK. International economic institutions like the IMF and the World Bank supported by these neo-conservative/neo-liberal governments encouraged Third World regimes to adopt the principles of the market mechanism, the strategy of the privatization of their public sectors, export-oriented industrialization, and to abandon the import-substitution development strategy, state-guided industrialization and economic development. The rise of the Newly Industrialized Countries (NICs) in the East Asia and Latin America has been considered as proving the success of this neo-conservative/neo-liberal re-orientation. The economic success of the NICs has also weakened the Third Worldist idea that the uneven economic relations between the Third World and metropole countries are the main reasons behind the underdevelopment of Third World countries. Instead, this success has been seen as evidence of the failure of state-guided development contained in the idea of the Third World and Third Worldism.

In the post-Second World War era, a significant number of Third World countries were attracted to the idea of socialism as an economic and political development strategy guided by the state. Within the Third Worldist orthodoxy of that era, economic and political dependence was seen as an outcome of incorporation into the capitalist world order; socialism, in this schema, was understood as a necessary precondition for independent and national development. However, after the fall of the Berlin Wall, the idea of socialism as a development strategy began to lose its currency, both in the industrialized countries and in the Third World, in a very dramatic way. The challenges of the new age both in intellectual and practico-political terrains removed the very foundations of Third Worldism of the post-colonial age and the need for (and possibility of) the articulation of socialism with nationalist developmentalism. The dissolution of the ambiguous amalgamation of socialism, developmentalism and nationalism in this

new era resulted in the decline of socialism and developmentalism and the re-revival of nationalism. Although the pressures of neo-liberalism and globalization from 1980s onwards have eradicated the developmentalist content of nationalism, the same processes, on the other hand, have also given rise to “anti-modern, anti-secular, neo-traditional cultural nationalisms” in the forms of ethno-nationalism, religious fundamentalism and racism (Berger and Ghosh, 2010: 601).⁹ While socialism and developmentalism lost their historical role in the making of the world that emerged after the Cold War, nationalism in its new “culturalist” forms has retained its effectiveness in the present age, and proved its attractiveness to be more deep-rooted and stronger.

⁹ For the transition from “developmental” to “cultural” nationalisms, see also Desai (2008: 647-70).

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Özet

Üçüncü dünyacılık çağında üçüncü dünya'da sosyalizm ve milliyetçilik

Bu makale sosyalizm ve milliyetçilik arasındaki ilişkiyi, bu ilişkinin üçüncü dünyacı türüne özel bir vurgu yaparak incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Sömürgecilik sonrası dönemin üçüncü dünyacı ortodoksisi, milliyetçilikle sosyalizm arasındaki sınırları belirsizleştirmişti. Bu yaklaşımda, üçüncü dünyacı milliyetçilik emperyalizme ve kapitalizm tarafından üretilen eşitsiz gelişime karşı duyulan öfkenin siyasal ifadesi olarak görülüyordu. Yine bu yaklaşımda sosyalizm, milletin emperyalist güçlerden ve onların yerli işbirlikçilerinden siyasal ve ekonomik olarak kurtuluşu şeklinde anlaşılmaktaydı. Sosyalizm, milleti siyasal ve ekonomik olarak bağımsız ve gelişmiş yapacak bir kalkınma stratejisi olarak görülüyordu.

Anahtar kelimeler: Üçüncü dünyacılık; sosyalizm; milli kurtuluş; kalkınmacılık.